

## Chapter One

### Introduction to the Study

In the spring of 1989, a 9-year-old boy was gunned down in the streets of a major city in The United States. The horror of this homicide was that both the victim and the assailant were children. During the 1980s this city, like most other large urban cities, was besieged by a growing number of violent acts: assaults, thefts, rapes, homicides, suicides, hate crimes, extortions, and destructions of property, but the murder of this young child became the catalyst which propelled specific action. In this case, a community educational organization called The Cottage Family and Child Care Center, which is the subject of this study, was created. Curcio and First (1993) write that "we can do more than just cope" in our "efforts to proactively defuse and prevent violence" (p. 50). As an antidote to growing violence in our schools and communities, they support the concept of community involvement and the relatively new notion of full-service schools (p. 35). School-linked services, full-service schools, or school community connections are terms which have been surfacing during the last decade and mean different things to people, depending upon their background and experience. While recognizing the semantic challenge that exists and the diversity of actual program designs represented by these terms, some commonality is beginning to surface in the literature. Adler (1994) identifies a number of common threads that weave through various definitions of school-linked or community-linked services: neighborhood accessibility, collaboration for holistic purposes, prevention rather than crises orientation, new systems, flexibility of funding, staff development, and system-wide changes (p. 1).

According to Kagan (1993), the roots of community responsiveness to those in need can be found as early as America's colonial period. With "the arrival of the first immigrants--a quarter of a million by 1700,"

many of whom were poor, uneducated, and unskilled for employment, an "embryonic social structure began to take shape" (p. 4). It was based on the English Poor Law of 1601, wherein towns provided for the indigent when families and relatives were unable. As the number of poor people grew and the community resources dwindled, towns turned to the colonial governments for support. Kagan states that, "As the numbers of transient and unemployed poor grew, so did the stigma attached to their dependency" (p. 4). The result of this shift, Kagan believes, is America's "ambivalence regarding the role of society in service to the poor" (p. 4).

According to Kagan (1993), from the earliest days of the new republic, the intentional duality of federal and state power created an unsettling dynamic where "champions for states rights clashed with champions of more centralized federal power, raising the issue of which level of government should be responsible in which ways for the indigent" (p. 5). The debate continued through the Civil War and World War I with the emergence of powerful private charities assuming responsibility for community need. The 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s after the Great Depression were years when the pendulum swung toward the Federalist side, as America was beginning to realize that the nonprofit sector and states could not manage alone in providing for those in need.

The civil rights movement, specifically fueled by legal protection guaranteed by *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, ushered in a new era for the poor and disadvantaged. Many social and educational programs of the "Great Society" in the sixties sought to address some of the inequities in our American citizenry through legislation and federal programs such as: the Community Mental Health Act (1963); the Economic Development and Training Act and food stamp legislation (1964); Title XIII (Medicare) and Title XIX (Medicaid); and Head Start legislation (1965). Kagan writes that "between 1962 and 1966 the number of federal categorical grant programs increased from 160 to 349, and by 1971 there were close to 500" (p. 15).

The intent of many of these programs was to "fight the war on poverty," but the reality was, chaos reigned. Elliot Richardson, former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), speaking of this growth of federal programs, said the rules and regulations were "highly prescriptive, restrictive, duplicative and conflicting" (Kagan, p. 29). In essence the system, despite good intentions, failed. As a result of this categorical approach of the 1960s, as well as a waning interest in the federal role in education and social service for subsequent administrations, dependency continued and families remained on welfare from generation to generation. It became a vicious cycle of poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment moving from parent to child to parent, each year of dependency robbing poor citizens of dignity and dreams and creating for the nation, as a whole, a system of support that was becoming increasingly unsuccessful.

Three decades later violent acts by and against children rivet our national attention. According to First and Curcio (1994), "Violent crimes by juveniles aged 10-17 years ballooned during the 1980s and still surge upward in the 1990s" (p. 450), and the problems of poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment remain. For example, according to the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) (1996), reporting on a recent study by the Luxembourg Income Study group, "The U.S. child poverty rate is highest among 18 industrialized countries. Yet American children in wealthy and middle-class families are far better off than their counterparts in those same nations" (p. 6). The Defense Fund also notes that "One out of four American children under the age of six is poor" (p. 2). Marion Wright Edelman, President of CDF, states that "Child poverty steals from all of us" in terms of future economic losses (1994, p. 3). Moreover, alarming figures from the Children's Defense Fund (1996) indicate that every day in America:

- \* 2,660 babies are born in to poverty.
- \* 100,000 children are homeless.
- \* 342 children under eighteen are arrested for violent crimes.
- \* 6,042 children are arrested.

- \* 135,000 children take guns to school.
- \* 3,398 babies are born to unmarried mothers.
- \* 2,833 children drop out of school. (p. 112)

According to the National Institute for Literacy (1997):

- \* More than 20 percent of adults read at or below the fifth-grade level--far below the level needed to earn a living wage.

- \* Adults with low literacy skills earn the least. As literacy skills improve, average weekly wages increase.

- \* Among adults with low literacy skills, 43 percent live in poverty and 17 percent receive food stamps. In contrast, among adults with strong literacy skills, fewer than five percent live in poverty and fewer than one percent receive food stamps.

- \* Children's literacy levels are strongly linked to the educational level of their parents, especially their mothers.

- \* Children of parents [who] are unemployed and have not completed high school are five times more likely to drop out than children of employed parents. (Fact Sheets)

Poverty and unemployment can be viewed as root causes of many educational and social problems as well (Adler, 1994).

In The State of America's Children-Yearbook 1996, produced by the CDF, mention is made that "every \$1 invested in high-quality early childhood programs like Head Start yields \$7 in lower special education costs and higher future productivity" (p. xviii).

### Statement of the Problem

Dryfoos (1994) writes that under the "big umbrella of full-service community-based programs, there is a bubbling up of private initiatives" (p. 14). How do these programs come into being, and what is the likelihood of their survival? According to Kimberly (1980), most organizational research focuses on change within existing organizations despite the birth and frequent demise of profit and nonprofit

organizations. The few leading academicians who have studied the creation of organizations (Kimberly, Miles, & Associates, 1980; Miles & Randolph, 1980; Pennings, 1980; Van de Ven, 1980) found a common thread of conceptualization running through the organizational life cycle (Kimberly et al., 1980). According to Van de Ven (1980), "The conditions under which an organization is born and the processes followed in its initial development have important consequences on its structure and performance in later life" (p. 87). Added to Van de Ven's theory is the fact that the life expectancy of new organizations is very short. From estimates provided by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Business Economics, Van de Ven reports that 54% of new businesses in America survive one and one half years or less.

It would be useful therefore to study in depth one private initiative involving the development of a community educational program. Being able to identify the key ingredients present in the evolution of an organization from idea to reality may help the "bubbling up" syndrome be more successful.

While this "bubbling up of private initiatives" which Dryfoos speaks of is occurring randomly and idiosyncratically in different community pockets, there is a noticeable policy shift in the United States from large federal government programs to smaller local initiatives. The pendulum is swinging back in favor of community involvement at schools, family resource centers, and settlement houses. Kagan, author of Integrating Services for Children and Families (1993), posits that there has been a change in attitudes of service integration for children and families since the 1970s and 1980s. She writes that during the 1970s, "Service integration efforts were profoundly optimistic in their intent and maintained their beliefs in the viability of government as a vehicle of social change" (p. 180). Today, Kagan theorizes there is "decreased optimism regarding the viability of social reform" (p. 180).

According to Kagan (1993), a change in focus is also noticeable today. In the past decades large systemic efforts were attempted, whereas the current

focus is "a client-based focus . . . agencies recognize the need to treat clients holistically and focus on the family rather than viewing single members in isolation" (p. 184).

Kagan (1993) also believes there is a change in locus. She writes, "A second major difference between service integration efforts of the 1970s and those of the present is that diminished optimism in general has been accompanied by diminished faith in the federal government as the sole catalyst for change" (p. 181). In discussing the change in locus, Kagan (1993) states that:

Recent efforts at service integration have far more of a local flavor, with impetus, planning, and support coming from the states, municipalities, the private sector, and professional organizations. Communities throughout America have launched local and state collaborative efforts--more than 350 in the early childhood domain alone. . . . No longer the absent player, the private sector has (recalling American history) become intimately involved in service integration efforts--sometimes as initiators and sometimes as funders (p. 181).

One such initiative, The Cottage Family and Child Care Center, exemplifies the shift in public perceptions regarding the government's effectiveness in addressing social problems, highlights the switch in focus, from individual to family needs, and illustrates a change in locus, from large federal government programs to smaller local responses to problems.

As Sarason, Zitnay, and Grossman (1971) posited in the creation of new "settings,"--a term they coined to describe any organization which could be as small as a marriage or as large as a university--development is more often driven by action than theory. The founders of The Cottage Family and Child Care Center were most likely not cognizant that they were part of a new paradigm shift in addressing social problems. All they knew was that children were committing crimes against children and something had to be done to stop the violence.

## The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe the evolution of a nonprofit corporation, The Cottage Family and Child Care Center, from its conceptual stage in 1989 through its institutional stage (or first two years of operation) in 1994 in order to identify the ingredients required to create and to sustain a viable educational organization. A qualitative case study method was used as the most appropriate approach to inquire into such research questions as:

1. What were the environmental conditions that necessitated the creation of a community parent and child care center?
2. What was the vision of the leaders?
3. In what way did diverse groups come together on this project, and why were they able to join forces and to work toward a common goal?
4. What were the major challenges along the continuum from conception to completion of two years of operation, and how were they handled?

In addressing these questions the study was guided by theories of Sarason, Van de Ven, and others writing on the organizational life cycle.

## The Significance of the Study

National attention is more and more focusing on the growing numbers of at-risk children and the challenge facing schools to educate these disadvantaged students effectively and efficiently. A number of policymakers, educators, and community activists are recognizing that the old ways of doing business are not working and that new solutions are required to reach these at-risk children.

This observable policy shift which both Dryfoos and Kagan speak of is bearing down on the nation, bringing with it pressure to succeed where other systems of change have failed, but offering little technical support. Sarason et al. (1971), writing about the creations of settings and his own experience

in creating The Yale Psycho-Educational Clinic and The New Haven Regional Center for the Mentally Retarded, stated:

Our training and background had in no way exposed us to the creation of setting as a practical or theoretical problem of any consequence. Second, neglect of the problem was apparently not peculiar to our own fields, but was general. For example, scouring the literature did not produce a single description of the creation of a setting that would meet those minimal criteria of description enabling one to feel secure that the thinking, actions and problems involved in such an undertaking had been communicated. A third factor, which not only entered our thinking but forever changed it was that the creation of a setting was a fantastically complex array of conceptual and personal problems not made any easier by the lack of experience and guidelines. The fourth factor was that an appreciation of the problem of the creation of a setting, particularly in the absence of adequate published description could be gained only by engaging in the world of action. One can fantasize a utopia and in the history of Western Civilization, these utopias had an impact. Utopias, however are notable for the fact that they are not concerned with how one creates them. (pp. 1-2)

A study of the creation and evolution of one setting, The Cottage, may be illuminating to theorists and practitioners alike who are interested in why and how some organizations come to be and are able to sustain their existence beyond the critical two-year survival period. The research should prove useful not only in organizational studies of single nonprofit organizations, but in studies of collaborative ventures.



## Definition of Terms

The following definitions are offered to provide clarity for this study.

### At-risk children.

There are various definitions of this term, (Children's Defense Fund, 1996; Dryfoos, 1991; Melaville & Blank, 1993) which include being born into poverty and highly stressful situations with limited access to food, adequate housing, physical safety, medical care, emotional and physical nurturing, and intellectual stimulation. According to Dryfoos (1991), research demonstrates that these at-risk children have behaviors which have been identified as "problem behavior syndrome," which means these children are at severe risk for growing into responsible, caring, and self-sufficient adults. They are likely to become involved with drugs, to drop out of school, to become parents prematurely, and to violate the law.

### Culture.

In sociological studies, according to The Random House College Dictionary (1988), culture is "the sum total of the ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another" (p. 325). According to Rubin and Rubin (1995), "Culture defines who is an insider and who is an outsider" (p. 171). In this study culture refers to the norms, behaviors, language, values, symbols, beliefs, and modus operandi of any group of people.

### Educational organization.

Organizations that are dedicated to education, "the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge and of developing the powers of reasoning and judgment" (The Random House College Dictionary, 1988, p. 420) can encompass a large variety of profit and nonprofit groups. Using this broad definition for this study, examples of educational organizations can include, but are not limited to: a child development center, an after-school or teen center (especially if it has tutorial or enrichment programs), a public,

charter, or private school, a parenting center, and a college or a university.

Full-service, community-based programs.

These programs are holistic in nature as opposed to being categorically driven and are often located in a community setting, such as a school, child development center, or after-school recreational center. They are generally family-centered and serve a variety of client needs. Frequently, these programs involve cooperative or collaborative programs, services, funding, and administration.

Private initiatives.

Individuals, groups, or corporations in the private sector at times begin programs by funding a study or pilot project as in the case of foundation initiatives such as the Robert Wood Johnson school health services or the Annie Casey New Futures (Dryfoos, 1991). Other private initiatives are begun by religious or association groups, grass-roots community clusters, or universities in response to a community need. Occasionally one person or a group of individuals inaugurate a program. Although private initiatives may address social, health, recreational, education, or employment needs and may get programs "off the ground," once they are viable, some become supported in part by public monies.

School.

In its broadest sense, according to The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (1969), school is defined as an "institution for the instruction of learning" (p. 1162). Traditionally, this has referred to a K-12 structure. Today, however, our student populations and educational programs do not fit this tidy and conservative configuration. Thus in this study, any program that is considered beyond mere custodial care will be considered an educational program and de facto a school.

### Settings.

This is Sarason's et al. (1971) term for any organizational unit that comes together for a sustained period of time for a specific purpose. Size is not a feature (indeed they state that marriage is a setting) nor is a physical structure. According to Sarason et al., "A new clinic, institution, business, university, school, department, program--in each of these and similar instances one is dealing with the creation of a new setting" (p. 1).

### Assumptions

It is assumed that educating and supporting the whole child effectively will increase the likelihood that the child will become a more economically self-sufficient adult and productive member of society which, in turn, will benefit the individual and the nation as a whole.

It is assumed that the at-risk population of children will remain a persistent challenge for America which will require action of some kind.

It is assumed that there will always be groups of policymakers and practitioners who are interested in one of society's perplexing problems--the balance of power and resources between the "haves" and the "have nots"--and are intent on exploring new solutions.

### Delimitations

This study is delimited to a single case study of one community educational organization, The Cottage Family and Child Care Center, which is located in the Liberty Heights section of a major city in the United States. The time frame of the study includes the pre-history of the specific setting as well as the planning, start-up, and operational phases of the nonprofit corporation through 1994.

## Limitations

Because this case study has focused on one organization in depth rather than manipulating a variable among and across many subjects, the outcome is different. The findings along the way have occasionally led the researcher in new directions, and the conclusions drawn or questions asked after the data were analyzed have pointed the way for other research studies in the future.

Furthermore, as this is ex post facto research, there is always the possibility of distortions due to bias or preconceived ideas of the interviewees and the researcher.

## Organization of the Study

Chapter One contains the introduction to the study. It identifies the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the basic assumptions, the definition of terms, the delimitations and limitations of the study, and the organization of the study.

Chapter Two presents a review of literature delineated by two strands. The first literature strand, organizational theory, specifically in terms of the life cycle theory, focuses on the conception and birth stages of an organization, including the role of the leader or leaders in emerging organizations. The second literature strand highlights nonprofit organizations and looks at their structure, role, and partnership in community service.

Chapter Three identifies the methodology used in the study. It includes the design and rationale, the overall strategy, a description of the site, population, and phenomenon studied, the researcher's role, data collection methods and management, and data analysis systems.

Chapter Four includes a presentation and analysis of data collected.

Chapter Five consists of conclusions, reflections, implications, and recommendations. It incorporates a discussion of findings based on the

research questions, reflections of findings including the role of the researcher and emerging theory development, implications of findings for future initiatives, and recommendations for further research.

## Chapter Two

### Review of Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of literature pertinent to the evolution of a nonprofit educational organization, specifically The Cottage Family and Child Care Center which is the subject of this dissertation. The fabric of this study is delineated by two major strands of literature:

1. Organizational theory, focusing on the conception and birth stages of an organization, including the art of leadership in emerging "settings" or organizations.

2. Nonprofit organizations, their structure, role, and partnership in community service.

#### Conception and Birth Stages of an Organization

The first strand of literature includes organizational theory, particularly the conception and birth stages of an organization, and helps focus attention on basic questions of how an organization comes into existence, how an organization moves from potency to act, from idea to reality. A subset of this strand of organizational theory encompasses looking at the role of the leader or leaders in emerging settings.

An organization's becoming is an elusive event occurring repeatedly throughout the world, yet without much attention or reflection given to the becoming process itself. The end result, a successful venture or the contrary, the early demise of an organization, tends to receive all the attention (Miles & Randolph, 1980; Sarason, 1972). This selective attention may be a mistake as Kimberly et al. (1980) pointed out, "What is really challenging for the field is the observation that organization birth--a phenomenon about which relatively little is known--may be an important constraint on later development . . . ." (p. 42).

In The Organizational Life Cycle, Kimberly et al. (1980) argued that much of contemporary organizational

theory and research is "static, ahistorical and arid and that redirection of the paradigms used by researchers may be helped along by thinking about organizations in life cycle terms" (p. 1). They posited that the application of the biological metaphor may not be perfect as metaphors are wont to be but can be useful in studying organizations in perhaps a more creative and invigorating manner. According to Kimberly et al., one reason for the lack of dynamic perspectives on organizations is the on-going academic debate between the disciplines of history and science concerning the true nature of research. They stated:

Organizational researchers, most of whom have been trained in disciplines of psychology or sociology, are usually socialized in the values of traditional science, which emphasize the importance of objectivity and empirical evidence. It also emphasizes the central role of verifiability and reproducibility and hence, leads researchers not to trust their own intuitions and judgments but instead to rely on the tools of science for explanation of the phenomena of interest. This often results in ahistorical perspectives on organizations and places a generally negative value on historical analysis and in-depth descriptive case studies. The effects of the widespread acceptance of traditional scientific values have been a positivistic bias in organizational research and more subtly, limitations on both the kinds of problems organizational researchers define as legitimate and on the accompanying research strategies. (p. 4-5)

Kimberly et al. used this more innovative life cycle approach while looking at the gestation and birth of an organization in a hands-on, albeit theoretical, study of a new medical school as did Sarason et al. earlier in a reflective study of the Yale Psycho-Educational Clinic, the New Haven Regional Center for the mentally retarded, and the Central Connecticut Regional Center (Kimberly et al., 1980; Sarason et al., 1971).

Acknowledging the complexity of the birth of an organization, Kimberly et al. (1980) limited their analysis to two salient features: (a) the environmental conditions and (b) the vision of the dean of the medical school. They believed that a number of environmental factors occurring in a specific time period had much to do with the creation of a medical school, but that alone would not explain its creation. Challenging Perrow's (1970) critique of the leadership approach to organization analysis, Kimberly et al. argued that the structural analysis Perrow favored was not adequate to explain newly formed organizations (p. 27). According to Kimberly et al., five leadership characteristics of the medical school dean help define the scope of the dean's influence on the new school.

First, he had a deep-rooted dissatisfaction with traditional forms of medical education and a very real commitment to the importance of developing new structures. Second, he was a risk-taker, willing to experiment with new ideas in an often uncritical fashion. Third, he was a man of action as opposed to a man of reflection and was given to making very quick decisions. Fourth, he was an idea man as opposed to a detail man, ready to paint scenarios for the future in very broad strokes, leaving his staff--often unprepared--to fill in the blanks. Finally, he was an optimist with very strong instincts for self-preservation and quickly learned the often intricate rules of survival in the highly political and politicized university environment. (pp. 27-28)

Kimberly et al. (1980) believed that stages of initiation, innovation, and institutionalization occur in emerging organizations and existing organizations, but the difference is that in newly forming organizations change happens as new identities, values, cultures, and systems are being developed.

Miles and Randolph (1980) wrote about the early stages of organizations and stated that despite the rise and fall of small firms, there are few studies on organizational creation, but those available show that the character and structure of an organization as



formed in the creation stage persist. They refer to this as "organizational imprinting" (p. 45). Organizational infancy, the stage of "getting off the ground," (a term they borrowed from Kimberly et al.) is "characterized by high uncertainty in decision making," according to Miles and Randolph (p. 46). There is much to do in this period, the tasks must be identified and assigned, roles and relationships must be solidified, systems for communication and operation must be developed, policies and procedures must be created, and above all, belief systems and goals, which will drive future actions, must be articulated and agreed upon (p. 46).

To gain a clearer understanding of how the structure and content of an emerging organization affects its success, Miles and Randolph (1980) created a simulated activity called "The Organizational Game" (p. 53). They concluded:

The most obvious implication of our simulation study is that organizations cannot be understood apart from their history. The initial organizing choices, along with the ability to amass enough power and trust to carry them out, set into motion processes that lead to different developmental patterns, belief systems, and outcomes even for organizations that began their existence with identical constraints and resources. (pp. 72-73)

Van de Ven (1980) was interested enough in the creation stage of organizations that in 1972 he conducted a longitudinal study of 14 early childhood development organizations which was initiated by the Office of Early Childhood Development, a state government agency in Texas. He studied the initial inception, the planning phase, and the early years of implementation in an attempt to measure and to explain the effect of planning on an organization's viability (p. 84).

According to Van de Ven, there are three basic approaches to the study of organizational creation: entrepreneurial, ecological, and behavioral. He stated:

Each approach has its own distinct strengths and weaknesses. The few researchers who are presently studying the creation of organizations tend to take one of the three approaches and simply dismiss the other two--and this researcher is no exception. Fortunately, the three approaches are or may become highly complementary, so that a synthesis of future research may come to yield a rich and comprehensive understanding of the creation of organizations. (p. 85)

The entrepreneurial approach, Van de Ven explained, focuses on the qualities and personalities of the leaders who founded the organization and formed its early character and structure. The ecological approach, on the other hand, is concerned with the organization's relationship to its environment. Van de Ven (1980) wrote that the ecological approach provides "important insights on the environmental conditions that are conducive to the creation of organizations. It won't, however, help those seeking information on how to start and successfully maintain an organization" (p. 87). Van de Ven said, "The ecological perspective emphasizes that it is the environment--not the motives, decisions, or behavior of individuals--that is the driving force that determines whether organizations will be created and, if so, which ones" (p. 87). It appears that Van de Ven appreciates the importance of the ecological condition in which an organization finds itself but also values the human component of decisions and behaviors which shape an organization's gestation and birth. In his writings he called for a "more balanced viewpoint on the relative importance of environmental conditions versus human choices and behaviors in shaping the structures and processes of new organizations" (p. 87).

The study of organizations through a behavioral lens looks at the behavior of leaders and managers of new organizations, rather than characteristics of leaders, as a way of describing an organization's viability and effectiveness. According to Van de Ven (1980), "It also focuses on the behavior of other interest groups and constituencies who come to have a

stake in the creation of the organization" (p. 87). In the policy and procedural study of demonstration child care projects which Van de Ven conducted, a behavioral approach was used. Like Kimberly et al. (1980) and Sarason (1972), Van de Ven believed that "the conditions under which an organization is born and the processes followed in its initial development have important consequences on its structure and performance in later life" (p. 87).

Van de Ven (1980) believed that in the behavioral approach two aspects of study were important: the time period defined within the creation stage, and the processes that went on within each key time period. For him, the creation stage of an organization begins with the initial inception, progresses to the planning and implementation stage, and ends in the institutional stage which he identifies as "usually two to three years after initial implementation" (p. 88). He believed that "organizational birth covers an extended period of time and the behavioral approach relies heavily on the literature related to organizational change and planning to conceptualize the processes that go on in the birth of organizations" (p. 88).

Van de Ven (1980) stated that many organizational theorists used ideas from Lewin's (1947) seminal work, "Frontiers in Group Dynamics," notably:

The three phase process of group and organizational change: unfreezing, (if necessary), moving, and refreezing. Unfreezing requires the entry of new forces, pressures, or tensions to move a social system to change, while refreezing requires establishing a new constant pattern of forces different from the initial pattern. (p. 88)

Although Lewin and the other organizational theorists who followed in his footsteps were concerned with change within an existing organization, Van de Ven found their planning models useful as "a starting point for conceptualizing developmental processes in organizational creation" (p. 88).

The Program Planning Model (PPM), developed by Van de Ven and others and later refined for use in the creation of new community human service organizations, divided activity into five phases.

Phase I: Planning Prerequisites starts with the identification and formulation of a policy planning group and begins to create specific steps toward an agreed upon goal.

Phase II: Problem Exploration involves information gathering from a variety of community sources to determine needs.

Phase III: Knowledge Exploration centers on identification of the problem while considering possible solutions. In this phase of activity, experts are consulted to insure that the problem priorities and alternate solutions are well thought out. The experts' reports are given to the policy board and other interest groups.

Phase IV: Program Design is crafted from previous work on problem identification and potential solutions as well as information garnered from community meetings, and it is presented as a proposal to the policy board.

Phase V: Program Implementation, Evaluation, and Operation commences with a pilot program which is subsequently evaluated to determine its effectiveness, efficiency, and acceptability to clients. Once corrections are made, the program is expanded and steps are taken to formalize and to routinize operations.

The central hypothesis of Van de Ven's study was that the planning process of a community service organization had much to do with the organization's success or failure within the first two years of operation. In addition, Van de Ven (1980) addressed the connection between "the planner and the doer," and felt that his research, as well as the research of others, confirmed that the closer the planners and the doers are merged, the more successful the program will be.

Despite a careful program planning process, Van de Ven (1980) stated that "all community projects encountered obstacles in implementing their programs"

(p. 116). He identified six kinds of implementation problems which occurred during the early life of the child care organizations he studied: staff recruitment, resistance or lack of support from other agencies or community people for the project, lack of resources or materials to initiate or to sustain the project, lack of clarity about goals or plans for the project, lack of understanding about implementation of goals, and staff resistance or complacency in reaching the project goals.

As important as Van de Ven (1980) found the initial planning process, he was careful to state that planning alone did not account for success or failure in implementation. He said it was "but one of the important contributing factors" (p. 128). Other obstacles encountered during the first two years of the newly created child care organizations varied in degree and kind, which Van de Ven (1980) described as structural and performance factors:

1. The child care organizations that initially attempted to implement their programs on a large-scale basis later experienced serious implementation barriers. In contrast, the programs that began small in size, in number of service sites, and in quantity of services encountered significantly fewer problems in later stages of implementing their child care organizations.
2. The structuring of formal rules, policies, and procedures in the early stages of implementation decreased obstacles and problems in later stages of implementing the child care organization.
3. The lower the level of employee education, the greater the obstacles subsequently encountered in implementing the child care organization. This result called into question the well-intentioned strategy of hiring individuals on welfare and training them to staff the child care center.
4. Overemphasis on service efficiency in the first year of implementation of the new programs had the negative consequence of increasing problems and decreasing performance in later stages of program implementation.

5. Symbolic of the painful stage of moving from dependence to independence, countervailing pressures were experienced by the child care organizations to become financially independent and at the same time to overcome implementation obstacles. The greater the obstacles experienced in the early stages of implementations, the more dependent the child care organizations remained on the state agency for funding. However, the more financially independent the child care organizations became, the greater the obstacles they subsequently encountered in later states of implementation. (p. 129)

Pennings (1980) contributed a chapter to The Organizational Life Cycle, entitled "Environmental Influences on The Creation Process," in which he wrote:

The creation of a new organization is one of the most salient moments of its life cycle.

Organization birth is salient not only because it is the starting point of that life cycle but also because it is an overriding factor in molding and constraining the organization's behavior during the subsequent stages of its life cycle. (p. 135)

Pennings also stated:

The initial stage entails a learning process that results in decision making patterns, an authority structure, and rules and procedures that are relatively permanent and evoke pressures toward organizational inertia. While organizations undergo modifications and display varying degrees of flexibility, they are cast at birth into a mold that is discernible in all the subsequent stages of their life cycle. (p. 136)

Pennings (1980) concurred with Van de Ven (1980) and wrote that, "The most important contributions on organizational birth do not come from organizational theory, but from the literature on entrepreneurship" (p. 136). In his study of newly forming organizations, Pennings was interested in "the urban-contextual factors that promote or inhibit organizational birth" (p. 137) and used an ecological lens to view the creation. In his research, Pennings made some

interesting distinctions between "new organizations that represent the first members of a new class or new population of organizations and new organizations that are joining an existing population" (p. 139). For Pennings, population meant some sameness in size, locale, or service. He also made a distinction between "newness and smallness" (p. 138) and posited that in studying a new organization, one must also refer to the focus pool to which it belongs in order to understand clearly its creation.

Pennings (1980) wrote:

Urban areas accommodate a community of organizational populations whose growth and decline can be traced to the environmental resourcefulness and to the characteristics of their overall organizations. There exists a territorial and functional division of labor within each area. It would then appear that urban areas are highly appropriate for studying organizational birth. (p. 139)

In studying organizational birth from an ecological viewpoint, Pennings looked at four important characteristics of urban environments: "the urban level" or "population density," including specific attributes of race, occupations, industrial output, location, and changes or trends; "the population level" or "size," including number of workers; "the resourcefulness" or "economic" state of a population including wage and tax rates and government incentives; and "the social resourcefulness" or "entrepreneurial climate" including such features as quality of life factors and educational level of the population. Pennings (1980) stated that "Urban size or population density is probably the most important predictor of organizational birthrates" (p. 145). Pennings also hypothesized that "urban differentiation is positively associated with organizational birthrates" (p. 147). Pennings explained this phenomenon by reasoning that in urban differentiation there exist cluster populations based on race, locale, and occupation, and the interactions between these clusters "create the roots for entrepreneurial behavior and for other

expressions of nonconventionality" (p. 147). While population size and density are important predictors of organization birth, resourcefulness, both economic and social, is critical as well. According to Pennings (1980):

It is obvious that birth levels are associated with the availability of wealth. Capital resources such as savings capital are crucial for economic advancement. Although entrepreneurs take risks when they start a new venture, the risks are often limited to the funds invested. . . . It appears that entrepreneurs often have to rely on such additional sources as kinship groups, friends, and wealthy individuals. (p. 156)

In looking at social resourcefulness, Pennings (1980) made a distinction between tangible and intangible resources. He wrote:

Intangible resourcefulness includes the "climate" of entrepreneurial spirit that may prevail in a particular urban-metropolitan region. . . . The supply of professional groups pertinent for certain types of new firms illustrates a tangible aspect of social resourcefulness. Naturally this supply could be labeled "economic" in that it indicates the availability of know-how as a production factor of new firms. I prefer to label it "social" in that such professional groups are often the source of novel ideas that initiate the start-up of new firms. (p. 157)

Pennings (1980) thought that:

Research ought to be undertaken to determine the validity of the hypothesis that these attributes are related to the level of entrepreneurial vigor of an urban-metropolitan area. The personal backgrounds of entrepreneurs, their achievement orientation, and other motivational aspects can be important, but they may be insignificant compared to the contextual area from which their new business firms emerge. (pp. 159-160)

Sarason (1972), a man of action, having been involved with the creation of settings such as the Yale Psycho-Educational Clinic and the New Haven Regional Center for the mentally retarded, and also a



reflective theorist, has contributed much to the literature of organizational birth. His personal experience led him to explore the creation of settings, not in a purely technical, "how to" manner, but in a broader, more philosophical way. He believed that despite the frequency of organizational births, there is no conceptual road map as there is in psychotherapy, for instance, to measure the individual against the norm, to determine what has gone astray. Sarason (1972) wrote:

Those who create settings have, of course, conceptions about what will be involved, but in the main they reduce to four factors: strength of motivation, values, personality, and power. These are as important as they are incomplete. What is missing and needed are conceptions which put these factors into a historical, sociological, and developmental or longitudinal context reflecting the supraindividual realities. . . . Creating a setting is as much an affair of the head as it is the heart. . . . (p .67)

When Sarason et al. (1971) wrote The Creation of a Community Setting, the problem to which they were seeking a solution, or at the very least hoping to shed some light upon, was "how people think, plan, and act when in the position of creating a new setting--when they are brought together in new relationships for sustained periods of time to accomplish stated objectives" (p. 1). Sarason et al. wrote:

What we were able to witness--in fact, what was almost impossible to avoid seeing--was the haphazard, unreflective way in which people generally engaged in the creation of their settings. It was not only that the process seemed so frequently to be a self-defeating one, but that early on awareness of problems tended to be explained away by placing blame on external factors, e.g. the "system," the stubbornness and perversity of individuals, and the weight of tradition. However understandable it might be, the fact remains that very few creators of settings seemed to entertain the possibility that

a good part of their problems may have resided in two related factors. The first was the implicit assumption that the creation of a setting was a "technical" problem which proceeded in steps: obtaining physical space, defining roles, hiring staff, hammering out a program, and beginning to deliver whatever one had to deliver. The frequent use of the word "deliver" or the phrase "the delivery of services" reflects well, we believe, the mechanical model guiding thinking. The setting or program was like a complicated machine and the task was "how to put the pieces together." The second factor (like the first rarely verbalized) was that the creators of settings seemed from the very beginning to underestimate the complexity of the task and to fail to anticipate problems, and only when disaster struck or when it became obvious that the setting would not obtain its goals, did self-scrutiny take place. Since our own experience in the creation of settings indicated that the first assumption was invalid and that the second source of problem was endemic (if only because the creation of settings had hardly been formulated as a problem, and one cannot deal well with a problem that one has not formulated), we looked sympathetically upon the experiences of others; at the same time, we could not react with other than discouragement as we witnessed many good ideas and programs founder. (pp. 2-3)

The issue of time played a part in Sarason's (1972) conceptual framework in creating settings. He stated that there is a "before-the-beginning phase" when founders confront history. This is an easier task to do when the new setting grows out of an existing organization or program. It is more difficult, however necessary, to do when the idea of a setting arises from "the mind of an individual (or even from those of a small group)" (p. 35). Even in these instances Sarason (1972) believed that creators needed to look to the past for relevant information, not only focusing on the obvious surface similarities, but probing deeper in an attempt to understand causality

and to limit, if possible, the number of problems facing creation of an organization (p. 36). Just as the creation of settings are tied inextricably to the past according to Sarason (1972), they are also "dominated by the future" (p. 61). He wrote that:

Once a setting "starts" all kinds of things begin to happen or have to be done. . . . Those who are creating the setting always have a timetable. It may have narrow or broad limits, but a timetable is always there and influences how activity in the present is perceived. (p. 61)

He entreated his readers to balance these conflicting pressures, saying, "When the present is dominated by concerns about future goals, remembering and confronting history become a luxury" (p. 65). This, in fact, is one hypothesis Sarason et al. (1971) developed in The Creation of a Community Setting, namely that, "The social soil in which an innovative setting is to develop and grow must already contain a fertilizing ingredient, however weak" (p. 9).

While acknowledging the importance of a historical perspective when creating new settings or organizations (as did Kimberly et al., 1980; Miles & Randolph, 1980; Van de Ven, 1980), Sarason et al. (1971) also believed that future success or viability of a new setting depended upon the creators asking important and basic philosophical, rather than technical questions, such as:

How those who are part of it (a setting) want to live with one another and how does the answer to the first question affect how the setting wants to live with the larger community in which it is embedded. (p. 93)

For Sarason et al., the key word is "want." They speculated that despite the way most organizations are created, there are commonalities of thought among those who are involved as to how they want to be part of the setting and how the setting should function. To avoid what Sarason et al. (1971) called "organizational craziness," they encouraged creators to confront these basic questions (p. 93). According to Sarason et al. (1971):

In a very basic sense, the creation of settings

is a form of constitutional writing in that it involves a clear statement of purposes, a spelling out of the rights and privileges of everyone, a description of the checks and balances that protect the rights of people as well as the larger organization, and the means by which the constitution can be amended to meet new problems and situations. Writing a constitution is a very self-conscious process, in the core of which is the knowledge that how people agree to live with each other, how well this agreement squares with the realities of social existence, and how well they can anticipate how these realities change will determine the degree to which purposes will be realized. (p. 93)

According to Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996), "Every act of organizing occurs around an identity. Every change occurs only if we identify with it" (p. 50). The identity of which Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers speak is probably the identity of the self, as well as the identity of the new force or organization. They further stated that, "The organizing tendency of life is always a creative act. We reach out to others to create a new being. We reach out to grow the world new possibilities" (p. 56). Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers wrote, "We organize to make our lives more purposeful. We organize always to affirm and enrich our identities" (p. 56). Sarason et al. (1971) spoke of the "organizational craziness" that could occur if creators failed to ask the important philosophical questions or *raison d'être*. Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) have similar questions for creators to ask such as, "What are we trying to be? What's possible now? How can the world be different because of us?" (p. 59). For Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers, these core questions are the driving force of organizational creation and eventual viability. They wrote:

We need to become intrigued by how we create a clear and coherent identity, a self that we can organize around. . . . In organizations, as in people, identity has many dimensions. Each illuminates some aspect of who the organization

is. Identity includes such dimensions as history, values, actions, core beliefs, competencies, principles, purpose, mission. None of these alone tells us who the organization is. Some are statements about who it would like to be. Some are revealing of who it really is. But together they tell the story of a self and its sojourn in a world it has created.

Identity is the source of organization. Every organization is an identity in motion, moving through the world, trying to make a difference. Therefore, the most important work we can do at the beginning of an organizing effort is to engage one another in exploring our purpose. We need to explore why we have come together. How does the purpose of this effort connect with the organization? Does it connect to our individual hopes and desires? (p. 58)

Sarason et al. (1971) believed that there was most likely a common thread of organizational intent and personal goals among creators which could be defined through a kind of constitutional writing approach. Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) warned of conflicting messages and goals and asked, "How do we know what is important to the organization? Which identity should we honor? Which should we ignore? Organizations with multiple personality disorders confuse us with their incoherence" (p. 60). According to Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers:

Whether we are beginning a relationship, a team, a community organizing effort, or a global corporation, we need together to be asking: What are we trying to be? What's possible now? How can the world be different because of us?" (p. 59)

In the movement from potency to act, from idea to creation, Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) viewed the becoming as more of a natural unfolding than as a process which required careful planning as Van de Ven (1980) envisioned. For Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers, being willing to take risks, to explore newness, is what matters. They stated:

Every act of organizing is an experiment. We begin with desire, with a sense of purpose and

direction. But we enter the experience vulnerable, unprotected by the illusory cloak of prediction. We acknowledge that we don't know how this work will actually unfold. We discover what we are capable of as we go along. We engage with others for the experiment. We are willing to commit to a system whose effectiveness cannot be seen until it is in motion.

Every act of organizing is an act of faith. We hope for things unseen which are true. (p. 74)

Although Sarason (1972) and Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) were concerned with the "supraindividual realities" (p. 67) when thinking about the creation of settings or organizations and urged creators to ask important philosophical questions regarding identity and causation, they looked for meaning in different ways. For Sarason (1972), the defining of purpose and eventual spelling out of rights and responsibilities in a constitutional writing mind set identified what creators wanted and how they agreed to work and to live together to that end. For Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996), the meaning could not be encapsulated in rights and responsibilities but was found in more fluid relationships. According to Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers:

Emergent evolution explains systems quite differently. Evolution occurs in many ways, but always from the desire to work out relationships for mutual coexistence. Locale by locale, individuals and groups figure out what works for them. They exchange information; they adapt to one another; they discover symbiosis. From their efforts, a system emerges with its own identity, its own characteristics. Once the system emerges, it can't be changed by analyzing its individual members or by singling them out for removal. We can't change a system by changing individuals. Systems are fluid relationships that we observe as rigid structures. They are webby, wandering, nonlinear messes. Because of their webbiness,

they are unknowable through traditional forms of analysis. How do we draw a dynamic process? A map can't capture its complex, coevolving, self-transcending relationships. How do we dissect a process? There are no parts to understand. (pp. 78-79)

There appears to be agreement among some theorists that creators of settings make a conscious decision to act, to pursue change, to initiate movement of some kind which causes an idea to become a reality. Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) wrote, "This world that we seek to control so carefully is a world we have created. We created it by what we chose to notice, by the images we used to describe what we were seeing" (p. 95). Sarason et al. (1971) spoke repeatedly about the "universe of alternatives" and stated, "One of the most frequent characteristics of the process of creating a setting is the failure or inability to list and examine the alternative ways one can think and act" (p. 59). According to Sarason et al.:

For any step in the growth of the setting, there is always a universe of alternatives which could be considered, but in practice there seems to be awareness only of a very constricted universe, and this is largely due to the weight of tradition, a pessimistic assessment of what others will allow, and the lack of an organizational vehicle devoted to a description of alternatives. The results are that virtues are made of presumed necessities, courage is not seen as a relevant characteristic, and imagination is viewed as a luxury relevant to some future world and not the present one. (pp. 91-92)

Goldenberg (1971), in writing about the creators of settings and their decisions to act, said, "They believe a new institution, agency or setting is needed to meet some need (old or new) that has been identified in the community or society. . . . The decision is born out of a combination of hope and frustration" (pp. 43-44).

According to Melaville and Blank (1993):

In some communities, a galvanizing community

event--the death of a child or a drive-by-shooting--unites different elements of the community. Local collaboratives can result from high-profile leadership, behind-the-scenes action by key education and human service administrators, or from the efforts of mid-level managers. (p. 23)

Garvin and Young (1994) cite one such example where, in the city of New Orleans, the mayor and the University of New Orleans came together in 1991 to focus on the role of the city government in improving city schools. Out of these discussions, with the leadership of the mayor providing an urgency and legitimacy, a collaborative effort was launched to link schools and social services in an effort to improve the lives of children.

Sarason et al. (1971) believed that no one embarks on creating a setting to replicate some existing program and wrote:

As Goldenberg (1971) has pointed out, one of the characteristics of these guiding ideas is that they are in some way or another a reaction against an existing state of affairs or traditions. . . . In fact, one can understand the high enthusiasm and sense of mission characterizing the earliest stages of setting creation only by recognizing not only that there is a relationship between excitement and the creative process, but also that the process is being powered by the desire to demonstrate that what will be will turn out to be better than what is. There is an element of competitiveness and superiority in the thinking and motivations of the creators of settings. (p. 23)

According to Heifetz (1994), there is a distinction between leadership and authority. For him, authority is conferred on a person or group to perform some activity, whereas leadership is getting people to tackle tough problems--problems that often require painful adjustment in their habits, attitudes, or values (p. 26). Heifetz cites the work of Ralph Abernathy and Martin Luther King and their march on Alabama as an example of leadership, a commitment to



act in the interests of change. Heifetz is careful to note, however, that the historical and important work done by these two men was in reality the collaborative efforts of many, thus debunking the "lonely at the top" or "lone ranger" leadership theory. The work Heifetz has done at the Kennedy School of Governance at Harvard University has been idiosyncratic and somewhat unique, coming at the issue of leadership from the worlds of psychiatry and classical music. He pointed out that most problems facing us today require adaptive, not technical solutions. Using musical analogies as a way to understand the distinction between authority and leadership, Heifetz contrasted the often used analogy of the orchestra conductor who has the clear line of authority to interpret the musical score with an improvisational jazz group. According to Heifetz (Lambert, 1995):

It's a different situation in organizations that have to construct new directions and authority structures--where they have to invent the score as the music is being played. A better model would be an improvisational jazz group. The musicians listen carefully to each other. Within stretches certain soloists stand out. There's latitude for surprises, and the interplay can generate inspiring moments of creativity. (p. 33)

DePree (1989) wrote that, "The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality" (p. 11). He (1992) also said, "A leader paves the way for change" (p. 99). These seemingly simple statements are inherently complex and echo Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers' (1996) theory of "choosing to notice," Goldenberg's (1971) notion of creators "reacting to an existing state and recognizing a need," and Heifetz's (1995) definition that leaders "tackle tough problems."

Sarason et al. (1971) wrote, "Utopias require among other things, controlled fantasy" (p. 2). In a similar vein, Kouzes and Posner (1987) said, "Leadership is disciplined passion" (p. xvii). For leaders of emerging organizations or creators of new settings who make the decision to act and to seek to motivate others to follow, the process, if it is to be

successful, must be marked by "controlled fantasy" and "disciplined passion."

### Nonprofit Corporations: Structure, Role, and Partnership in Community Service

The second major literature strand of this study deals with nonprofit corporations, their structure, role, and partnership in community service. The nonprofit sector, as many have observed (Dryfoos, 1994; Gies, Ott, & Shafritz, Eds., 1990; Hammack & Young, Eds., 1993; Kagan, 1993; Salamon, 1995), has been part of our American culture since its inception. Salamon (1995) wrote:

One hundred and fifty years ago, the Frenchman Alexis de Toqueville came to the United States to understand how democracy works. The most important prerequisite, he concluded, was a fundamental set of private associations, what we would now term a private nonprofit sector. (p. 268)

Filer (1975) wrote:

Association[s] dedicated to public improvement found fertile territory in the New World, a land colonized far from the reach of central governments, a vast land that did not lend itself well to strong central government of its own and in frontier areas was slow to adopt even minimal local governments. As historian Daniel Boorstin has observed, America evidenced a profound tendency to rely on voluntary, nongovernmental organizations and associations to pursue community purposes, "from the beginning." As this country was settled, he writes, "communities existed before governments were there to care for public needs." The result was that "voluntary collaborative activities" were set up first to provide basic social services. Government followed later on. (p. 83)

Despite the historical significance of nonprofit associations in America, little attention has been focused on their distinctive structure and substantive role in society until the last several decades or so

(Herman & Heimovics, 1991). According to Hodgkinson, Lyman and Associates (1989):

Since the mid-1970's, however, the efforts of the Commission on Private Philanthropy and Public Needs, . . . the establishment of the Program on Nonprofit Organizations at Yale (1977), the founding of INDEPENDENT SECTOR (1980), and the establishment of several academic centers focused on the study of the nonprofit sector and philanthropy have assisted in addressing major gaps in our knowledge about what this sector is and how it functions within the U.S. social and economic structures. (p. 3)

Hall (1994) stated that, "Nonprofit organizations comprise the newest and fastest growing category of organizations in America: the concept of charitable tax-exempt organizations as a unified and coherent 'sector' dates back little more than twenty years" (p. 3). Hodgkinson et al. (1989) believed:

Among the major obstacles preventing the development of an analytical framework for studying the roles and functions of this sector are the length of its traditions, the transformation over centuries of its roles and responsibilities to society, and the diversity of the kinds of institutions it encompasses. (p. 4)

In an attempt to understand nonprofit organizations, one needs to examine the various labels and kinds of associations under the umbrella of the nonprofit sector. It is a complex task to explain the term in a comprehensible, yet understandable manner. Indeed, Filer (1990) stated in the Report of The Commission on Private Philanthropy and Public Needs:

The sector as a whole is most broadly defined by what it is not. It is not government--that is, its component organizations do not command the full power and authority of government, although some may exercise powerful influence over their members and some may even perform certain functions of government. Educational accrediting organizations, for example exercise aspects of the governmental power of licensing. . . . On the

other hand, the third sector is not business. Its organizations do not exist to make profit, and those that enjoy tax immunities are specifically prohibited from doing so, although near the boundaries of the sector many groups do serve primarily the economic interests of their members. (p. 79)

Gies, Ott, and Shafritz (Eds., 1990) observed that the third sector exists today due to the inadequacy of the other two sectors. According to these editors of Essential Readings of The Nonprofit Organization:

Government (the first sector) provides public goods but only in categorical ways; the marketplace (the second sector) provides for exercise of individual choice but fails to provide public goods; the third sector lacks the coercive power of government and the driving self-interest of the marketplace but it provides for individual choice and it provides public goods. This rationale is a defect model, if you will; philanthropy works in many important situations because other ways fail. (p. vii)

The independent sector, the third sector, or the voluntary sector are all terms used to describe a diverse range of nonprofit organizations and institutions including, but not limited to religious organizations, private colleges and universities, youth organizations, hospitals, child care centers and senior citizen centers, and advocacy groups. These organizations are all defined as 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations under the federal tax code for tax-exempt organizations. According to Block (1990), the tax-exempt benefits to nonprofit organizations and the tax deduction credits given to contributors are an essential and evolving part of the nonprofit world.

An important distinction is made by Rubin (1990) between two segments of the nonprofit sector and their relationship to donors: donor contributions to charitable organizations, including those related to health, education, social service, religion, culture and science, are tax deductible, whereas donor contributions to commercial and membership

organizations, such as social clubs, fraternal organizations, labor unions, chamber of commerce, trade associations, and business leagues, are not tax deductible.

Block (1990) believed that the 1954 establishment of Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code had a significant impact upon the nonprofit world. In addition to the benefits of tax exemption to organizations and donors, it clarified the boundaries between the three sectors. According to Block:

For the first time, the nonprofit organization was subject to meeting two different types of tests to either qualify or maintain tax-exempt status of the 501(c)(3) organization--the organizational test and the operational test. First, the organizational test is one in which the organization's articles of incorporation and bylaws clearly limit the activities of the organization. . . . The second test, known as the operational test, is demonstrated by the organization's resources being primarily devoted to the activities that were outlined in the organizational test. Furthermore, the net earnings of the organization may not inure to the board of directors. Together, the operational and organizational tests provide quasi-guidelines concerning the administration of the nonprofit organization. (p. 60)

In addition to the distinctive purpose and tax status of nonprofit organizations, they have particular governance structures as well. As the 501(c)(3) code implies, nonprofit organizations become nonprofit corporations when they incorporate under the statutes that are specific to nonprofit organizations in their state of incorporation. According to Gies et al. (1990):

All states' statutes of nonprofit incorporation specify that the board of directors is the ultimate point of responsibility and accountability for the corporation. Some state statutes also define the specific responsibility of boards. The courts have also been active in

defining the basic responsibility of boards. For example, in the now famous Sibley Hospital case--officially, Stern v. Lucy Webb Hayes National Training School (381 F.Supp.1003 [D. DC, 1974])--the Federal District Court for the District of Columbia held (among other things) that nonprofit corporation trustees are responsible for active supervision of management and for overseeing the financial management of the nonprofit organization. (p. 177)

Gies et al. (1990) also state that, "By statute, a nonprofit organization's articles of incorporation and bylaws must specify the board composition, its responsibilities, and the rules and procedures under which the board of directors will govern the corporation" (p. 177).

Due to the unique structure of governance in nonprofit corporations and the potential for misunderstanding the difference between the board's responsibility for policy-making and the executive director's or C.E.O.'s job of managing the corporation, many nonprofit management texts spell out duties for trustees and directors. Axelrod (1994) wrote:

The majority of nonprofit boards are expected to carry out the following responsibilities:

1. To determine the organization's mission and purpose.
2. To select and support the chief executive.
3. To review the executive's performance.
4. To plan for the future.
5. To approve and monitor the organization's programs and services.
6. To provide sound financial management.
7. To enlist financial resources.
8. To advance the organization's public image.
9. To strengthen its own effectiveness as a board. (pp. 121-124)

The board of directors is essentially at the top of the hierarchical structure of nonprofit organizations, due to the legal and moral obligations of members to carry out the mission of the

organization as specified. The chief executive officer, however, who may or may not be a member ex officio of the board, must work hand in hand in a spirit of mutual trust in order for the organization to thrive. Ostrowski (1990) warned that the dangers of list making and generalizations about responsibilities present a somewhat static and homogeneous view of nonprofit corporations when, in fact, just the opposite is true. Nonprofit corporations differ in size, locale, service, and age.

Two other distinctive features of nonprofit corporations, namely the source of finances for services and the role of the volunteer, need to be discussed.

According to Salamon (1995), contrary to popular belief, most American nonprofit corporations do not receive the lion's share of their resources from individual donation, but from the government. Variations in funding patterns by service area and community exist to be sure; however, the rule of thumb generally applies. For example, in a 1982 analysis of funding, social service nonprofit corporations received 54% of revenues from government, 14% from fees, 27% from private giving, 3% from endowments and investments, and 2% from other sources (p. 64).

Salamon stated:

While the federal government finances most government human service programs and state and local governments do most of the administration, it is nonprofit organizations that actually deliver the preponderance of services. Despite the recent calls for "privatization" of human services, in other words, it appears that privatization has long been an established fact in the human service field. . . . In the typical community, government delivers just under two-fifths of the services it funds in these fields [the human service area]. The remaining three-fifths is contracted out to private nonprofit and for-profit organizations. Of this, just over two-fifths of total government spending in social welfare goes to nonprofits, and just under a fifth goes to for-profits. (p. 79)

The extensive use of volunteers is an additional distinguishing feature for the third sector. Helgesen (1990) wrote:

Peter Drucker maintains that the leader of a well-run nonprofit organization is likely to be more skilled than the CEO of a profit-centered business, because the nonprofit manager must rely upon volunteers, who will simply devote their time elsewhere if the organization seems troubled. (p. 71)

Dryfoos (1994), among others (Gies et al., 1990; Herman, Ed., 1994; Kagan, 1993), stressed the deep roots of volunteer activism and social service leadership in America by pointing out, for example, that social reformers in the Progressive Era, such as "journalist Jacob Rees and settlement workers Jane Adams and Lillian Wald urged the government to play a key role in the upgrading of the health of children and youth to eliminate handicaps to successful educational achievement" (p. 20). According to Drucker (1990):

With every second American adult serving as a volunteer in the nonprofit sector and spending at least three hours a week in nonprofit work, the nonprofits are America's largest "employer". But they also exemplify and fulfill the fundamental American commitment to responsible citizenship in the community. The nonprofit sector still represents about the same proportion of America's gross national product--2 to 3 percent--as it did forty years ago. But its meaning has changed profoundly. We now realize that it is central to the quality of life in America, central to citizenship, and indeed carries the values of American society and the American tradition. (p. xiii)

It appears that nonprofit organizations cannot be considered apart from the environment in which they function. Nonprofit organizations are "open systems" according to Herman and Heimivics (1991). They wrote, "More simply put, nonprofit organizations are part of a system of interacting components in which a change in one component affects others" (p. 24). The



components that they were speaking of are the nonprofits, the government, the marketplace, and the philanthropic community. Bryson and Crosby (1992) expanded this theme even further and in a dramatic stance declared:

We live in a world where no one is "in charge." No one organization or institution has the legitimacy, power, authority, or intelligence to act alone on important public issues and still make substantial headway against the problems that threaten us all. . . . Many organizations are involved, affected or have a partial responsibility to act, and the information necessary to address public issues is incomplete and unevenly distributed among the involved organizations. As a result, we live in a "shared-power world", a world in which organizations and institutions must share objectives, activities, resources, power or authority in order to achieve collective gains or minimize losses.

If we are to survive and prosper, and if our children and grandchildren--and their children and grandchildren--are to enjoy the benefits of our ability to make the world better, we must find ways to think and act more effectively in shared-power contexts. We must deepen our understanding of the interrelated phenomena of power, change, and leadership. (pp. xi-xii)

According to Hammack and Young (Eds., 1993), current study reflects that:

A simple three-part model of the economy in which business, government, and the nonprofit sector each have cleanly and separated and delineated roles, is simply naive. Rather, . . . the three sectors are highly interwoven and interdependent--all part of a single piece, rather than separate worlds existing side by side. (p. 399)

Speaking to graduate students in the Educational Administration Program at the Northern Virginia Center of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University during the spring of 1997, Paul Houston,

head of the American Association of School Administrators, stated that the two biggest problems facing our schools today are poverty and race. Dryfoos (1991), however, in addressing the crises our schools are facing in trying to educate the at-risk child stated, "A consensus is forming over the proposition that schools cannot do it alone . . . ." (p. 119). Schorr, Miller, and Fine (1986) wrote:

People who are knowledgeable about children and families, and the circumstances that cause them to flourish, must help in restoring to this nation's prevailing values a commitment to community, to shared responsibility, to caring for each other in both private and public settings, so that we may guide our children in directions that are promising for them as well as for the society that nurtures and is nurtured by them. (p. 255)

According to Kamerman and Kahn (1995), "The American mixed economy of social welfare has demonstrated the strengths of a public-private nonprofit mix, of the division of roles between Washington and the states . . ." (p. 182). In spite of the strengths of this partnership model, several dangers are possible from this mix as well. One is the potential for fragmentation of services as is evidenced in our past approach to social service and to educational needs through categorical programs (Adler, 1994). Another danger is the precarious nature of funding that most nonprofit corporations face daily. Massarsky (1994) wrote:

Nonprofit organizations want to, and must, continue their important work. Yet their survival is in the hands of funders--foundations, corporate giving officers, government agencies and individual givers. The typical nonprofit creates a host of programs in concert with its mission and then seeks grant monies to support them. When programs are fresh and innovative, the fund-raising task is easier. But as programs become more commonplace, regardless of their need and importance, the task gets more difficult. (p. 383)

Despite the financial instability for nonprofit organizations, or perhaps because of it, Herman (1994), in speculating about the future of nonprofit corporations, stated, "I take the position that the nonprofit sector and the communities that nonprofit organizations serve will benefit from greater cooperation among nonprofit organizations" (p. 623).

Other dangers of partnership among nonprofit associations themselves, and between public and private collaborative efforts, have been spelled out by many (Dryfoos, 1994; Epstein, 1995; Mawhinney, 1994; Melaville & Blank, 1993) and include: lack of a common language in addressing problems, insufficient time allocated to goal setting and to bonding experiences, professional training differences, resource constraints, limited leadership initiatives, ineffective management methods, communication gaps, and "turf" battles.

### Summary

Many of the major challenges facing the nation as we approach the year 2000 are child-centered--poverty, neighborhood violence, growing numbers of single parent families, and school failure among this at-risk population. A number of practitioners and policymakers have come to the conclusion that new solutions are required to solve these daunting problems--solutions that are collaborative, preventative, holistic, ecological, flexible, and unlike most approaches of the recent past (Adler, 1994).

Experimentation has begun in a number of communities in an attempt to address the needs of the at-risk child. This "bubbling up" of initiatives, as Dryfoos (1994) terms it, is encouraging; and although Mawhinney (1994) and others have reminded us that there is no single solution, no best approach, we need to examine existing models to see what works and why.

Examining the gestation, birth, and, "institutional stage" (Sarason et al., 1971; Van de Ven, 1980) of an organization and the art of leadership in an emerging setting helps clarify the

process of an organization's becoming and contributes to the theoretical understanding of how an idea becomes a reality. Looking at the nature of the nonprofit sector and considering the part it plays in an increasingly complex and interrelated core of social service and educational programs advances leadership initiatives and collaborative efforts on behalf of the at-risk child.

## Chapter Three

### Research Design

#### The General Methodological Approach

The purpose of this study was to describe the evolution of a nonprofit corporation from its conceptual stage through its institutional stage (or first two years of operation) in order to identify the ingredients required to create and to sustain a viable educational organization. The research method employed was an interpretive study of a single case, The Cottage Family and Child Care Center. According to Yin (1994), the case study method "allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events" and is especially useful in community psychology and sociology and organizational and management studies (p. 3). Answering the questions of "how" the organization studied came into existence and reflecting on "what" the necessary ingredients were to create and to sustain a community educational organization, seemed best examined by descriptive and exploratory strategies.

An interpretive case study by its very nature accepts the premise that there are multiple realities to consider. Unlike rationalism, which assumes that there is an objective reality to examine, or positivism, which proclaims the absolutism of quantitative data, the qualitative research approach acknowledges multiple realities and perspectives as a means to a more complete understanding of some phenomenon (Langenbach, 1994). According to Rubin and Rubin (1995), "A positivistic model extracts simple relationships from a complex and real world and frequently examines them as if time and context did not matter, and as if social life was stable rather than constantly changing" (p. 32). Rubin and Rubin also state that positivist social researchers believe that knowledge is "politically and socially neutral" (p. 32) and that "the Truth [sic] can be measured with statistical precision" (p. 33).

In qualitative interviewing, Rubin and Rubin support the interpretive approach where "meaning emerges through interaction" (p. 31). In this model, "Social research is not about categorizing and classifying, but figuring out what events mean, how people adapt, and how they view what has happened to them and around them. Interpretive social researchers emphasize the complexity of human life" (pp. 33-34). Rubin and Rubin also value much of the feminist critical social researchers' philosophy and write:

Like the feminists, we argue that interviewers should not dominate the interview relationship, and also like feminists we argue that the interviewers cannot be completely neutral, and need to consider their own beliefs, needs and interests as they work out questions and try to understand answers. (p. 38)

In studying one case, The Cottage Family and Child Care Center, and asking how an educational organization comes into being and what the necessary ingredients are to create a viable organization, the researcher cannot gather a neat bundle of facts and extrapolate meaning that will explain the evolution. Moreover, this study of the evolution of an organization from idea to reality, implies a process, a changing, a nonstatic existence which is not possible to measure in a positivistic manner. Counting and measuring which imply a fixed point in time would not answer the research questions in mind.

Creating an organization also means creating a culture. According to Lodahl and Mitchell (1980):

Bringing an organization into existence is an exercise in the creation and maintenance of meaning. . . . Founders must create symbols, language, myths and organizational structures, . . . they must move beyond the merely formal, rational planned, and utilitarian aspects of structure that make up the "girders and rivets" school of organizational design to deal with the vast institutional substrata into which all human organizations are born. (p. 186)

Schein (1992) posits that, "We simply cannot understand organizational phenomena without

considering culture as both a cause and as a way of explaining such phenomena" (p. 311).

Rubin and Rubin (1995) write that "Culture is created and evolves to solve shared problems" (p. 20).

According to Van Maanen and Barley (1985):

Culture can be understood as a set of solutions devised by a group of people to meet specific problems posed by situations they face in common. . . . This notion of culture as a living, historical product of group problem solving allows an approach to cultural study that is applicable to any group, be it a society, a neighborhood, a family, a dance band, or an organization and its segments. (p. 33)

Thus the researcher must examine the culture of the evolving organization in an attempt to answer the research questions. Information that is garnered from various sources and is grounded in multiple realities is by its very nature complex and abstract and cannot be gathered through "yes" and "no" answers. According to Marshall (1985, 1987), the strengths of qualitative research should be emphasized for particular kinds of research. She identifies a number of research types that are best served by qualitative inquiry. The following seem especially pertinent to this study:

- \* research that delves in-depth into complexities and processes
- \* research on little-known phenomena or innovative systems
- \* research on informal and unstructured linkages and processes in organizations
- \* research on real, as opposed to stated, organizational goals
- \* research that cannot be done experimentally for practical or ethical reasons. (p. 43)

Marshall and Rossman (1995) write that Zelditch (1962) theorized that "qualitative research should be judged on two criteria . . . informational adequacy . . . and efficiency" (p. 42). According to Zelditch, informational adequacy means the research strategy maximizes the chances of gathering pertinent information, enabling the researcher to answer the research question in a thoughtful manner. Efficiency

refers to design of data collecting and asks "does the plan allow for adequate data to be collected at the least cost in terms of time, access, and cost to participants" (p. 42).

The overall research strategy of using an interpretive case study to answer the questions of how an educational organization comes into being and what the necessary ingredients are to create and to sustain a community educational organization meets Zelditch's criteria of informational adequacy.

### Specific Procedures

Qualitative interviewing was the primary method for obtaining data in this study. According to Rubin and Rubin (1995), qualitative interviewing is "both an academic and practical tool. It allows us to share the world of others to find out what is going on, why people do what they do and how they understand their worlds" (p. 5). They also state that "to elicit in-depth answers about culture, meanings, processes and problems" (p. 5), the researcher must choose the specific kind of interviewing best suited to gathering data for the research questions in mind. In this study, the researcher sought a balance of structured and unstructured questions in conducting the long interviews. Using a focused or semistructured approach, the researcher introduced the topics under study and steered the conversation by asking in-depth questions pertinent to the problems identified. The following questions were asked to the founders of The Cottage:

1. Can you describe some of the environmental conditions in the city in 1989? What was happening that made you think something had to be done and that you had to be involved?

2. Did you think you had a solution to the problem? What was your vision?

3. When you look at these "before" and "after" photographs of The Cottage space, what words come to mind to describe the process from idea to reality?

4. How would you describe your role in the evolution of The Cottage? Did it change?



5. How do you think that the diverse groups were able to come together to work toward a common goal?

6. What were the major challenges along the way from the idea of a family and child care center, to the opening day, to the institutional stage of The Cottage, approximately two years later, and how were these challenges handled?

In addition to these main questions, a variety of probes were used to elicit information such as:

1. Steering probes, "Sorry, I distracted you with that question, you were talking about . . . ." (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 208).

2. Detail probes, "Who was involved? What did you do then?"

3. Sequence probes, "When did that happen? Do you think it was before or after . . . ?" (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 209).

4. Experience probes, "Can you describe the situation as you remember it?"

5. Evidence probes, "What do you mean when you said the start-up procedures were endless? Can you give me an example?"

6. Slant probes, "How did you feel facing the challenges during the evolution? Did you ever feel alienated?"

During the long interview it was necessary to ask some follow-up questions to insure that pertinent data was being collected:

1. Considering contradictory information, "Can you clarify this for me?"

2. Approaching sensitive issues, "Can you help me here, I'm a bit confused?"

3. Getting past pat answers, "I know this has been stated about The Cottage, but I would really like to hear your view."

### Research Population

Since this case study is primarily concerned with the evolution of an organization, especially in the gestation and birth stages of the life cycle, long interviews with the founders of the organization were conducted. According to McCracken (1988), in

qualitative research one is not concerned with a sample, but rather with cultural categories. He states that, "The issue is not one of generalizability. It is that of access" (p. 17). In selecting respondents, McCracken adheres to the Bauhaus philosophy of "less is more." He writes, "It is more important to work longer and with greater care, with a few people, than more superficially with many of them" (p. 17). Realizing that endorsing a relatively small "sample" causes quantitatively trained social scientists to have grave doubts, he states, "It is important to remember that this group is not chosen to represent some part of the larger world. It offers, instead, an opportunity to glimpse the complicated character, organization, and logic of culture" (p. 17).

In this study, the sample included five founders of the organization. There were two founders of The Cottage Family and Child Care Center who might be described as community activists, living somewhat inside the urban neighborhood culture, and three founders of the organization who could be labeled as experienced professionals, living outside the culture in suburban settings. The researcher is one of the outside professionals who interviewed the other four founders. In addition, the shadkhan or "marriage broker" who brought these two groups together and thus played a critical role in the evolution was interviewed as well.

The researcher acknowledges the dilemma of being both an insider and outsider in the study. Sarason's et al. (1971) The Creation of A Community Setting and Goldenberg's (1971) Build Me a Mountain: Youth, Poverty, and the Creation of New Settings are examples of effective insider-outsider studies which rather than being comprehensive histories of emerging organizations are focused inquiries based on theoretical questions. In both cases, Sarason and Goldenberg were creators of the organizations being studied as well as reflective investigators of the process.

One advantage of being an insider is that access to interviewees, which can be a problem (Marshall & Rossman, 1995; McCracken, 1988; Rubin & Rubin, 1995),

was less of an impediment. In this case access to founders--two community leaders, "encultured informants" as well as "elites," (Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Rubin & Rubin, 1995) with roots in the neighborhood, and three outside professional "elites" was facilitated by bonds of trust which took years to develop.

An additional advantage was that the researcher knew not only whom to interview but how to structure the interviews to obtain the data sought. Marshall and Rossman (1995) write that, "The value of the ethnographic interview lies in its focus on culture through the participant's perspective and through a first hand encounter" (p. 82). While the researcher was not a daily participant in the neighborhood culture as the two community activists were, the insider role afforded the interviewer a participation lens through which to view and to position the inquiry and data. Marshall and Rossman (1995) write that, "Observation is a fundamental and critical method in all qualitative inquiry: It is used to discover complex interactions in natural social settings" (p. 80). According to Hunter (1993), "The study of local community elites, and especially the concern with the structure or network of relationships among them and the local issues with which they are concerned, requires an intimate knowledge of the community context itself" (p. 152).

The insider role was also an advantage in structuring the interview with the other elites. Marshall and Rossman (1995) as well as Hunter (1993) posit that the information gathered from elites is apt to be valuable, complex, and comprehensive and requires special skills to obtain. Marshall and Rossman define elites as the "influential, the prominent, the well-informed people in an organization or community who are selected for interviews on the basis of their expertise in areas relevant to the research" (p. 83). According to Marshall and Rossman, "In working with elites, great demands are placed on the ability of the interviewer, who must establish competence by displaying a thorough knowledge of the topic . . ." (p. 84).

According to Rubin and Rubin (1995), the interviewer and the interviewees are "conversational partners" (p. 10) in the work being done. In this kind of research, the passivity required of the researcher in survey methods of data gathering is not present. The prior relationship of the interviewer and the informants in this case study was helpful for access and identification of key players and issues and also facilitated the flow of dialogue between the conversational partners. The disadvantage was that the researcher needed to be aware of personal bias in data gathering and analysis. Realizing this potential problem, the researcher sought to practice what Rubin and Rubin (1995) believe is the philosophy of qualitative interviewing, "Find out what others think and know, and avoid dominating your interviewees by imposing your world on them" (p. 5). Despite this caveat, Rubin and Rubin state that:

In qualitative interviewing, the researcher is not neutral, distant, or emotionally uninvolved. He or she forms a relationship with the interviewee and that relationship is likely to be involving. . . . The researcher is asking for a lot of openness from the interviewees; he or she is unlikely to get that openness by being closed and impersonal. (p. 12)

McCracken (1988), writing about the long interview, states, "The investigator serves as a kind of 'instrument' in the collection and analysis of data" (p. 18). He says that in the long interview:

It is necessary to listen not only with the tidiest and most precise of one's cognitive abilities, but also with the whole of one's experience. . . . This self-as-instrument process works most easily when it is used simply to search out a match in one's experience for ideas and actions that the respondent has described in the interviews. (p. 19)

In this study the researcher had an obvious match of experiences to construct a "bundle of templates to be held up against the data until parallels emerge" (McCracken, 1988, p. 19). The research methodology and data collecting system used in this study meets

Zelditch's (1962) criteria for informational efficiency in terms of "least cost in terms of time, access and cost to participants" (p. 42).

The researcher in this study also acted as a reflective practitioner thinking about the stages of formation in the organization, the creation of the culture, and the challenges along the way as the organization developed through the conception, birth, and early life periods. Schon (1987) believes that, "Competent professional practitioners often have the capacity to generate new knowing-in-action through reflection-in-action undertaken in the indeterminate zone of practice. The sources of knowing-in action include this reflection-in-action and are not limited to research produced by university-based professional schools" (p. 40).

Rubin and Rubin (1995) write:

Culture defines who is an insider and who is an outsider. It sets up boundaries between those who should and those who should not be taught the rules. . . . To help cross the boundaries, researchers can begin studies of culture with a period of participant observation. (p. 171)

In this study, participant observation had already been done prior to gathering data. From years of working with the various groups to be studied, the researcher brought a wealth of information, impressions, and observations about the "rules, norms and values" (Rubin & Rubin, 1995) of the culture (p. 168).

### Case Study

The organization which was studied, The Cottage Family and Child Care Center, is a nonprofit organization which provides child care and educational programs for parents and 50 children aged eight weeks to five years. Funding comes from sliding scale tuition, government grants, private foundations, and individual donations. The annual budget for 1993-94, when the center was operating at half enrollment, was \$196,000, of which \$154,824 went to salaries. Because of the required staff-child ratio (for example, 4-1

ratio in the infant room), the length of the school day and the number of weekdays the center is opened per year (all but 10 days), the average cost per child was \$7,850 per year. Actual tuition fees vary depending on the age of the child and the income of the parents. The Cottage is open Monday through Friday year-round from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Located in Liberty Heights, a multicultural neighborhood of a major United States city, The Cottage serves an international community comprised mostly of recent immigrants, many of them Latinos, and second- and third-generation African Americans. Ward I, which includes Liberty Heights, has the highest child poverty rate (42%) in the city.

Since the study focused on the evolution of the organization and looked at how an organization comes into being, the research consisted of long interviews with the primary founders of the organization. Many individuals and groups played a part in the organization's inception, but the five individuals who were interviewed in depth were the primary players in the conception, birth, and early life of The Cottage.

### Instrumentation

Collection of data in this study was obtained by interviewing the five founders at length. According to Rubin and Rubin (1995), "Qualitative interviewing is appropriate when the purpose of the research is to unravel complicated relationships and slowly evolving events. It is also suitable when you want to learn how present situations resulted from past decisions or incidents" (p. 51). This is exactly the topic and structure of this case study--looking at complex relationships and realities from 1989, when the idea of The Cottage Family and Child Care Center first became evident, until 1994, the end of what Van de Van (1980) calls "the institutionalization phase" (p. 88). According to Miles and Randolph (1980), "studies of organizational creation show that the character and structures of organizations formed in creation, persist"; they refer to this as "organizational imprinting" (p. 5). Using the qualitative method of

long interviewing, therefore, was most appropriate for looking at an existing organization (The Cottage) and its past in an attempt to determine how it came to be.

### Procedures For Collecting Data

The five individuals involved with the creation of The Cottage were interviewed during the summer of 1997. Four of the five live in the Washington, DC area, and the fifth lives in Florida and was interviewed by phone, so access, time, and cost to interviewees and interviewer were quite manageable. Since The Cottage is a nonprofit organization and all of the interviewees are either on the board of directors or the advisory board, there were no permissions needed from a higher authority. Each interview was scheduled in advance to accommodate summer vacation schedules.

A formalized questionnaire (Appendix A) and a series of main questions, probes, and follow-ups (Appendix B) were prepared which served two purposes in this study. First, the biographical information gathered at the beginning of the long interview positioned the respondent in a cultural setting. Second, following the biographical data, the important questions organized in a systematic way structured the long interview so that the "investigator ha[d] a rough travel itinerary with which to negotiate the interview" (p. 37), allowing for side trips along the way which the respondent at times initiated.

The interviews were conducted in large blocks of time. The respondents were informed of the time frame needed and were encouraged to plan for a three-hour interview session. Each of the five respondents took approximately three hours to interview. The interviews took place in the respondents' offices or, if this was not possible, in their homes. When the research questions were answered and no new information was forthcoming, the long interviews reached what Rubin and Rubin (1995) refer to as the "saturation" point and were concluded.

Before each interview session, the researcher read a standard ethics protocol to the respondent

which was signed by the respondent and kept by the interviewer. The interview sessions were recorded on tape (30 minutes per side) to preserve actual data gathered and to focus the interviewer's attention on questioning and prompting the respondent. Each respondent was identified by number, and the tapes were labeled with date, time, interviewer's name, interviewee's name, and sequence number. Tapes were stored in a locked file cabinet.

### Procedures for Analyzing and Organizing Data

A verbatim transcript of each interview was prepared by the researcher. In addition, a color coding system was employed to facilitate organization of data. Once this was done, the researcher followed a process suggested in the literature using (McCracken, 1988) five stages of data analysis. McCracken's system for organizing and analyzing data is structured in an a priori fashion with each stage "representing a higher level of generality" (p. 42). According to McCracken, the five stages of data analysis of a long qualitative interview are:

1. Examining utterance in isolation.
2. Comparing observation with the transcript to see if relationships exist.
3. Expanding observation to see if patterns emerge.
4. Identifying and ordering themes.
5. Reviewing themes and assembling a thesis (p. 43).

In this study the researcher first looked at utterances from the interviews per se, sifting out the significant from the perceived nonimportant data. The literature review served as a template in analyzing the data at this point as McCracken suggests (p. 45). The researcher resisted generalizing at this stage.

Second, the researcher expanded observation of the utterances, and key observations were compared to the transcript to see if relationships exist. At this stage the researcher "look[ed] for all logical relations, not only those of identity and similarity,



but those of opposition and contradiction as well" as McCracken advises (p. 45).

Third, the researcher began to compare observations previously noted and started to identify emerging patterns and themes.

Fourth, the researcher made decisions about the interrelationships of the themes previously identified. An ordering to themes emerged, and some lesser themes were discarded.

Fifth, the researcher reviewed the themes identified and assembled a thesis based on the a priori process. This theoretical stage was constructed from the analytical perspective of the researcher, not from the respondents' reports of reality.

### Validity and Reliability

If the work is valid, Rubin and Rubin (1995) write, "It closely reflects the world being described. If work is reliable, two researchers studying the same arena will come up with comparable observations" (p. 85). They continue:

Most indicators of validity and reliability do not fit qualitative research. Trying to apply these indicators to qualitative work distracts more than it clarifies. Instead, researchers judge the credibility of qualitative work by its transparency, consistency-coherence, and communicability; they design the interviewing to achieve these standards.

Transparency means that a reader of a qualitative research report is able to see the basic process of data collection. (p. 85)

To provide for transparency, this researcher kept in addition to tapes, interview notes, and transcripts, a log of how the interviews were conducted and how the data were collected and analyzed as well as a notebook containing a running file of ideas and steps in the research process. These records are available for review if requested by readers.

According to Rubin and Rubin (1995), consistency means that the researcher "checked out ideas and responses that appeared to be inconsistent" (p. 87).

While the researcher cannot rule out inconsistencies, they must be dealt with and the investigator must explain why one version rather than another is accepted. Coherence means the researcher "can offer explanations for why apparent contradictions in the themes occurred and what the contradictions mean" (p. 87). Communicability means that the researcher has communicated to the reader "what it means to be within the research arena" (p. 91).

McCracken (1988) warns that in an effort to judge quality, one should not be tempted to adapt quantitative research controls. He states that, "It is important to keep the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research visible and clear," and suggests that, "We should turn to the humanities and adopt their standards of interpretation of quality control" (p. 49).

## Chapter Four

### Presentation of Data

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe the evolution of a nonprofit corporation from its conceptual stage through its institutional stage (or first two years of operation) in order to identify the ingredients required to create and to sustain a viable educational organization.

#### Research Questions

1. What were the environmental conditions that necessitated the creation of a community parent and child care center?
2. What was the vision of the leaders?
3. In what way did diverse groups come together on this project, and why were they able to join forces and to work toward a common goal?
4. What were the major challenges along the continuum from conception to completion of two years of operation, and how were they handled?

#### Methodology

The researcher conducted long interviews with the five founders of The Cottage Family and Child Care Center as a primary method of collecting data for this study. Verbatim transcripts were prepared of each interview. With the exception of the researcher, who was one of the founders of the organization being studied, pseudonyms were used for names of specific people, places, and organizations to protect the interviewees and to provide anonymity for the settings and people discussed in the interviews. A color coding system was used to organize data. Besides the data collected in the interviews, each respondent completed a brief biological survey.

In addition to the data collected in the long interviews, the researcher used personal calendars, legal documents of The Cottage, newsletters of the organization, and "before" and "after" photographs of the site to prompt comments and to position the dialogue in a "supraindividual reality" (Sarason, 1972, p. 67).

### Organization of Data

Chapter Four is exhibited in layers. First, The Cottage, an educational community organization, is described as an individual "setting" (Sarason et al., 1971) and is positioned as well in a broader ecological framework (Pennings, 1980; Van de Ven, 1980).

Second, a report of the biographical data gathered from the respondents is included so that the reader can envision the founders in a cultural context.

Third, a chronology of the conception, birth, and early life of The Cottage is presented. The personal calendars (1989-1994) of the researcher who was also a participant-observer, publications of the organization during the period studied, formal papers of the organization (lease, incorporation, zoning, bylaws), and foundation proposals were used as secondary sources of data. These various sources of information help define the objective reality for this study of The Cottage's evolution or what Sarason (1972) called "the supraindividual realities" of the setting or organization (p. 67). The research data collected in the long interviews illustrate various points of view of the founders concerning the evolution of the organization and focus on the four research questions.

Fourth, this description of the early life cycle of the organization is looked at in light of the selected theories presented in the literature review:

1. Organizational theory--concentrating on the conception, gestation, and birth stages of an organization, including the art of leadership in emerging organizations.

2. Theories of nonprofit organizations--their structure, role, and partnership in community organizations.

The theories presented in Chapter Two serve as a template against which the evolution of The Cottage is viewed.

Finally, from the interviews, themes emerge, are identified, and discussed. By describing the milieu in which The Cottage is a part, relating the chronology, and submitting the data in a layered fashion, the intention is to present a complete gestalt of the organization and its evolution.

### The Setting

#### The Cottage.

The Cottage Family and Child Care Center is located in a low-income apartment building in the Liberty Heights neighborhood, a section of a major United States city. Among many residents in Liberty Heights, like many other poor communities across America, there is a cycle of poverty that feeds on lack of self-esteem and dependency. The residents of Liberty Heights rank in the bottom one fifth of mean household income in this nonaffluent state. Ward I that encompasses Liberty Heights has the highest child poverty rate (42%) in the state.

An independent survey in the late eighties of parents and children living in Liberty Heights presented findings consistent with national trends. The sample consisted of 57 respondents, all female, who had 100 children among them. Some significant findings were:

\* 68% of the households were headed by the mother without a man present; just under 30% of the children lived with both parents; one child lived with neither parent.

\* 37% of the mothers worked full time; 18% worked part time; two mothers were in school or in training; 42% were unemployed.

Liberty Heights is multiethnic. Approximately 60% of the residents are African American, 33% white

(predominantly Latino); the remaining are Asians, Native Americans, etc. The Cottage Family and Child Care Center is a licensed facility for 50 children aged eight weeks to 5 years or kindergarten age. It is accredited by the National Association of Education for Young Children (NAEYC). Although The Cottage is open to all residents of Liberty Heights, families who live in the eight low-income Covenant apartment buildings are given priority for admission whenever possible. Before a child is accepted, parents are required to be working full time, in school, or in a job training program. In addition, they must be willing to participate in parenting seminars and to contribute to the center in a volunteer capacity (approximately one hour a month). There is a sliding scale tuition, and employment records are examined twice a year to determine tuition fees for each family.

The Cottage provides an educational program appropriate for and tailored to each of the four age groups served--infant, toddler, preschool I, and preschool II. The program is based on child development principles espoused by NAEYC, among others, and research in the field of early education. Careful attention is given to the needs of the at-risk child. The growth and development of each child are regularly monitored to ensure that progress is being made physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially. There is a specially funded early intervention program that provides for Denver Developmental tests as well as speech, language, vision, and hearing screenings, dental exams, lead poison monitoring, and nutrition counseling. Various individuals and groups support the early intervention program. University nursing students provide medical education for everything from hand washing procedures to lead screenings. Graduate students in speech pathology administer periodic exams. Individual professionals donate time and services for dental check-ups for preschoolers, and others are called upon to consult with specific problems children may be presenting, such as sleep disturbances, failure to thrive, cleft palate, retardation, nutritional deficiencies, delayed motor

skills, oppositional behavior, or attentional problems.

Since its inception, The Cottage has had a strong literacy thrust with funds and volunteers committed to the program. There is a Read-a-Loud program where children are read to six times a day by parents, teachers, and volunteers in an attempt to bridge the gap for these at-risk children so they can begin kindergarten ready to begin formal reading instruction. A Gift Book program also exists whereby all children, even infants, are given a new book every month to take home supporting Reading Is Fundamental's (RIF) philosophy that book ownership is one key to success in school.

The Cottage, housed in the daylight basement level of The Ellington apartment building, has four classrooms, a kitchen, an office, a storage room, a faculty room that houses the library, and a staff bath room. In addition there is an on-site playground. The center is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. and is closed only 10 weekdays throughout the year. A director, assistant director, four classroom lead teachers, and six assistant teachers serve as the educational instructional team. There are also several Ayuda staff members (senior Latina women in a formal job training program) who are either on staff paid by The Cottage, to work in the kitchen and to serve as "floaters" in the classroom assisting at meal time and nap time, or who are in employment training and are funded by Ayuda. A part-time development director is on staff as well to solicit monies from foundations and individuals.

There are various outreach support programs at The Cottage. During the first two years of operation, The Cottage had a project called "The Baby-sitters Club." This club was designed for low-income girls aged 8-12 who lived in Liberty Heights. These young girls attended an eight-week training course to learn about caring for babies and young children. After successfully completing this course, the girls worked at the center and continued to receive additional education, mentoring, and a stipend. A volunteer group leader coordinated the entire year-long program. For

many of these girls, the education was in reality parent education. Two participants became parents several years after completing the program.

### Social service neighborhood network.

Although The Cottage Family and Child Care Center is a separate community educational organization registered as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, it, like many community organizations, does not operate in a vacuum. Its conception, gestation, birth, and early life have been intimately linked with other organizations and people. This study's focus on the founders of the organization and their roles in the conception and evolution of the setting does not in any way indicate that the creators were solely responsible for developing a new nonprofit organization or conducting business in a sterile environment. Indeed, the collaboration and cooperation--or lack thereof--of the various people and organizations in the milieu in which The Cottage was eventually to be born are part of the narration of this study. Moreover, in studying organizational creation, it is important to view the development of a specific organization through an ecological lens to discover, as Van de Ven (1980) posits, the environmental conditions that are favorable or unfavorable to creation.

Located in Liberty Heights, a multiethnic section of a major city in the United States, The Cottage is part of a diverse community of approximately 20,000 people. The very low-income citizens of Liberty Heights, be they street people or working poor, are supported by a network of community service groups. Many, but not all, of these volunteer groups are an outgrowth of an ecumenical community called The Church of The Redeemer that began in 1947. As time passed the fervor of this unique community spread; by 1976 the founding church had six small spin-off churches. The evolution of these churches was idiosyncratic; as the years went by, some churches dissolved while new ones were created.



The churches, all separately incorporated, are united by a call to commitment to serve the poor and oppressed. The term "church" may be too grand a word for these gatherings as the small groups meet in various locations, without concern for the place of worship. It is generally understood that each church is unique with its own leadership, budget, and council. People are free to move from church to church as they feel inclined. Each church or faith community has one or more mission groups it supports. The following list describes the nine faith groups currently in existence and the social service activities they support:

\* Hombres' House is located on a major street in Liberty Heights. This faith group focuses primarily on the needs of the homeless. Hombres' House, besides being a faith community, is a respite medical care facility for homeless men providing medical and social services, food services, shower facilities, a clothing bank, and program activities for a 34-bed infirmary. Hombres' House is an integral part of this low-income neighborhood. This church besides managing the medical care facility, sponsors A.A. meetings, provides housing, training, and community support for the physicians and volunteers in training, operates a mobile health care unit that serves the homeless living on grates, in parks, and in 11 city shelters, and manages a housing program, My Brother's Place, for residents who are well enough to leave Hombres' House.

\* Hosanna Church seeks to be a racially, culturally, and economically diverse ecumenical community. This group is interested in establishing new systems of economic justice. As a church they support other faith communities' mission groups, such as the Teen Center, the Job Mart, and Job's House, a community residence for persons with AIDS.

\* Covenant Church is a multicultural and economically diverse gathering of people who focus their energies on the immediate neighborhood of Liberty Heights. This group pays specific attention to the eight Covenant apartment buildings and addresses the particular needs of the senior citizens and children who are residents. The church supports

Martha's House, a community of senior citizens who live in 36 low-income apartments in an intergenerational building; The Ark, a program for school-age children with athletic, tutorial, and music classes for elementary students offered after school and during the summer; and The Teen Center with recreational, tutorial, scouting, and computer activities. The Covenant community also works in a hands-on way with an adopted second grade at the neighborhood public school, providing support to the teacher and the students on a weekly basis.

\* Evergreen Church is located in a nearby suburb. Although it does not directly deal with the citizens of the neighborhood on a regular basis, it does provide a site for summer outings for children and adults who are clients of other programs in the network. A major focus for the Evergreen Church is a retreat center that is open to members of sister churches, neighbors, strangers, and travelers.

\* Pacem Church is committed to building a just and caring society. Its various mission groups mirror the members' interest in helping the oppressed. Streetside Academy tutors adults and supports them in their efforts to become better educated. The Academy provides literacy classes and G.E.D. support. Champions for Children is a mission group that works on behalf of at-risk children living in the city. In general, the group seeks ways to advocate for all children. Specifically, each adult in this mission group works one-on-one with an at-risk child or special needs child. Pacem Church also has a mission group, La Casita, which was created to respond to the needs of Central American refugees especially in the areas of housing and employment. This church also operates The Grotto, a place for low-income expectant parents and families with young children. At The Grotto parents have a place to gather, to receive support in their parenting needs, and to obtain referrals for social service needs. The goal of The Grotto is the healthy development of parents and children.

\* Candlewood is a church community of people who seek to be recovered from the addictions of drugs,

alcohol, money, and power. They support other church communities' mission groups such as Gabriel's House, a single-room housing community for approximately 80 men and women who are in transition from being homeless to finding employment and permanent housing, and Naomi's House, a similar housing community for 45 men and women. They also sponsor Healers, which reaches out to victims of violence.

\* Commonweal Church endeavors to be a diverse community of worshipers. It places special emphasis on developing programs that support children and families. Its mission groups support the Streetside Academy after-school tutorial program for children and an outreach ministry to the housebound elderly. Comida, a nonprofit housing group that buys, renovates, and sells housing to low-income, first-time buyers is also a mission group of Commonweal.

\* The Annex Church is located in the heart of Liberty Heights. One of its mission groups, The Annex, a restaurant, gallery, bookshop, and meeting place for the neighborhood, offers employment for residents of the neighborhood and hospitality for all. In addition to The Annex mission group, this church supports AIDS efforts in the neighborhood, works with single mothers in the area, and provides a forum for peace and nonviolence efforts in Liberty Heights.

\* Alpha Church is interested in serving all segments of society in worship. Its mission groups include an artist group, a center for neglected and homeless children, and a respite center for families in need of immediate housing.

\* Providence Church is a worship community that reaches out to families with children and to other members who are often overlooked. This church supports the community efforts of other faith groups working with AIDS victims and literacy programs.

The Church of The Redeemer and its splinter churches have had an enormous influence on the lives of at-risk people in this city, especially those living in the Liberty Heights neighborhood. The citizens of this community, most of whom live at the poverty level, are supported by a network of related nonprofit social service programs. Dave Snyder, an

attorney who has served on many of the major nonprofit boards of the city and who was instrumental in getting the founders of The Cottage access to key foundations for start-up funding, has said that with the addition of The Cottage, The Church of The Redeemer and The Covenant Church in particular have provided support to the citizens of Liberty Heights from "cradle to grave."

Indeed, within this neighborhood there exists an employment center, a health care center, two residences for mentally challenged adults, a family and child care center for children two months to five years of age, an after-school program for elementary-age children with tutorial, music, and sports programs, a teen center, a residential center for people with AIDS, low-income housing for over 1,000 people in eight apartment buildings, a mailing business providing training and transitional work experience for people who want to enter the permanent work force, two residential houses for the homeless providing housing and support for the residents as they work their way toward self-sufficiency, a residential program for senior citizens, a health care program for the homeless on the street and a respite medical care facility for homeless men, an adult literacy center, a parenting and referral center for expectant parents and parents of young children, and a transitional mission for homeless recovering from addictions.

All of these programs serve the same population of this community but in different ways. Each program qualifies as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit group with its own agenda, goals, governing structure, and financial accountability. Many, but not all of these nonprofit groups, are offshoots of The Church of The Redeemer and its splinter churches. The nontraditional structure and values of these churches encourage small worship groups and equally small mission groups that address specific community needs. In the early days of The Church of The Redeemer as small groups began to multiply, it was the practice to give Christmas and Easter offerings to new groups that were being formed.

When mission groups became more solidified, they became economically independent.

Gregory Chapman, the charismatic, nontitular head of The Church of The Redeemer, comes from a family dedicated to prayer and to service. His father was a deacon in a Baptist church, and his mother was a member of a Presbyterian congregation. Gregory attended both churches as a child. He later became a street minister, a white preacher in a black congregation, and the founder of The Church of The Redeemer. Gregory's vision of small worship communities and proactive mission groups is a defining characteristic of this neighborhood's social service programs. The manageable scale of client population, the linkages with other nonprofit groups, and the common mission to serve at-risk individuals are distinctive features of the social service collaborative efforts in Liberty Heights. Despite a loosely linked service structure, this is a model of what Herman (1994) advocates for the future of nonprofit corporations when he stated, "I take the position that the nonprofit sector and the communities that nonprofit organizations serve will benefit from greater cooperation among nonprofit organizations" (p. 623). Gregory believes in autonomy for each social service group and states:

No matter how large a congregation--four or five thousand members--if kept under central authority, it will always be a very limited operation. The small group structure is threatening because it generates work for which we have no clear guidelines but, when you think about it, it is not nearly as threatening as a congregation with no shared responsibility and no shared life. (O'Connor, 1991, p. 44)

The size of each social, health, and educational program in this neighborhood network is relatively small. The names and faces of clients as well as providers are familiar to many in the community. Dryfoos (1991) has studied a variety of support programs that deal with educational, health, and life issues of at-risk populations. She states that there are "thousands of interventions in and out of schools

trying to change behaviors and improve life options for at-risk students" (p. 123). Although most of these programs have not been sufficiently evaluated, "More than one hundred programs were identified that could demonstrate results in preventing specific targeted behavior in different settings under various conditions" (p. 123). According to Dryfoos:

The most significant feature common to the whole array of successful prevention programs, including school remediation, was individual attention. This should not come as big news to anyone who has followed the ongoing youth at-risk dialogue, in which educators and service providers alike state and restate that children who have problems, need personal care. (p. 124)

Unlike the large federal governmental programs of the past, these small grass-roots programs in Liberty Heights that are examples of a shifting locus for educational and social service programs (Kagan, 1993) encourage individual attention to low-income citizens. In addition, the network of nonprofit groups and services in this neighborhood, however tenuous and difficult to define, promotes collaborative action.

It is likely that a person or a family participating in one education or social service program in Liberty Heights is known by several other mission groups or nonprofit organizations as the needs of the individual or family intersect. Melaville and Blank (1993) write in Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services:

Collaborative strategies are the key to system change. Cooperation, in which partners agree to work together to meet their individual goals without substantially changing the services they provide or the rules and regulations governing their institutions, is not enough. Collaborative strategies, in which partners share a vision, establish common goals, and agree to use their powers to achieve them are necessary; commitment of resources and willingness to alter existing policies are a vital part of such strategies. (p. 15)

Melaville and Blank (1993) define a collaborative as:

A group of community leaders who have agreed to be partners in addressing shared problems. The collaborative undertakes an initiative--a series of interrelated activities designed to solve these shared problems and create a new system of services for children and families. (p. 15)

Melaville and Blank's term "initiative" corresponds roughly to the term "call" used by members of The Church of The Redeemer. The scattered churches of The Church of The Redeemer, their mission groups, and the tangential community service programs, such as The Cottage Family and Child Care Center, are cooperative initiatives to be sure and in some very basic ways are collaborative ventures. Although each group or program is a separate nonprofit organization with a distinct agenda, the overarching "initiative" or "call" is to support the poor and oppressed in the city, most often in the Liberty Heights area. Occasionally funds, leadership, and facilities are intermingled regardless of individual programs and organizational structures.

The exact relationship of The Cottage to other groups in The Church of The Redeemer and its scattered churches and mission groups is almost impossible to grasp as will be illustrated in the narration and presentation of data that were collected in the long interviews. It is clear, however, that a relationship exists. Two of the founders of The Cottage were members of scattered churches and were employed by The Ark. The building where The Cottage is located is owned by Covenant Housing which charges \$10-a-year rental fee. Parents who live in Covenant apartments are given priority for enrollment in The Cottage. On the advisory board for The Cottage, there are three leaders of other social service groups in the neighborhood (the co-director of the school-age and teen program, the director of the health clinic, and the director of the respite care facility for homeless men). Moreover, in the initial stages of The Cottage's development, funds were donated from two community faith groups, a third group shared a mailing list of

names for solicitation purposes, and The Ark allowed The Cottage to piggyback on its nonprofit status so that The Cottage could begin raising funds while waiting for its own 501(c)(3) to materialize.

In the day-to-day workings of The Cottage, it is also obvious that a cooperative or collaborative arrangement exists between The Cottage and the other social service groups in Liberty Heights. During the first two years of operation of The Cottage, the following examples help demonstrate the interconnections of social service groups in the neighborhood:

- \* The Grotto, a nonprofit group that provides parent education for young immigrants, contacted The Cottage to request an emergency placement for Marisa, a 2-year-old who was at risk for physical abuse. The Cottage accepted the child, which helped relieve the stress on the parent, permitted the single mother to seek employment and to gain more financial security, and reduced the opportunities for physical abuse for the child.

- \* The Cottage and The Job Mart of Hosanna Church worked in tandem a number of times. The Job Mart provided training for Cottage parents while The Cottage employed Job Mart-trained workers.

- \* The Health Center which serves the citizens of Liberty Heights and Greenville is two blocks from The Cottage. This center provided medical training to The Cottage staff. The teachers, in return, frequently served as a responsible third party between The Cottage parents and the medical staff, seeing that medications were followed and appointments were kept.

- \* College-age volunteers who came from many states to The Market Place for training during the year frequently spent time working in The Cottage, an arrangement which was beneficial to both groups.

- \* The Cottage enrolled Danielle as an infant and supported her young single mom in making the transition from Gabriel's House (single-room housing community for formerly homeless people) to her own apartment and in finding a job which could support her and her young daughter. The daily challenges in assisting this young mother in her efforts toward



self-sufficiency were enormous but were a true collaboration between the mission of Gabriel's House and The Cottage.

\* The directors of The Cottage, The Ark, Covenant Housing, and other social service groups in the neighborhood network shared information about a child or a family in crisis. In this nonbureaucratic world, the issues of releasing information did not surface; the leaders of the various groups, however, talked on an as-needed basis and were extremely discreet.

### Biographical Sketches of the Founders Who Were Interviewed

Audrey is a community activist who lives in a major United States city. She is divorced, 67 years of age, and founder and co-director of The Ark, a nonprofit center for at-risk elementary-age children and teens who live in the Liberty Heights neighborhood. A mother of four children aged 43, 42, 40, and 32, Audrey has two years of college education. Before Audrey was directing The Ark, she worked at Covenant Housing. She has been a familiar face in the Liberty Heights neighborhood for over 25 years and greets many people in the streets by name.

Leah was a suburbanite who lived eight miles from the Liberty Heights neighborhood during the conception, birth, and early years of The Cottage. Currently she lives in another part of the United States. A college graduate, Leah has worked most of her professional career with low-income housing. She is 57 years old, married, and the mother of three children aged 36, 33, and 30. Leah was the general contractor during the build-out of The Cottage and President of the Board of Trustees from 1989-1993.

Marvin, the marriage broker who brought the two groups of women together, is 63. He lives in a comfortable house in the city in an affluent neighborhood. With successful careers in the building business and social work behind him, Marvin spends much of his time working behind the scenes in a variety of nonprofit ventures. He has a B.S. and a

M.S.W. A twice-divorced dad, Marvin has three children aged 33, 32, and 29.

Mary Jo is co-director of The Ark, the program for elementary-age children and teens in the Liberty Heights neighborhood. She, like her co-director, Audrey, began working in this neighborhood for Covenant Housing. Mary Jo at 53 has spent her adult life working with children, most of them at risk for school failure. She has a B.A. degree, spent a number of years teaching in the city, and still tutors individual students who come to The Ark. Married, Mary Jo is the mother of two children aged 26 and 24. She lives in the city not too far from the area where The Cottage is located and is known for her warmth and ready smile by residents who live in the Liberty Heights neighborhood and people who work in the community service organizations.

Vivian is a clinical social worker who has a practice in the downtown section of the city. She has private clients, the majority of whom are successful professionals. Vivian has a B.A. and a M.S.W. Living in a wooded suburban area with well-to-do neighbors, she is married and has three children aged 36, 34, and 31 from an earlier marriage. Vivian was one of the three suburban professional women who joined forces with the two community activists from the Liberty Heights neighborhood to create The Cottage.

## The Conception, Gestation, Birth, and Early Life of The Cottage

### The conception.

The violent death of Ramiro Enriques, aged nine, on the streets of Liberty Heights was the catalyst that caused a flurry of activity in a suburban section of the city. This is not unusual as Melaville and Blank (1993) point out, "In some communities, a galvanizing event--the death of a child or a drive-by-shooting--unites different elements of the community" (p. 23).

About this time, Leah, who owned and managed low-income apartment buildings, invited Vivian, a friend who was a clinical social worker, for a brisk and lengthy walk. They often met to exercise and to discuss family matters and current events. On this occasion, however, they were both preoccupied with the murder of a child by a child. It seemed to them that the violence that had been plaguing the city for months had reached impossible limits. Having nearly grown children themselves, they searched for meaning in this senseless act. "Why," they asked, "did children have to live in this kind of environment? Why couldn't these children living in Liberty Heights have the same nurturing start to life that their children had enjoyed? Why couldn't parents in Liberty Heights have the same supportive network which they had as parents when their children attended Waverly, a cooperative school in the suburbs?" The more they walked and talked, the more committed they became to some kind of action. Although they discussed housing, job training, and poverty, it was the plight of parents and young children that captured their imagination. Their fervor was growing although their focus was still a bit fuzzy. Vivian said:

Then there was what was going on socially at the time with the city just getting worse and worse and the violence just getting worse and worse, and it just seemed that dealing with young children was where it was at. Leah and I were just talking in general terms, wanting to do something together, wanting to do something along these lines. Leah was certainly the driving force, and her initial vision was certainly larger than the day care center. She really thought in terms of serving whole families, and that certainly is what appealed to me; but partly we may have settled on doing a day care center because of you. It was something you [Judith] would know something about. (p. 1)

Leah concurred and said about environmental conditions in the city in 1989:

I believe, in fact I am very sure that was the time all these children were being murdered, the

random murders, the drive-by murders, the killing of innocent people, kids really. (p. 1)

When asked, "What made you think that something had to be done or that you had to be involved?" Leah responded:

It would take a lot of money with a psychiatrist to figure that out. Well, that something had to stop it [the violence] was obvious. Well, you just knew that something had to change, the cycle had to be broken. I don't know what made me personally think that we could do it. I guess because of youth. I believe that people have to take responsibility for things around them. We were a pretty responsible trio, and I don't think we were looking to change the world. We were just looking to change the lives of a few children.

(p. 1)

So armed with pieces of a dream, Leah and Vivian invited Judith, a friend and educational consultant, to lunch at an upscale eatery on March 17, 1989. Having spent the morning working with the director of a private school in the city which provided education and child care for middle and upper class children, child care and education for at-risk children and parents were the last thing Judith expected to be on the agenda for this social outing. Over coffee and \$6.95 hamburgers, Leah and Vivian presented their ideas. They talked about the violence in the city and the effect it was having on the lives of young children and their parents. Remembering the happy days they spent as parents at Waverly, they reminded Judith, a fellow parent as well as a former administrator of the school, how much the school contributed to their success as parents.

In approximately an hour and a half over lunch, as they reminisced about the past and the supportive milieu their children had grown up in, the dream for other children's futures began to unfold. Many of the goals and policies for The Cottage were created at this first meeting.

From their experience at Waverly, these three founders wanted parent involvement to be paramount. They even wanted to define the yet unnamed and

unhoused center as a parent and child care center with the word parent appearing in the name. They wanted to support the working poor who needed child care while they worked or went to school and wanted parents to pay tuition, no matter how small, so that they would feel part of the program. These three women wanted the center to be located in a housing project as the hub of ancillary programs. It was agreed upon that the site be attractive for the sake of the children, the parents and the neighborhood, and that the emphasis be on quality education and literacy for children and adults.

What occurred at this lunch meeting was significant in the life of The Cottage. Miles and Randolph (1980) used the term "organizational imprinting" to describe the process that happened while these three women sat among potted palms and lunched. The brainstorming and defining the pieces of the dream that day were to become the reality as The Cottage was created and sustained. Miles and Randolph state that research shows that the character and structure of an organization as formed in the creative stage persist (p. 45).

During the separate interviews, the researcher asked, "The two of you already had a vision in place when you invited me to lunch, right?"

Vivian said:

Well, I think we very much did, but we thought we could do it if we could get you [Judith] to go along with it because we didn't know anything about it; but we didn't know anything about anything else either. (p. 2)

When asked to define their vision, Vivian said: We wanted initially to go into a public housing project, and of course in the beginning we thought we could do more than one. For the first couple of years, our big theme [laughter] was that this would be a model and we, or others, would do something similar all over the city. And so we wanted to provide child care as a kind of core, of bringing families in, and then we wanted to offer, I mean Leah wanted a laundry mat. She wanted all kinds of services for the parents, in

terms of literacy, in terms of jobs, in terms of parenting guidance, and so we really saw this as almost a kind of community center, a settlement model from the early social work days. (p. 2)

When the researcher asked the question, "What was your vision even before you met with me? How did you see this dream, because it really was very much yours, Leah?" Leah said, "The vision probably was like a flash of light, a bolt of lightning that hit me. I think Waverly, our cooperative school, was a very important part of my life" (p. 2).

In answer to "Do you remember any of the specifics, what did you want?" Leah replied:

We wanted so much in the beginning, don't you remember? We wanted to go down and take over a building. We not only were going to do day care, we were going to do everything that the Covenant had in place practically. . . . We were going to do the housing. We were going to do the after-school studies. I mean we were practically going to take these people--we were even going to put a laundry in. . . . Some of the things that I'm remembering are things like we wanted parents to work. I mean we had all of these specific thoughts. Oh, yes, yes, that it should not be a give-away program. Remember, we felt that it didn't matter what it was but that parents should be required to give something. You can't just give things away; that takes away their dignity. We did feel that in fact the parents had to be either in school, or learning a trade, or working, and remember, we were going to help them get a job. (pp. 3-4)

When asked for detail of how the place should look, Leah said, "I always remember that we didn't want it to be, I don't know what the word is--frou-frou. It was very important that it be practical, warm, and functional, but not frilly" (p. 4).

These three suburban women spent the next four months meeting frequently, most often in the early morning hours before their regular work days began, refining their thoughts and mustering people who could

be potential brokers to inner city communities. They knew that they were outsiders and would need the support of a church or community leaders to gain credibility in disadvantaged neighborhoods if they were going to be successful in the venture.

Unknown to these three suburban women, at approximately the same time, or perhaps a bit earlier, two other women with strong ties to an inner city community were fashioning a similar dream. Audrey was working at Covenant Housing, a low-income complex of eight apartment buildings in the Liberty Heights neighborhood. She said:

When I was working in Covenant Housing in 1985 and saw the children sitting around the buildings doing nothing or vandalizing, I was disturbed. I also remember seeing three young women on welfare in one apartment who were all pregnant having toddlers already, and I remember one mom who had two retarded daughters whom she used to sell favors with men. (p. 1)

Audrey's vision was child-centered activities. As a member of The Church of The Redeemer, Audrey consulted with the spiritual leader, Gregory Chapman, and he said it was "Audrey's calling" (p. 1). She said she accepted the call, initially with doubts and difficulty, but soon people began contacting her with ideas and help.

Components of the child-centered vision began to unfold: a teen center, a pregnancy prevention center, a Montessori school, an after-school program, and scouts. Audrey also wanted a child care center. She obtained support from a major zoning law firm in the city to do some studies on the feasibility of a child care center. Susan Smith and Aurora Simmons, two young associates in the firm, were assigned to work on the pro bono case. Audrey and others surveyed the eight Covenant buildings and selected The Ellington as the best site for the child care center. An architectural firm was hired to draw preliminary plans for the unused and unfinished designated basement space.

During this time the child-centered mission activities that Audrey and Mary Jo were spearheading became a nonprofit corporation, The Ark, and received

a large private donation of which part was stipulated by the donor to go to a child development center. Despite Audrey's intention to open a child care center and an initial burst of energy directed toward the project, things seemed at a standstill. At this point in the interview, when asked why things seemed to stop in the development of the child care center, Audrey said, "The teen center was opening, and other things took our time and energy."

Mary Jo, the other inner city community activist, corroborated Audrey's testimony. In the interview session Mary Jo was asked, "Do you remember what the city was like or what the neighborhood was like when we first got together? Why did you think something had to be done like starting the child care center or the youth center?"

She replied:

Well, in many ways it is similar to the way it is now. There was an enormous need for housing for low-income families. There were homeless people on the streets, although there are many more now. There was always a need for child care for the people in Covenant Housing that I knew well back in 1973-74. Many people were unable to work or didn't have good placement for their children . . . . I think the violence, at least my sense of it, was not as bad then although there was a fair amount of it. I think there seems to be more now and the sense of hopelessness has increased from then to now, but there were just lots and lots of struggles and problems and not adequate anything for low-income people. (p. 1)

The researcher asked Mary Jo, "Why did you think that you had to be involved in solving some of these problems? What was your personal interest or desire? Did you think you had answers to any of these problems?"

She said:

Well, at heart I am a teacher. I worked right here in the city and taught in the inner city schools for seven or eight years until my children were born, so that is the thing that is always in my heart; and I have worked with



children my entire adult life. Children are close to my heart, so that is a kind of overarching, undergirding call.

Within that then, I responded to Audrey's call to begin working with the children's ministries here in the neighborhood. We had a wonderful housing program, of course, that had its problems and struggles, but I felt it was important with Covenant Housing. When Audrey heard her call within her church community, I knew I wanted to work more directly with the kids. . . . one of the very most basic parts of this call was child care. Because the people who had helped us get started financially by giving a grant from a family foundation, something in their hearts also was day care. So although The Ark started without that particular component, starting with a little bit older children in an after school center, it was something that we knew that we needed in this neighborhood and wanted to do because of our own sense of completing the call of The Ark for the little ones. (p. 2)

When asked, "What was your vision of this child care center? What did you want for it? Do you remember how you wanted it to look?" Mary Jo responded:

Well, in a word, beautiful. I think we knew that one of our visions was to serve Covenant Housing, and so we would very often have little children at home doing nothing or plopped in front of television and we knew many children like that, so part of our vision was to get these children out of their usually dark apartments (because people were saving on electricity) into some bright and happy and more spacious and educational environment where they would be interacting with adults in a loving fashion and with other children. Because a lot of these children were isolated even if someone were baby sitting for two or three kids. So just to have beautiful surroundings with a little air and space and a little interaction and stimulation

other than television was really important. (p. 3)

These seemingly parallel concerns about the effects of violence and poverty on the lives of young children and their parents were taking root in two separate locations of the city. Although the two inner city activists and the three suburban professional women were unaware of each other's visions, they were united by a common cause. The proactive responses of the inner city women and the suburban women are examples of the philosophy of Curcio and First (1993) that "we can do more than just cope" in our "efforts to proactively diffuse violence" (p. 50). Both groups of founders of The Cottage, in Wheatley and Kellner-Rodgers (1996) terms, "created it by what" they "chose to notice . . ." (p. 95). Goldenberg (1971) believed that:

Creators of settings believe a new institution, agency or setting is needed to meet some need (old or new) that has been identified in the community or society. . . . The decision is born out of a combination of hope and frustration." (pp. 43-44)

The inner city activist women and the suburban professional women, jolted by the extent of violence in the city and the lack of promise for at-risk children, dreamed of a safe and nurturing place where parents and children could learn and grow.

### Coming together.

Knowing that they needed community support, the three suburban women began shopping for a suitable site. During the interviews Vivian was asked, "Do you remember after the three of us met and I said I would join you, and we went shopping for a location? How did we approach that?"

She said:

The meeting that I remember most vividly was the meeting in my office with Marvin and Priscilla Devon because Priscilla was a black woman well connected in the black community. I remember thinking at that time that we needed the backing

of a black church. That would be a helpful thing and Leah, I guess Leah had talked to Marvin. I don't know how he got to that meeting. I guess Leah had talked to him and told him about the idea cause Marvin came to that meeting pushing Covenant; and Priscilla was talking more about the black power structure, and the sparks flew between the two of them. It was extremely uncomfortable; and Marvin kept pushing Covenant, and I remember wondering, what is he trying to do here, take over? And that was just bristling, but at that meeting Priscilla really didn't have anything to offer us in terms of a resource or black support. (p. 3)

The three suburban women spent March, April, and May considering possible sites and following up leads for potential neighborhoods where they could become connected. On May 19, 1989, Leah, at the urging of Marvin, scheduled a breakfast meeting at The Hyatt where Marvin was known by the wait staff as a regular early morning customer. At this meeting, along with Marvin and the three suburban women, was Allison, Marvin's daughter. Although Marvin and Allison were well known by Leah, the other two suburban women had only met Marvin on several previous occasions and had never met his daughter.

The conversation that morning was full of starts and stops. Everyone was on best behavior and felt a bit awkward but eager. There were stories to be told and questions to be asked although for a time in this elegant setting everyone seemed preoccupied ordering omelets, tasting fresh fruit compote, and buttering toast. The restaurant rituals of making selections and passing the sugar and cream seemed to ease the tensions that were brewing below the surface.

Eventually Leah described her vision, and Marvin told what he knew through his daughter Allison, who worked at Covenant, of the Liberty Heights neighborhood and the social service efforts of The Church of The Redeemer. He also related that there were two women who worked at The Ark who had a similar vision for a child care center. By the end of this

breakfast meeting, it was agreed that Allison would set up a meeting for the two groups of women to meet.

The researcher asked Marvin, "What made you think that it would be a good match between what we three from the suburbs wanted to do and what that whole neighborhood needed?"

He said:

Well, because I [had] had this experience recently with Rob Warren [property manager of Covenant Housing]. He and Allison, my daughter who was working at Covenant Housing, threw a big charity event and Rob and I spent time talking, and he told me about Audrey's dream of opening a child care center and that he had \$100,000 and a set of plans and some zoning. And I think, I don't remember which came first, whether I heard that first or whether it was Leah telling me the little dream you all had, and needed to find a church somewhere. . . . Well, two and two is four. So why not just put a meeting together . . . . It seemed "a marriage made beyond me," that is the way those people [Church of the Redeemer] talked. (p. 2)

When asked during the interview, "What do you think your role was and did you agree with the two dreams?" Marvin replied:

Part of the pleasure I have in a new project is the people. First of all there was the project and it made sense, and then there were the people, and so I was very excited about it. Here is another group of people that I would like to know, besides Leah. As far as the day care goes, I was already totally taken with The Ark, partly because of Allison working there [as a volunteer tutor], but also because of what they do over there at Covenant Housing. I was drawn to the way they view the world, and I thought well, here is another connection, another piece. I had no idea of how the day care would work. Even though I was a social worker, I was more familiar with teens and adults. So that [the day care] was more of a curiosity to me, but it seemed to make

sense--and then it was a dream . . . I mean, could this really happen? (pp. 2-3)

Leah was asked, "When the three of us got together and made the decision to move forward and we began shopping for a site which was an event in itself, Marvin played a pivotal role in that, don't you think?"

She responded:

Yes, he definitely did. Actually not just in the terms of the money that he gave. I don't think that we could have succeeded without Covenant. I think Covenant gave us . . . what is the word, that people would open doors for us. They definitely gave us credibility. (p. 5)

Dryfoos (1991) believes that in creating a community school:

[A] vital collaboration with open doors for the whole family and an array of community services: a satellite health clinic, mental health services, infant and child care center, outreach home-visiting services, after-school recreation and cultural events, adult education, drug treatment, life skills and community service programs, . . . a marriage broker is desperately needed (pp. 135-136) to pull the various pieces of programs and bureaucracies together.

Marvin was the shadkhan, the marriage broker, who brought the three suburban professional women together with the two inner city activists who were connected to a complex web of social service programs serving the at-risk citizens of Liberty Heights.

#### The first meeting.

On June 2, 1989, the two groups of women met at The Annex in the heart of Liberty Heights and were introduced to each other by Allison. There were few awkward pauses during this first meeting. Both groups, the inner city women and the suburban women, seemed to relate easily to each other. In this somewhat darkened simple setting with paintings by local artists adorning the walls of the room on one side and book stalls full of inspirational texts for sale on the

other side, the five women ate egg salad sandwiches, shared brownies, and described their dreams for at-risk parents and children.

The visions were remarkably similar. They wanted: to help families who had ambitions to work or to go to school but were desperate for child care, to support parents as well as children, to charge something for child care, no matter how little, to create an attractive facility, and to design an educational experience for the children beyond mere custodial care. This initial meeting seemed to go well. Audrey said, "I felt from the first it was a perfect match" (p. 3).

She added:

Well, it was a real blessing that you three came along when you did because we would never have been able to, Mary Jo was not that interested in, I mean she was supporting it because I had the idea, but we didn't have the expertise that you had and Vivian had and the construction expertise that Leah had. (pp. 1-2)

Vivian said:

I think that first meeting with Audrey and Mary Jo was very warm. I don't think that kind of hesitation on their part came until later. It felt like their vision and our vision were very similar and that we, or I, came away very impressed with their holiness and at that first meeting their seemingly willingness to let us in. (pp. 3-4)

Mary Jo said:

We were excited about it, number one. It was a call, and we were quite different people. I think what I thought was neat was that the three women, Judy, Vivian, and Leah, brought different skills and so that is one way it worked. Just the fact that each person had knowledge in a particular area was crucial to the development of the child care center.

I think Audrey and I brought knowledge of the neighborhood and the families and a sense of call as well. We didn't know very much about any of the areas that the other women were gifted in,

but we did know this community and we loved it and wanted this to happen. Also we knew a little bit about going through the trenches of raising money, mainly for Covenant Housing because both of us were on the staff at the time I think, at least Audrey was for a number of years and I for a shorter period of time, and we knew some of the tough ways of raising money. And we had also, we were able to bring the knowledge of people like Burt [President of Covenant Housing] and Gregory [de facto spiritual leader of the scattered churches of The Church of The Redeemer] who were sort of with us in this, and so we had that spiritual support. (p. 4)

Leah called the inner city women "angels" after this first meeting and said she had never met anyone like them before. She said they seemed to "walk inches above the ground." At the interview session, however, in thinking back on that first meeting Leah had other ideas.

The interviewer said to Leah:

Before we got to the negotiating stage, we seemed to be in sync with each other; we would say, "We think families need to be involved," and they would say, "Oh, yes," and we would say, "We want the center to be really attractive," and they would say, "Oh yes." We seemed to agree on so many big things.

Leah responded:

But what was "attractive" to them and what was "family oriented" to them . . . we were using words that didn't mean the same to each of us. They didn't know that we wanted to spend a quarter of a million dollars. You know, what was perfectly good as they saw it was like the room they had their after-school program in, and that was not going to be good . . . we were not going to do that. And that happens. For instance, what I do with low-income homes now, and I work a lot in the community, and Habitat for Humanity also does, but their concept is if you give someone a roof over their heads, that's good enough, My

concept is if I give someone a roof over their heads, I'd have to want to live in it too. (p. 8)  
The researcher said, "So we agreed in words, but they didn't have the same meaning?"

Leah said, "Right" (p. 8).

The two groups of women had several other meetings with each other during the month of June. The interpersonal connections were strengthening, and the visions were being defined more fully.

At this stage in the initiation of The Cottage, the five women despite their differences were all experiencing a kind of creative euphoria. Although many questions were yet to be asked, let alone answered, a collective positive energy was surging. Sarason et al. (1971) confirmed this affective response and wrote:

One can understand the high enthusiasm and sense of mission characterizing the earliest stages of setting creation not only by recognizing that there is a relationship between excitement and the creative process, but also that the process is being powered by the desire to demonstrate that what will be will turn out to be better than what is. There is an element of competitiveness and superiority in the thinking and motivations of the creators of settings. (p. 23)

#### Meeting the social service leaders in Liberty Heights.

On August 3, 1989, the three suburban women and the two inner city women met with Gregory Chapman (spiritual head of The Church of The Redeemer) and an extended group of leaders representing the various social service groups in the Liberty Heights neighborhood. The meeting occurred at The Annex. Although The Cottage was to be a separate nonprofit organization developed through the leadership of the two groups of women, it became clear that if it came to be, The Cottage would be connected to a larger social service web. This de facto relationship was murky and difficult for the suburban three to comprehend. In reflecting upon the relationships of



the various nonprofit organizations in the neighborhood, Marvin said during the long interview: It's impossible; it's a maze. The best way to understand it is don't try to get it. You know I have been messing with them for years, long before I met you, and I wanted an organizational chart, and there isn't one. Each one [organization] is separate, but each one is connected with these prayer churches. There are different people, they go to different churches . . . . At any rate, all I do is observe it and observe the work and try to know the people. (p. 1)

The researcher said to Marvin, "And the connection does help, doesn't it?"

He replied, "Absolutely, and the central character is Gregory" (p. 1).

At this first meeting with the neighborhood social service leadership, the five women sat side by side and seemed to bond somehow during the meeting as the questions from the others flew fast and furiously. It was all very cordial, but the inquiries were penetrating. There were, of course, questions about what the women had in mind for the center, but there were also probings about how they planned to fund the project and to sustain the center if it were to open. There were subtle questions about intentions . . . . "Why do you want to do this?" and general questions about professional experiences and community contacts. Paul Goering (director of Hombres' House) asked pointed questions about the women's experience managing money. Everyone present outside of the two groups of women tried to sense how the two groups were "getting-on."

Marvin, remembering this meeting, said:

He [Gregory] set down some parameters, and one of the things he said was, "If it goes, it goes, and if it doesn't, it doesn't," but then it felt like there was real commitment from you three, you were really serious. (p. 3 )

When asked during the interview why Paul Goering was brought in, Marvin replied:

I don't remember. Well, there was a sense of suspicion in general because this would have been different in a lot of ways from the ways that the other places worked. Most of these places evolved from the inside out, out of the church mission. Here there were three outsiders coming in, wanting in effect to do business, and with Audrey and Mary Jo there was a lot of suspicion. So that had to be worked out. And I think I had a little role because they trusted me. (p. 3)

The researcher said, "So you were not just a marriage broker, but you added credibility?"

Marvin said, "I think so, not that you needed credibility, but in their eyes. You know, here are these three fancy ladies from the suburbs who are do-gooders and da, da, da, da, da" (pp. 3-4).

Continuing this line of thinking, the interviewer said:

I remember some feeling from Gregory and Paul not only on that issue [finances] but on the issue of Audrey and Mary Jo, questioning whether they could do it alone because of The Ark. I remember them quizzing the five of us saying, "Are you really committed, can you really get this off the ground, can you really stick with this?"

Marvin said, "This is one of Gregory's virtues, I mean he goes straight at it."

Audrey agreed in her interview and said about the probing from Paul and Gregory, "Oh yeah, they are tough. They asked good questions. They really made you think" (p. 7).

Asking Mary Jo for her memories of that meeting, she said:

Well, I think it had to do with, I don't know whether specifically if it was tied to the fact that we had a certain chunk of money set aside for this, but I think it might have had to do with just the whole philosophy of whether it was going to be undergirded spiritually or whether it wasn't. I remember the meeting. I don't remember all the issues as clearly as I should, but it seemed to me that we were coming, just making sure that our motivation, even though we were all

so excited about the same things, I felt like it was a miracle that we found each other and Marvin came along and all that, and it was the perfect combo. It just seemed to me it had to do with underlying philosophies about whether it would stay connected to The Ark or whether it wouldn't. (p. 12)

Vivian said:

Then there was another meeting [August 3, 1989] at some time with Gregory. My worse memory of that meeting was Gregory saying, "Well, we don't want you to do this if you're going after the same sources of support as we are." And me saying to Gregory, "Oh no, this is all going to come from individuals," because I still had the belief about Leah and her friends. And I felt so guilty when we started going to foundations because we were going to the same sources. (p. 4)

When asked in the interview, "Do you have the feeling that Gregory and Paul were kind of questioning our values?" Vivian replied:

Yes, I felt that, not trusted at that meeting, I felt we had to prove ourselves and Audrey and Mary Jo needed Gregory's permission or felt they needed his permission to work with us, and he gave it, and again, who knows why. It was all very nice, but it was clear that we were being looked over, and something said go ahead. Maybe they just didn't want to disappoint Audrey and Mary Jo who wanted this so badly. (p. 4)

When asked, "Did you ever feel that they [Gregory et al.] were reluctant to let Audrey do this alone?" Vivian said, "Yes, my memory is that they had turned Audrey down on this before because they thought she couldn't manage it with what she was already doing" (p. 4).

When Leah was asked if she remembered this meeting, she said:

I do, I do remember Gregory there and Burton and yes, Paul from Hombres'. He ended up being really supportive of us, didn't he? Maybe they had other groups do things, we don't really know, and I do believe that each of these people had a different

problem with us. I think Gregory . . . Gregory was the most practical if you want to know the truth. I thought he was, I don't think he found us as threatening as Burton found us. Maybe I just always thought that Burton found us incredibly threatening. (p. 9)

The interviewer said, "Do you think it was a power or control issue?"

Leah said:

Yes, but I'm not sure I think that of Gregory . . . actually I'm not sure he would be the real person to be afraid if we were part of the community. . . . He doesn't seem hung up, you know I didn't really spend a lot of time with him so I don't know, but I never had the feeling that he was feeling that we were treading on his turf. (p. 9)

The interviewer said:

I just remember feeling at that meeting that it was somewhat exhilarating in one sense, but in another sense it was the first time that the five of us were bound together against this community and it was sort of like we-they and the insiders-outsiders. (p. 10)

Leah said, "Well, maybe not. You know, Judith, maybe they were asking questions that we needed to think about and had never thought about" (p. 10).

"Like what were they asking?" the interviewer questioned.

Leah answered:

You know numbers, they were being rather practical probably. . . . I really think it was where were we going to get the money. I think money was the real issue, and they didn't think we could do it, but I kept wondering, what difference did it make? They had nothing to lose. So that was why I kept getting around to power. What would they have lost? How would they have been hurt? (p. 10)

The researcher said, "You mean it was like a gamble; if it worked, it worked, and if it didn't, it didn't?"

Leah said, "Right, they didn't have anything on the line" (p. 10).

The interviewer asked, "What about the \$100,000 from The Ark? Do you think that was a concern, that at least a piece of it, they would have lost?"

Leah answered back:

I don't think that they would have lost it. They would always have had \$100,000 there. That would always have been more than covered, and then maybe they wouldn't have done exactly what we did; but what they thought was adequate, would have been done. . . . In my mind, there is no question that if it were up to Burton [President of Covenant Housing] and Rob [property manager of Covenant Housing], we would not have done it. Gregory [spiritual leader of The Church of the Redeemer] must have given the okay. I think he overruled them. (pp. 10-11)

This meeting with key leaders from various churches and mission groups in the neighborhood was followed by another meeting approximately one month later on, September 5, 1989, with representatives from Covenant Housing. On November 2, 1989, there was a meeting in the city at a prestigious law firm known for pro bono work. Leah had secured their services, and they were willing to draw up the corporation papers and articles of incorporation required for gaining 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. This meant, of course, committing to paper the agreement between the two groups of women and the agreement between The Cottage and the Covenant Housing that was essentially donating the space. Although things seemed to move relatively swiftly from the time the suburban women met together on March 17, 1989, to this first meeting at the attorney's office, a long delay period was just beginning. The agreements, bylaws, and articles of incorporation were not signed until August 24, 1990.

In retrospect, the creators of this project, like the creators of other settings according to Sarason et al. (1971), "from the very beginning seemed to underestimate the complexity of the task. . . ." (pp. 3).

## Negotiations.

The need for a law firm was twofold. First, to qualify for nonprofit status that was required to raise funds, the founders had to have bylaws and articles of incorporation for The Cottage. Second, issues of governance and finance had to be agreed upon and put into language that was acceptable to all founders. The process was lengthy and fraught with tensions on all sides. Even the law firm, it seemed, had a balancing act to perform. Although the lawyer was obtained by the suburban women and did all he could to represent them, the law firm was known for its pro bono work in the city; thus some senior partners were aware of the network of social services provided by various spin-off groups of Church of the Savior. The suburban women, albeit practicing professionals in other fields, had yet to prove themselves in the nonprofit world of social service work. The inner city women did not have the contacts with the law firm but had credibility due to their participation in the social service network that served the neighborhood of Liberty Heights.

The debates about governance and finance not only occurred between the two groups of founders but extended to other nonprofit groups and people, namely, Covenant Housing, which managed eight subsidized low-income apartment buildings in Liberty Heights, and their leaders, Rob Warren and Burton Branscome. Warren worked as property manager, and Branscome was the head of Covenant Housing. Audrey said, "I remember a whole day in the law office with Rob Warren" (p. 2).

There was also an issue that surfaced late in the negotiations involving the actual owner of The Ellington apartment building. Covenant Housing and Burton specifically expressed difficulty in obtaining the owner's permission to enter into an agreement with The Cottage. Until this time, the suburban women assumed that Covenant Housing owned the buildings.

In a long interview with Marvin, he said, "It took a long time for Audrey and the three of you to come to an understanding" (p. 4).

When asked by the interviewer, "Why was this a problem?" Marvin replied:

Well, I think it was suspicion and control issues. Audrey and Mary Jo were running The Ark and were really running the whole deal. This was Audrey's dream, and she had \$100,000 to kick it off. I think Audrey, I don't know what Mary Jo's role was, was suspicious. She wanted to maintain control of the board if you remember. There was the whole issue of the board, and Leah could be very provocative and that was part of it; and then Warren got involved, and there was this problem of how it was going to work between Covenant Housing and the day care. (pp. 5)

When the interviewer said to Marvin, "I don't remember, was it over the rental?" he said:

It was over everything! I mean, if you remember, John Burlington [pro bono attorney] represented us and I think it went on for six or eight months trying to get a lease. What I kept telling everybody, which is always true, is that everything is going to work out, and once that thing is signed no one will ever look at it again. (p. 5)

The interviewer said, "I remember the three suburban women with a vote each and the two inner city women with a vote each and another trustee was needed to balance it out" (p. 5).

Marvin said:

Right, and it really came down to a personality thing between Leah [founder and general contractor] and Warren [property manager of The Ellington building]. I used to meet with Warren a lot to try to cool him out. So this wasn't easy stuff. It wasn't like everybody met at church and hugged each other. So that was another challenge to work through that, and I have to commend everybody for sticking with it and not walking. (p. 5)

The interviewer said:

I remember meeting with John [the attorney] and Vivian for breakfast one day during the final stages of negotiations before signing the lease

and John had had it, not so much as a lawyer, but with the tensions of the whole thing. He said, "I'll do whatever you want as your lawyer, but I've got to tell you, I think you should forget it. This is just too hard. Do you really want to do this?" And then we said, "Oh yeah, just keep going." There was not a doubt, there was not a pause. It was just, "We're doing it." And he shook his head and said, "I don't get it. I don't know why you are hanging in there." (p. 6)

Marvin responded:

Well, I know John and he is always going to think like a lawyer. He is always looking out for what could go wrong. . . . He was putting a lease together as if it were a commercial lease, but I knew that the way The Church of The Redeemer and all those small groups worked that, if you could get beyond this, you would never hear about it again. . . . And then there was the whole idea of organizing a board, and we were going to need more financial help and help from foundations. I don't know how the board got organized so well, but it sure got organized. I mean you got Dave Snyder [attorney and member of many major nonprofit boards in the city] to help. (p. 6)

Vivian, reflecting on this time, said:

It was not easy at all. Audrey, it is so hard to remember this because she is so totally trusting now, but she was very suspicious--suspicious is the wrong word, wary--yeah. She wanted to keep control, and at some point she let go of that. But for the first year or so, I think she found Leah abrasive. I think they locked horns more than we even knew about. So that the negotiations over the lease that lasted a year I think was so painful, but I think it was mostly about Audrey's reluctance, I mean I wasn't there for all of those . . . I think the bylaws were basically set up to keep them in charge. It was three and three, but they had a veto power or they got to pick for the seventh person on the board. And ultimately, and I guess Allison was their pick,



because it was Audrey and Barbara and Mary Jo and Allison. (p. 5)

Vivian was asked if she remembered the meeting with John before the lease signing. She said:

Yes, I do remember that a little bit, and I think John did think we were crazy and that we were going to have, and I certainly thought we were going to have after these negotiations, constant trouble with Covenant. It is really hard to remember when Audrey turned around as much as she did. It may have been in the month when Leah left, but it was probably later. It was gradual. (p. 5)

When asked about the constitution writing phase of The Cottage, Mary Jo said:

Well, I know we ended up with a great document. We did have to get it all down on paper, and that was complicated. I don't remember how many meetings we had, but we obviously needed legal help and we did get it. I know that it took a long time. We went over everything with a fine-toothed comb so that Covenant [Housing] would be happy and we would be happy and all of our different people feeling different things among us. . . . (p. 8)

During the interview the researcher said to Leah, "You knew more than we did because you were in the trenches. What made it so hard? Why, when we were trying to do something good and they wanted the child care center, was it such a challenge?"

Leah responded:

Well, first of all they were letting go. They were letting go, and that's what I don't think nonprofits like to do. They were not controlling us. Nonprofits like control. Now also, they did see us as competitors for money. Maybe I'm more aware of that now than I was then. At that time I really thought it had to do a great deal with control. (pp. 6-7)

Leah added, "Remember how long it took us to get that lease done? It really was awful; I don't know if any of you really knew how awful it was" (p. 6).

"There was no reasonable reason for it to have taken

so long and for so many harsh words to have been uttered over that. That's why I think it just wasn't really reasonable" (p. 11).

The interviewer asked Leah, "Those debates we had when we were starting out with the lease, do you think that it was basically between Covenant Housing and us?"

She said:

I think they were really afraid of us. I think that is what took so long. There were lots of excuses and this guy we [the suburban women] were blaming in another city and everything like that, but really and truly I think it was and in a way it's to Covenant's credit that they finally took the leap. (p. 7)

Leah was asked, "Do you think it was because we didn't fit their formula of a nonprofit in the neighborhood?"

She said, "We were not part of them. We really were outsiders" (p. 7).

The interviewer responded by saying, "And I guess they didn't know what we wanted or why we wanted it. They didn't particularly trust us, did they?"

Leah said, "I don't think so . . . I don't know that they didn't trust us, but we were foreign. I don't mean that they thought we were evil . . . "; and she then paused and turned to the interviewer for confirmation, and the interviewer said, "But they didn't have a handle on us," and Leah said, "Right" (p. 8).

The appearance, and possible inclusion, of the suburban women into the Liberty Heights social service network, in the words of Lewin (1947), was a time of "unfreezing," the first phase in the process of group and organizational change. Van de Ven (1980) writing about Lewin said that "unfreezing requires the entry of new forces, pressures or tensions to move a social system to change" (p. 88).

The constitutional writing for The Cottage, although a painful and lengthy exercise, served the organization well. To create articles of incorporation and bylaws, the founders had to ask and to answer what Sarason et al. (1971) believed are "important

philosophical questions" that have much to do with the "future success or viability of a new setting" (p. 93). He stated that:

Writing a constitution is a very self-conscious process, in the core of which is the knowledge that how people agree to live with each other, how well this agreement squares with the realities of social existence and how well they can anticipate how these realities change will determine the degree to which purposes will be realized. (p. 93)

Identifying the goals and sorting out the structural identity of The Cottage in the constitutional writing phase were arduous tasks that occurred during the infancy of this organization, but they helped prevent what Sarason et al. (1971) called "organizational craziness" (p. 93). Dryfoos (1994) wrote, "Whatever emerges--a partnership, a cooperative effort, or a collaboration--must be graced with a legal contract or a memorandum of agreement that creates a formal structure and clarifies roles and responsibilities in great detail" (p. 150).

The sifting and sorting of power between the two groups of founders, although not an easy process, helped solidify the organization's identity. Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) warned of conflicting messages and goals and asked, "Which identity should we honor? Which should we ignore? Organizations with multiple personality disorders confuse us with their incoherence" (p. 60). Without this critical period of self-inquiry and identity formulation that are reflected in the legal documents of The Cottage, there certainly would have been multiple identities battling for survival. Although the identity of The Cottage became "clearer and more coherent" (Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, p. 58) as time went by in the initiation stage and as organizational documents were developed, it was by no means fully formed.

The construction phase.

— The difficulties of cooperation and communication were not eliminated with the signing of the lease and the corporation papers but continued into the construction phase. This phase was challenging as personality clashes and practical problems of refitting space in an older building demanded equal attention. In addition, there was the constant need for funding.

The original estimate for rehabilitating and outfitting the basement space of The Ellington was \$250,000. The final cost was \$370,000. Vivian said, speaking about the two inner city founders:

They had \$100,000 also which I have a tendency to forget about. I don't know when we knew it, but we knew it fairly early on. By the time you and I went to Winston [a foundation], I think we knew that. It kind of gave us the courage that we weren't just broke, and I think we thought at that time that the renovation would be about \$200,000. So having that \$100,000 was huge. . . . Basically you and I were raising the money for those first two years, and that was \$370,000. (p. 7)

When asked about her role in these early years of the corporation, Vivian said:

I think it has always been in that period financial. And keeping the books initially. . . . I constantly worried about the big picture [financially], and that is part of what I remember of those early years--of being worried about money all the time and feeling very alone in that. I think I didn't realize, in fact, the extent to which Marvin was right behind me worrying, but then he didn't let us know that, and we would go to him in fear and trepidation. But he was, I know now, just as worried as I was about the money so that was my major role, keeping the books, keeping people as informed as I could, and worrying about the money so that we would keep at it in terms of not spending and raising money both. I was very tight-fisted,

probably excessively so. For instance, Audrey was saying, "Let's hire a fund-raiser"; we probably should have done it sooner. (p. 12)

The interviewer said, "When Leah had her construction problems, you were the one who would say, 'What about this and what about that?'"

Vivian replied, "Yes, but with less oversight than I imagine most boards have with their construction. Because we had to give Leah a free hand or it wasn't going to work" (p. 12).

"We were \$100,00 over on construction cost, and it was hard to know how much of that was a poor estimate and how much was unforeseen," said the interviewer.

Vivian answered, "Right, it was not unlike any construction project I have undertaken personally; it just happens. I think that maybe we should have anticipated that it was going to be more, but we didn't. We were very naive" (p. 12).

Marvin had similar views about the construction costs. During the interview he said, "Audrey had the \$100,000, and Leah did an estimate of what it would take for construction; and I don't remember the number, but I know she missed by \$100,000" (p. 6).

The practical problems of converting the unused basement space in an older apartment building were staggering. There were financial limitations, strict zoning requirements for day care use, design challenges in the basic space needs for child care coupled with the realities of the actual space configurations, and day-to-day confrontations with the inhabitants of The Ellington apartment building and the contiguous neighbors.

The residents did not embrace the idea of a child care center easily. Although the basement space was dirt-floored and dank and housed only rats and the occasional vagrant, the residents complained that their future laundry room, which was never promised, would be lost.

The abutting neighbors were equally uneasy. A child care center frightened them. "What about the noise?" and "Would their property values suffer?" they asked. A dead-end alley in the shape of an L separated

The Ellington from neighbors on two sides. One neighbor in particular was very concerned about any changes, although until The Cottage project began, this alley space was used as a hiding place by drug dealers. The alley easily camouflaged the dealers as it was littered four feet high with trash and old furniture which residents had thrown out the windows. Even though this space was designated to be the on-site playground as required by licensing for child care, the transformation did not happen without incident. One concerned neighbor was not easily swayed. Lengthy negotiations took place for a year or more concerning the property line. To satisfy the neighbor, a fence had to be constructed to delineate the inches between The Cottage space and the neighbor's brick wall. Audrey said she viewed this "next door neighbor and all of his persnickiness" (p. 6) as one more challenge The Cottage had to face.

The Ellington residents were uncooperative as well. During the construction they continued to throw garbage and trash, including old commodes and furniture, into the alley space. Numerous times the debris was hauled away by the construction crew hired by The Cottage. Even after the fencing and decking were installed, window boxes were planted, and the new pieces of play equipment were in place, residents continued to toss garbage out the window on occasion. Audrey and Mary Jo talked with the residents repeatedly, stressing the health and safety issues, and encouraged them to use the trash container and to walk to it with their garbage rather than hurl trash out the windows. Gradually over time and as families in The Ellington began using the center, the trash problems lessened.

As the suburban women dreamed about the family and child care center in the spring of 1989, one premise dominated their thinking--they would use pro bono help whenever possible, both to keep costs down and to integrate professionals into the project. The construction phase demanded much professional support. Before the involvement of the suburban women, the inner city women had consulted with an architectural firm and paid for a preliminary plan. The suburban

three felt they could save money if they could find a firm to do the actual architectural drawings at no fee. Marvin, because of his earlier work in the construction business, contacted a major commercial firm in the city who agreed to do the final design and specifications for The Cottage. Leah, from her work in the building business, secured an engineering firm that agreed to do pro bono work. Eventually all or most of the professional work--architectural, engineering, legal, zoning, interior design, and landscape architecture--was done pro bono.

Leah served as general contractor and was assisted by one of her contacts, an experienced Latino handyman. Arriving at the site daily at 6:00 in the morning during the construction period, Leah would meet the various crews working.

Although the basement space had potential for a family and child care center, it also had some major problems. The first problem became evident as soon as the city building inspector made his preliminary visit. The requirements for a child care center stipulated the exact height required for each room. The vertical space in The Ellington basement was too limited, and since it was impossible to gain space by going up, the only option was to go down and to dig out the dirt floor.

The second major problem had to do with the pros and cons of gas versus electrical power in the building. Leah had a creative solution to the problem and said it would be cheaper to buy new electric stoves for all the residents of the building than to convert the basement space to gas. This was done, and some residents accepted the new stoves reasonably happily while others grumbled about the loss of their old gas stoves.

The third construction challenge came toward the end of the outfitting when the fire marshal determined that a sprinkler system had to be installed in the entire building due to the presence of day care in the basement. This unexpected and large expense nearly halted the project. In fact, all five founders went in search of alternate space in the neighborhood, feeling that they would be unable to raise this additional

\$30,000. Finding nothing else available, they recommitted to The Ellington space, resumed construction, and continued to raise funds.

Each founder who was interviewed remembered this construction phase a bit differently. Leah, who was the one most involved on a day-to-day basis, remembered it fondly. She said:

As exasperating as it was, there were just very wonderful things. I mean those were just happy times for me, just meeting with you [Judith] and Vivian. I can never tell you how wonderful it was. It was the highlight of my life. (p. 14)

The interviewer responded, "Well, we were hand-in-hand creating something very exciting, so although there was a lot of drudgery on one hand, you being down there in the trenches with the rats . . . "

Leah interrupted, "It's like having a child, you forget all of that. . . . I really don't remember all the pain. I still wonder at the miracle of it" (p. 14).

Thinking about the stove incident, she said, "Well, in a way wasn't that terrible, maybe that wasn't nice" (p. 17).

The interviewer said, "No, I think it was problem solving, but it probably took their breath away, the way you did it, just because you were such a take charge type" (p. 17).

Leah said:

I mean we just came one day with all these stoves, but we did notify everyone. When I think about it, that was not very good. We really should have had someone go door-to-door to explain to people how to use these stoves. (p. 17)

In recollecting the construction phase, Marvin said:

And then I remember the first time I went into that basement in total disbelief, and I'll give Leah credit that she could see something down there besides the rats. There was not even enough head room down there. I remember telling her, "We can't go up; we must go down." So there was a certain tenaciousness, not giving up on



everyone's part, that could have fallen apart at any of those challenges. (p. 5)

The interviewer showed Marvin a large photograph of the unfinished basement space in The Ellington to trigger his memories of the construction phase.

Looking at the picture, he said:

That looks good compared to what I remember! Anyway, another lucky thing was the mix. You [Judith] were involved and had an educational expertise which made a difference even in the planning. . . . Because I think we did a lot of redesign from the original plan, and I think the place is laid out rather well. Do you remember some of the stuff we went through during the construction? (pp. 8-9)

"Like what?" the interviewer said.

Marvin replied, "Like the fact we had to change all of the ranges to electric in the whole building because we had to get rid of those gas lines" (p. 9).

Vivian's memories of the unfinished space were jogged as well by looking at the "before" photographs. The interviewer said to Vivian while showing the various pictures of the basement space, "What in the world were we thinking of?"

Vivian replied:

I know, that place was a dump and it stayed this rat infested, dank, dirty, earth-floored basement. And Leah would keep saying, "Oh, look what just happened!" And I could never see what had happened. It was just horrible. It just was unbelievable that we negotiated for a whole year for that space. (p. 11)

The financial demands and the challenges the construction posed for meeting codes were exasperated by the personalities of key players. Leah, who was President of the Board as well as general contractor, was indefatigable and indomitable. Many difficulties as well as successes during this construction phase were attributed to Leah. Audrey, who was Vice President of the Board, wanted this dream, *her* dream she felt, to become a reality, but to make this happen, she had to relinquish the reins of control to Leah and that did not always suit; moreover, the

leadership of Covenant Housing presented additional challenges to all of the founders.

When Audrey was asked by the interviewer, "What do you think our biggest challenges were in getting the doors open?" she said without hesitation, "Oh, the first thing that comes to mind is Rob Warren [Covenant Housing]. He was such a pain in the ass, and our relationship with Covenant Housing became really sticky" (p. 5).

The interviewer said, "You brought that all back, Audrey. I had forgotten that," and Audrey said, "Well, I was in the middle of it!" (p. 5).

The interviewer asked, "Who was that tall older gentleman?"

Audrey said, "Burton Branscome [head of Covenant Housing]" (p. 5).

"Oh right, there were so many times that I felt sorry for him, the tension was obviously getting to him," said the researcher.

And Audrey agreed, saying, "Right, but he is so proud of it [The Cottage]" (p. 5).

The interviewer asked Audrey, "Was it that they [Covenant Housing] wanted us to use the building in different ways or what? What were the issues?"

Audrey answered:

I think they felt that we were really demanding about a lot of things like removing all the old stoves and putting in new lines and the noise that they made, and Leah was such a stinker about things and good for her. But she was very demanding and kind of irritating, and I think she got people's back up a lot of times. The results have been wonderful, but her people skills, which I blocked right out, were sometimes [sic]. (pp. 5-6)

During the long interview Mary Jo was asked, "Can you remember some of the challenges from the early days, from the time we first met to the construction and opening to the first two years of operation?"

She said:

This is where my memory will fail me some because a lot of the stuff that registers with me are the emotional things. I don't have the kind

of visionary eye that Audrey, for example, has as an artist and so when I looked at the basement space I thought, "Whoa!" And to just have the vision that would be a beautiful space was hard for me.

I guess the hurdles were delaying and timing. Everything we thought would happen more quickly than it did. We had to also be sensitive and appreciative of Covenant Housing and tactful working with that lovely group of people who were in effect letting us use and renovate the space in their building which would obviously serve their children so it was mutually beneficial, but I remember some difficulties in negotiating with people that I knew well and loved and felt like in a way a go-between this new group of friends that I loved and the old friends . . . we didn't always see things eye-to-eye and it was really their space, and it might require a certain something that we didn't envision paying for and I have forgotten what, but I know there were a couple of things, like the sprinkler system. . . . We had to put a pipe through the lobby and that seemed to be a big issue, just whether Covenant would pay for it or we (meaning, The Cottage) would pay for it. I forgot how it was resolved. . . . We sat down and negotiated and talked. I don't remember, I think we had to raise the money for it. . . .

And then even within our own little group, I remember one thing where I felt uncomfortable with Leah on something to do with the construction. I don't remember the specifics; I just remember that my feelings were hurt on it. And I think it probably had to do with negotiations stuff with Covenant Housing, but I truly don't remember, but we stuck with it and that's the thing. Whereas I probably at one point would have said, "Oh, I don't want to argue because I hate it anyway; I'll leave and they can go on without me," but I was able to say to myself, "Hey you know, grow up a little here and this is going to be the most wonderful thing."

And so we worked through that by just talking, and that was good. . . .

Actually the physical development of it, the building, the construction part was the hardest part for me to sort of work through because that's where I was involved sort of a . . . little bit as a . . . not go-between exactly, but trying to balance the people that I knew on both sides and hearing it from both sides and understanding it. (pp. 5-6)

The personality conflicts that continued to rage throughout the initiation period, specifically in the constitutional writing and construction stages of The Cottage, are examples of what Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) call "emergent evolution" (p. 78). They believe:

Evolution occurs in many ways, but always from the desire to work out relationships for mutual coexistence. Locale by locale, individuals and groups figure out what works for them. They exchange information; they adapt to one another; they develop symbiosis. From their efforts a system emerges with its own identity, its own characteristics. . . . Systems are fluid relationships that we observe as rigid structures. (pp. 78-79)

This evolution of relationships among founders of The Cottage is interesting as viewed through the musical lens of Heifetz. In talking to Lambert (1995), he said:

It's a different situation in organizations that have to construct new directions and authority structures--where they have to invent the score as the music is being played. A better model would be a jazz group. The musicians listen carefully to each other. Within stretches certain soloists stand out. There's latitude for surprises, and the interplay can generate inspiring moments of creativity. (p. 33)

The founders did have to invent the score as they went along; although there was a clear theme, there was no formula or orchestration to follow and depending on the time and the task, "certain soloists"

stood out. When the vision was discussed, Audrey and Leah were in the forefront. When negotiations were underway between the two groups of founders and among groups in the social service network, Mary Jo, Vivian, and Marvin played key roles. When neighborhood issues surfaced, Audrey and Mary Jo were needed. When pro bono help was required, Marvin and the suburban women took the lead. When construction expertise was necessary, Leah and occasionally Marvin stepped forward. When fund-raising and financial matters demanded attention, Vivian, Marvin, and Judith met and devised strategies. And when educational issues were present, Judith was consulted to plan policy, to make choices, and to set plans into motion. All of this solo work was spontaneous and very much self- as well as peer-defining as in a jazz performance.

#### The opening.

Determining when to open the doors of The Cottage for parents and children should have been an easy decision--it wasn't. As construction neared completion, again there was dissension among board members. Despite the exhilaration that was evident as white floor tiles and green carpeting were placed over the once dirt-surfaced floor, tiny toilets and sinks were installed, cribs and cots were being delivered, and the dream was becoming a reality to everyone, there was the constant problem of funding. Not only had the start-up costs exceeded estimates by \$100,000, but the board was discovering that operating funds were even more difficult to obtain than start-up monies.

In addition, although it was always the plan of the founders to operate The Cottage by a combination of funding sources--a sliding scale tuition, donations from individuals, private foundations, and the government, the trustees were realizing an important fact about public funding. To qualify for funding from the Department of Health and Human Services that subsidizes low-income families in a variety of ways, a child care center must be in operation for one year to apply for a grant. Faced with this unsettling news,

the trustees decided to open the center at half capacity as the funding would be coming from fewer sources: tuition (at this point families on the lowest end of the sliding scale were to pay two dollars per week), individual donations, and private foundations.

Not only did debates swirl around decisions regarding the date of the opening and the number of child care slots which would be available, but arguments abounded concerning the amount of money needed on hand to open. It was an enormous gamble the trustees were undertaking, and no one knew, despite strong emotional pleas from various liberal and conservative perspectives, how many months of operating monies were sufficient to have on hand, nor where the next funds would be found.

These were critical issues as staff had to be hired and families had to be enrolled. The credibility of the whole project was at stake at this point. It would have been a travesty for The Cottage to hire staff, to enroll children, to determine that parents were employed, enrolled in school, or in a training program, and then to close the center in a few months due to lack of funds.

Vivian was asked during the long interview, "What else was challenging?"

She answered:

Well, certainly money was challenging and continues to be a challenge. It didn't seem like that much of a challenge in the very beginning, well, because of The Ark's money and because of Winston [foundation], after the first little bit, it just seemed impossible. (p. 8)

The interviewer said, "Do you remember the conservative stance that you and I had, believing that we had to have six months of operating money on hand to open?"

Vivian replied, "We have never had six months of operating money!" (p. 8).

The researcher said, "Then Marvin [the shadkhan] and Dave Snyder [board member, attorney, and experienced trustee of nonprofit organizations] got us down to three months."

Vivian said, "Yeah, that I remember was Dave's last big push, 'Get those darn doors open, it's going to be easier to raise money once the doors are open.' And he was right, but we were very reluctant" (p. 8).

Marvin remembered the challenges of finding operating monies as well. He said:

And all in all there were times, even after construction, when we thought we were going to fall apart because of money, time after time after time. And then we didn't know how we would ever open or how to open. Then we finally made the decision to open whether we had enough money to open or not. (p. 7)

The interviewer said to Marvin, "I remember going to board meetings and saying we need six months of operating money to open and you chipped us down to three months and there were times when we didn't even have one month!"

Marvin responded, "Yes, but that is much the way many groups of The Church of The Redeemer operate" (p. 7).

"It didn't work like another business, did it? You just sort of had to go on faith," said the interviewer.

Marvin replied:

No, in many ways it defies logic, but somehow people come on board, they are drawn to it. They make it work but it is always a struggle. It is never easy, and in our group it never will be. And yet you look at us five years later; I think we are financially in bad shape, but in other ways we are in better shape than we have ever been. (p. 7)

The realities of funding that The Cottage faced during the start-up phase are examples of Massarsky's (1994) theory of the precarious nature of financing that nonprofits face daily. He wrote:

Nonprofit organizations want to and must continue their important work. Yet their survival is in the hands of funders--foundations, corporate giving officers, government agencies and individual givers. The typical nonprofit creates a host of programs in concert with its mission

and then seeks grant monies to support them. When programs are fresh and innovative, the fund-raising task is easier, but as programs become more commonplace, regardless of their need and importance, the task gets more difficult. (p. 383)

Thinking that the center would open earlier than it did, the trustees hired a director to work part time implementing the final stages of the opening. Rosemarie, the director hired, immediately immersed herself in the neighborhood. She went from one social service group to another in the community and introduced herself. Although she was a tall blond Scandinavian who stood out in this ethnic neighborhood of Latinos and African Americans, she became accepted by everyone for her good cheer and willingness to help the community as a whole. Side by side she worked with residents and other social service leaders at community clean-up day. Hired by the trustees to order equipment and supplies, to interview staff, and to develop procedures, Rosemarie also knew that she needed to spend time during this period becoming known in the neighborhood and part of the larger social service network.

Audrey said, "Oh, but one of the gifts was Rosemarie who came in ahead of time. . . . She helped the project along immeasurably" (p. 6).

During the long interview Vivian, recalling the months before the opening and Rosemarie, said, "I remember being concerned because she was white. She was absolutely remarkable. She really got involved in Covenant, and she made all those bridges easier because she did that. They all knew her and she worked with them" (p. 9).

Rosemarie not only became part of the social service network in the neighborhood, but she worked with the board on final construction issues, ordered the equipment and supplies, hired the staff, created the handbooks and procedures necessary for the opening, and met with families who were interested in coming to The Cottage. As construction and inspection delays slowed the pace, Rosemarie's part-time,



six-month contract was gradually being used up and the opening date was not in sight. The child care inspection team would not allow the basement space to be used even for adults until the final inspection was granted; thus the trustees decided to rent office space in the adult learning complex which was a mission group of the Hosanna Church among others. This need to rent office space during the final months before opening was another unforeseen expense.

Finally on June 29, 1992, the doors of The Cottage opened for business and the parents and children arrived. The board decided to open the infant room first which was licensed for eight infants. The first day was full of surprises. Eight babies aged 6 to 14 months arrived in strollers, and there was no place to park the vehicles. No one had thought of this basic need for a stroller parking lot!

The founders and the staff had other lessons to learn. By the end of the first week, the teachers in the infant room had figured out that the clipboards which were posted outside the infant room with daily information forms to record each child's eating and sleeping record at home had been left blank, not because the parents didn't care, but because the parents could not read or write well enough to fill out the forms.

Messy art projects, sand box play, and encouragement for self-feeding were met with a host of parent complaints. These parents who were subsisting on welfare or minimum wages did not own washing machines, and therefore two or more outfits a day per baby meant an extra trip to the Laundromat and additional money. In response, The Cottage began to use the center laundry machines for more than crib sheets and blankets.

The preschool room opened September 8, 1992, with 13 children aged 2 1/2 to 4 years. The majority of the children in the preschool class had not been to school before, so there were many challenges. The classrooms were attractive and inviting, but these children had no experience using books or educational materials. At first books were just missiles to be hurled and

child-sized tables and chairs were obstacles to be climbed over. The idea of a predictable schedule was unfamiliar to parents and children. Although breakfast was served in The Cottage at 8:00, parents would arrive from 7:30 to 10:00 and expect their child to be served. Nap time was chaotic with babies crying and preschoolers hopping from cot to cot with no intention of sleeping or resting.

All of these issues and more are examples of the coming together of parents, staff, and board that had to happen as a new culture was being created. Much give-and-take was required. The board and staff had to understand the client population and their needs, and the parents had to accept The Cottage policies which were designed in the best interest of all parents and children.

On September 11, 1992, The Cottage was dedicated with a reception and ribbon cutting ceremony. The following is from The Cottage newsletter dated December 1992, Vol. 2, No. 1:

On a mild fall evening, The Cottage officially opened its doors to welcome all of those who had made this event possible. Included in the throngs of awestruck, delighted people were lawyers, accountants, engineers, architects, Board members, Covenant community support members, education and health care professionals, Cottage staff, grant proposal writers, area residents, brochure and interior designers, volunteer landscape and local artists.

Highlighted throughout the building were "before" and "after" pictures of The Cottage from the time the space was identified as where the center would be, to the way it looked at the time of the opening. A comment heard in passing was that this endeavor truly exemplified the "making of a silk purse out of a sow's ear."

A special part of the evening was the presentation and thank you to all who were attending, given by one of the founders, Judy Knotts, an educational consultant. . . .

Following Judy's talk, Reverend Gregory Chapman, founder and pastor of The Church of the Redeemer,

spoke with sincerity, warmth and humor in addressing the serious need for facilities like The Cottage. . . . (p. 1)

Melaville and Blank (1993) write that in stage four as a collaborative vision is being realized, it is important to reflect and to celebrate (p. 76). This celebration was a highlight in the evolution of The Cottage.

#### The first two years of operation.

Although the trustees did not want to operate The Cottage during the first year at half enrollment, the financial constraints dictated it; there were, however, some benefits to beginning small. Having 22 very young children and their parents from an at-risk population begin school at the same time was overwhelming. To have doubled this would have been a challenge for staff as well as families. In addition, the first year at half enrollment gave the center time to work out problems of procedures and schedules. It also gave the teachers time to get to know each other in a less pressured atmosphere.

In October 1992 an in-house newsletter with articles from parents, staff, and volunteers written in English and Spanish was inaugurated by The Cottage director with help from a parent. This was to become a monthly communiqué.

During this first fall of operation, The Cottage signed a contract with the Child Care Food Program under the Department of Agriculture which made the center eligible for food cost reimbursements. Moreover, The Cottage was selected as a model center for Early Intervention (0- to 3-year-olds) by the state early intervention program.

In November 1992 The Cottage applied for funding from the Department of Health and Human Services for 20 children which would allow the center to open the additional two classes. This grant application was two inches thick and a nightmare to complete. The Cottage, however, was banking on this government funding, so much time and effort were spent on doing a quality application. There was a "catch-22," however, in the

funding requirement--a center had to be open for one year before it could be eligible for monies. In January 1994, approximately one and a half years after opening with half enrollment, The Cottage went to full enrollment with subsidies from the Department of Human Services. The two-year \$180,000 grant for tuition subsidy was to provide for 20 additional children. The classrooms were ready, the teachers contracts were finalized, and parents on the waiting list were notified that their children could begin school.

The funding of The Cottage changed considerably from July 1992 when it opened to 1994 with full occupancy. During the fiscal year July 1, 1992, to June 30, 1993, the total income was \$94,346 with \$35,292 coming from individual and community support, \$2,554 coming from tuition, and the rest from foundations. In fiscal year July 1, 1994, to June 30, 1995 (which goes beyond the time frame of this study of calendar years 92-94, but reflects the expansion of the center due to government funding), total income was \$329,970 of which \$123,500 came from Department of Human Resources Child Care subsidies, \$16,000 came from USDA Child Care Food subsidies, \$62,000 came from foundations and corporations, \$64,354 came from individual donations, and \$57,316 came from tuition. This financial shift is an example of Salamon (1995) reporting of nonprofit resources that the "rule of thumb generally applies . . . social service nonprofit corporations received 54% from government" (p. 64). Although the funding of The Cottage in 1994 from government sources was not quite 54%, it had increased significantly since its inception and permitted The Cottage to expand and to survive.

### Emerging Themes

In the data collected a number of themes surfaced: vision, money, power, trust, expertise, contacts, time, risk-taking, and tenacity. These will be explored one by one.

## Vision.

Vision, "the act or power of anticipating that which will or may come to be" (The Random House Dictionary, 1988), is a generally acknowledged hallmark of leadership (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1978; DePree, 1989; Greenleaf, 1991; Kouzes & Posner, 1987). During the long interviews, the founders of The Cottage all spoke about their vision. Audrey, when asked, "What do you think made it all work?" said, "I think it all goes back to the initial call, the vision that you all [the suburban women] had, that I had" (p. 5).

In response to the same question, Mary Jo answered:

Everybody had a vision for that place, and I think that's really important. There is a biblical quote that I love that says, "Without vision the people perish." And it doesn't mean that it has to be, although in that case it certainly was, a biblical vision. But it has to be a vision. So in this case without a vision for The Cottage, the children perish. (pp. 18-19)

The founders also used the word "dream" interchangeably with "vision." According to The Random House Dictionary (1988), one definition of a dream is "a voluntary or involuntary vision occurring to a person awake as well as asleep." During the long interview with Marvin, the shadkhan who brought the two groups of founders together, he was asked, "What made you think that it would be a good match between what the three women from the suburbs wanted to do and what that whole neighborhood area needed?" In his response he said that Rob Warren [Covenant Housing] had told him of "Audrey's dream of opening a day care center" and he remembered Leah "telling me the little dream you all had" (p. 2). Later in the interview he said, "So that [daycare] was more of a curiosity to me, but it seemed to make sense. And then it was a dream . . . I mean, could this really happen?" (p. 3)

When Leah was asked, "Do you remember even before you met with me, what was your vision? What did you want to do or how did you see this dream because it

really was very much yours?" she said, "The vision was like a flash of light, a bolt of lightning that hit me" (p. 2).

The interviewer said to Leah, "Our early meetings [with the inner city founders] were very lovely and our visions sort of meshed, but when we got down to the nitty-gritty, we had a lot of challenges. We had a lot of meetings that were heavy duty."

Leah responded:

But were the challenges on the ultimate goal? Were the challenges on what everyone wanted for the children? See, I guess the other just wasn't important, I don't actually remember this, but somehow I believe that we were fairly united in what we wanted or the principles of the day care. (p. 15)

Leah asked if all of the founders "remembered the same" (p. 18) during the interviews.

The interviewer responded:

No, we remember a lot of the same things, but we remember it from our own point of view. It's filtered through our own personalities and what role we played. One thing that stands out is that you and Audrey were able to envision that awful space, and both Mary Jo and Vivian thought you were sort of crazy because they couldn't see it. You two kept saying, "It's going to be lovely, it's going to be beautiful." (p. 18)

Leah replied:

But I do believe that Audrey and I were envisioning different things. . . . I think what she thought would be a beautiful space would not have been beautiful for me. That isn't to say that her--what she envisioned is what Covenant had done to date is really good. It's almost a band-aid. And I'm not, what we're doing is not a band-aid, or what The Cottage is doing is not a band-aid, but I hope it is much more than that. (pp. 18-19)

During the long interview Vivian said that "her [Leah's] initial vision was certainly larger than the day care center. She really thought in terms of serving whole families. . . ." (p. 1).

In discussing how the two groups of founders came together specifically, Vivian said, "We must have told Allison about our vision, and she arranged a meeting for us with Audrey and Mary Jo" (p. 3).

Describing the first meeting of the two groups of women, Vivian said, "It felt like their vision and our vision was very similar, and that we, or I, came away very impressed with their holiness and at that first meeting their seemingly willingness to let us in" (p. 4).

Vivian was asked in the interview, "Looking back, what do you think Audrey and Mary Jo brought to the project and what did we bring? What were the strengths on both sides?"

She mentioned many things (connections, money, expertise) but also talked about vision, saying, ". . . she [Leah] also had the vision about the site, which maybe Audrey and Mary Jo shared that vision about the site, but I certainly didn't. I thought this is a real dump, and there is no hope" (p. 7).

The researcher asked:

What made us think that three women from the suburbs who had never done anything like this, with full-time jobs, could merge with the two women from very different backgrounds and make this work? What was it that made it work?

Vivian replied, "I certainly think one of the things was that we did have the shared vision with the Covenant people. Even though we were very different, that shared vision was important" (p. 13).

Dryfoos (1994) writes:

Collaborative efforts have a much higher probability of success if the participants start out with a common vision of what the program will look like when fully implemented. It is not sufficient for people to come together to talk about collaboration if they have no idea what the potential models might be. (p. 149)

In Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services, Melaville and Blank (1993) state, "A shared vision to which partners are truly committed is the key to the collaborative process. It provides a reason and a

rationale for joint action to parents, neighborhood leaders, elected officials and other key actors in the community" (p. 44).

### Money.

It is not enough to have a vision--there must be funds to implement ideas and to sustain initiatives. In the interviews with the founders of The Cottage, despite a shared vision, there were many challenges discussed which focused on funding and the tensions surrounding the financial needs of the evolving organization.

The Cottage was fortunate in that The Ark had seed money to contribute, although the actual amount of the gift and the timing of the gifting were topics of contention during the early life of the organization and resurfaced in the interviews. Audrey, co-director of The Ark, said in the first minutes of the interview, "The Ark got a grant from a private donor for \$300,000-500,000 of which part of it was to go for a child care center" (p. 1).

When asked by the interviewer, "There are so many groups out there trying who don't make it, and it wasn't easy; it took us three years to get the doors open. What made it work?" Audrey replied, "Well, having \$300,000 from the Mulenburg grant certainly helped a lot, a lot of organizations don't have that who are trying to get started" (p. 5).

Later in the interview Audrey said, "And you know, as I think of it, I don't think either Mary Jo or I even mentioned the money or the amount of money that we had for it; and I remember saying at a meeting and you were all really surprised at the \$250,000" (p. 7).

Mary Jo, in thinking back, said, "I don't think the money issue to me registered as a big problem because we had that initial hundred thousand dollars to work with" (p. 5).

When asked to reflect upon the first meeting the five women had with the leaders of the Covenant and other social service groups in the neighborhood, Mary Jo said, "Well, I think it had to do with, I don't



know whether specifically it was tied into the fact that we had a certain chunk of money set aside for this . . . " (p. 11). She added that Gregory was there to ask the "hard questions" like, "Where is the money coming from?" (p. 13).

Marvin had memories of the seed money from The Ark as well and said, "This was Audrey's dream, and she had \$100,000 to kick it off" (p. 4). He seemed sure of the amount as later in the interview, when asked about challenges facing the emerging organization, Marvin said, "Well, one was money. Audrey had the \$100,000, and Leah did an estimate of what it would take for construction; and I don't remember the number, but I know she missed by \$100,000" (p. 6).

Vivian remembered a similar amount of seed money and said:

They [Audrey and Mary Jo] had \$100,000 which I have a tendency to forget about. I don't remember when we knew it, but we knew it fairly early on. By the time you and I went to Winston [the foundation], I think we knew that. It kind of gave us the courage that we weren't just broke, and I think we thought at that time that the renovation would be about \$200,000. So that having \$100,000 was huge. (pp. 6-7)

The interviewer tried to clarify the murky matter of the start-up monies and asked Vivian, "Do you ever remember feeling a mistrust for them and the \$100,000 and wondering were they ever going to give the money?"

She answered:

Right, and would they? There was a time I think when I believed that there was a lot more money from that same \$100,000 source. And that they [Audrey and Mary Jo] were not going to give us access to it. I don't know if it was there, but they didn't give us access to it. (p. 11)

The interviewer said, "We did get the \$100,000, didn't we?"

Vivian replied:

Yes, but we got it in dribs. I don't think we got it all at once. They presented it as if someone had given that money with the stipulation that it

be used for day care. I don't know if that was the way it was or not. (p. 11)

The seed money was not the only funding matter which had a double-edged sword. Because The Cottage was de facto a part of the established social service network in the Liberty Heights neighborhood, there were controversies revolving around issues of competition versus collaboration for funds from foundations and individual donors. Perspectives on this issue ranged far and wide, not only from the nonprofit social service organizations seeking funding, but from the funders themselves.

When Leah was asked why she thought it had been so difficult in the beginning, working with other nonprofit groups in the neighborhood network, she said:

Now also, they did see us as competitors for money. Maybe I'm more aware of that now than I was then. At that time I really thought it had a great deal to do with control. . . . I didn't think money was such a big issue then, but now I think it really was. (pp. 6-7)

Vivian remembered a tension-filled meeting with Gregory Chapman and other representatives of neighborhood nonprofit agencies, and she said:

My worse memory of that meeting was Gregory saying, "Well, we don't want you to do this if you're going after the same sources of support as we are." And me saying to Gregory, "Oh, no, this is all going to come from individuals" because I still had the belief about Leah and her friends. And I felt so guilty when we started going to the foundations because we were going to the same sources. (p. 4)

When Vivian was asked in the interview, "Looking back on it, were we really grateful for the Covenant structure or what?" she replied:

I don't know, I feel so separate now. In the beginning it felt terribly important, and it was always very important for fund-raising that we be perceived as being part of them, as one more piece of that whole service organization. . . . In the beginning, who was it, The Covenant Job

Bank, who gave us their mailing list when we did our first sort of mass mailing. . . . I think Barbara must have gotten that, but I think then maybe because of Audrey and Mary Jo were more involved, we were viewed by that community as more a part of them. (p. 9)

Vivian was asked, "Do you remember trying to sort that [the collaborative versus individual identity] out and saying, 'Are we part of you, are we not part of you?'"

She replied, "Right, and at first their name was in our name [The Ark Family and Child Care Center]" (p. 9).

The interviewer said, "And then when we went to foundations, we tried to decide was it best to be part of them or be alone?"

Vivian concurred and said:

Right, and it was very clear for some foundations that it was good, and for others it was bad. I remember the whole Jane Wilkins thing and her saying, "If you Covenant people don't come in with one proposal, we are not going to give you any more money." And she was running the foundation coalition at that point. She was head of Morris [foundation], I think, and she was really tough on us on this Covenant issue; and she was running the state area council on foundations and was pushing them in that direction, to get people to bunch together with their requests. Again, I think Dave [Snyder, attorney and experienced trustee of many nonprofit groups] was helpful about that, saying, "Well, that's what she wants, but Covenant does it this way because it works, to do it separately." (p. 10)

Marvin was asked in the long interview, "Despite the strange make-up of the Covenant groups, did you ever feel that there was a sense of competition between The Ark and The Cottage or The Ark and Hombres' House?" (p. 11).

He responded:

Well, sure there is, these are not people without human characteristics. There is a lot of tension

between Covenant Housing and Covenant Enterprise. It seems to be better now. You know the Church of the Redeemer broke up, and there was all kinds of trouble. (p. 12)

The researcher then said, "I remember the first time we went to Winston [foundation]; Audrey, Vivian, and I went, and it was fine. We were all in it together, and yet there were other times when I felt like we were competing" (p. 12).

Marvin responded, "It was true. It is true. You know I am involved with Covenant Enterprise, and I see lots of places where they are getting money where we are not getting money" (p. 12).

The interviewer said:

In those early days it was really hard when Audrey was really active on the board and we would say we were going to, let's say, the Stoner Foundation; and she would say, "We just went to them" or "Maybe we'll give you our donors' names." On the other hand some mission-church group gave us big money, so there was this constant "Where are we . . . are we part of you or are we separate?" (p. 12)

Marvin replied, "Well, I don't think it has ever been defined where the relationship of The Cottage and these other groups fit in. It is different" (p. 12).

Although Marvin had been a social worker, was experienced in working with nonprofit groups, and enjoyed the role of a shadkhan, he was also valuable in the early life of the organization because personally he had deep pockets.

When Audrey was asked, "Besides the serendipity of it all, Marvin bringing us together, what do you think made it all work?" she spoke of the vision, the seed money, the strong roots in the neighborhood, and concluded by saying, "And we knew Marvin Weinstein. Believe me, we relied on him an awful lot, not only for encouragement, but for money too. He was always there" (p. 5).

Leah was asked, "When the three of us got together and made the decision to move forward and we began shopping for a site, which was an event in

itself, Marvin played a pivotal role in that, don't you think?"

She answered, "Yes, he definitely did. Actually not just in the terms of the money he gave" (p. 5).

On this topic Vivian said:

And we never would have gotten into Covenant [without Marvin] because he gave us credibility because of who he was as a person, but also because of the money. They knew if he was going to back us, he would back us generously. (p. 8)

Leah didn't remember any monies given to The Cottage when it was under the umbrella of The Ark. The researcher said in discussing the complexity of the various social service groups in the Liberty Heights network:

Well, we were trying to get our own identity too. Do you remember sorting through all those issues, not just the lease and the policies, but a real identity crisis? Who are we? We kept trying to get our hands on the whole issue. (p. 19)

She responded, "Well, that was a very big issue; don't forget that was because of foundations. Now how is it conceived? Is it part of Covenant, or does it stand on its own?" (p. 19).

The researcher replied, "I think it is still muddled. I mean, we have our 501(c)(3), but remember we had to use their 501(c)(3) for awhile in order to get monies?" (p. 19).

Leah vehemently said, "We never used their 501 to get monies as far as I know" (p. 19).

The interviewer said:

We did in the beginning because it took us a year to get our 501(c)(3), so in order to get our initial money from Winston and other foundations, we were under the umbrella of The Ark and even our name changed. The original name was The Ark Family and Child Care Center so that we could go for money because unless we had a 501, the foundations wouldn't give us money. (p. 19)

Leah replied, "I don't remember it at all like that. I remember that they wanted to call it The Ark Family and Child Care Center; that's really

interesting. I would really question that. Are you sure what you are saying is true?" (p. 19).

The researcher said, "Well, I don't know, that's what I remember" (p. 19).

Leah replied, "I don't think any money was given under their 501(c)(3)" (p. 19).

The interviewer said, "Well, I know we still occasionally get mail addressed like that, and our name did change" (p. 20).

In response, Leah said, "But our name did change because they [meaning Audrey and everyone in The Church of The Redeemer] referred to it as the other. But there was nothing that we ever signed that I know of that had the other name" (p. 20).

Early on in the interview with Vivian, the researcher asked, "Why and how did you think you could do this?" [creating a settlement house model] (p. 2)

She replied:

That is a puzzle to this day. Where did we think we were going to get the money? You know, I think it was just being incredibly naive. I think we had no idea of how much it would cost. I think at the time I thought, I don't know whether Leah thought this, that Leah had a lot of very wealthy real estate friends and that they would contribute a lot of money. (p. 2)

At the end of the long interview with Mary Jo, the researcher asked:

Is there anything that you can think of that you want to add to this so that any other group, small initiative or large initiative, that might be wanting to do something similar to this could benefit? It wouldn't have to be a child care center; it could be a health center, a teen center, a senior citizen home. Do you have any other ideas that might make it work for them so that they could be a success as we were, at least in terms of getting the doors open and existing for two years which is the critical time? (p. 20)

Mary Jo had a number of ideas but ended by

saying:

Money is always important. And that I would say too, is to have . . . whether it is to pray it

down which we always try to do, but you have to be practical. God has to use somebody. You gotta work hard, get your fund-raiser, get your funds in place, not be afraid to ask people, not be afraid for people to say "no" money-wise. That is what I've learned from Gregory over the years, to be freed up to the point of asking for money because . . . all of these ministries need money, not only to begin, but to continue. (p. 21)

Marvin said, "My concerns are always, will there be money there" (p. 8).

The theme of money is intertwined with all the other themes which surfaced in the interviews and in particular with themes of power, trust, vision, and contacts.

#### Power.

Power, whether conferred de jure or de facto, is the ability to make things happen. Despite the fact that the stages of initiation, innovation, and institutionalization (Kimberly et al., 1980) of this emerging organization were periods of intense power struggles and shifts, only three founders interviewed addressed the issue. Neither inner city founder discussed power per se.

In speaking about the time it took for the two groups of women to bond, the interviewer asked Marvin, "Why was it a problem?" and he said:

She [Audrey] wanted to maintain control of the board, if you remember; there was that whole issue of the board. And Leah could be very provocative and that was part of it. And then Warren [property manager of Covenant Housing] got involved, and there was this problem of how it was going to work out between Covenant Housing and the day care. (pp. 4-5)

When the researcher said, "I don't remember, was it over the rental?" Marvin emphatically responded, "It was over everything! I mean, if you remember, John Burlington represented us and I think it went on for six or eight months trying to get a lease" (p. 5).

Later in the interview Marvin said:

You know, it would be interesting to know what kept Audrey in the process. Because she was the other real powerful player [besides Leah] at that time, except that she knew that she couldn't do it by herself and she knew she needed help. (p. 10).

Marvin looked to the interviewer for a comment, and the researcher said, "Looking back, she [Audrey] sees her role as more of a cheerleader" (p. 10).

He replied, "Yes, but I'm not sure that originally she thought that; she thought she was going to control it. It was her idea" (p. 10).

The interviewer said to Leah, "Why when we [suburban founders and inner city founders] were trying to do something good and they [inner city founders and connected nonprofit social service groups] wanted this child care center, why was that such a challenge?" (p. 6).

She answered, "Well, first of all they were letting go. They were letting go, and that's what I don't think nonprofits like to do. They were not controlling us" (p. 6).

When Leah was reflecting on the early meetings with leaders from the neighborhood social service network and their questions put forth to the five women, she said:

I really think it was where were we going to get the money. I think money was the real issue, and they didn't think we could do it. But I kept wondering what difference did it make? They had nothing to lose. So that was why I kept getting around to this about power. (p. 10)

Later in the interview, Leah went back to the issue of power and said:

I honestly believe that all of the problems of space had to do with power. I think in the beginning to let us become part of it, I think there was the money issue, but most of it was power. (p. 16)

The theme of power even surfaced before the two groups of founders met. At a meeting in the spring of 1989, the three suburban women met with Marvin, the shadkhan, and Priscilla Devon, an African American



social worker, to brainstorm possible sites for the parent child care center; tension was high at this meeting. Vivian, recalling this meeting, said:

And Marvin kept pushing Covenant, and I remember wondering, "What is he trying to do here, take over?" And that was just bristling, but at that meeting Pat really didn't have anything to offer in terms of a resource or black support. (p. 3)

In thinking about the challenges the founders had to face in the initiation and innovation (Kimberly, 1980) stage, Vivian said about Audrey:

She wanted to keep control, and at some point she let go of that. . . . I mean the bylaws were basically set up to keep them in charge. It was three and three, but they had a veto power or they got to pick the seventh person on the board. . . . (p. 5)

### Trust.

"The hardest part of collaboration is having people from diverse backgrounds learn to trust each other" (Cynthia Marshall, *Cities in Schools*, Melville and Blank, 1993, p. 35).

Four of the five interviewees mentioned trust during the long interviews. Audrey's comment about trust was perhaps the most significant of all, because it came late in the interview session without any direct question seeming to prompt it. Up until that time in the interview, Audrey's memories were filtered through rose-colored glasses--everything about the evolution of The Cottage was positive and perfect. At the end of the interview, the researcher said, "Is there anything else you can think of that I should know?" (p. 7).

Audrey said:

No, maybe tomorrow. . . . I remember in the beginning, about the money, that sometimes I felt that you all didn't trust us. I mean we were relinquishing all this money, but you were doing so much of the work, but I got a sense sometimes, and I don't know whether it was Leah maybe. (p. 7)

The interviewer responded by saying, "Those were hard times. We didn't know each other. We didn't have the basis of trust yet, and it had to be worked on" (p. 7).

Audrey replied:

Yeah, but I think more of the distrust was on your side than on ours. Yes, really, I guess because of Marvin who brought you all in. We trusted him implicitly. And we knew and we loved you. We just got along so well from the beginning. You had the same vision. It was meant to be, but, yes, I was aware of the mistrust. (p. 7)

Audrey also spoke of mistrust when speaking about relationships with other leaders of the neighborhood network of nonprofit groups. Talking about Rob Warren, who worked with Covenant Housing, she said,

You know I complain about how difficult Rob was with The Cottage, but the man is charismatic. He is good. He has got great ideas and a charming personality, but a lot of us who have worked with him have a mistrust and there is a sense of competition that he has instilled in us that he is going to be bigger and better and get more money. I mean he got a million dollar grant! We would never get that. Oh, yeah, we did from the federal housing something. . . . (p. 10)

Vivian mentioned trust a number of times during the long interview. In speaking of the first meeting of the five women, she said, "But I think that first meeting with Audrey and Mary Jo was very warm. I don't think that kind of hesitation on their part came until later" (p. 3).

Remembering the first meeting with leaders of the Liberty Heights social service network, Vivian said, "I felt not trusted at that meeting. I felt we had to prove ourselves . . ." (p. 4).

Responding to a question about challenges in the early stages of the organization, Vivian said, "It was not easy at all. Audrey, it is so hard to remember this because she is so totally trusting now, but she was very suspicious, suspicious is the wrong word, wary . . . yeah" (p. 5).

In discussing the debates between The Cottage and Covenant Housing, Leah was asked, "Do you think it was because we didn't fit their formula of a nonprofit in that neighborhood?" (p. 7).

She replied, "We were not part of them. We were really outsiders. . . . I don't know that they didn't trust us, but we were foreign. I don't mean that they thought we were evil" (pp. 7-8).

As Cynthia Marshall (Melaville and Blank, 1993) reasoned, it is a challenge for people from diverse backgrounds who want to collaborate--trust is essential. The two women from the inner city had a Christian spiritual undergirding in their vision for The Cottage and in their daily work in the neighborhood; the three women from the suburbs represented three faiths--Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish--and had an ethical sense of justice and caring which motivated their efforts to serve at-risk families. The two inner city women were devoted to prayer and to sacrifice and lived modestly; the three women from the suburbs, although committed to the evolving dream of The Cottage, worked in other jobs each day and lived a more affluent life style.

When Leah was asked, "We talked about the challenges of it, between the various groups, The Covenant versus The Cottage, but we didn't talk about The Cottage versus The Ark. Did you sense that challenge?" (p. 14) she said:

Yes, I did, and maybe because I was Jewish. Many of the people, the children were Hispanic and Catholic, and I didn't want to be a mission--you know a missionary, I don't know what The Covenant is, I don't know what that exactly means. I don't know what denomination it is or what Gregory's religious inclinations are, but I didn't want to be part of that. (pp. 14-15)

Marvin spoke of trust early in the interview and said:

There was a sense of suspicion in general because this would have been different in a lot of ways [from the ways] that the [other neighborhood nonprofits] places worked. Most of these places [other nonprofit groups in the network] evolved

from the inside out, out of the church mission. These were three outsiders coming in, wanting in effect, to do business. And with Audrey and Mary Jo there was a lot of suspicion. So that had to be worked out. And I think I had a little role because they trusted me. (p. 3)

### Expertise.

Pennings (1980) wrote of the "tangible aspect of social resourcefulness"; he stated, "Naturally this supply could be labeled 'economic' in that it indicates the availability of know-how as a production factor of new firms" (p. 157). This "know-how," "expertise," or "talent" was mentioned by all of the founders of The Cottage during the data gathering sessions.

Looking at "before" photographs of The Cottage, Audrey said, "I had the idea, but we didn't have the expertise that you had, and Vivian and the construction expertise Leah had" (p. 2).

When asked "What do you think your job was in getting this all to happen? What role did you play?" Audrey said:

My connection with Covenant housing for one thing. And my familiarity with the neighborhood. Because I didn't have the expertise, I just had the desire more than anything that it happen . . . . I was always standing in awe of you and Vivian and Leah and the things that you knew. You just knew how to handle things. . . . (p. 2)

Again Audrey used the word "expertise" and said: I just felt that it was very appropriate to relinquish very much of the real planning of the program for the kids and the teachers. That was not my area of expertise, and it was yours, and I just felt that you would handle it really well. (p. 4)

Mary Jo said, in talking about the five women founders:

And we were quite different people. The thing that I thought was neat was that the three women, Judy, Vivian, and Leah, brought different skills

and so that is one way it worked. Just the fact that each person had knowledge in a particular area was crucial to the development of the child care center. And I think Audrey and I brought knowledge of the neighborhood and the families . . . . We didn't know very much about any of the areas that the other women were gifted in, but we did know this community. . . . And we also knew a little bit about going through the trenches of raising money. . . . (p. 4)

Mary Jo also said in response to a question about suggestions for other groups wanting to start a nonprofit social service organization, "Bring expertise in" (p. 20).

Vivian was asked, "So what in the world did the ladies from the suburbs bring to the project?"

She replied, "Well, Leah brought her construction stuff. . . . Ultimately you [Judith] brought all of the education stuff that was terribly important once we were open. . . . And basically you and I were raising money for those first two years" (p. 7).

The interviewer asked Leah, "What do you think made it work with all of these challenges? How were we able to pull this off?" (p. 22)

She replied:

One of the reasons it succeeded or opened is that each of us came with good working skills about what we were giving this place. I mean, you knew what you needed in the day care. I knew what I needed to build it. Vivian knew what she needed. I think the foundations were really good, and if you have good foundations, then you don't crumble. (p. 22)

When asked, "What do you think that Audrey and Mary Jo brought that we [the suburban women] didn't bring?" Leah said:

Oh, I think that it is difficult to ask me. I think Mary Jo and Audrey allowed Covenant to work with us. I didn't see them giving as much. I didn't think that they should though, but I didn't think their input into the opening--I didn't see it on the scale that you and Vivian. (p. 23)

While looking at the "before" photographs of the center space, Marvin said, "Anyway, another lucky thing was the mix. You were involved and had an educational expertise which made a difference even in the planning" (p. 8).

The interviewer said to Marvin, "When you look at these pictures, you realize what it took to get it off the ground. So why did it work?"

Marvin said among other things, "It worked because of the people involved, coupled with a lot of competence" (p. 13). He added, "I have to give Leah a lot of credit even though she was such a problem. She has a powerful energy to get people involved. Leah has a soft spot, but without Leah there never would have been a day care center" (p. 9).

### Contacts.

Contacts for pro bono work, financial support, and relationships with the community nonprofit groups and neighborhood residents were an important component in the evolution of The Cottage. Both groups of founders tapped into professional and social resources for support. Audrey repeatedly spoke of her "connection with Covenant Housing" and her "familiarity with the neighborhood" (p. 2) as assets. She added later in the interview, "And hey, we knew Marvin Weinstein . . ." (p. 5).

When the interviewer said to Audrey, "Do you remember when we [The Cottage] had to go under your 501(c)(3) because it took a year to get our papers and we had to go out and ask for money and we couldn't without a 501?" she replied, "Yes, well, Covenant Housing did that for The Ark, and we did it for The Cottage and also for College Chance which is now incorporated separately. I felt really good to have spin-offs" (p. 4).

The contacts with other nonprofit groups in the neighborhood were critical for each of these organizations in the initiation stage. And the connections continued to be important for The Cottage in its early life. When Audrey was asked, "What made

it work [The Cottage evolution], and why did it happen?" she responded by saying:

I mean all of the ministries of the Church of the Redeemer have worked with only their reputation to go on; for fifty years things have been happening in this neighborhood. It has not transformed the neighborhood that much, but the lives of a lot of people have been transformed . . . . I'm always so pleased when children from The Cottage come over to our primary program. (p. 8)

The interviewer said, "They have that good foundation which makes a difference," and Audrey replied:

It sure does. We see it all the time with the Cottage children and the primary children moving up, that continuity is so important. In contrast are the kids who just come in off the streets and have never been involved in anything, what they trust or even who they trust. (pp. 8-9)  
The interviewer then said:

Dave Snyder always talks about this neighborhood support system as being "cradle-to-grave." All of those groups who are independent, but work together with the same population. Do you think all of those groups are supportive of each other? (p. 9)

Audrey said, "Yes, I think so. . . . Everybody knows The Cottage. Hell, I don't even like to go to the Covenant ministries meetings. I like to see the other directors: it is not that big a thing" (pp. 9-10).

In speaking about the neighborhood social service network, Mary Jo said,

Also we were able to bring the knowledge of people like Burton and Gregory and others who were sort of with us in this, and so we had that spiritual support. With that combination, even though we had our ups and downs--you know, getting permits and figuring out the nuts and bolts of it was not easy, but I think we had the basic things that would make negotiating the differences possible. (p. 4)

When Marvin and the interviewer were discussing The Church of The Redeemer, the various mission groups, and the complex collaborative efforts of the nonprofit organizations in Liberty Heights, the researcher said, "And the connection does help, doesn't it?" and he replied, "Absolutely, and the central character is Gregory" (p. 1).

Leah said, "I don't think that we could have succeeded without Covenant. I think Covenant gave us--what is the word, that people would open the doors for us. They definitely gave us credibility" (p. 5). Again at the very end of the long interview with Leah, as the discussion was focused on the number of pro bono professionals that Leah brought into the project, she said:

But would we have gotten that without The Covenant? You know, who was our law firm--whoever they were, would they have done it for you or me or anybody? But because we were working with the Covenant, maybe that's why they helped. (p. 28)

The interviewer said, "Why do you think they would give us help because we were part of Covenant?" and Leah concluded the interview by saying, "I don't know, but that is one of the things that I think we were lucky to get involved with Covenant. It gave us credibility" (p. 28).

The contact with Marvin through Leah is what made the connection between the two groups of women founders. Vivian said about an early meeting with the three suburban women, "I guess Leah had talked to Marvin and told him about the idea cause at that meeting Marvin was pushing Covenant" (p. 3).

Later in the interview Vivian, talking about Marvin, said:

He really wanted us to do it with Covenant, and I suspect he tried to smooth the waters when they were rough. And we never would have gotten into Covenant [without him] because he gave us credibility because of who he was as a person, but also because of the money. (p. 8)

Talking about the neighborhood of Liberty Heights, Vivian said, "Audrey and Mary Jo had the connections in the community. They had the connections



with Covenant; we never would have had the place without them" (p. 6).

Vivian spoke about other contacts the suburban women had with professionals in the area:

And we brought in a lot of people who, if you look at it, have really fallen by the wayside now, but Leah brought in helpers with construction, architects, and engineers, pro bono stuff. Dave Snyder was invaluable, and they wouldn't have had him without us. And he got us into those foundations. It would have been a different story without him. And we brought in different people that they [the Covenant and the Ark] didn't have any access to. And we brought in people who gave not huge amounts of money, but some money as well. And there were a lot of people like Dave who did open a lot of doors. (pp. 7-8)

Vivian said later in the interview, "Waverly School was not a small part, I think in terms of our contacts with people like Dave who gave us credibility . . ." (p. 13).

Audrey said much the same thing about the suburban contacts, "You knew a lot of people who could help with that sort of stuff" (p. 3).

The interviewer replied, "We were like you, we just sort of stumbled along," to which Audrey replied, "Oh, but your range of acquaintances were enough to help" (p. 3).

### Time.

Sarason (1972) posited that time played an important part in the creation of settings. He believed that founders of organizations were beholden to time in the "before-the-beginning phase" (p. 35) as they confronted history and were "dominated by the future" as organization timetables were developed (p. 61). During the initiation and innovation stages (Kimberly et al., 1980) of The Cottage, the founders did not realize the extent to which their lives and the life cycle of the emerging organization would be

subject to time, both past and future. Striking out independently to create a nonprofit corporation with a distinctly different governance structure than other nonprofit social service groups in the neighborhood network, the founders in their inexperience believed, erroneously, that they were in control of the timing. Both Dryfoos (1991) and Melaville and Blank (1993) warn that collaborative ventures take time. Dryfoos writes, "These new relationships take time. At least a year of negotiation, preparation, and orientation prior to initiation seems to be required to set up these special programs" (p. 133). Melaville and Blank state, "Visions that are truly shared take time to emerge" (p. 44).

When Mary Jo was asked, "Do you remember some of those early challenges and how did we handle them? How did we get through all those hurdles we had to get through?" she replied, "I guess the hurdles were delaying and timing. Everything we thought would happen more quickly than it did. . . . I think what I remember is just that everything moved more slowly than we hoped" (p. 5).

Marvin spoke of "the long time it took for Audrey and the three" (p. 4) women to come together.

Marvin, Vivian, and Leah also spoke of the timing of The Cottage creation in terms of personal lives, environmental conditions, and serendipity. Marvin said:

My own commitment to The Cottage has grown deeper because I've watched it and my belief in it has deepened. In fact, it is like a little piece of luck. It is like we hit the right thing at the right time. (p. 7)

The researcher said, "What do you mean?"

He replied, "Well, the way the city is working, there is nothing better that we could be doing with our money" (p. 7). In talking about his bringing the two groups of women together, he said, "I do believe that the coming together of the two groups was just good timing" (p. 9). He also said in response to why it worked, "It was going to happen" (p. 9).

Vivian and Leah talked about the environmental conditions at the time. Vivian said:

Then there was what was going on socially at the time with the city just getting worse and worse, the violence just getting worse and worse, and it just seemed that dealing with young children was where it was at. (p. 1)

Leah said:

Well, I think the timing did play a part. The external timing of what was happening in the world was a piece of it, and the timing in our lives, don't you. . . . We had something to give and maybe the time to do it. Not that we were not working, but we didn't have children underfoot. This would have been very hard to do in 1979.

(p. 13)

When Leah was asked if she remembered the random killings in the city in 1989, she responded:

I do very much. . . . I think you can document them. There is no question about it. They were in the newspaper every week. I even remember where I was sitting with Vivian the day it was brought up because we just heard about another one on television. We were at that tennis place. (p. 12)

### Risk-taking.

Kimberly et al. (1980) described five leadership characteristics of a dean of a new medical school and identified one of these qualities as risk-taking, "Second, he was a risk-taker, willing to experiment with new ideas in an often uncritical fashion" (p. 27).

Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) also wrote about risk-taking in emerging organizations. They stated:

Every act of organizing is an experiment. We begin with desire, with a sense of purpose and direction. But we enter the experience vulnerable, unprotected by the illusory cloak of prediction. . . . We are willing to commit to a system whose effectiveness cannot be seen until it is in motion. (p. 74).

In gathering data for this study, there were various ideas of the risks involved in starting The

Cottage. Vivian said, "I certainly can't imagine doing it again because of what I know now; being naive really helped. We were really risk-takers, and that is not my natural thing. If we did it again, we would be so careful . . . ." (p. 14).

Marvin seemed to concur when asked, "So if you had to do it all over again, could we do it and know more than when we first started? Was it blind luck? Is there anything we learned out of this?"

He said:

I think we learned some things that would get in the way, like we would want all our money in place before we made a big commitment. Claudia [director of The Cottage] talks, she says she could fill another place, so we ask, "Could we do it again?" And yet we have had such a financial struggle to keep this place open, we would want \$500,000 in the bank before we would do it. That would probably be the block that would stop it before it started. (p. 10)

Others involved did not think starting an organization was such a risk. According to Marvin, "One of the things he [Gregory] said was, 'if it goes, it goes, and if it doesn't, it doesn't'" (p. 3).

Leah strongly believed that there were no risks involved. In talking about a meeting between the five women founders of The Cottage and other leaders of Liberty Heights social service groups, she said, "But I kept wondering, what difference did it make? They [the other group leaders] had nothing to lose . . . . What would they have lost? How would they have been hurt?" (p. 10).

The interviewer said, "You mean it was like a gamble. If it worked, it worked, and if it didn't, it didn't."

Leah replied, "Right, they didn't have anything on the line" (p. 10).

The researcher asked, "What about the \$100,000 from The Ark? Do you think that was a concern--that at least a piece of it they would have lost?"

She said in response:

I don't think they would have lost it. They would always have had \$100,000 there. That would have

been always more than covered, and maybe they wouldn't have done exactly what we did, but what they thought was adequate would have been done.  
(p. 10)

Toward the end of the interview, the researcher said to Leah, "How does another group do what we did? What are the ingredients that make something like this work because it is an incredible risk?"

Leah reacted vehemently, saying, "What was the risk!"

The interviewer said, "You don't see a risk?"

"No," responded Leah.

The interviewer asked, "Even for us? I know you said it wasn't a risk for The Covenant, but you think for us it was not a risk?"

Leah said, "What could we lose? We would have lost time, and our bubble would have burst" (p. 25).

In discussing the challenges in creating a setting, the interviewer said to Mary Jo, "Do you think knowing what you know now about the challenges we had to face and how much longer it took than we thought it would, do you think you could ever do it again?"

She replied:

I say "yes" because we are doing it again in a sense at The Ark because, well, first of all I had been at Covenant Housing and I know what it was like to buy buildings that had 940 housing code violations and correct those. . . .

Currently with The Ark we have renovated in this ministry, the basement space downstairs and with Jonas's help and contractors for the elementary kids space, and now we are in the process of doing the arts center, all of which requires the permits and the time line which is never ever the way it is supposed to be. . . . So I would, because I feel like I am doing it again.

Hopefully, I am growing to the place where the frustrations and the delays and the interpersonal workings, you know it's been a number of years now, that I could roll with those punches a little more easily. But I would, I would be involved with almost any beginning project

because that's kind of what we are about in this neighborhood. It seems to be happening in some way on every corner. . . . (p. 17-18)

### Tenacity.

Melaville and Blank (1993) believe, "Partners interested in integrating services must develop a process of change powerful enough to overcome multiple layers of resistance--in attitudes, relationships, and policies . . ." (p. 19). They further state, "When recruiting members, organizers should look for people who will bring clout, commitment, and diversity to the table" (p. 25). According to this team that studies social policy, "Commitment relies not only on intentions, but actions" (p. 25).

In collecting data for this study, the theme of tenacity, stick-to-itiveness, or commitment appeared in some fashion in all five interviews. Audrey, in thinking about the early days of the organization, said, "I never had any doubts that it would work. I mean, it was meant to be--it was going to happen" (p. 2).

Leah had much the same view when she was asked by the interviewer, "How did those two 'angels' as you called them from the inner city and the 'suburban women' as they called us, how did we ever pull this off with such diverse backgrounds and experiences and make it work?"

She answered, "I just think we were rather tenacious. We set small goals each time. I mean we decided that we had to have a 501(c)(3), and we found someone who would do it for us" (p. 6).

Mary Jo was the acknowledged peacemaker in the group of five women. She could bridge the gap between the two groups of women, which she did frequently, as well as be the go-between for The Cottage and the other social service groups connected with Covenant. In thinking about the initiation phase of the corporation, Mary Jo said:

And then even with our own little group, I remember one thing I felt where I felt uncomfortable with Leah on something to do with

the construction, I don't remember the specifics, I just remember that my feelings were hurt on it. And I think it probably had to do with Covenant Housing, but I truly don't remember, but we stuck with it and that's the thing. (p. 6)

Later in the interview Mary Jo spoke again of the challenges she had to face and her feeling of commitment. She said:

I didn't ever feel like I wanted to give up. I didn't want us to give up The Cottage dream. Never. But, because I often felt I was too emotional (my feelings got hurt easily), that the tension, particularly at one meeting, I think it was at The Market Place, I just remember thinking it's going to go along. It is going to happen. I don't want to be the go-between; I don't want to have to juggle Burton and his temperament which wasn't always easy and the different ones, and I just don't want to do it. It's taking too much of an emotional toll. And that is when I had a talk with myself and with Audrey, and she said, "Hang in there. This is just one phase, and we are going to get through it." That is the only time I felt like leaving during the construction stage when we were hammering things out with Covenant Housing. I guess I never felt like it wouldn't happen. I felt like it could happen without me when I was getting in that kind of mood and it would have. But just because of my own dislike, almost neurotic dislike of conflict, I thought, "Who needs this? I'm out of here." But fortunately I didn't leave. (p. 16)

Vivian had much to say about tenacity and the evolution of The Cottage. When asked, "Why and how did you think you could do this?" Vivian said among other things:

But I don't think we had any idea of what we were getting ourselves into. Yet, I don't ever think we thought of backing out. We just kept going no matter what we were confronted with, no matter what disappointments in terms of the building, in terms of the money, that we ran into. (p. 2)

The interviewer said to Vivian, "There were so many challenges. What kept us going?"

She replied:

Plus we were so determined, for whatever reason, to continue. And I think for you and I it became a matter of principle almost. We had gone this far and we were not going to stop, but we had to talk Leah into continuing from time to time because she would be really ready to go. (p. 6)

She also stated, "But initially you and I provided the momentum; I mean we had to have Leah's drive, and Audrey's dream, and all of that, but I really think we kept it going in the most practical way" (p. 7).

When Vivian was asked, "Is there any other role you played in this period?" she answered:

Well, as I said earlier, you and I kept it going in that it wasn't the drivenness that Leah had, but it was persistence. I think persistence was needed. You know all those times that Leah wanted to back out, why we didn't just say, "Fine!"

Barbara was also persistent. (p. 13)

Vivian believed that Waverly School, which the suburban women's children had attended, played a part in the tenacity which surfaced during the evolution of The Cottage. She stated, "I think it [Waverly] instilled us with a spirit of things can be done. Somehow we had a very powerful belief that things could work, that we could do it" (p. 13).

Marvin spoke of commitment as he reminisced about the first meeting with leaders of the other groups in the Liberty Heights network. He said, "But then it felt like there was a real commitment from you three. You were really serious" (p. 3). In thinking about the challenges which occurred after these early initiation meetings, he said, "It wasn't like everybody met at church and hugged each other. So that was another challenge to work through, and I have to commend everybody for sticking with it and not walking" (p. 5).

Later in the interview when Marvin was asked, "So why did it work? That is the thing I am trying to



figure out," he answered, "Well, it worked for two reasons, because of commitment and persistence" (p. 9). He also said:

But all in all, when you look back, it's a wonder it didn't fall apart five times. If everyone knew what they knew, they never would have started. But that is true of many things, but it was a good mix even though it was a problematic mix. (p. 10)

## Chapter Five

### Conclusions, Reflections, Implications, and Recommendations

#### Discussion of Findings

##### Purpose of study.

The purpose of this study has been to describe the evolution of a nonprofit corporation, The Cottage Family and Child Care Center, from its conceptual stage in 1989 through its institutional stage (or first two years of operation) in 1994 in order to identify the ingredients required to create and to sustain a viable educational organization. Below are conclusions based on the findings and related to the research questions.

##### Research questions.

1. What were the environmental conditions that necessitated the creation of a community parent and child care center?

The late 1980s were times of violence in most major cities of the United States; the city in which this study was based was no exception. The actual location, the neighborhood of Liberty Heights where the center was created, had a child poverty rate of 42%. In a neighborhood survey of 57 respondents done in 1989, it was determined that 68% of the households were headed by a woman, most women had at least one child, and 42% were unemployed. Audrey (one of the inner city founders of The Cottage), who worked in this neighborhood for 25 years, described young pregnant mothers on welfare just sitting around empty apartments with toddlers playing at their feet. There was a cycle of poverty and dependency in this community which needed to be broken. A network of social service supports existed for the citizens of Liberty Heights but did not include child care or

education for the youngest of the citizens and their parents.

## 2. What was the vision of the founders?

The founders sought to create a family and child care center to support at-risk families that wanted to escape the cycle of poverty and dependency. This support they envisioned would be accomplished in a number of ways. First, parents who wanted to work or to enroll in a job training program could go to work or to school with the knowledge that their child was being cared for in a safe and nurturing environment. This was an important first step in collaborative efforts between the parents and the center; if parents did not trust the teachers and feel secure in the environment, they could not grow in their professional or parenting roles.

Second, The Cottage was always envisioned as an educational organization; its systems and approaches to everything from hiring to curriculum were modeled on schools, not day care centers. The founders wanted not only to create a nurturing milieu, but to establish an environment which was intellectually stimulating, supporting the premise that a child's academic success was not determined by nature alone.

Third, literacy was a thrust from the very beginning. The founders knew that for young at-risk parents and their children to succeed, they would have to be literate. Books as symbols of this new culture were visible as soon as the space became outfitted. Illustrations of classic children's books, such as Good Night Moon, Curious George, and The Edible Alphabet, were framed and hung even in the bathrooms and kitchen as symbols of this ethos.

Fourth, the founders wanted The Cottage to be available for the youngest children in this community. Not only was infant and toddler child care almost nonexistent in this area, but the founders realized that for the child at risk for school failure, waiting until preschool or kindergarten was too late. They believed in preventive education and comprehensive early intervention for both parent and child.

Fifth, the founders wanted parents to be involved in The Cottage. By paying tuition, no matter how small an amount, volunteering in some way on a routine basis, and participating in parenting sessions, the founders anticipated that the parents would grow in their parenting skills, increase their self-esteem, and serve as mentors to other young parents. The fact that "family" was the first descriptive word after the name "Cottage" attests to the significance of a pro family program in the vision of the founders.

Sixth, the founders wanted The Cottage to be holistic, to address the needs of the whole child and family; the suburban women especially thought in terms of health, employment training, and jobs. Both groups of women recognized the importance of the continuum of care which the neighborhood network could provide.

Seventh, the founders envisioned The Cottage as an attractive addition to the neighborhood, a place where parents and children would want to be every day. This was a new mind-set for people in this area where traditionally buildings were run-down, trash was underfoot, and beautification projects were rare. The Cottage culture was one where care and hope predominated; growing plants inside and outside, colorful and safe play equipment, and proper maintenance of the center were to be indicators of this belief.

Eighth, the founders predicted that this model would be funded by a patchwork of public and private monies.

Ninth, the founders hoped that the creation of The Cottage would be an incentive to other groups in other cities who were looking for a way to stop the violence and to break the cycle of poverty and school failure for at-risk children.

3. In what way did diverse groups come together on this project, and why were they able to join forces and to work toward a common goal?

The collaborative efforts in creating The Cottage involved two major groups of founders (three professional women from the suburbs and two activist

women from the inner city), a shadkhan or marriage broker who brought the two groups of women together, and a neighborhood network of social service groups that had varying degrees of involvement with the founders. In all of these collaborative efforts, there were periods of intense struggle and tension as well as periods of euphoria and celebration.

The coming together of the two groups of women founders was somewhat random. It was fundamentally a matter of contacts, a theme which surfaced in the data from the interviews of the founders. Marvin, a retired builder and social worker as well as an active supporter of community nonprofit organizations, knew of The Ark (a community center for school-age children in Liberty Heights), its leaders, and their dream of a child care center. He also knew of the group of suburban women with a similar dream. Marvin, the shadkhan, said, "Well, two and two is four. So why not just put a meeting together" (p. 2).

In looking at these two groups of women, there were striking dissimilarities and similarities. On the surface, the women were quite different. The suburban women had careers which kept them busy, and the dream of reaching out to at-risk children and parents was to be only a part of their lives. Their motivation was also more an ethical response of justice and caring rather than a religious commitment.

The inner city women essentially had devoted their adult lives to at-risk children and families. They spent their days laboring on behalf of the poor, and their motivation was spiritual. In attempting to explain this devotion that founders Audrey, Mary Jo, and some others in the scattered church community demonstrated, O'Connor (1994) wrote in The Call to Commitment, "They were called to be a part of a movement of people who: live sacrificially, make a clean break with the ways of the world, love the poor, and long to follow Jesus wherever he leads" (p. XI).

In this collaboration between the two groups of women, the suburban women were definitely seen as outsiders initially. According to Marvin, the shadkhan, "These were three outsiders coming in, wanting, in effect, to do business" (p. 3). Even

physically, in terms of location, the insider-outsider roles were evident to everyone. The suburban women drove into the neighborhood and learned to avoid the potholes, to cope with the lack of parking spaces, to endure the vandalism, and to steer clear of the most dangerous areas. The inner city women, long acclimated in Liberty Heights, walked the streets daily and were part of the fabric of the community.

Despite the surface differences, there were surprising similarities. All five of the women were mothers of grown children. The common experience of mothering and the more or less parallel ages of their children gave the women an existential unity. They knew firsthand the enormous challenge of parenting and the significance of a supportive environment for parent and child. For the five mature women looking back on the past, their memories of mothering became fused with a growing realization that being a parent is one of the most important jobs in the world for which there is little education. Moreover, each woman had a history of being an advocate for children and had manifested this in the past in numerous ways.

Another similarity was that each one of the women had entrepreneurial experience demonstrating some risk-taking behavior (Kimberly, 1980; Pennings, 1980; Van de Ven, 1980; Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1996) prior to the creation of The Cottage. In the mid-1980s Audrey and Mary Jo had created The Ark, the center for school-age and teenage children in the community. This required fund-raising and space rehabilitating expertise; furthermore, it was an indication that these two inner city women had dreams they had been able to realize. Leah, Vivian, and Judith, showing a particular kind of maverick personality although they worked in different fields, had all formed their own practices or businesses years before the vision of The Cottage emerged. They, albeit to a lesser extent than the two inner city women, also had been able to envision something and to see it through to fruition. These entrepreneurial tendencies which all the women founders exhibited, combined with a certain amount of tenacity, were to become important harbingers of success in this collaboration.

Both groups of women had contacts, an important theme which came up again and again in the long interviews with the founders. The inner city women had contacts in the neighborhood and in the local social service network. They were known by families, individuals, and businesses in the neighborhood and had deep roots in community support groups. Audrey and Mary Jo also had contacts in the foundation world. For a number of years prior to the creation of The Cottage, on behalf of The Ark, they had culled foundations that were sympathetic to the needs of inner city children, written proposals, and met with numerous development officers to solicit funds for start-up and operating needs.

The suburban women had different kinds of contacts which proved to be essential as well. Their first contacts were used to find a site and a group willing to collaborate. Next, they relied heavily on friends and associates to provide professional pro bono help and to lend credibility to the entire venture. Early on in the translation of the vision and the development of the organization, the suburban women learned that getting people on board and raising money depended upon identifying and contacting a small circle of people who were either known for philanthropic generosity or professional achievements.

One contact told the suburban women, when they were in the preliminary stages of setting up the organization, that the first thing she looked at in a brochure, letter, or solicitation was the list of names on the left-hand side of the letterhead. She said, "If she knew anyone of merit associated with the organization, she would consider the request seriously; if she didn't, it was immediately discarded." The suburban women suspected this was the case but didn't realize the power of the "old boy network." After the conversation with this contact, they worked intently on an advisory board that would provide credibility. The suburban women also used friends, family, and associates for access to foundations as well as for direct solicitation. Over and over, knowing someone proved to be critical for success.

The collaborative efforts in this project were multilayered. On the first layer, within each small group of inner city and suburban women, there was respect, trust, and commitment to each other as well as to the project. They shared a common vision and power structure, however fluid. Without defining who or when a person was in charge, they had an intuitive grasp of what worked best in any given situation. The collaborative efforts within the small groups were facilitated by years of friendship and working together, the suburban women at Waverly, the private cooperative school, and the inner city women at Covenant Housing and The Ark. In both the inner city group and the suburban group, the women had known each other for at least 15 years. This investment in time did not eliminate all the problems in collaborating but certainly contributed to the success within the small groups.

The second layer of collaboration involved the two groups of women working together. This was a much more challenging collaborative effort. As has been pointed out, while there were many similarities between the two groups of women, there were dissimilarities as well. It took time, much more than either group imagined, for the "we"- "they" mentality to dissipate and the new common identity of The Cottage to emerge. In the long interviews the themes of power and trust were mentioned by various founders. The suburban women felt that for a long time the inner city women were not willing to share power. Women in both groups felt a sense of mistrust during the evolutionary stages of the organization. In addition, money, another recurring theme in the interviews, was frequently an impediment in the collaborative efforts of the two groups of women founders.

The third layer of collaboration included the two groups of women and the rest of the nonprofit groups in the neighborhood network, most specifically The Church of The Redeemer, The Ark, and Covenant Housing. In this layer of collaboration, the themes of power, money, trust, expertise, time, vision, contacts, risk-taking, and tenacity surfaced. Despite the test this collaboration posed, the groups were finally able



to come together and The Cottage was created. This eventual coming together was possible because the issues between individuals and among groups were superseded by the overarching concern of everyone to reach out to at-risk families. The founders of The Cottage, as well as The Church of The Redeemer, The Ark, and Covenant Housing, wanted to prevent future violence, to strengthen the likelihood of school success for these children, and to end the cycle of poverty and dependency for the families in the neighborhood. The shared vision became the driving force behind the efforts to collaborate. The contacts, expertise, risk-taking mentality, and tenacity of the founders ultimately made the collaboration work.

4. What were the major challenges along the continuum from the conception to the completion of two years of operation, and how were they handled?

The major challenges in the evolution of The Cottage centered around collaborative issues of time, trust, power, and money. The women from the suburbs, with a vision for supporting at-risk families, knew from the beginning that they needed grass-roots community support to survive. They accepted the fact that they would be viewed as "outsiders" wherever the center would be located. This need to collaborate unconsciously created a "we"- "they" mentality and tended to polarize people and issues.

The time required for the collaboration and the creation of the setting was unanticipated and thus seemed particularly unusual and threatening to everyone. Governance issues surfaced almost immediately as visions were described, and they took time and patience to be resolved both formally in the articles of incorporation and bylaws and informally in the daily workings of the organization.

Personality clashes periodically dominated the evolution of The Cottage. The two founders with the original dreams of the center (Audrey and Leah) were charismatic but were also at times confrontational and challenging.

In the early stages of the organization's life cycle, the interactions with other nonprofit social service groups in the neighborhood were often marked by tension and suspicion. Marvin said in the long interview, "So this wasn't easy stuff. It wasn't like everybody met at church and hugged each other" (p. 5).

Conflicts of cultural values and attitudes occurred between the two groups of women, among The Cottage and the other social service groups in the network, between The Cottage Board of Trustees and the residents of The Ellington apartment building, and between the staff of The Cottage and the parents. Most of the cultural conflicts were due to the different groups coming together and needing to find a common ground in which to operate. Values, ideas, ways of doing business and communicating, likes and dislikes, and language were all rooted in past cultural mores and dictated behavior.

Over time, as the new culture of The Cottage was being created, people began to come together, understanding what was valued and accepting how things were being done. The legal documents of the organization, the policies of the board, and the handbooks for staff and parents spelled out specific boundaries and rules. The emerging culture of The Cottage was more amorphous; it was created through common experiences, always with an eye on the vision of the founders. Eventually, stories of survival against the rats or the crabby neighbor or the repeated robberies united the founders, the board, and the parents.

Traditions began to develop which gave everyone a sense of continuity and comfort. Parent conferences in the fall and spring, weekly walks to the library with the children, a cake baked for each birthday child, and 7:30 a.m. board meetings were just some of the traditions that were created.

Symbols were used to reinforce ideas and feelings. The logo of The Cottage, which spelled out the words in children's blocks with a flower sprouting between two blocks, signified a child-centered place where growing would occur. A drawing of a picket gate

on the brochure symbolized a safe, nurturing spot, a cottage where parents and children were welcome.

Time, although it had its own pressures, permitted trust to develop among the many groups that were trying to work together. Expertise also encouraged trust. As individuals began to see what others could accomplish, trust grew.

Money was a recurring theme in the evolution of The Cottage, both in the "supraindividual reality" (Sarason, 1972, p. 67) of the organization's actual development and in the perspectives of the founders. As in many projects, it was difficult to determine actual costs. The founders' sense of financial security constantly shifted. Originally with a \$100,000 grant from a private donor that the inner city women had secured and \$50,000 seed money from the Winston Foundation with only a dream to describe, things seemed possible. Leah estimated that the construction would cost \$250,000, so the women felt that they were well on their way.

In the end, however, the start-up costs were \$370,000; there were many building and fire code requirements to address requiring consensus and more money. This additional burden took a toll on everyone; for every euphoric moment when monies came in from foundations or private donors, there were hours of debate, doubt, and suspicion as to who had access to money and who was willing to contribute funds.

Despite these obstacles, the vision propelled everyone toward the finish line and the center was opened. The lack of operating funds required the trustees to make a decision to operate at half capacity until government funds could be obtained. All along the way, constant reassessment and flexibility were required to cope with the issue of money.

## Reflections on Findings

### The role of the researcher.

In this qualitative case study the participant-observer role of the researcher had much to do with the data collected. Easy access to the

founders of the organization and the ability to have real conversations with the interviewees rather than needing to ask formal questions produced results that were "deep, detailed, vivid, and nuanced" which according to Rubin and Rubin (1995) "is one of the goals of interview design" (p. 76).

Depth, as Rubin and Rubin define it:

Means getting a thoughtful answer based on considerable evidence as well as getting full consideration of a topic from diverse points of view. . . . People are more willing to talk in depth if they conclude that you are familiar with and sympathetic to their world. (p. 76)

This researcher did not have to convince interviewees of an interest in the topic or identify individuals who could provide diverse points of view; because of the prior participant-observer role, these facts were evident and generated responses that were deep.

According to Rubin and Rubin (1995), "You ask for detail by requesting particulars. Life is lived in details; the evidence for the generalizations you draw from the specifics" (p. 78). An advantage in being a founder of an organization, as well as the one studying the organization, is knowing what particulars to examine. The researcher had firsthand experience of the organization's development, the chronology was firmly in mind, and thus the questions asked of the interviewees could be focused on specifics of the evolution.

In addition to depth and detail, Rubin and Rubin (1995) believe the interview should result in vivid responses. They state, "To be vivid, an anecdote or example need not be dramatic or extreme, but it should create a strong vicarious experience for the audience" (p. 80). By coming to the interviews and showing "before" and "after" photographs of the site and providing memorable verbal prompts of incidents which occurred during the evolution, the researcher was able to elicit vivid responses from the founders.

Nuance, according to Rubin and Rubin, means "precision in description . . . it explores subtlety in meaning" (p. 81). By being a participant-observer,

the researcher had a firm grasp of the structure and maturation of The Cottage, and although the collaborative efforts and complex relationships were difficult to define, the researcher, with a basic understanding of the evolution, was freed up to explore and to question the more elusive and subtle aspects of the early life cycle of the corporation. In this search for nuance, a more comprehensive and meaningful gathering of data was possible.

### Emerging Theory Development

The literature review, interviews with the founders of The Cottage, and themes and concepts identified in the data collection and analysis generated three theories in the mind of the researcher.

First is the notion of serendipity. Despite the theories of planning espoused by Melaville and Blank (1993), Miles and Randolph (1980), Pennings (1980), Sarason (1972), and Van de Ven (1980), the researcher believes that success in creating a setting, an educational organization, or a collaborative venture has much to do with pure luck, happenstance, or being in the right place at the right time. To be sure, the ingredients (power, money, trust, risk-taking, expertise, time, vision, contacts, and tenacity) required for these successes must be present, but what is the assurance that opportunities to use these ingredients will be made? One does not plan environmental conditions (Kimberly et al., 1980) or predict a "galvanizing community event" (Melaville and Blank, 1993, p. 23). How do you identify key people to spearhead a founding? Although "contacts" brought the two groups of founders of The Cottage together, what was the likelihood that this would happen or could happen again in another environment? The process defied logic and traditional ways of doing business. Without becoming bogged down in the age-old philosophical debate between determinism and free will, the researcher would merely like to emphasize that serendipity, "an aptitude for making desirable discoveries by accident" (The Random House Dictionary,

1988, p. 1201), played a part in the creation and evolution of The Cottage.

Both Leah and Mary Jo, despite their fundamentally different backgrounds, personalities, and motivations, used the same word in the interviews to describe this phenomenon. Leah said, "I still wonder at the miracle of it" (p. 14). Mary Jo said, "I felt like it was a miracle that we found each other . . . it was the perfect combo" (p. 12).

Vivian used a different term to explain why The Cottage came to be despite the obvious hurdles. She said, "It is a mystery. It feels somewhat like the mystery of therapy to me. I know what you do and what steps you go through, but I really don't know what makes it work in the end" (p. 13).

Marvin said, when asked why it all worked out, "Well, it worked for two reasons, because of commitment and persistence and because it was going to happen. I don't know why or where the three of you [suburban women] came from" (p. 9). At another time in the interview, he said, "In fact, it is like a little piece of luck. It is like we hit the right thing at the right time" (p. 7).

It is the belief of the researcher that serendipity, as much as planning for The Cottage, determined success. The researcher has not seen this concept presented directly in the literature having to do with organizational becomings or collaborative ventures. The closest reference to serendipity is a statement by Dryfoos (1994), "A whole array of events, some serendipitous, some interrelated, have resulted in the creation of hundreds of centers in schools that bring together health and social service and make them accessible to students and their families" (p. 206).

The second theory, the conundrum of collaborative education, evolved from the literature review and the data collected in the qualitative research. Notable organizational theorists (Kimberly et al., 1980; Miles & Randolph, 1980; Sarason, 1972; Van de Ven, 1980) and experts in the process of change (Kanter, 1983; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Lewin, 1947) have much to offer the reader who wants to create a setting or to develop an idea. Policymakers and researchers in the burgeoning

nonprofit arena (Bryson & Crosby, 1992; Gies et al., 1990; Herman & Heimovics, 1991; Massarsky, 1994; and Ostrowski, 1990) have defined the characteristics of nonprofit organizations and outlined challenges for those interested in creating and sustaining nonprofit organizations. Visionaries and pioneers in the worlds of service integration and school-linked collaboration (Adelman, 1993; Adler, 1994; Dryfoos, 1991, 1994; Epstein, 1995; First, Curcio, & Young, 1994; Kagan, 1993; Melaville and Blank, 1993; Rigsby, Reynolds, & Wang, Eds., 1995) have petitioned for integrated services and collaborative work and have described various programs in existence that have attempted to serve the at-risk child and family. While these visionaries admit that there is no one best way to design integrated programs, there are commonalties to note and in some cases, as in the work of Melaville and Blank, specific guidelines for creating cooperative or collaborative systems of pro family education and human services.

It would be foolhardy indeed to ignore these rich resources when considering the creation of a new setting. Although the founders of The Cottage dove into the project "driven more by action, than by theory," as Sarason et al. (1971) noted most creators do, they would have learned much from other ventures. The work of reflective practitioners such as Goldenberg (1971), Sarason et al. (1971), and Sarason (1972), as well as the organizational studies of Kimberly et al. (1980), Lewin (1947), Miles and Randolph (1980), Pennings (1980), and Van de Ven (1980), were available, albeit unknown to the founders when they envisioned The Cottage. While there is limited research material on the creation stage of organizations and that which does exist is not particularly current, it is nevertheless useful. Furthermore, the research and writing on integrated services that have emerged in the 1990s are enlightening to community activists and to groups that are considering integrated services involving cooperation or collaboration.

The flip side of an immersion in education approach became apparent in the data collected in this

study. All of the interviewees acknowledged the enormous task of creation and collaboration. Some of the interviewees even went so far as to say that they would not venture forth again. One person (Marvin, p. 10) said, "If everyone knew what they know now, they never would have started." Another (Vivian, p. 14) said, "I certainly can't imagine doing it again because of what I know, being naive really helped. We were really risk-takers and that is not my natural thing. If we did it again, we would be so careful." Marvin added, "And yet we have had such a financial struggle to keep this place open, we would want \$500,000 in the bank before we would do it. That would probably be the block that would stop it before it started" (p. 10).

So the conundrum of education for those seeking to create a nonprofit collaborative venture raises its ugly head. How much information is useful, and how much stifles initiation? In the literature review the researcher was able to find limited but helpful information on the creation of organizations and the role of nonprofit organizations in education and social service. In addition, there is a growing body of knowledge concerning education and social service integration. There is, however, nothing in the literature about the potential dangers of too much information that could abort the creation of a setting, a warning that surfaced in the data collected.

The third theory that grew out of the data collected as well as from the literature reviewed concerns the role that individual people play in any project and the relationships among individuals involved in the creation of a setting or organization. According to Adler (1994), "People, not organizations, collaborate . . ." (p. 6). The danger in describing an ideal scenario for collaborative work, or in assembling a "how-to" list for nonprofit groups interested in creating school-linked program or any nonprofit organization, is oversimplifying the task and eliminating the personality factor.

The founders of The Cottage had vision. They also had a certain amount of power, money, expertise,



contacts, tenacity, and risk-taking behavior. Both groups of women had altruistic intentions, the inner city women being motivated by religious convictions, the suburban women driven by moral imperatives. The leaders of the neighborhood social service network had repeatedly shown their personal and professional commitment to the poor and disadvantaged citizens in the community and had histories of cooperative ventures.

Yet despite these "necessary ingredients" and seemingly powerful motivations, the creation of The Cottage foundered at times and then was resurrected. Why? Adler (1994) foreshadowed this important consideration which is easy to dismiss--individual personas matter. In studying the early stages in an organization's life cycle, Kimberly et al. (1980) looked at a specific individual, the dean of a medical school, rather than outlining the qualities a founder should have. According to Heifetz (1994), we need adaptive rather than technical solutions today as we attempt to make changes or to lead people in new directions.

Thus it is individuals who must adapt, and herein lies the challenge. Looking through the behavioral lens of Van de Ven (1980), founders or leaders must have a vision but be flexible. They must be personally committed to the project but have the ability to enlist support from others. They must be able to communicate their ideas but be equally willing to listen to the ideas of others. They must be able to bring something to the project--money, contacts, expertise, power, tenacity, and a risk-taking approach but also be willing to share these ingredients. They must be secure in who they are but be interested in other cultures and amenable to learning different languages and understanding diverse symbols.

From these distinct backgrounds and perspectives, individuals who wish to cooperate or to collaborate in school-linked programs or community-linked services must be interested in creating a new system, setting, or organization. Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) write, "Locale by locale, individuals and groups figure out what works for them. They exchange

information; they discover symbiosis. From their efforts, a system emerges with its own identity, its own characteristics" (p. 78). Melaville and Blank (1993) caution founders of new organizations and collaboratives and quote Jenne Jehl from New Beginnings, "There has to be a willingness to meet each other halfway . . . a flexibility to put egos and protocols aside" (p. 28).

The lesson to be learned is that vision, planning, motivation, and the necessary ingredients of power, money, trust, risk-taking, expertise, time, contacts, and tenacity are not enough to ensure a successful venture. The founders, leaders, and implementors of any project must not only be charismatic, but coactive and patient. Dryfoos (1991) states, "These collaborative arrangements [school-linked or community-linked education and service integration programs] are complex, requiring a high level of cooperation and communication" (p. 132).

She adds, "These new relationships require a lot of time. At least a year of negotiations, preparation and orientation prior to the initiation seems to be required to set up these special programs" (p. 132). The experience of New Beginnings, a collaborative venture involving four agencies serving families in San Diego, California, is one such example. According to Melaville and Blank:

The collaborators spent 2 years on the planning, then in September 1991 a trio of portable classrooms sprouted at the edge of the concrete playground at Hamilton Elementary. A sign on the wall of one portable announced, "New Beginnings Center for Children and Families." (p. 107)

The actual time line of The Cottage's evolution and the information gathered from the interviews of the founders confirm Adler's thesis and are remarkably consistent with the collaborative experience of New Beginnings in terms of time needed for creation.

### Implications

Dryfoos (1991) writes, "The marriage between the school and 'everything else' is taking place. It is

not merely a marriage of convenience; it is one of dire necessity" (p. 135). She, like many other educational researchers and visionaries (Adelman, 1991; Adler, 1994; Epstein, 1995; First et al., 1994; Kagan, 1993; Melaville and Blank, 1993; Rigsby et al., 1995), believes that we have no real choice to cooperate or to collaborate in our attempts to educate and support at-risk families. The old top-down, categorical, large-scale programs do not work; moreover, new challenges (the easy access to drugs and weapons, the increased violence in the schools and elsewhere, the high divorce rate and incidence of single parent families, the erosion of the nuclear and extended family, and the growing number of illiterate and untrained students leaving school at age 16 or 18) demand different solutions. According to Bryson and Crosby (1992), "We live in a 'shared-power world,' a world in which organizations and institutions must share objectives, activities, resources, power or authority in order to achieve collective gains or minimize losses" (p. xii).

Despite this imperative, there is reluctance on the part of many to change the old ways of doing business; for those who are willing to try new methods of supporting at-risk families, there is the challenge of how to go about doing so. The findings in this study support several considerations.

#### Out-of-the-box thinking.

Before an individual, small group, or organization can move toward finding better ways to educate and to support the at-risk family, there has to be a freeing up of the mind and spirit. Many options must be considered in the theoretical realm and practical stage of implementation. Sarason et al. (1971) declared, "One of the most frequent characteristics of the process of creating a setting is the failure or inability to list and examine the alternative ways one can think and act" (p. 59). They referred to this as a "universe of alternatives" (p. 91). According to Adler (1994), Dryfoos (1991, 1994), and Melaville and Blank (1993), there is no one best

way to structure programs for this population group. One commonality found in the various programs described in the literature and in the data gathered for this study is the need for flexibility in problem solving.

#### Collaborative outreach.

Recognizing that no one person, agency, or organization can deal with the dilemma of how to educate and to support at-risk families, the next step must be a reaching out to others in the community in an effort to plan and to problem solve together. Herman (1994) stated, "I take the position that the nonprofit sector and the communities that the nonprofit organizations serve will benefit from greater cooperation among nonprofit organizations" (p. 623). The data collected in the interviews with the founders of The Cottage show how difficult cooperation among nonprofit organizations can be, even when strong motivational forces are at play. The data also show, however, how necessary cooperation or collaboration can be for a successful venture.

#### Disciplined passion.

Kouzes and Posner (1987) write, "Leadership is disciplined passion" (p. xvii). The literature of organizational theory, especially writings focusing on the creation and early stages of an organization, support the concept of "disciplined passion." According to Sarason (1972), "Creating a setting is as much an affair of the head as it is the heart" (p. 67). Miles and Randolph (1980) used the term "organizational imprinting" to illustrate that "the character and structure of an organization as formed in the creation stage persist" (p. 45). Pennings (1980) concurred and wrote, "While organizations undergo modifications and display varying degrees of flexibility, they are cast at birth into a mold that is discernible in all the subsequent stages of their life cycle" (p. 136).

Van de Ven (1980) developed his ideas of entrepreneurial efforts and the study of emerging organizations in similar fashion. According to him, "The conditions under which an organization is born and the processes followed in its initial development have important consequences on its structure and performance in later life" (p. 87). One important finding of the Van de Ven study, later refined by Van de Ven, of the creation of new community human service organizations was that the planning process of the organization had much to do with the organization's success or failure within the first two years of operation. Van de Ven was careful to note, however, that planning alone did not account for success or failure in implementation. He said it was "but one of the important contributing factors" (p. 128).

The passion must be present to spur progress, but it must be, as Kouzes and Posner (1987) state, "disciplined," combined with some sense of order and systems. Sarason's et al. (1971) thinking parallels that of Kouzes and Posner. They wrote: "Utopias require among other things, controlled fantasy" (p. 2).

The data collected in this study support the need for disciplined passion or controlled fantasy in creating a setting or nonprofit organization. Vivian said in the long interview, "We had to have Leah's drive, and Audrey's dream, and all of that, but I really think we [Vivian & Judith] kept it going in the most practical way" (p. 7). Earlier in the interview when she was asked about the challenges the founders had to face and was queried as to what kept the group going, she replied:

I don't know because there were times when Leah wanted to quit. . . . We were so determined, for whatever reason, to continue. And I think for you and I, it became a matter of principle almost. We had gone this far and we were not going to stop. (p. 6).

Audrey talked about having the dream for The Cottage but also being willing to relinquish the planning. She said:

I just felt that it was very appropriate to relinquish very much of the real planning of the program . . . that was not my area of expertise, and it was yours, and I felt that you would handle it really well. (p. 4)

When Leah was asked, "How in the world did five women with such diverse backgrounds and experiences make it work?" she responded, "I just think we were rather tenacious. We set small goals each time. I mean, we decided that we had to have a 501(c)(3) and we found someone who would do it for us" (p. 6). Kouzes and Posner (1987) concur and in The Leadership Challenge develop the concept that change is a process of small wins.

For The Cottage, the passion, the fantasy, or the dream was provided by Leah and Audrey, but together the founders took that passion and reined it in to make it a reality. This discipline took many forms. It was dividing the tasks to be done and assuming responsibility. It was knowing that systems and structure were necessary and setting about to write bylaws and articles of incorporation, parent and staff handbooks, and proposals for funding. It was initiating a governing system with an active board of trustees and a reputable advisory board. It was preparing budgets for start-up and operating costs and seeking funds for both. It was communicating the dream to funders and to families who would be part of the project. It was creating and re-creating time-lines for everything from collaboration to construction. It was moving two steps forward and frequently one step backward toward the goal with the synergetic will power of all the founders.

### The significant role of the university.

In order for the "bubbling up" of private initiatives which Dryfoos (1994) sees occurring to be successful and to be prolific, there needs to be some theoretical and practical support in place. The data collected in this study demonstrate the complexity of the task. The university is the ideal candidate to

fill the void. This support can come in a variety of forms. First of all, the university can encourage research and writing in this area. These studies can be used as background information for policymakers studying change and politicians allocating funds.

Second, the dissemination of information on existing models of school-linked or community programs and the description of how these models came to be can be useful to groups seeking to initiate programs for at-risk families. These information sources can bridge the gap between theory and practice for those interested in creating or collaborating.

Third, the university can address the challenge that any collaboration poses, particularly a collaboration that involves diverse people, disciplines, or cultures. By looking at education and social service supports as joint efforts to help families rather than separate disciplines with distinct agendas, the university can begin to train the leaders who will be going out into the communities and schools to work in more effective ways. This will involve new collaborative ventures involving cross departmental faculty and funding within the university itself.

Fourth, the university can help facilitate change and collaboration through its educational leadership programs. According to Dryfoos (1991), "The bubbling up of ideas, often the result of individual creativity and ingenuity, is indeed healthy and invigorating, but program diffusion is still extremely limited. The existing model experiments are primarily located in places with individual charismatic leaders and sophisticated grant-getters" (p. 135). Clearly leadership initiatives must be encouraged and nourished at the university level.

Fifth, the university can consider integrating itself into its own community as a model of collaborative work. This is happening in a number of university communities such as center city Philadelphia where the University of Pennsylvania has begun to reach out to the at-risk community surrounding the campus. Much as the university laboratory schools of the past were created to teach

students about children, curriculum, and effective ways to instruct students and to evaluate their progress, the collaborative efforts of universities can instruct future educators, health professionals, and social workers how to work productively with each other and with the citizens in the community. Experienced advisory teams can then branch out into the broader community and provide not only credibility but hands-on support.

Knapp, Barnard, Brandon, Gehrke, Smith, and Teather (1994) write:

Because the university is a central player in the preparation of human service professionals, the challenge lies squarely before it to devise and sustain preparation programs that will instill the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to guide collaborative interprofessional work.

(Knapp et al., p. 137).

According to Adler (1994):

Universities are common elements in almost every institutional network of organizations that focus on human service. Thus, they may have an important role to play beyond the preparation of professionals--that of provocateur of collaboration between organizations in the community" (p. 2).

#### The importance of funding.

The theme of money surfaced again and again in the data collected for this study. Not only was it a source of conflict between groups and among individuals, prompting power struggles and periods of mistrust, but it was also the root cause of many of the difficulties that the founders of The Cottage had to face. The founding women had to convince individuals and foundations that a proactive, holistic approach to education was essential in stopping the cycle of poverty and illiteracy and that monetary support was needed. The founders also discovered that public monies were not available until a center had proven its viability. Moreover, as difficult as



start-up funds were to assemble, operating funds were even more challenging to obtain. Once the doors of The Cottage were open, the trustees were able to persuade some individuals and foundations to contribute seed money for special programs (early intervention, literacy, baby-sitter club for pre-teen girls) but had great difficulty soliciting funds for general operating expenses. This is not unusual. According to Massarsky (1994):

The typical nonprofit creates a host of programs in concert with its mission and then seeks grant monies to support them. When programs are fresh and innovative, the fund-raising task is easier. But as programs become more commonplace, regardless of their need and importance, the task gets more difficult. (p. 383)

There are many financial hurdles to overcome even if a vision is present. Founders of nonprofit organizations or groups wishing to collaborate must be or know "sophisticated grant-getters" (Dryfoos, 1991, p. 135), experienced public policy professionals with knowledge of state and federal funding programs, or altruistic individuals with deep pockets. Most likely, as in the case of The Cottage, all of the above will be necessary to survive. In addition, community leaders, school systems, social service agencies, politicians, and policymakers need to take a look at long-term funding for schools and social service support for at-risk children and families. There is no quick fix for the at-risk child.

### Recommendations for Future Study

This case study of the early life cycle of The Cottage has produced a number of findings. It would be valuable to study a comparable nonprofit organization in the same manner to see if parallel findings materialize. It would be interesting as well to see if identical themes emerged from other studies of collaborative discussions or initiatives involving school-linked or community-linked programs. In addition, it would be beneficial to study an analogous

evolution of a public venture to see similar findings surface.

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## APPENDICES

Appendix A  
Preliminary Question Form  
For Founders of The Cottage to Complete  
Prior to the Long Interview

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Today's Date:

Place:

Time:

Interviewer's Name:

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Subject's Name:

Birth (Maiden) Name:

Sex:

Age:

Residence:

Marital Status:

Children (number and ages):

Education (highest level):

Emphasis/specialty (if any):

Occupation:

Appendix B  
Main Questions, Probes, and Follow-ups  
To the Founders of The Cottage

Main Questions:

1. Can you describe the environmental conditions in the city in 1989? What was happening that made you think something had to be done and that you had to be involved?
2. Did you think you had a solution to the problem? What was your vision of the future?
3. When you look at these "before" and "after" photographs of The Cottage space, what words come to mind to describe the process from idea to reality?
4. How would you describe your role in the evolution of The Cottage? Did it change?
5. How do you think that the diverse groups were able to come together to work toward a common goal?
6. What were the major challenges along the way from the idea of a family and child care center, to the opening day, to the institutional stage of The Cottage, approximately two years later, and how were these challenges handled?

Probes:

1. Steering probes, "Sorry, I distracted you with that question, you were talking about . . ." (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 208).
2. Detail probes, "Who was involved? What did you do then?"
3. Sequence probes, "When did that happen? Do you think it was before or after . . . ?" (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 209).
4. Experience probes, "Can you describe the situation as you remember it?"
5. Evidence probes, "What do you mean when you said the start-up procedures were endless? Can you give me an example?"
6. Slant probes, "How did you feel facing the challenges during the evolution? Did you ever feel alienated?"

Follow-up Questions:

1. Considering contradictory information, "Can you clarify this for me?"

2. Approaching sensitive issues, "Can you help me here, I'm a bit confused?"

3. Getting past pat answers, "I know this has been stated about The Cottage, but I would really like to hear your view."

Appendix C  
Cast of Characters (in order of appearance)

Dave Snyder: attorney, board member of The Cottage, experienced trustee of many nonprofit boards

Gregory Chapman: founder and de facto head of The Church of The Redeemer

Audrey: inner city activist, founder and co-director of The Ark, founder and Vice President of the Board of Directors of The Cottage

Leah: owner and manager of low-income housing complex, suburban founder, general contractor and President of The Board of Directors of The Cottage

Marvin: retired builder and social worker, knowledgeable "behind-the scenes" volunteer for various nonprofit organizations, marriage broker who brought the founders of The Cottage together

Mary-Jo: inner city activist, co-director of The Ark, founder and Secretary of the Board of Directors of The Cottage

Vivian: clinical social worker, suburban founder and Treasurer of the Board of Directors of The Cottage

Ramiro Enriques: child killed by gunfire in the streets of Liberty Heights

Judith (Judy): educator, suburban founder of The Cottage, researcher of this study

Susan Smith: young associate in law firm who did pro bono zoning work for The Ark

Aurora Simmons: young attorney who helped with pro bono zoning work

Priscilla Devon: African American social worker well connected with black community

Allison Weinstein: Marvin's daughter, Covenant Enterprise employee, board member of The Cottage

Rob Warren: property manager of Covenant Housing

Burton Branscome: President of Covenant Housing

Paul Goering: Director of Hombres' House

John Burlington: pro bono attorney, negotiated agreements among groups and prepared nonprofit corporation papers

Rosemarie: first director hired prior to opening of The Cottage

Barbara: elderly, vigorous volunteer for many groups in neighborhood network, selected by Audrey and Mary-Jo to be balancing vote between two groups of women founders

Jane Wilkins: head of Morris Foundation and president of city foundation coalition

Claudia: director of The Cottage during the time of the long interviews

## VITA

Judith Knotts was born in Allentown, Pennsylvania, on August 7, 1940. She received her elementary schooling in Allentown and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and was graduated in 1958 from Eden Hall, Convent of the Sacred Heart, an independent girls boarding school located in a suburban section of Philadelphia. In 1962 Ms. Knotts received a B.A. from Newton College of the Sacred Heart, Newton, Massachusetts, where she majored in philosophy, served as president of the student government, and was selected by the faculty and students to receive "The Outstanding Student Award."

Following graduation Ms. Knotts pursued graduate studies in education at Hunter College and The University of Virginia. She earned a M.S.Ed. in Educational Policy and Management from the University of Southern California in 1981. In 1994 Ms. Knotts began a doctoral program at the northern Virginia campus of Virginia Polytechnic and State Institute as a member of the first educational leadership cohort group. She received a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) in 1997.

Most of Ms. Knotts's professional career has been spent as an administrator in independent schools and as an educational consultant. She has been a teacher and assistant director at The Country Day School, an early childhood center for children age 2-6, assistant director for The Langley School, the largest private elementary school (K-8) in the state of Virginia, and acting director at The Harbor School which has a preschool and primary program.

From 1981-1997 Ms. Knotts was president of EDUCATION UNLIMITED, an educational consulting firm that provided services to school directors and boards of trustees on a wide range of topics including enrollment, public relations, physical plant, staff relations and training, curriculum, parent education, trustee support, and student monitoring. As a consultant, Ms. Knotts has worked with all grade levels in a variety of school settings.



Judith Knotts is the co-author with Elizabeth Gregg of Growing Wisdom, Growing Wonder (1980, New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc.). This well received book for parents and educators describes the intellectual development of young children and includes a preface written by T. Berry Brazelton, noted pediatrician. It was a main selection in Early Learning Book Club and Young Parents Book Club, featured in *Independent School* and recommended by the Fairfax County Association for the Gifted and Talented.

Currently Ms. Knotts is Head of Middle School at The Potomac School, an independent school (PreK-12) in McLean, Virginia, where she is a member of the administrative team and is responsible for the day-to-day operations and over-all planning of the division. One of the founders of The Cottage, Ms. Knotts continues to be a trustee of the nonprofit organization and to serve as a pro bono educational consultant to its staff.

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Judith Knotts