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THE SEVENTIES: COUNSELING, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND REHABILITATION SERVICES

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It is suicidal for professional persons or organizations to devote their best intellectual strength solely to coping with current problems. Effectiveness requires future oriented decisions and farsighted planning. The amazingly rapid growth of rehabilitation services to deaf people which occurred in the sixties was a direct outgrowth of the capacity of a nucleus of visionary persons at the federal level, including Boyce Williams and Mary Switzer, to establish long range goals in deafness and to retain a focus on these goals while not being overwhelmed by the then existing day-to-day demands (Switzer and Williams, 1967). Currently we see these same qualities of farsightedness in persons like Larry Stewart and Alan Sussman who direct or participate in the most progressive projects growing out of the sixties, yet who see their projects as already anachronistic relative to present needs and future standards (Stewart, 1970, Sussman, 1970).

Most of us who heard Boyce Williams or Mary Switzer in the sixties courteously listened to their remarks while privately regarding their thinking as utopian. On certain occasions we wished they would stop dreaming about the future and deal exclusively with the then present problems which consumed most of our own efforts. Had they done this today there would be no PR-WAD, NTID, Hot Springs Rehabilitation center, *Journal of Rehabilitation of the Deaf* ad infinitum. Potential new leaders in rehabilitation such as Alan Sussman, Larry Stewart, Barbara Sachs, Bob Donnoghue, Geno Vescovi, Dick Johnson and others would be punching linotype machines or engaged in some other

relatively menial tasks instead of being at the forefront of progress in rehabilitation.

The remarks which follow are intended to direct the thoughts and actions of the overwhelming majority of us who are sometimes bound by the problems of today to the considerations of tomorrow. The major effort will be to conceptualize the issues which will affect the seventies rather than to predict specific events. The questions of where we are going and how we will get there must be paramount in PRWAD's orientation and in the professional thinking of each of us.

Consumer Involvement

When looking at the field of deafness a contrast that stands out immediately is the dynamic progress which has taken place in counseling and psychological services as compared to the stagnant inertia which has characterized much of education. Looming forth as a primary reason for this difference is that from the beginning education has and continues frequently to demean and to ignore the contributions of deaf "consumers" and professionals. Rehabilitation has not made this fatal error. In fact, the leaders in counseling in deafness today are in many cases the same deaf persons who were driven out of education by the discrimination, the disregard, and the professional dead ends imposed upon them by some educators because they were deaf.

The point to be made is that the progress in the seventies in counseling and psychological services should far outstrip that made in the sixties because the deaf community is involved in all phases. There now exists a nucleus of professionals, many at the doctoral level, to lead the way. Organizations like the NAD are consulted and included in planning and conducting research, training, and service. An interesting brain drain is occurring in which the bright, ambitious, deaf professional is frequently leaving the field of education for those of counseling or psychology.

The involvement of deaf persons in decision making leadership roles contributes more than anything to optimism for the seventies. It is only when the deaf community is the master of its own fate

including rehabilitation and educational services that solid progress will develop (Vernon and Makosky, 1969). There is overwhelming evidence from social psychology that for rehabilitation to work the minority groups involved must play leading roles. The failure of the Bureau of Indian Affairs as contrasted to the success of Synanon is one example. Even groups with a serious problem like drug addiction do better rehabilitating themselves than do "outsiders" as exemplified by the bureaucrats handling Indian affairs. This is not to say that non-deaf persons should not be involved.

Money

No realist can meaningfully discuss the future without dealing very directly with the issue of money. Unfortunately, the fiscal bases for large parts of service, research, and training in the sixties were short-term grants and other temporary or "soft money" sources. This must change in the seventies.

To understand how important changes in funding are, let us briefly examine the waste, instability, and inefficiency of the "soft money" mode of operation. First, tremendous amounts of high level professional time are spent in preparing the grants and establishing the interactions necessary to obtain "soft money." This time investment is in many respects money thrown away in that it provides no one service or training or research. Second, by the time the grant awards are actually made it is only a few days or weeks before the project is scheduled to begin. Good people have already made other commitments. Consequently projects are often staffed by incompetent "leftovers" or else go for a year or more unstaffed. As projects near their end, employees frantically seek other positions, crippling the work remaining to be done.

Most grants are limited to a maximum of three to five years duration. Hence, getting started and preparing to terminate or else re-apply consume much of the project time. Long-range goals, longitudinal research, and other fundamentally sound bases for operation are lacking. One problem is that it is often necessary to paint a falsely rosy picture of what happens in hopes of thereby obtaining a grant renewal. Money that could be saved or set aside for future use is frantically and wastefully spent to avoid returning it and jeopardizing future budgets.

Grant and project funds are often treated totally different from the actual funds of the institution receiving the grant. Specifically, many institutions are frugal with their own money but act like Santa Claus with grant money. In fact, it is so common to divert grant funds to institutional use that it is no longer regarded by many as dishonest.

The issue is that basic service, research, and training facilities for deaf people in the seventies must be "hard money" operations established through federal and state legislation, not temporary grants and demonstration projects. Good professionals avoid the area of deafness because they quickly see that college, administrative, and other positions are almost exclusively temporary, i. e. contingent upon year-to-year funding and awards.

Gallaudet and NTID serve as examples of the kind of hard money fiscal base major services in deafness in the seventies will require. Care must be taken in structuring the legislation for the "hard money" funding of the future to avoid the bureaucratic over-control the United States Office of Education has tried to force upon NTID and the Model Secondary School of Gallaudet. Empire builders in Washington can and do paralyze the best intended rehabilitation programs when they succeed in retaining fiscal and decision-making power in Washington. Grants and demonstrations will always have an important place in future programs in deafness.

The issue is that key services such as vocational-technical education, comprehensive facilities for low-achieving deaf persons, mental health services, and professional preparation should all have permanent federally legislated status in the seventies. College level research and training must also be put on this kind of solid long-term financing. For example, the seventies may see college programs supported in a way analogous to the financing of R.O.T.C. training, i. e. land grants or other federal commitments to higher education be made with stipulations for the maintenance of programs of professional training in rehabilitation.

Centralization vs. "De-Federalization"

As we enter the seventies under the Nixon Administration the big push is to de-federalize, i. e. return control and responsibility to the states. This policy has certain obvious advantages, but like any

generalization, the effectiveness of its implementation depends upon a recognition of the specific situation where it is and is not applicable.

The danger of the seventies is that too large a share of responsibility for services, research, and training in deafness will be turned back to the states. Deaf people represent such a small proportion of the population that programs for them at the state level are often not feasible. Few states, if any, could afford a college for deaf students. Yet by working at the federal level, Gallaudet was established over a hundred years ago. The dividends on this investment have been huge. Gallaudet, more than any other single factor, accounts for the higher educational, social, and economic status of deaf people in the U. S. as contrasted to those in other countries. The NTID should further improve this situation in the future. Programs such as that at New York University, the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center, the Leadership Training Program, and many others of great demonstrated value would never have occurred in an era where the general governmental principles of decentralization had been applied indiscriminately to include programs in deafness.

The extent to which the Rehabilitation Services Administration retains primary responsibility for programs in deafness looms as one of the crucial issues of the seventies. If basic decisions in deafness are shifted to regional and state levels, deafness will be lost. The seventies will see the gains of the last decade disappear.

Absolute and Relative Progress

Along with certain optimistic trends and recognition of the growth of counseling and psychological services in the sixties there is the obvious and sobering fact that present service, research, and training are inadequate. The sixties represented progress from nothing to tokenism. For example, professional training today is unable to even begin to meet the staffing needs of the most basic of service programs. Outstanding projects such as that for low achieving deaf clients in Hot Springs cannot fill half their professional openings and searched a year before locating a qualified Director. The Council of Organizations Serving the Deaf was unable for several months to find an appropriately qualified

Executive Director. Even "hard money" prestigious institutions such as Gallaudet College and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf cannot obtain enough professionals for full counseling and psychological services.

If we are to progress from the almost total inertia of the forties and the fifties and the tokenism of the sixties to appropriate levels of service and training in the seventies sharp questions must be raised to those responsible. For deaf people an ant hill has been provided where a mountain is needed.

Political Action

In the past and today people with very little knowledge of deafness have made the decisions that affect deaf people. Otologists with as much competence in vocational rehabilitation as counselors have in ear surgery made key policy for research and training in rehabilitation. Other important programs for adult deaf people were strongly influenced by oral private school factions which rejected the advice and counsel of leading organizations of the deaf and whose own contacts with adult deaf people were limited due to these educators inability to communicate.

The seventies will see a more sophisticated, more politically active deaf community. This community, represented primarily by the National Association of the Deaf, will exercise sufficient political strength to assure that programs for the deaf people reflect deaf persons' needs, not the needs imagined by those unfamiliar with the community to be served.

General

The seventies may see the PRWAD broaden its scope to include a much larger and more diversified membership. Its official organ, *The Journal of Rehabilitation of the Deaf*, which has made great strides in the sixties should become one of the leading publications in deafness in the future.

The seventies must see an end to the case finding procedures which, in the past, have permitted deaf youth to grow into adulthood totally unschooled, untrained, and unknown (Grinker, 1969).

Concentrated efforts must be directed to end the discrepancy between need and demand which leave rehabilitation centers unfilled while relatively eneducated, unemployed, untrained deaf youth pour out of urban and rural schools in need of services but uninformed about their availability.

Summary

Counseling, psychological, and rehabilitation services for deaf persons in the seventies will be determined by several major issues. These are:

1. The degree of involvement of the deaf community in policy making and in leadership roles.
2. The extent to which services, training and research in deafness change from "soft money" short-term grants and demonstration projects into permanently legislative and funded programs.
3. Whether or not present governmental policy generalizations on de-federalization make appropriate exceptions in the area of deafness, exception which permit primary policy decisions to remain centralized in the Rehabilitation Services Administration.
4. If the fact that services, research, and training for deaf people is an ant hill where a mountain is needed are sharply and forcefully brought before the appropriate agencies.
5. The extent to which those with little knowledge of or contact with the adult deaf community cease to be in decision-making roles in rehabilitation and education.

Organizations such as the PRWAD have tremendous potential influence on what will happen to deaf people in the seventies. For this potential to be realized, the PRWAD must be farsighted. Even more importantly its members, its journals, and the organization itself must have the courage and forcefulness to stand on principle and conviction where the interest of deaf youth and adults is at stake.

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