new technologies into old ways of working.[1] Learn from others' experience and then apply it to your own environment.

- Agencies that are not online yet should prepare to get connected soon. The option for networking internally and externally will soon become a requirement, and all will need their own Web sites so the rest of the world can find them.
- Prepare for unimaginable surprises. Our thinking has been linear, but is now becoming more collaborative and interactive in every area of our work. Computers and the Internet open up new ways to create community and to provide social services for clients that would have been unthinkable to previous generations.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Last year, for the first time in human history, the number of e-mail letters surpassed the number of conventional "snail mail" letters. Now, all of the messages sent on Mother's Day in America can be transmitted in one second through a fiber-optic thread the size of a hair.

At the same time, we sense that something is terribly wrong. A malaise has set in, probably because we also now realize that all the science and all the computers in the world will not help us solve the very human problems that individuals and families face.

This realization opens up enormous opportunities for family service agencies such as ours to become even stronger and more useful. Toward this end, technology becomes a tool of empowerment, enabling us to magnify our considerable strengths, to work better together, and to care for the children, families, and elderly of our communities in exciting and more effective ways.

To survive and thrive, our agencies are gradually changing how we do business, and we will have to change even faster. Because in this new superhighway world, any institution that does not make dust will have to eat it.

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[1]Our thinking on these issues has been influenced by Donna Hoffman and Thomas Novak, Co-Directors, "Project 2000," Vanderbilt University.

II. FROM THE TRENCHES

RECEPTION AND RESETTLEMENT SERVICES IN THE JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE AGENCY

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Although resettlement and acculturation services may seem out of the mainstream of Jewish Family Service delivery systems, they indeed fit well into the historical mission of our agencies. Resettlement work combines the basic principles of family social work with the intrinsic values of the Jewish community.

In 1975, I was sitting in my living room listening to the radio, when I heard that the Jewish, Catholic, and Lutheran agencies in Chicago were about to begin resettling refugees from Indochina. As a worker at Jewish Family and Community Services (JFCS) downtown office, I thought, "I guess that means me." Sure enough, the next day I was assigned two Cambodian families, who, it turned out, had learned slightly less French in high school than I had.

At first, I worried about how to be helpful. I wasn't sure that my social work training was relevant. Gradually, however, I discovered that the basic fundamentals of casework practice were, in fact, applicable.

It made perfect sense to me that I, as a social worker in a Jewish family service agency, should be asked to use my knowledge and skills to help people fleeing a holocaust in Asia. The U. S. government had sought help from Jewish agencies because we had been resettling refugees from various parts of the globe for many years. Chicago JFCS had in fact been founded in 1859 specifically to help immigrants.

Just as it was appropriate to resettle Cambodians in the 1970s, today Jewish Family Service agencies are using their skills to help a range of people—not only the large numbers of Jews from the Former Soviet Union (FSU), but among others, Iranian Jews in California, Bosnian Muslims in Chicago, and Kurds in Baltimore. This article primarily addresses the resettlement of refugees from the Former Soviet Union, which has been a major focus of the work of many Jewish Family Service (JFS) agencies in North America for the past twenty-five years. It is based on a review of the literature, particularly articles that have appeared in this journal, and presentations at conferences on resettlement, as well as discussions with my colleagues, both down the hall and across the continent.

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT RESETTLEMENT ACTIVITY

According to the 1995 Statistical Abstracts of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) field services department, 113 large and small communities are involved in resettling refugees. In the vast majority of those communities, it is the JFS agency that carries the major responsibility for the day-to-day work: the case management, provision of financial assistance, acculturation, and basic supportive counseling. In small communities, JFS agencies also provide vocational services, English as a Second Language, and the full range of "wrap-around" services. In larger communities, other Jewish communal organizations, including Jewish Community Centers, day schools, synagogues, vocational services and of course, Federations, play important roles as well. But nationally, the family service agencies perform the early reception and placement functions.

For the last few years, approximately 85 percent of the new arrivals have gone to only twenty communities. New York, of course, is always at the top of the list and for years, resettled about half of the system's newcomers. Chicago lives up to its "Second City" nickname in the area of resettlement, having resettled the second largest number of newcomers since 1992. In fiscal year 1995, arrival numbers were as follows: New York, 12,857; Chicago, 1,600; San Francisco, 1,284; Los

Angeles, 1,021; Philadelphia, 844; and Boston, 650.

For all of the major resettlement sites, the number of arrivals in 1996 declined from the previous year. While the "Fourth Wave" (Galperin, 1996) of migration from the FSU seems to have crested, there are still many emigres coming, and our agencies are still very much involved and invested in helping them. Given the state of the world, we never know when or from where the next wave of refugees will come.

THE TRADITION OF RESETTLEMENT IN THE FAMILY SERVICE FIELD

The North American Jewish community is made up of immigrants and refugees from many parts of the world, and its JFS agencies were established to assist people in crisis, including the crisis of resettlement. As Milton Feinberg's letter to the editor in this *Journal's* Fall, 1996 issue reminds us, JFS agencies were helping newcomers well before there were organized national government programs, certainly before block grants, matching grants, reception and placement grants, and formal refugee cash assistance existed.

In the archives of the Chicago JFCS are torn yellow case record documents from the 1880s that describe clients like Simon, the peddler who had come from Kiev three years before and needed $10 for a week's food for his family; or Morris, the cigar maker from Germany, a secondary migrant who came to Chicago "to better his condition" after two years in New York. The records are fascinating reading. They are written in exquisite handwriting in brown and black ink, show both sensitivities we would applaud today and some vivid descriptive adjectives (e.g., "slovenly") that a supervisor would quickly question. Many of the requests were for financial assistance. After exploration, some were granted and some denied, as, for example, "the family is known to have brought some silver candlesticks and jewelry with them."

There are no two communities that resettle people in exactly the same way, and that is the art and the beauty of resettlement work. For example, JFS agencies use different staffing patterns to deliver resettlement services. At first, Indochinese and Soviet resettlement was done by regular casework staff, using whatever creative means they could think of to understand and communicate with their clients. As resettlement experience grew, the importance of having a bilingual, bicultural staff presence in our agencies came to be more appreciated. Some agencies, such as the New York Association for New Americans (NYANA) and Baltimore's Jewish Family Services, have used masters-level social workers as the primary resettlement staff and employed bilingual interpreters or case aides (Zicht, 1993). Others, like Chicago's JFCS, have hired bilingual resettlement workers with bachelor's degrees, preferably in social science areas, given them intensive supervision and training, and enabled them to work collaboratively with experienced social workers (Bukhman & DiRago, 1991).

In Chicago, many of our bilingual resettlement workers are former teachers who were trained in the FSU. They perform many functions similar to American social workers. Like the rest of our professional staff, our resettlement staff is supervised primarily in groups, which are led by an MSW supervisor. Some of the groups are made up only of resettlement staff, and others mix more experienced resettlement staff and "regular" agency MSWs. All bilingual staff attend agency seminars and other staff development programs.

Supervising resettlement workers who come from other cultures and other career paths requires a good deal of attention and skill (Dayron, 1980). At first, many bilingual paraprofessional staff viewed supervision as "wasting time"—sitting around and talking about things you already did. Teaching the value of reflection, self-determination, introspection, and the use of self to people from a "society of unfreedom" (Dublin, 1977) is a challenge. Just as we have learned that group education and therapy methods can be used with refugees (Kestnbaum & Bychkov, 1990), so have we learned that many of our usual group supervision methods provide wonderful opportunities for growth. Groups com-

prising both MSWs and experienced resettlement workers, although not always appreciated by the participants, do provide all members with new points of view and enrich their practice.

More recently, agencies have been able to find, or better yet, produce masters-level bilingual social workers. Some agencies have created scholarships, field placements, and innovative arrangements with graduate schools of social work to facilitate this process. The most elaborate of these training programs is at NYANA in New York. We need to continue to develop ways to assist family service professionals to combine language skills and first-hand knowledge of resettlement with "book learning."

THE ROLE OF AJFCA

Throughout its twenty-five year history, the Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies (AJFCA) has played an important role in facilitating both formal and informal means of sharing information. A committee, convened in October 1980, produced a valuable document that maintains its freshness to this day in describing "quality resettlement." In 1981, the committee asserted that "any refugee who requests services is entitled to the best, most professional services the agency is able to provide based on their status as members of the general Jewish community."

From 1989 to 1993, AJFCA published a monthly resettlement bulletin, the "AJFCA Resettlement, Acculturation and Integration Bulletin." Each issue contained descriptions of local agencies' service ideas and programs, listings of source materials available from community agencies, and reports on AJFCA surveys. The surveys, 86 of them in all, covered everything from "Staffing Patterns" to "Divorce Rates in the Emigre Community" and included such rumor-dispelling and practical information as which communities really did help refugees get cars and how, and who paid fees for circumcision ceremonies. By disseminating this information, AJFCA enabled resettlement workers in far-flung communities to build on the work of their colleagues.

AJFCA is also responsible for publishing and updating the list of resettlement coordinators' phone numbers. That list certainly has been one of my most valued resources. Over the years, I have called colleagues from Boston to California to discuss anticipated changes, compare programs, and give and receive support.

RESETTLEMENT AS A BASIC FAMILY SOCIAL WORK SERVICE

Resettlement work in a Jewish family agency requires the full range of basic social work concepts and skills, and then some. As large as the caseloads are—and, for the resettlement worker, they tend to be huge—it is the one person, one family at a time philosophical base at the heart of family social work that makes our resettlement efforts so successful. As Spaulding wrote in 1949, "We must remember that a refugee is equally an immigrant and an individual, not an immigrant first and only then an individual."

We address every new resettlement client with a fresh curiosity about the person, the family, and the history. We combine this curiosity with a wealth of knowledge about family systems, individual development, conscious and unconscious thought and feeling processes, cultural influences, and so forth. And, on a good day, all of those pieces come together as we work with the newcomer.

Delivering services in the context of a professional casework relationship is what distinguishes the resettlement work of Family Service agencies from that of other service providers. The relationship between the refugee and the worker has a special intensity that feels sometimes almost like "imprinting." The worker is a caring person, a professional, a representative of a bureaucratic agency, and maybe the first non-related "American" to whom the newcomer connects. Managing that relationship, being aware of its rational and irrational components and of the potentials for transference and countertransference developments, and setting appropriate limits while keeping the clients' needs primary are all sophisticated tasks.

"Starting where the client is" can be difficult when the worker's agenda is full of forms to fill out and instructions to give. All the directives are necessary, but may not be very comprehensible to a newcomer whose priorities for that first meeting are very different. Partializing the multitude of tasks helps the client accomplish small goals.

Making a multi-faceted psychosocial assessment of each family is crucial to the work (Halberstadt, 1996), as is factoring in the crisis of resettlement (Hulewat, 1981). Newcomers can appear much more pathological than they are. The trauma of being uprooted, the many losses that emigration brings (Fox, 1992), the high level of anxiety in new surroundings all can cause people to present themselves in an odd manner. We need always to be adding to the psychosocial assessment as new information emerges and people calm down (or don't). Coping skills may not be evident immediately, but we ought to assume they exist and will re-emerge.

While remembering that the newly arrived family often looks less able than it is, it is also important to be prepared to meet the appropriate dependency needs that arise during crisis periods. Family service agencies are sometimes accused of "coddling" newcomers, of expecting them to need a long time before going to work, for example. On the contrary, we see that it is important to assess and build on each family's strengths. We also find it crucial to provide enough support in the beginning so that the newcomer can feel safe, respected, and shored up and therefore able to move on at a faster pace. Expecting people to hit the ground running is unrealistic. A setback on arrival is normal, and a period of bewilderment and fear in the face of the new is healthy, not pathological. Being able to seek and accept help is a strength in such circumstances.

As social workers in a JFS agency, we must always pay attention to what it means to our clients to be Jewish. For refugees from the FSU, Jewish identity issues are both intense and varied (Zahler, 1989). The resettlement worker needs to understand the nature of each client's sense of Jewishness and the diversity of possible feelings about connecting to the American Jewish community. In this area as well as others, a nonjudgmental approach is required.

From our years of resettlement experience, we now know a good deal about stages and phases of resettlement (Dorf & Katlin, 1984). We know to anticipate a tough time for many families at about the six-month mark, a time when some of the early tasks of finding housing, learning basic English, and maybe even finding a job have been mastered. (The job tends to come later in today's economy.) At six months a kind of "Is that all there is?" depression tends to emerge. Bilingual staff members then need to be available to help clients understand what is happening and to offer counseling, a concept alien to many newcomers, to help them get through this difficult time. Ideally, the same worker who has helped with the initial resettlement tasks should be the counselor.

Sitting still and listening is a valuable social work technique. Sometimes that is hard for resettlement workers (or their supervisors) to remember. Respect for the process of the work, as well as attention to the content, is certainly important.

Self-determination and confidentiality are two related principles that social workers hold dear. At times, other members of the community and the refugees themselves may find these tenets confusing or contemptible. Frequently, the client asks the worker, "So which is the best...?" or "What job should I take?" or "What color telephone should I buy?" Teaching people from totalitarian societies about choices and options is part of the job, a hard part. Fielding questions about a particular refugee client asked by a well-meaning member of the community can be tricky. A refugee client is still a client and therefore is entitled to the same kind of protection of confidentiality that we provide to our other clients.

Family service professionals tend to be expert in understanding systems, and this knowledge has applications on many levels. On the individual level, it can be used to understand the dynamics of a newcomer family wherein, for example, the children learn English first, the mother changes her appear-

ance rapidly, and the father seems to age in front of your eyes. Each family member has separate needs and strengths. However, the worker must also address the family's needs together.

The impact of a resettlement program and population on the rest of the family service agency is a systems issue as well. The intensity of the initial service needs for newly arrived families may appear to drain all the resources, thinking, and caring from the rest of the client population and the rest of the staff as well. Systems knowledge is crucial, too, in understanding and working with the family of Federation agencies (Taft & Hirsch, 1981).

Certainly, the twists and turns inherent in resettlement work will continue into the future. We need to remain available to welcome emigres from the four corners of the earth when they need help. We need also to find creative ways of facilitating their return to our agencies when they experience other family crises after they are settled. Resettlement work in the JFS agency requires us to respond to constant changes in arrival flow, funding, overseas politics, government legislation, and community priorities. Often, we feel very little sense of control. Therefore, we must include in the work a systems approach, a long-range perspective, a sense of humor, and a lot of opportunity for "ventilation." The same social work principle of helping clients verbalize their fears and woes needs to be applied to our staff at all levels. We need to talk about the anxieties and frustrations of this work and to listen to each other when we talk. This is very hard work. We do it very well.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Recent conversations with Richard Dublin, Bert Goldberg, Martin Langer, Norm Levine, Joel Ollander, Harvey Paretsky, Dale Stahler, Lucy Steinitz, and Gayle Zahler proved invaluable in writing this article.

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A NEW LIFE
Reflections on Emigrating from the Former Soviet Union

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This is the story of our family's exodus from the Former Soviet Union (FSU) and our adaptation to a new life in Canada. I hope that it will help Jewish communal professionals understand better the problems that emigres from the FSU experience during their first few years in a new country.

There has always been a strong prejudice against the Jewish people in Russia. This old tradition carried over into the Soviet state and resulted in special problems for Jews, maintaining discrimination against them yet keeping them alive as a people, always there as potential scapegoats.

Growing up in Kishinev, my husband and I, along with our parents and grandparents, dreamed that one day our children would be able to learn the language of our ancestors, to pray, and to practice the Jewish religion openly, and because of G-d, that dream came true when we emigrated to Canada sixteen years ago. In Kishinev, which had approximately 100,000 Jews, there was only one synagogue. It was in a tiny, broken-down hut in a dangerous, dirty neighborhood, and only a few old men gathered there twice a day for prayers. Yet, we struggled to keep the traditions and light of *Yiddishkeit* alive.

My husband Isaac did have a *Bar Mitzvah*. One day his father secretly brought him a Russian transliteration of the prayers, *Sh'ma* and *brachot,* and asked him to learn them by heart. He also begged Isaac not to tell anybody in school or the neighborhood about this activity. If the Soviet authorities had found out about this "Zionist propaganda," Isaac's father would have faced imprisonment or, at the very least, lost his livelihood.

Isaac learned those prayers, and on his *Bar Mitzvah* morning, his father took him to *schul*. Only a few close relatives joined them in the synagogue. For the first time, Isaac was taught how to put on *tefillin*, and he was called to the Torah for an *aliyah*. After he returned to his seat, there were tears of joy and also of sorrow in his parents' eyes. They had brought along some vodka and sponge cake, and everyone participated in a celebration. From this experience, Isaac gained an indescribable feeling of belonging to the Jewish people, a feeling that has never left him.

Similarly, I vividly remember our wedding. We secretly gathered in Isaac's sister's home, and again only our close relatives came. And when our son was born, we faced the tremendous problem of finding a *mohel* to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *Brit Milah*, which again had to be performed in secrecy. Yet, we always managed to find some *matzoh* for *Pesach;* we fasted on *Yom Kippur* and tried to be as close to the synagogue as possible for the High Holidays, in a place where we couldn't be spotted by the KGB agents.

Practicing our Judaism was a never-ending struggle. Even as we finally left the FSU, one of the KGB border guards told us, "Don't think, you traitors, that we won't get you. Pretty soon we will be all over the globe and we will show you what freedom is all about."

By leaving the FSU, we had put our well-being, our careers, and even our lives on the line. Yet finally, on the evening of October 27, 1980, we arrived in Ottawa.

It is difficult enough to adjust to life in a new country when the place you came from has a similar political tradition; then you only have to struggle with matters of language, local habits and customs, and so forth. But when you also have to come to grips with great differences in political habits and culture, as was our case in coming from the tradition of oppression of the FSU, then the adjustments