

Jewish Family Services

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Up And Coming Events

NAME CHANGE: Beginning January 1, Jewish Social Services will officially become Jewish Family Services. This reflects the primary emphasis of our agency: providing counseling and social work services to Jews with an emphasis on the family system. Any family, where at least one member of the family is Jewish, qualifies for our services.

CONTRACT COUNSELORS: We are adding master level contract counselors to expand our counseling component. We will continue to serve seniors and the unemployed. But, this is a way of handling the many requests we are receiving for individual, marital, parent-child, and family counseling. All services continue on a sliding fee scale.

JEWISH FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION: Beginning in January, the Jewish Community Center and Jewish Family Services will be cosponsoring a series of workshops to be held at Shalom Park. (See page 11)

SUPPORT GROUPS: The Agency will be conducting support groups for the newly separated single, interfaith couples, the widowed and substance abusers.

Thoughts From Adrienne

By Adrienne Rosenberg
JFS Director

The tears were streaming down her face on the way to work, on the way home from work, and especially when no one else was around. She felt depressed, vulnerable, alone, scared, and unsure most of the time. Her self-confidence eroded; she found it hard to concentrate or sleep at nights. Yet, there were others who depended on her to make decisions and be in charge — her supervisees at work; her young children at home. But, no one could make it all right, though she was fortunate to have supportive friends and an understanding counselor from Jewish Family Services.

These feelings were the result of a traumatic separation from her husband of 15 years. They had recently moved from a small community to a larger one; both had acquired new jobs; the children had changed schools. All was new — and now the breakup of the marriage began. And with that, the "old" rules of coping did not apply anymore. It became the most desperate and traumatic time in this person's life. She never thought she could make it on her own; and she had liked being married and part of a couple.

Separations are often painful. No matter what the cause. Divorce, death, loss of a job, retirement, a move, children leaving home to be on their own — all can bring depression and anxiety as one adjusts

from the former way of living to the reality of the present situation. It is a process that can not be avoided, for the grieving that accompanies it is healthy. It is necessary to grieve to resolve the feelings evoked by the separation. This process frequently takes two years of adjustment as one struggles with "finding themselves".

Jewish Family Services will be offering support groups within the next few months. Many of these are aimed at providing a vehicle for people adjusting to separations in their lives: widowhood, separation and divorce, aging parents, a move to Charlotte. It is comforting to know that one is not alone when a person is experiencing a painful time in their lives — that others are going through similar situations. Thus, mutual support develops.

Counseling at such a pivotal place in one's life is also important. For that reason, trained professionals are hired by Jewish Family Services to help people during their ad-



justment periods — to know there is someone objective in the Jewish community to go to, where confidentiality is mandated, and who will be supportive.

The person referred to at the beginning of this article was myself four years ago. I am not the same person I was then. The adage "no pain, no gain" was certainly true in my case. But, the growth that occurred, and the renewed self-confidence at making it "on my own", was a slow, painful process. Just dating again was a new experience, as was learning to live as a single once more in a community mostly geared to married persons.

I am a living example that adjustment can be made with help and support. I'd rather the situation had not happened to me; but then again, I'm convinced I'd never have experienced the growth I have made otherwise.

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