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**SELF
INSTRUCTION**

FAMILY BALANCE

UNIT 10



PARENTAL SKILLS PROGRAM HANDICAPPED CHILDREN



SELF-INSTRUCTION WORKBOOK

UNIT X

FAMILY BALANCE

PARENTAL SKILLS FOR PARENTS OF
HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

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FAMILY BALANCE



INSTRUCTIONS: Turn the page and begin reading. Take a sheet of paper and slide it down the page as you read. Throughout the unit, you will come to exercises marked with a big circle. You should complete each exercise as you come to it. Then slide the paper down and check your answer with the answer provided immediately following the exercise. If you are not satisfied with your answer, go back and read the part just before the exercise and then redo the exercise. When you are satisfied with your answer, proceed with your reading.

UNIT 10

THIS IS THE TENTH UNIT IN THE PARENTAL SKILLS PROGRAM. THIS UNIT IS CONCERNED WITH THE PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPING BALANCE IN FAMILIES WHERE THERE IS A HANDICAPPED CHILD.

HANDICAPPED CHILD

THE PRESENCE OF A HANDICAPPED CHILD IN THE TYPICAL FAMILY CAN HAVE A DISRUPTIVE EFFECT ON RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE FAMILY, AND UPON THE PERSONAL GOALS AND NEEDS OF FAMILY MEMBERS.

RESULTS

- . TIME PRESSURE
- . STRESS
- . CONFUSION

FOR MANY FAMILIES A HANDICAPPED CHILD CAN RESULT IN TIME PRESSURES, STRESS, AND CONFUSION IF FAMILY MEMBERS FAIL TO SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE AND ADJUST TO THE SITUATION.

MAJOR PROBLEMS

THE MAJOR PROBLEM FOR MOST FAMILIES TO SOLVE IS: HOW CAN WE SUCCESSFULLY ADAPT TO AND DEVELOP THE CHILD AND AT THE SAME TIME MAINTAIN NORMAL FAMILY RELATIONS?



Check (✓) the statements below which are true of most families with handicapped children.

- ___ 1. The presence of a handicapped child does not disrupt relationships within the family.
- ___ 2. The presence of a handicapped child in a family often results in time pressures.
- ___ 3. The family rarely develops stress because of a handicapped child.
- ___ 4. One major problem is how can a family develop the handicapped child?

(Statements 2 and 4 are true.)

2 PATTERNS

IN LOOKING AT FAMILIES WHERE THERE IS A HANDICAPPED CHILD, TWO MAJOR PATTERNS OF FAMILY ADJUSTMENT CAN BE FOUND. ONE PATTERN TENDS TO BE SUCCESSFUL, WHILE THE OTHER TENDS TO BE UNSUCCESSFUL. LET'S LOOK AT THE UNSUCCESSFUL PATTERN FIRST.

HANDICAP
CENTERED

SOME FAMILIES SEEM TO ADOPT A HANDICAP CENTERED PATTERN. IN THIS PATTERN THE NEEDS, INTERESTS, AND CONCERNS OF OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS ARE CONSIDERED SECONDARY OR SIMPLY IGNORED.

CHILD FIRST

THE MAJOR CHARACTERISTIC OF THE HANDICAP CENTERED FAMILY IS THAT THE HANDICAPPED CHILD COMES FIRST. ONE OR BOTH PARENTS TEND TO PUT THIS CHILD ABOVE EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE ELSE.

*relates to
the* X-2 *the*

RESTRICTION .

THIS PATTERN TENDS TO GREATLY RESTRICT OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS AND PREVENTS THEM FROM FULFILLING THEIR NEEDS. UNDER THE PRESSURE OF RESPONSIBILITIES, THEY ARE RESTRICTED IN TERMS OF TIME AND FREEDOM TO DEVELOP THEIR OWN INTERESTS OR POTENTIAL.

SACRIFICE

SACRIFICE IS ALSO EXPECTED FROM THE MEMBERS OF A HANDICAP CENTERED FAMILY. EVERYONE MUST SACRIFICE FOR THE SAKE OF THE HANDICAPPED CHILD. SUCH A FAMILY SPENDS MORE TIME, MONEY AND EFFORT THAN IS NECESSARY ON THE HANDICAPPED CHILD.

PESSIMISM

GENERALLY MEMBERS OF A HANDICAPPED CENTERED FAMILY ARE PESSIMISTIC. RESTRICTION AND SACRIFICE REQUIRED OF OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS CREATES TENSION, DISSATISFACTION AND CONFLICT. THE WHOLE FAMILY TAKES ON A CHARACTER OF PESSIMISM.



On the left is a list of characteristics of a handicapped centered family. Write the number of the example by the characteristic it matches.

<u>Handicapped Centered Characteristics</u>	<u>Example</u>
Handicapped Child First _____	1. I never get out of the house because Johnny can't be out in this heat.
Restriction _____	2. We don't take vacations because Susan couldn't go and she would enjoy it so much.
Sacrifice _____	3. I'm sorry you got married. If you hadn't you could stay here and help us take care of your sister.
Pessimism _____	4. Things won't ever be better for us, we just have to take it.

(Handicapped child first = 3; Restriction = 1; Sacrifice = 2; Pessimism = 4.)

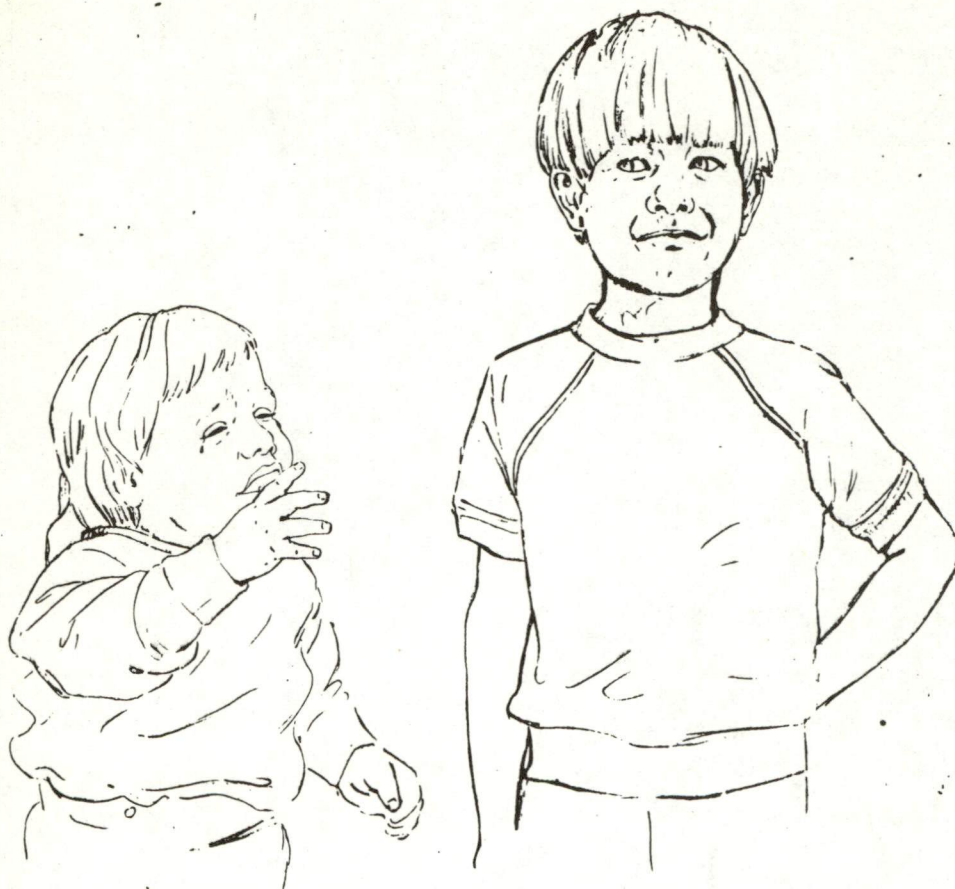
IMBALANCE

- HUSBAND AND WIFE
- OTHER CHILDREN
- OTHER PEOPLE

AFTER A PERIOD OF TIME AN IMBALANCE DEVELOPS IN THE FAMILY. THIS IMBALANCE OCCURS IN THE HUSBAND AND WIFE RELATIONSHIP, IN THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARENTS AND THEIR OTHER CHILDREN, AND IN THE FAMILY'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PEOPLE.

HUSBAND AND WIFE

IN THE HANDICAP CENTERED FAMILY THE HUSBAND AND WIFE TEND TO BECOME SEPARATE FROM EACH OTHER. ONE PARENT USUALLY CONCENTRATES ALMOST ENTIRELY ON THE PARENT ROLE. THE OTHER PARENT IS EXCLUDED FROM CONTRIBUTING TO THE CARE OF THE HANDICAPPED CHILD AND FROM DECISIONS CONCERNING THE CHILD. TIME AND INTERACTIONS BETWEEN THE PARENTS BECOME LIMITED. COMMUNICATION BARRIERS DEVELOP, CONFLICTS BECOME COMMON, AND THE EXCLUDED PARENT WITHDRAWS MORE AND MORE FROM THE FAMILY. DIVORCE IS COMMON IN THIS SITUATION.



OTHER CHILDREN

PROBLEMS ALSO DEVELOP WITH OTHER CHILDREN IN THE HANDICAP CENTERED FAMILY. OFTEN THEY RECEIVE LIMITED ATTENTION. THEIR NEEDS AND DESIRES ARE OFTEN IGNORED BY ONE OR BOTH PARENTS. THEY DEVELOP NEGATIVE FEELINGS BECAUSE OF THE IMBALANCE AND INJUSTICE IN THE FAMILY. THERE IS LITTLE OPEN COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PARENTS AND THE OTHER CHILDREN. THE OTHER CHILDREN MAY DEVELOP EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS.



OTHER PEOPLE

IN THE HANDICAP CENTERED FAMILY, RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PEOPLE TEND TO BE RESTRICTED AND STRAINED. BECAUSE OF THE TIME AND EFFORT DEVOTED TO THE HANDICAPPED CHILD, ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE CHILD ARE SHUNNED. HANDICAP CENTERED FAMILIES USUALLY RESTRICT THEIR FEW ASSOCIATIONS TO OTHER PEOPLE WITH CHILDREN OF SIMILAR HANDICAPS.

WHOLE FAMILY
IS
HANDICAPPED

EVENTUALLY IN THE HANDICAP CENTERED FAMILY THE WHOLE FAMILY BECOMES HANDICAPPED. THE CHILD'S HANDICAP IS OVEREMPHASIZED. AT THE SAME TIME OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS BECOME EMOTIONALLY HANDICAPPED BY THEIR SACRIFICING, RESTRICTION AND FRUSTRATION.



Check (✓) the statements below which are TRUE for the imbalance which occurs in a handicapped centered family.

- _____ Husbands and wives often stop communicating openly and grow distant from one another.
- _____ Often one parent spends so much time with the handicapped child that other family members receive limited attention.
- _____ As parents concentrate more and more on providing for every wish and whim of the handicapped child, there are fewer contacts with other people outside the family.
- _____ Because of imbalance, the whole family becomes emotionally handicapped.

(All of the statements tend to be true for handicapped centered families.)

BALANCED
FAMILY

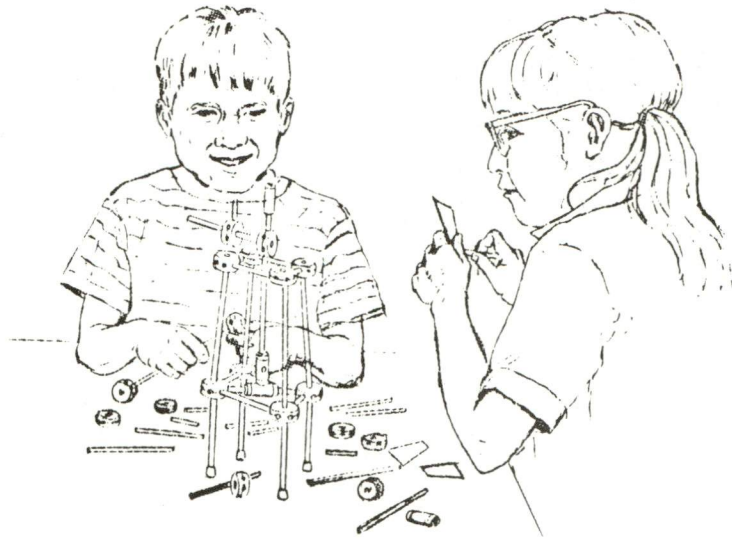
THERE IS ANOTHER PATTERN WHICH DEVELOPS IN MANY FAMILIES WITH HANDICAPPED CHILDREN. IN THIS PATTERN THE NEEDS OF ALL FAMILY MEMBERS ARE CONSIDERED AND A BALANCE DEVELOPS. IN THIS BALANCED FAMILY PATTERN THE FAMILY DOES NOT DEVELOP CHARACTERISTICS WHICH MAKE IT EXTREMELY DIFFERENT FROM OTHER FAMILIES. THE IMBALANCE IN THE RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE FAMILY DOES NOT OCCUR AS IT DOES IN THE HANDICAP CENTERED FAMILY.

EQUALITY

IN THE BALANCED FAMILY THERE IS EQUALITY. NO FAMILY MEMBER IS CONSIDERED MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANY OTHER. THE PARENTS AND EACH CHILD ARE THOUGHT OF AS HAVING RIGHTS, NEEDS, PERSONAL IDEAS AND PREFERENCES.

FLEXIBILITY

ANOTHER CHARACTERISTIC OF THE BALANCED FAMILY IS FLEXIBILITY. FAMILY MEMBERS TEND TO BE CREATIVE AND FLEXIBLE IN TERMS OF MANAGING THE TASKS AND BUSINESS OF THE FAMILY. THERE ARE FEWER FIXED IDEAS ABOUT WHO DOES WHAT JOB AND MORE FLEXIBILITY IN TRYING TO SATISFY THE NEEDS AND DESIRES OF ALL FAMILY MEMBERS.



COOPERATION

IN THE BALANCED FAMILY, THE MEMBERS TEND TO WORK AS A TEAM. COOPERATION IS THE MAJOR THEME AND FAMILY GOALS AND DECISIONS ARE REACHED THROUGH SHARING. COOPERATION ALLOWS THESE FAMILIES TO SPEND LESS TIME ON CONFLICTS AND MORE TIME ON ACTUAL WORK, FUN, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY MEMBERS.

OPEN
COMMUNICATION

OPEN COMMUNICATION IS ANOTHER CHARACTERISTIC OF THE BALANCED FAMILY. OPEN COMMUNICATION ALLOWS FOR EXPRESSION OF IDEAS AND FEELINGS AND SHARING OF INFORMATION. OPEN COMMUNICATION ALLOWS FOR DISCUSSION OF PROBLEMS, OPEN DEALINGS CONCERNING NEGATIVE FEELINGS, AND JOINT SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS.

PLANNING

FINALLY, IN BALANCED FAMILIES THERE IS PLANNING. THIS TAKES THE FORM OF LOOKING AHEAD AND ANTICIPATING MAJOR PROBLEMS BEFORE THEY OCCUR. BECAUSE THEY PLAN AHEAD, FAMILY MEMBERS TEND TO HAVE MORE MEANS OF DEALING WITH PROBLEMS WHEN THEY HAPPEN. THEY DO NOT FEEL TRAPPED WITH NO ALTERNATIVES.



Below is a list of examples which illustrate the characteristics of a balanced family. For each characteristic listed you are to select two examples from the list on the right and write the numbers on the lines provided.

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Examples</u>
Equality _____, _____	1. Expression of feelings
Flexibility _____, _____	2. Anticipating problems
Cooperation _____, _____	3. Each family member has rights
Open Communication _____, _____	4. Family members working as a team to solve problems
Planning _____, _____	5. Being able to discuss negative feelings
	6. Being creative about managing family business
	7. Looking ahead to decide on possible problems
	8. Not having fixed ideas about family jobs
	9. Setting family goals through sharing
	10. Taking into consideration everyone's personal ideas and needs

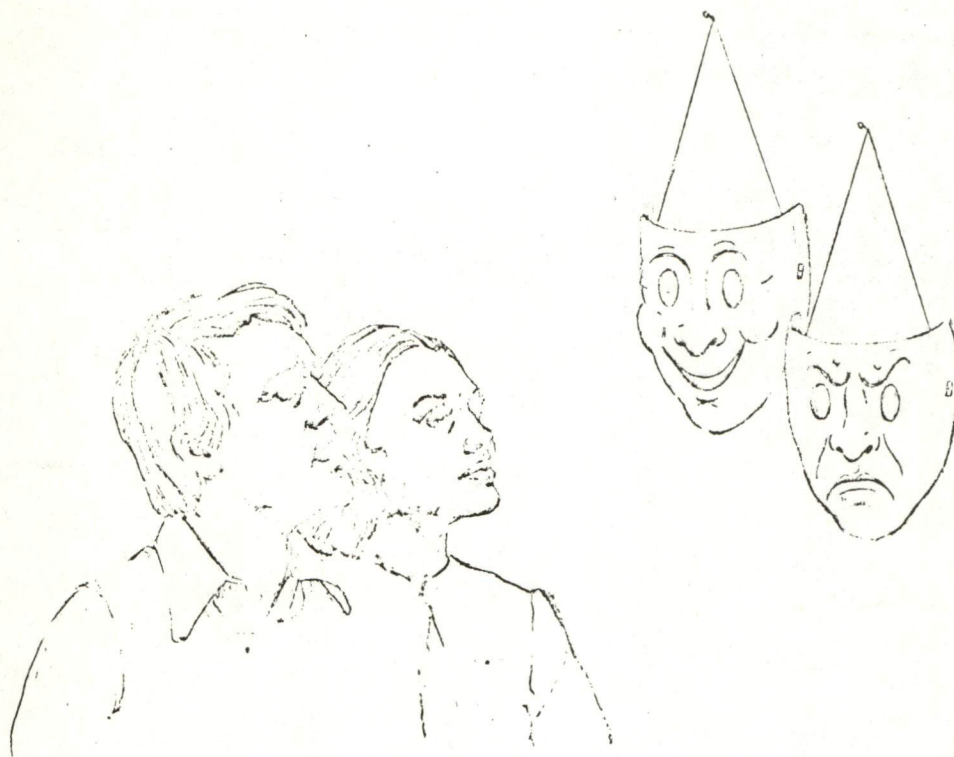
(The answers are: Equality = 3, 10; Flexibility = 6, 8; Cooperation = 4, 9; Open Communication = 1, 5; Planning = 2, 7.)

FAMILY BALANCE
HOW ??

YOU MAY BE THINKING: "THIS FAMILY BALANCE SOUNDS GREAT, BUT HOW CAN PARENTS CREATE FAMILY BALANCE?" LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE ACTION STEPS YOU MIGHT TAKE TO CREATE MORE BALANCE IN YOUR FAMILY.

FAMILY STAGE

BEFORE TAKING THESE ACTION STEPS, REMEMBER THAT YOUR FAMILY OPERATES ON A FAMILY STAGE. FAMILY MEMBERS "ACT OUT" SCENES AND FOLLOW SCRIPTS. THIS STAGE IS FLEXIBLE IN TERMS OF SCRIPTS AND SCENES THAT CAN BE "ACTED OUT".



DIRECTORS

AS PARENTS YOU ARE THE PLAYWRIGHTS AND DIRECTORS OF WHAT OCCURS ON YOUR FAMILY STAGE TO A LARGE EXTENT. YOU CAN WRITE A SCRIPT AND CREATE A SCENE WHERE THE HANDICAP OF YOUR CHILD BECOMES THE CENTER OF EVERYTHING. YOU CAN ALSO CREATE A SCENE WHERE THERE IS BALANCE, WHERE YOUR FAMILY IS MORE LIKE OTHER FAMILIES, WHERE YOUR CHILD SHARE EXPERIENCES IN COMMON WITH OTHER CHILDREN, AND WHERE YOU AS PARENTS ARE STILL INDIVIDUALS.

5
ACTION STEPS

THERE ARE FIVE ACTION STEPS PARENTS CAN TAKE TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF BALANCE IN THEIR FAMILY.

1. PHILOSOPHY

THE FIRST ACTION STEP FOR CREATING BALANCE IS TO DEVELOP A PHILOSOPHY CONCERNING THE HANDICAP.

JOINT DECISION

IN DEVELOPING A PHILOSOPHY, PARENTS NEED TO MAKE A JOINT DECISION TO SEEK BALANCE IN THEIR FAMILY. THEY SHOULD BOTH AGREE THAT THEY WILL NOT ALLOW THE HANDICAP TO SO DOMINATE THE FAMILY THAT THE RIGHTS AND NEEDS OF THE FAMILY MEMBERS GO IGNORED OR UNFULFILLED. THIS MEANS AN AGREEMENT THAT THE RIGHTS AND NEEDS OF ALL FAMILY MEMBERS ARE EQUAL. IT MEANS STRIVING TO HAVE A NORMAL FAMILY LIFE FOR THE SAKE OF THE HANDICAPPED CHILD AS WELL AS EVERYONE IN THE FAMILY.

2. FLEXIBILITY

THE SECOND ACTION STEP IN DEVELOPING BALANCE RELATES TO FLEXIBILITY. IN FAMILIES WHERE THERE IS A HANDICAPPED CHILD, TYPICAL OR TRADITIONAL WAYS OF DOING THINGS WILL NOT ALWAYS WORK. PARENTS NEED TO COME TO SOME AGREEMENT THAT WHEN OLD WAYS DON'T WORK, THEY WILL TRY TO BE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO TRY NEW METHODS. FLEXIBILITY AND CREATIVITY IN GETTING THE BUSINESS OF THE FAMILY DONE SHOULD BECOME THE MAJOR THEME.

SEEK NEW WAYS

PARENTS SHOULD BE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO SEEK NEW WAYS OF DOING THINGS. THEY SHOULD EXPERIMENT WITH NEW IDEAS. THE GOAL SHOULD BE TO FIND THE BEST WAY FOR THE FAMILY.

3. OPEN COMMUNICATION

THE THIRD ACTION STEP IS TO DEVELOP OPEN COMMUNICATION. THIS MEANS THAT FAMILY MEMBERS SHARE IN PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS. IT MEANS EXPRESSING FEELINGS AND TALKING ABOUT FEARS. IT MEANS INCLUDING EVERYONE, BOTH PARENTS AND THE CHILDREN, IN MAKING PLANS, SETTING PRIORITIES, AND SOLVING PROBLEMS.

Check (✓) the statements below which are true about action steps for increasing balance in the family.

- ☐ 1. In order to increase balance both parents must agree to work for it.
- ☐ 2. Parents must agree that the rights and needs of the handicapped child should come first.
- ☐ 3. Each member of a family should only have one set of jobs to do and should not be expected to do other things.
- ☐ 4. If the old way of doing something doesn't work, parents should try something new.
- ☐ 5. It is best not to bring up problems if it might cause conflict.
- ☐ 6. Parents should talk with their children about their feelings and fears.

(Statements 1, 4 and 6 are true.)

4. COOPERATION

THE FOURTH ACTION STEP IN DEVELOPING BALANCE RELATES TO COOPERATION. COOPERATION HELPS GET THE NEEDS OF EVERYONE FULFILLED. IT EVENS OUT THE DISTRIBUTION OF WORK AND FUN AMONG FAMILY MEMBERS. USING THE ACTIVATOR SCRIPT WITH ALL CHILDREN WILL ENCOURAGE COOPERATION. THIS MEANS RECOGNITION OF NEEDS, RESPECT FOR RIGHTS, POSITIVE MOTIVATION, OPEN COMMUNICATION, RECOGNIZING AND MANAGING STRESS, CALCULATED RISK TAKING, AND MANAGEMENT OF GAME SITUATIONS.

ACTIVATOR MATE

APPLYING THE SKILLS OF THE ACTIVATOR PARENT IN RELATING TO YOUR SPOUSE CAN CREATE COOPERATION. ABOVE ALL YOU SHOULD BE OPEN IN YOUR COMMUNICATION. LISTEN AND TALK TO EACH OTHER AND SHARE YOUR FEARS AND FEELINGS, ESPECIALLY THE NEGATIVE ONES. INCLUDE AND INVOLVE EACH OTHER, UNDERSTAND THE GAMES HUSBANDS AND WIVES CAN PLAY, USE POSITIVE MOTIVATION WITH EACH OTHER.

5. PLANNING

THE FIFTH ACTION STEP RELATES TO PLANNING. THIS MEANS THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE, TRYING TO ANTICIPATE PROBLEMS, AND DEVELOPING SOME OPTIONS. YOUR PLANS NEED TO BE CONCERNED WITH GETTING ROUTINE THINGS DONE, FULFILLING THE NEEDS OF FAMILY MEMBERS, BALANCING THE FUN AND WORK. PLANNING IS EASIER WHEN THERE IS OPEN COMMUNICATION, COOPERATION AND FLEXIBILITY.

THINGS TO DO

THE FIRST STEP IN PLANNING IS TO MAKE A WEEKLY "THINGS TO DO" LIST. ON THIS LIST EVERY FAMILY MEMBER SUGGESTS THINGS THEY MUST DO AND THE THINGS THEY WANT TO DO. OF COURSE THE AGES OF YOUR CHILDREN WILL DETERMINE HOW MUCH THEY WILL BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE.

TIME REQUIRED

THE NEXT STEP IS TO ESTIMATE THE TIME REQUIRED FOR EACH ITEM. FOR EXAMPLE: FATHER TO WORK - 10 HOURS, INCLUDING TRAVEL; JOHNNY TO SCHOOL - 8 HOURS; MOTHER CARPOOL - 4 HOURS; SWIMMING FOR MARY - 3 HOURS. NOW TOTAL UP ALL THE THINGS THAT MUST GET DONE BY EACH PERSONS' NAME. THIS IS HOW LONG IT WILL TAKE TO JUST KEEP THE HOUSEHOLD GOING. THEN TOTAL UP THE TIME FOR THINGS EVERYONE WANTS TO DO.

PRIORITIES

SUPPOSE YOUR LIST OF THINGS THAT MUST BE DONE TAKES EVERY WAKING HOUR. THEN STOP AND LOOK AT THAT LIST. CAN YOU DROP SOMETHING? IS SOMETHING UNNECESSARY? TRY TO SET PRIORITIES. WHAT IS IMPORTANT AND WHAT CAN BE PUT OFF THAT WILL PROVIDE TIME FOR SOME OF THE THINGS PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO DO?

WORK AND FUN

WHEN IT'S ALL WORK AND NO FUN FOR ANY MEMBER OF THE FAMILY, THINGS ARE OUT OF BALANCE. WHEN IT'S ALL FUN AND NO WORK FOR ANOTHER MEMBER, THINGS ARE ALSO OUT OF BALANCE. DIVIDING UP THE WORK OVER A WEEK CAN HELP BALANCE THINGS OUT. OF COURSE, ON SOME DAYS SOMEONE WILL HAVE ALL WORK AND NO FUN AS ALL OF US DO, AND ANOTHER DAY WHERE ITS MORE FUN THAN WORK FOR THIS PERSON. THE GOAL FOR THE WEEK IS TO PROVIDE A BALANCE FOR ALL MEMBERS.



Check (✓) the statements which are true about action steps.

- _____ 1. The Controller parent is best at gaining cooperation from all family members.
- _____ 2. Closed communication is best for achieving cooperation among family members.
- _____ 3. "Planning" refers to family problems and decision-making, not to getting routine things done.
- _____ 4. The "things to do list" includes work activities and fun activities.
- _____ 5. Providing balance for family members means that the parents have the work and the children can play.

(Only statement 4 is true.)

THE FAMILY COUNCIL

IN ADDITION TO THE FIVE ACTION STEPS, A FAMILY COUNCIL IS A GOOD WAY TO CREATE BALANCE IN A FAMILY. WHEN THE CHILDREN ARE INFANTS OR VERY YOUNG, THE COUNCIL IS MADE UP OF PARENTS. AS THE CHILDREN GROW THEY ARE INCLUDED IN THE COUNCIL TO HELP SHARE IDEAS, MAKE PLANS, SOLVE PROBLEMS, AND AIR FEELINGS. THE GOALS OF THE WEEK OR MONTH CAN BE SET AT A FAMILY COUNCIL. THE FAMILY CAN HOLD A COUNCIL MEETING ON A REGULAR BASIS OR ONLY OCCASIONALLY. HERE ARE SOME GROUND RULES FOR CONDUCTING THE COUNCIL.

NO "BOSS"

DURING THE COUNCIL MEETING THE PARENT IS NOT THE "BOSS". HE IS AN EQUAL MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL. BUT A PARENT CAN BE A "LEADER" AND CONTRIBUTE HIS GUIDANCE AND HELP KEEP THE COUNCIL ON THE TRACK.

LISTEN

DURING THE COUNCIL MEETING EVERYONE LISTENS TO OTHERS. ALL MEMBERS GET A CHANCE TO TALK, TO SAY WHAT'S ON THEIR MINDS, EXPRESS FEELINGS, AND MAKE REQUESTS.

EXPECT CONFLICT

CONFLICT SHOULD BE EXPECTED. IT IS A WAY OF FINDING THE BEST SOLUTION TO A PROBLEM SOMEONE HAS BROUGHT UP. EVERYONE WON'T AGREE ALL THE TIME BUT BY DISCUSSING THE ALTERNATIVES AN AGREEMENT CAN BE REACHED.

SEEK AGREEMENT

ONE REASON FOR A FAMILY COUNCIL IS TO SEEK AGREEMENT. IN SEEKING AGREEMENT A PARENT NEEDS TO AVOID DOMINATING AND USING POWER. INSTEAD PARENTS MUST TRY TO AGREE ON A SOLUTION THAT EVERYONE IS WILLING TO USE.



Below are examples of the ground rules for setting up a family council. Match the examples on the right with the rule on the left by writing the number of the example next to the rule to which it belongs.

<u>Rule</u>	<u>Example</u>
"No Boss" _____	1. "We're going to take a trip this weekend. Someone suggested the beach, someone else suggested the lake. Which shall it be."
Listen _____	2. "O.K. we've heard what you think, Jimmy. Would you like to comment Ann?"
Expect Conflict _____	3. "Children, "im not going to tell you what to do. We're all equal members in this council."
	4. "I know you've been planning a vacation and you probably won't like my saying this but I think we should stay home."

(The answers are: No Boss = 3; Listen = 2; Conflict = 4; and Agreement = 1.)

BENEFIT . ACTION STEPS . FAMILY COUNCIL
--

THE PROCEDURE OUTLINED IN THE FIVE ACTION STEPS AND THE USE OF THE FAMILY COUNCIL WILL NOT COMPLETELY SOLVE ALL PROBLEMS. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT WILL PROVIDE A NUMBER OF BENEFITS.

TIME

AN IMPORTANT BENEFIT MAY BE AN IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF TIME THAT HUSBANDS AND WIVES SPEND TOGETHER, AS WELL AS INCREASED TIME THEY MAY SPEND ALONE TO PURSUE THEIR OWN PERSONAL GOALS. ANOTHER IMPORTANT BENEFIT IS THAT THE FAMILY AS A WHOLE WILL BE MENTALLY HEALTHIER.

ENERGY FOCUS

THIS IS BECAUSE THE FAMILY WILL BEGIN TO FOCUS ITS ENERGY ON PROBLEM-SOLVING AND IMPROVING EVERYONE'S QUALITY OF LIFE RATHER THAN WASTING ITS ENERGY ON INDIVIDUAL PLANNING, BLAMING OTHERS, AND UNNECESSARY FAMILY CONFLICT.

TEAMWORK

THE FAMILY WILL BEGIN TO USE MORE TEAMWORK. TO THE DEGREE POSSIBLE, FAMILY MEMBERS MAY SHARE IN THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PERFORMING FAMILY CHORES AND PROVIDING NECESSARY CARE FOR THE HANDICAPPED CHILD. NO ONE FAMILY MEMBER IS FORCED TO CARRY THE WHOLE LOAD.

FREEDOM

FAMILY MEMBERS WILL BEGIN TO ACHIEVE SOME SENSE OF FREEDOM TO FULFILL THEIR OWN NEEDS WHILE ALSO FULFILLING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE FAMILY.

TURN OUTWARD

AND FINALLY, THE FAMILY MAY ESTABLISH NORMAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS. BY ACTING AS "MODELS" THE BALANCED FAMILY BEGINS TO SERVE AS EXAMPLES FOR OUTSIDERS TO FOLLOW IN INTERACTING WITH THEIR FAMILY.



Below is a list of examples which describe the benefits of a balanced family. You are to select the example which fits the benefit listed on the left and write the number on the line next to that benefit.

<u>Benefits</u>	<u>Examples</u>
Time _____	1. "Since I can't mow the lawn until I'm feeling better, I really appreciate you kids taking over for me. With Howard mowing and Ann edging the work will get done pretty fast."
Energy Focus _____	2. "Suzy, I'm proud of the way you and your sister decided to do something about your room instead of fighting about who keeps the room so messy."
Teamwork _____	3. "It's been a long time since we had anyone over. Why not invite the Smith's and their kids for barbecue Sunday? I think we'll all enjoy it."
Freedom _____	4. "Sweetheart, now that we've got a better schedule for doing the work around the house, I think we'll be able to go to the movies this weekend."
Turn Outward _____	5. "Since you don't mind helping me out with the kids on Saturday, I think I'd enjoy taking tennis lessons in the morning. I've always wanted to learn to play tennis."

(The example for Time is 4; Energy focus - 2; Teamwork - 1; Freedom - 5; and Turn Outward - 3.)

"SUZIE COMES FIRST"

THIS EXERCISE WILL PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT A HANDICAP CENTERED FAMILY.

Suzie is a handicapped child and her mother devotes almost all of her time doing for Suzie. Her every thought is for Suzie and there is no limit to what she will do for her. If there is a choice between doing something for Suzie or one of the other children, Suzie comes first.

Suzie's father is excluded from the "club" Suzie and her mother seem to have. Suzie's mother has little time for Suzie's father and when they do something together, Suzie is always along. They rarely talk to each other anymore and if the father questions how much she is doing for Suzie, the mother treats him like he is a traitor.

The whole household is tense. The two older children seem resentful. They don't bring their friends home anymore. The situation is getting to the point that mother cooks only what Suzie likes even when everyone else hates it. Suzie demands her way and is often rude to her father, brother and sister. Her mother always lets Suzie do as she pleases, and when anyone complains or says something to Suzie, mother gets irate.

In order to understand the extent of imbalance in this family, try to answer the following questions.

1. What possible self-motives does Suzie's mother have?

2. What long term effects will such a home situation have on Suzie?

3. If this situation continues, what would you expect for this family within a couple of years?

(The answers appear on the next page.)

ANSWERS

1. Parents such as this mother have many possible self-motives:
 - . They could be using this situation to gain control of their child, family or husband.
 - . They may have experienced a great deal of guilt and assumed this Martyr style in order to make themselves feel better.
 - . Such parents may be trying to avoid their responsibilities to the rest of their families.

2. Such a home situation could have several long range effects on Suzie:
 - . She could become extremely self-centered.
 - . She will fail to develop maturity and may become totally dependent.
 - . Suzie will become the real controlling factor in the family.
 - . She will fail to grow or develop good social skills.
 - . Suzie will have little motivation for self-development.

3. If such a situation were to continue, some or all of the following could happen to the family:
 - . Dad will spend more and more time away from home.
 - . Dad could easily find someone else.
 - . The other children will resent Suzie.
 - . The other children will try to leave home as soon as possible.
 - . The parents would seek a divorce.