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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE EFFECTS OF AN ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR  
WOMEN ON ASSERTION AND SELF-ESTEEM

BY

ARLENE M.C. YOUNG

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN

COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

(FALL 1987)

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E. E. Fox  
(Supervisor)

M. J. [unclear]

Catherine [unclear]

Date: September 18, 1957

To my mother, Margaret,  
and my children,  
Margot and Andrew.

## ABSTRACT

A formative evaluation of an assertiveness training workshop for women found that the program offered at Athabasca University led to an increase in subjects' assertiveness and self-esteem. The subjects were self-selected from a university continuing education population. The workshop approaches included: lectures, cognitive restructuring, behavioral rehearsal, behavioral coaching, and group discussions. The workshop topics included: definitions of assertiveness, aggression and non-assertiveness; socialization; interpersonal rights; initiating social contacts; making and refusing requests; and giving and receiving criticism. An analysis of the scores from the Gambrill-Richey Assertion Inventory indicated that subjects' assertiveness increased after taking part in the workshop. The scores on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory indicated that subjects' self-esteem decreased at the end of the workshop but that it had increased over the pretest level at the two month follow-up. The qualitative data, responses to questionnaires, provided information on which topics and approaches used in the workshop were the most effective in bringing about that change. The lowest ranked topic was that of the effects of socialization.

That topic was of little value to the subjects, who seemed aware of the effects of their upbringing. Of greater interest to the subjects were practical techniques for expressing oneself while exhibiting concern for others. The subjects' comments and the literature indicate that the topic of socialization should be deleted and an exercise on the expression of anger be added. In addition to the finding about program content, the description of the program offered will provide base line information for further research into the effects of program modifications.



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## I. INTRODUCTION

Assertiveness training workshops similar to that offered by Athabasca University, the subject of this study, have been offered for several years by the Women's Program, Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta. The purpose of the workshop is to teach assertiveness concepts to women, to help them acquire assertive behavior skills, and to reduce their anxiety about using those skills. An evaluation planned in the manner suggested by Stake (1967) was undertaken to determine whether or not the workshop was successful in helping participants to achieve those goals, and to assist trainers in determining what revisions, if any, would enhance the workshop program. In keeping with Stake's outline, the evaluation was concerned with the rationale for the workshop, what was intended to happen, what was observed to have happened, and what was judged to be the value of the outcomes.

### Rationale for Assertiveness Training for Women .

The rationale for assertiveness training for women has evolved, in part, from the thoughts of several feminist writers of the last half of the twentieth century (de Beauvoir, 1952; Miller, 1976; Gilligan, 1982). These writers have concluded that women are socialized to be

passive and to put their fate in the hands of the dominant, male oriented society. Women are expected to be dependent and to derive meaning for their lives from service to others, consequently, they have become sensitive to the needs of others. The concomitant expectations of service to others and dependence upon others for their livelihood have reduced women's motivation and ability to meet their own needs. They have been especially reluctant to risk expressing themselves in a manner that might lead to conflict and rejection. That women experience depression more than men has been thought to be related to their inability to express negative emotions; the literature reviewed in Chapter II is conclusive on that point. Assertiveness training has been shown to be effective in helping women to use their own power on their own behalf to reduce depression and to increase self-esteem.

Rationale for the Study . Research undertaken with respect to assertiveness training mentions the type of intervention used but rarely describes it with more than a single word or a short phrase, e.g. cognitive behavioral. Accordingly, this evaluation was designed to include a detailed description of the workshop program and to evaluate its effectiveness using both quantitative and qualitative means.

Research Hypotheses . There were a number hypotheses generated for this study.

Hypothesis 1: That the starters and the completers cannot be differentiated on the basis of their scores on the Gambrill-Richey Assertion Inventory and the Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory.

Hypothesis 2: That subjects' assertiveness and self-esteem increase after participation in the workshop program and that the increases become greater over time.

Hypothesis 3: That subjects would find some topics or approaches in the workshop program more helpful than others in bringing about those changes.

The information gathered through this evaluation served four purposes. First, the nominal data provides information about the subjects in comparison to the population of the female work force of Alberta and with respect to the differences between those who start and those who complete the workshop program. Second, quantitative measures provided data about the effectiveness of the workshop program with respect to self-reported changes in assertiveness and self-esteem. Third, the qualitative data indicates how the workshop program brings about change and how it could be made more effective from the participants perspective. Finally, the data attesting to program effectiveness, and the

detailed program description provides base line data for further research into program modifications.



## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature concerning assertiveness training for women and program evaluation is considered in this chapter. First, feminist theory which had the greatest influence on the workshop program and has provided the rationale for assertiveness training for women is examined. Second, research findings are considered which examine the merits of various approaches to and content of assertiveness training for women programs. Finally, literature which had the greatest influence on the design of this evaluation study is considered.

Feminist Theories . Simone de Beauvoir (1952) was the first of the recent wave of feminist writers to observe that women's development is not well fostered by society. She traced the development of western society in which men have been the central agents of change and thought and women have been dependent upon them. Men's thoughts about how society operated and how it ought to operate have become the ideals of society. Women's thoughts and ideals have not been considered except to note how they were different and inferior. The exceptional and lesser position of women and of women's thoughts has become so accepted that it has become part of the language. The norm and the universal are

expressed in the masculine gender. The female is the "Other", the exception to the norm. That observation applies even to English which, unlike the French of de Beauvoir, has a neuter gender.

Jean Baker Miller (1976) explored the theme of the "Other" in relation to the development of psychoanalytic theory. She stated that what Freud interpreted as the incomplete development of women's personalities was rather an entirely different pattern of development that he had failed to perceive. She reiterated Freud's ideas emphasizing that men's whole struggle, in psychoanalytic terms, is to become autonomous. On the other hand, women's struggle is to grow and develop while remaining intimately connected with others. In a recent unpublished manuscript, Miller (1984) developed that idea further by stating that an effective goal in counselling women would be for them to grow from "being-in-relationship" (someone whose existence is defined by a relationship), to the more active "being-within-relationships".

Miller (1976) attributed low self-esteem among women to two things: They have not been recognized and rewarded for the effort they have expended in nurturing relationships, and they have felt unable to acknowledge or express their own needs. Women have nurtured relationships because their own physical and

psychological well-being has rested upon the health of those relationships. They have feared taking action to promote their own needs, once acknowledged, because to do so might tear the fabric of the relationships on which their well-being has rested.

In a similar vein, Carol Gilligan (1982) examined Kohlberg's theory of moral development and concluded that he failed to acknowledge women's moral development adequately. Like Miller and de Beauvoir, she observed that psychological theories did not fit women. Gilligan wrote that: It is not so much that psychological theories have been in error about women's development, but that they have failed to consider it at all. The error has been a basic one: Universal patterns of human development have been defined from the study of only one part of the population, men and boys. That error in logic has led to a bias of the sort which those familiar with psychological testing will perceive and recognize as limiting the applicability of the pattern so derived (Sattler, 1982). Women and girls' development were considered, if at all, after the pattern was drawn. When observations revealed that the pattern fit them poorly, women's inadequate development, rather than an inadequately designed pattern, was blamed.

In Kohlberg's theory, which Gilligan (1982)

examined, moral development occurred through six invariant stages. At the sixth level, moral decisions were made by drawing upon universal ethical principles. While men in late adolescents often achieved that stage, women rarely achieved more than the third stage. "At (the third) stage morality is conceived in interpersonal terms and goodness is equated with helping and pleasing others" (Gilligan, 1982, p.18). Gilligan decided to study women who were in the throes of a moral dilemma such that any decision they made would be harmful to someone. They were deciding whether to maintain or abort their pregnancies (Gilligan, 1977). Gilligan found, contrary to Kohlberg, that women did develop to a principled stage of moral reasoning. The principle that women used, one that Kohlberg had failed to perceive, was one that Gilligan called the principle of nonviolence. It was not an abstract principle, like the ones considered by Kohlberg for his sixth stage, rather, it was firmly tied to interpersonal relationships by feelings of caring for others.

When assertion no longer seems dangerous...the notion of care expands from the paralyzing injunction not to hurt others to an injunction to act responsively toward self and others and thus to sustain connection. A consciousness of the dynamics

of human relationships then becomes central to moral understanding, joining the heart and the eye in an ethic that ties the activity of thought to the activity of care. (Gilligan, 1982, p.149)

The principle of nonviolence defined by Gilligan is one of the major themes that emerges from the research literature on assertiveness training for women. It will be shown in Chapter IV of this study that it is also a major theme that emerges from the questionnaire responses of the subjects.

Assertiveness Training . Research about specific approaches and components of assertiveness training has been examined to understand the relationship of these elements to the workshop design. The theoretical approaches to training were considered to determine which one, or which ones, led to the greatest acquisition of skills that subjects could then generalize to the greatest number of situations. Research which examined the content of programs was also considered. The literature which examined the perception of assertiveness by others was examined because of its relationship to the interpersonal implications of assertiveness. Finally, special consideration was given to the literature about the approaches and components of assertiveness training for women.

The definition of assertiveness training used for this study and the workshop is the one expressed by Lange and Jakubowski (1976). It is a useful definition because it acknowledges the interpersonal concerns that are so important to women (Miller, 1976; Gilligan, 1982). Lange and Jakubowski's definition is: That clients "learn to express thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in direct, honest, and appropriate ways which do not violate another person's rights" (p.7). To express feelings directly, especially negative feelings, is contrary to the way most women have been socialized. In fact, they have been socialized to consider the feelings of others, and to ignore their own (Miller, 1976; Butler, 1981; Gilligan, 1982). The failure to express feelings, especially when asking others to change their behavior, or to express anger, can lead to feelings of futility, depression, and poor self-esteem (Miller, 1976).

Assertiveness training has been found to decrease depression and anxiety as well as to increase assertiveness (LaPointe & Rimm, 1980; Shaffer, Shapiro & Sank, 1981), and to increase self-esteem (Lange, Rim & Loxley, 1978; Stake & Pearlman, 1980; Tait, 1977). Both individual and group processes have been shown to bring about those effects (Linehan, Walker, Bronheim & Haynes, 1979), regardless of the sex of the therapist

(Robbins, 1977). A two-day workshop was shown to be as effective as the same number of hours of treatment spread over several weeks (El-Shamy, 1977).

Greater increases in assertiveness were found with approaches which used a combination of behavioral rehearsal and cognitive restructuring. Rational emotive and self-instructional cognitive restructuring approaches were found equally effective (Carmody, 1978). Behavioral rehearsal with cognitive restructuring was found to be more effective than: behavior rehearsal or cognitive restructuring used alone (Goldfried & Goldfried, 1979), desensitization alone (Delange, 1977), and behavioral techniques alone (Alden, Safran, & Weideman, 1978; Baer, 1977; Jacobs & Cochran, 1982). Behavioral rehearsal with cognitive restructuring was also more effective for socially anxious clients (Elder, Edelstein, & Fremouw, 1981), and was superior in facilitating the generalization of assertive behavior to other situations (Jacobs & Cochran, 1982; Steel, 1977; Wolfe & Fodor, 1977). The latter finding is important because assertiveness is known to be a situation specific rather than a unitary trait (Galassi & Galassi, 1978; Rich & Schroeder, 1976). The greater generalization with cognitive restructuring may be due to an increased sense of personal competence that seems to develop with that

approach (Safran, Alden & Davidson, 1980).

There is evidence that the content of assertiveness training programs needs to emphasize the importance of both verbal and non-verbal behavior. Understanding both aspects of the behavior is especially important because many people do not discriminate between assertion and aggression (Hull & Schroeder, 1979; Rakos, 1979). In part, that is a language problem, e.g., the Concise Oxford Dictionary (1976) gives self-assertive as a synonym for aggressive, but non-verbal aspects of assertiveness, such as speech loudness (Rose & Tryon, 1979), eye contact and latency of response (McFall, Winnett, Bordewick & Bornstein, 1982; Rose & Tryon, 1979), can make the distinction between them clearer.

A positive reaction to assertiveness cannot be assured even with careful attention to verbal and non-verbal behavior. Assertion was found to be more likable and polite than aggression but less likable than non-assertion (Hull & Schroeder, 1979; Woolfolk & Dever, 1979). Those most involved with an individual stated, in the abstract, that they preferred assertiveness although in practice they preferred non-assertive behavior (Gormally, 1982). Reactions to assertiveness varied in direct correlation to the assertiveness level of the recipient of the behavior, and negatively if a



traditional attitude to women was held (Kern, Cavell & Beck, 1985). The negative perception of assertiveness was reduced when empathic statements were added to negative assertive statements (Hoffman, Kirwim & Rouzer, 1979; Hrop & Rakos, 1985; Rakos, 1979), but even then assertion was found to be less ~~likely~~ than non-assertion (Kern, 1982). In extreme, but not unusual, situations women who were abused were found to suffer from an increase in the incidence of violence when they used assertive responses (Meyer-Abell & Jensen, 1980).

For women to express negative feelings or to express themselves in a manner that is assertive and may be thought to be aggressive can be seen as a violation of the principle of nonviolence that Gilligan (1982) revealed as being so important to women. On the other hand, the expression of positive assertions is "entirely consistent with the feminine stereotype" (Muehlenhard, 1983, p.158). Women are known to experience more anxiety than men when expressing negative feelings; in contrast, men experience more anxiety in the expression of positive feelings (Butler, 1976). "The most anxiety provoking assertive situations described by women seemed to be those which involved disagreeing or expressing anger" (p.57).

The findings that men and women react with anxiety

to the expression of different emotions, has led to the suggestion that training for the two sexes should differ. Men's programs should focus on assertive rather than aggressive expressions of anger; women's programs should focus on the reduction of internal conflicts that seem to inhibit assertiveness (Butler, 1976; Furnham & Henderson, 1981). Butler (1976) stressed the importance of building women's skills and confidence to be assertive by beginning with the easiest topics like giving and receiving compliments, and working to the more difficult like saying no, giving and receiving criticism, and dealing with conflict. The necessity of building skills and confidence may account for what Lafevre and West (1984) found: Trainers spend relatively too much time on saying no when subjects really want to deal with interpersonal conflict. Although it may not be subjects' main concern, the topic of saying no, being less threatening than that of interpersonal conflict could be an important step in increasing subjects' skills and confidence.

Evaluation Methods . The design for this evaluation study has drawn principally upon Stake (1967). Stake's model focused particularly on the transactions that take place in the course of program delivery. He stated that it is important to gather as much information

as possible about the intents of the trainers, participants, and institutions. He also stressed the importance of observing the transactions that occur in the educational process under study and of using multiple outcome measures. Stake (1983) reiterated recently that the decisions about how to evaluate and what elements to study rest with the evaluator, and that his framework is meant to be descriptive rather than prescriptive.

Scriven's (1966) thoughts about evaluation have also influenced the course of this study. He stated that there are two major categories of evaluation: formative, which is an intermediate evaluation of a program that can still be revised, and summative evaluation, which is an overall judgment of the worth of the program. Scriven's primary interest was stated as determining how well a program succeeded in its own coin, but he also stated that institutional goals must be able to withstand external scrutiny. "How well does the course achieve its goals? It is of course obvious that if the goals aren't worth achieving then it is uninteresting how well they are achieved" (p.21).

Popham (1975) examined a number of research designs and determined that the one group, pretest-posttest design is weak, but that it can be strengthened if the time between the pretest and treatment is short so that

threats to validity, maturation and differential history, are limited. He acknowledges that the "design is particularly useful for formative evaluators who wish to gather data regarding the effectiveness of subcomponents of an instructional program" (p.207). Both Stake (1983) and House (1977) support Popham's opinion on the usefulness of the case study design. Stake thinks that it may lead to a different kind of knowledge, a subjective epistemology that can be lost in more objective randomized studies. House (1977) suggests that some of that knowing may come about by "pattern matching" i.e. the kind of learning that most of us do all the time when we decide whether or not new information fits with what is already known.

Summary and Implications of the Literature. The volume of research considered, has shown assertiveness training to be effective for increasing assertiveness and self-esteem. It has also been shown effective in helping women to recover from reactive depression. Those effects are in accord with the predictions of feminist theory and the theory of assertiveness training.

Particular approaches to assertiveness training have been shown to be effective in promoting the acquisition of the behavior and in facilitating its generalization. Cognitive-behavioral approaches were found to be

effective in increasing assertiveness and in facilitating the generalization of the behavior from one situation to another. A two day workshop has been found to be as effective as the same number of hours of training over several weeks.

For women, the finding that non-assertive behavior was better liked by others than assertiveness may militate against its use. In order to begin to change their behavior, women must be supported for the concern for others that inhibits their assertiveness and begin to understand the violence that they do to themselves through their unassertiveness (Gilligan, 1977). Women are in a double bind. They will feel powerless if they are unassertive, but they may risk an important aspect of their self-image and social isolation by being assertive. There is no totally satisfactory escape from that bind. The best approach in training programs would seem to be one that ensures that skills are acquired and confidence built through behavioral rehearsal and cognitive restructuring and encourages the use of empathic statements to enhance the social acceptance of an assertive statement. In those ways, assertiveness training can teach women how to show equal respect for themselves and others.

The literature considered lent support to the

pretest-posttest, nonrandom design of the evaluation undertaken in this study. Although vulnerable to threats to validity, especially maturation and history, it can be a useful approach to formative evaluation. Increases in assertiveness and self-esteem must be demonstrated in order to establish that the program was effective to some degree. In addition, the consideration of various components of the workshop program, from the subjects' comments will give some idea of which of the various elements were effective in contributing to the workshop experience and outcomes.

### III. METHOD AND PROCEDURES

The method and procedures for the study are examined in this chapter. The aim of the chapter is to describe who was involved in the study, how they were involved in the study, and how the effects of the study were determined.

Trainers . Both of the trainers for the workshop were counsellors at Athabasca University with several years experience. The senior counsellor holds a Master of Education in Counselling Psychology degree and was a candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, also in Counselling Psychology. She had experience working with individual clients and groups in educational and clinical settings. The other counsellor had worked with both individual clients and groups primarily within an educational setting. She was also the evaluator.

Procedures . The workshop was held on two successive Saturdays. The workshop plan drew principally upon two manuals: Responsible Assertive Behavior by Lange and Jakubowski (1976), and Self-Assertion for Women by Butler (1981). The workshop used lectures to impart information and to introduce the central ideas of cognitive restructuring, role playing by the trainers to provide examples of behavior, extensive behavior

rehearsal and coaching in small groups, and discussions with the whole group. Trainers consulted with each other frequently during the workshop to determine whether or not to amend the plan and, if so, to note those changes on the plan. The original plan is in Appendix 1. The amendments to it are listed in Appendix 3.

Sample . The subjects of this study were the participants in a workshop offered by Athabasca University. Publicity for the workshop, making reference to the research project, was sent to all female Athabasca University students in Edmonton and surrounding area. Participants were self-selected either from that population or through association with a member of that population. Of the initial 24 participants, 17 attended both days of the workshop and completed all of the inventories and questionnaires.

Data Collection . Subjects completed two self-report inventories: the Gambrill-Richey Assertion Inventory and the Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory. In addition, questionnaires designed by the researcher were given prior to the workshop, upon completion of the workshop, and two months following the workshop. The preworkshop inventories and questionnaires were mailed to participants the week prior to the workshop, the postworkshop inventories and questionnaires were completed by subjects at the end of the second day of the



workshop, and the follow-up inventories and questionnaires were sent out two months after the workshop. The intention was to keep threats to internal validity to a minimum, until the postworkshop data was gathered (Campbell, 1965; Campbell & Stanley, 1963; Popham, 1975). With the follow-up data, there can be no certainty that any changes have occurred as a function of the workshop. If there are improvements in self-esteem and assertiveness scores, and if the assertiveness scores improve over time, it can be stated that the results are consistent with other studies (Delehanty, 1982; Gambrill-Richey, 1975). The influence of differential histories cannot be eliminated in the time between the posttest and the follow-up. A plausible speculation is that it is the interaction between learned concepts and skills, the individual, and the environment that leads to gains in assertiveness over time. Those gains will inevitably differ in content and degree depending upon which individual and environment is examined (Bronfenbrenner, 1976; Rich & Schroeder, 1976).

Instruments . The Gambrill-Richey Assertion Inventory (Gambrill-Richey) was chosen because it assesses two aspects of assertiveness: subjects' feelings of discomfort or anxiety when they consider making an assertive response, and the probability or likelihood

that they will make an assertive response. For the Gambrill-Richey, it is assumed that the degree of assertiveness is situation specific, i.e. that one individual may respond at different assertiveness levels from one situation to another. It has support as a reliable self-report measure with a test-retest reliability of  $r = .87$  on the discomfort scale, and a test-retest reliability of  $r = .81$  for the probability of response scale (Gambrill & Richey, 1975). Delehanty (1982) reports that the effect of taking the test is not sufficient to affect assertiveness as measured by the test. The data on validity is incomplete, but what has been reported tends to support the use of the inventory (Alexander, 1979; Cammaert, 1980; Delehanty, 1982; Gambrill & Richey, 1975).

The Coopersmith Inventory (SEI) was chosen because it is expected that self-esteem will improve as the individual becomes more assertive and thus, better able to ensure that her needs are met. There has been less research on the SEI than on the Gambrill-Richey and, what there has been done indicates that self-esteem, as measured by the inventory, was not a unitary construct but that it may be closely related to anxiety (Bedeian & Zmud, 1977; Myhill & Lorr, 1978). One study reported a test-retest reliability of  $r = .80$  for males, and  $r = .82$

for females, with KR20 measures of internal consistency between  $r = .67$  and  $r = .75$  (Bedeian, Teague & Zmud, 1977).

The inventories were given to obtain a quantitative estimate of learning; the questionnaires, on the other hand, were given to gather qualitative information about the process by which that learning occurred. The preworkshop questionnaire gathered personal data, e.g. age, occupation, marital status, etc., and ascertained why subjects planned to attend the workshop. The postworkshop questionnaire gathered information from subjects as to the strengths and weaknesses of the topics and approaches and as to whether or not they met their needs (Appendix 3). The follow-up questionnaire determined the elements of the workshop that the subjects thought had the greatest effect, and also determined whether or not they thought that participation in the research project had any effect on the outcome (Appendix 4).

Data Analysis . The quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed in several ways. First, the personal data was analyzed to determine whether or not it could discriminate between the starters and the completers. The starters were defined as those who attended at least one day of the workshop but did not attend the second day or did not complete all of the inventories and

questionnaires. The completers were defined as those who attended both days of the workshop and completed all of the inventories and questionnaires. Chi-square analyses were used to determine if one group differed significantly from the other with respect to a few characteristics: age, marital status, and student status. Furthermore, the proportion of subjects of various ages and occupations were compared by chi-square analysis to those of the female work force of Alberta. Second, the inventory scores of the starters and the completers were examined to determine if the scores of one group could be distinguished from the scores of the other. Third, the quantitative data was analyzed, using  $t$  tests, dependent samples, to determine whether or not the scores on the inventories showed a significant change in the direction expected. Finally, the qualitative data on expectations, workshop approaches, and workshop topics was put into categories a posteriori. Categories were not defined a priori so that subjects would be restricted as little as possible by the researcher's ideas. The resulting compilation of data gave a good idea of how the workshop increased subjects' assertiveness, gave some idea of which parts of the workshop were the most effective in helping them to meet their expectations, and

consequently, illuminated the strengths and weaknesses of the workshop, from the subjects' perspective. Decisions about any subsequent changes to the workshop program will be based upon that data and upon the research cited in Chapter II.

Summary . The quantitative and qualitative methods used in this study provide information by which to evaluate the assertiveness training for women workshop. The quantitative data, inventory scores, help to determine both the direction of any changes in assertiveness and self-esteem, and the magnitude of those changes. The qualitative data, the questionnaire responses, help to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the workshop program from the subjects' perspective. The data generated provide objective and subjective evidence about the effectiveness of the program.

#### IV. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Analyses of the quantitative and the qualitative data were undertaken to determine if the program was successful in increasing subjects' assertiveness and self-esteem, if increases were noticeable more with some subjects than with others, and how the increases might have been brought about. The quantitative data were analyzed using Stats Plus computer software (Madigan & Lawrence, 1982). The format of this chapter is to examine the characteristics of the sample, to restate the hypotheses, then discuss the analysis procedure employed and the resultant tables and findings. A second portion of the chapter describes the analysis of the qualitative findings in detail. A summary concludes the overview of findings and conclusions.

Sample. An examination of the sample indicated that the subjects and the paid female work force of Alberta cannot be discriminated on the basis of the proportions of various ages and occupations. Further, that those who completed the workshop program, the inventories, and the questionnaires cannot be discriminated from those who failed to do so on the basis of the proportions of various ages, marital status, and student status.

The proportion of women of various ages and occupations estimated in the paid work force of Alberta, by Statistics Canada for January of 1986, and the proportion of women of various ages (Table 1) and occupations (Table 2) in the workshop did not differ significantly (.05 level) when the proportions were submitted to a chi-square analysis (Yates correction applied). Furthermore, comparisons of the proportions of completers and starters with respect to age (Table 3), marital status (Table 4), and student status (Table 5), showed that there were not significant differences (.05 level), in the proportions of subjects in those categories.

Table 1

Comparison of Ages: Subjects & Alberta Work Force

N = 24 df = 3

	Ages			
	15-24	25-44	45-55	55+
Subjects	5	15	3	1
Women in Alberta Work Force*	129	290	72	40

\* work force numbers in hundreds

$\chi^2 = .22$   $p = .19$

Table 2

Comparison of Occupations: Subjects & Alberta Work Force $N = 24$   $df = 4$ 

	Occupations				
	Managers**	Clerical	Sales	Services	Other*
Subjects	7	6	1	5	5
Women in Alberta Work Force***	160	172	54	99	42

\*\*\* work force numbers in hundreds

\*\* includes professionals

\* includes students

$$\chi^2 = 3.64 \quad p = .46$$

Table 3

Comparison of Ages: Completers & Starters $N = 24$   $df = 7$ 

	Ages							
	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	60
Completers	3	3	3	2	3	1	1	1
Starters	2	3	0	1	0	0	1	0

$$\chi^2 = 1.57 \quad p = .13$$

Note: The ages are categorized so that a woman between the ages of 20 and 24, is placed in the 20 year category, between 25 and 29 in the 25 year category, and so forth.



Table 4

Comparison of Marital Status: Completers & Starters

N = 24 df = 3

	Marital Status			
	Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed
Completers	4	10	2	1
Starters	4	3	0	0

$\chi^2 = 1.08$   $p = .69$

Table 5

Comparison of Student Status: Completers & Starters

N = 24 df = 1

	Student	
	Yes	No
Completers	15	2
Starters	4	3

$\chi^2 = 1.32$   $p = .25$

Hypothesis 1: That the starters and the completers cannot be differentiated on the basis of their scores on the Gambrill-Richey Assertion Inventory and the Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory.

The mean scores on the pretest of both the Gambrill-Richey and the SEI indicate that the starters report less discomfort with assertiveness, a greater probability of being assertive, and higher self-esteem than the completers. Means and standard deviations are

reported in Tables 6 and Table 7. In view of the small number of subjects in both groups, the data were not submitted to further statistical analysis.

Table 6

Gambrill-Richey Pretest Means: Starters & Completers

	Starters		Completers	
	<u>N</u> = 7		<u>N</u> = 17	
	MEAN	S.D.	MEAN	S.D.
Discomfort	89.29	18.22	101.24	29.18
Probability	102.00	17.40	109.82	19.41

Table 7

SEI Pretest Means: Starters & Completers

Starters		Completers	
<u>N</u> = 7		<u>N</u> = 17	
MEAN	S.D.	MEAN	S.D.
69.14	15.44	66.12	15.95

The data suggest that initial levels of assertiveness and self-esteem may be a factor in the decision to complete the assertiveness training workshop program. The starters mean scores suggest less discomfort with assertiveness, more probability of being assertive, and higher self-esteem than the completers, but it is evident from the large standard deviations that among subjects with similar scores some decided to complete the program, whereas others decided the

opposite. Hypothesis 1 is therefore given support.

Hypothesis 2: That subjects' assertiveness and

self-esteem increase after participation in the workshop program and that the increases become greater over time.

The scores for completers show that there was a difference in the levels of assertion reported at the three times of measurement when those scores are compared by t tests, related groups. The decrease in scores reflected a decrease in the self-report of discomfort with assertiveness and an increase in the probability of making an assertive response from pretest to posttest to follow-up test (Table 8). The results indicated that the mean scores have decreased and that in three of the instances, between the pretest and posttest on the discomfort scale, and between the pretest and posttest, and the posttest and follow-up test on the probability of response scale, the change in the scores reached statistical significance (.05 level).

Table 8

Changes in Gambrill-Richey Over TimeN = 17 df = 16

	MEANS		<u>t</u>	<u>p</u>
	Prettest	Posttest		
Discomfort	101.24	89.82	2.40*	.03
Probability	109.82	100.94	2.23*	.04

	MEANS		<u>t</u>	<u>p</u>
	Posttest	Follow-up		
Discomfort	89.82	87.59	.69	.51
Probability	100.94	89.18	3.77*	.01

\*significant at an .05 level

Table 9

Changes in SEI Over TimeN = 17 df = 16

	MEANS			<u>t</u>	<u>p</u>
	Pretest	Posttest	Follow-up		
	66.12	65.18		.32	.69
		65.18	70.35	-2.77	.01*
	66.12		70.35	-1.62	.12

\*significant at an .05 level

The scores for completers on the SEI indicated an increase in self-esteem between the pretest and the follow-up, with a decrease in scores at the posttest (Table 9). An analysis of the changes in the scores

using t tests, dependent groups found a statistically significant difference between the posttest and follow-up, but not between the pretest and posttest, where a decrease in mean scores occurred, or the pretest and follow-up (Table 9). The lack of significance in the posttest decrease in scores should not obscure its existence. It is likely that participants experienced some degree of threat to their sense of self-esteem possibly due to the difficulty of incorporating new behavior, or simply due to fatigue at the end of the workshop program.

The changes in the Gambrill-Richey and SEI scores are in accord with the predictions of Miller (1976), Gilligan (1982), and research on the expected outcomes of assertiveness training (LaPointe & Rimm, 1980; Shaffer, Shapiro & Sank, 1981; Lange, Rimm & Loxley, 1978; Stake & Pearlman, 1980; Taft, 1977). The results provide support for Hypothesis 2 with respect to the decrease in discomfort with assertiveness and the increase in the probability of an assertive response. There was an increase in self-esteem between the pretest and the follow-up test but a statistically insignificant decrease at the posttest. That decrease may be due to subjects difficulty in acquiring new behavior or to fatigue at the end of the program.

Table 10

Gambrill-Richey Scores from Other Studies

	Gambrill- Richey (1975)	Delehanty (1982)	This Study
PRETEST			
Discomfort	107.70	112.50	101.20
Probability	104.80	98.00	109.80
POSTTEST			
Discomfort	82.00	103.00	89.80
Probability	87.90	92.00	100.90
FOLLOW-UP			
Discomfort		102.00	87.60
Probability			89.18

A cursory examination of the Gambrill-Richey scores, in relation to the scores reported by other researchers, indicated that the ones in this study show changes in the same direction as other studies (Table 10).

Hypothesis 3: That subjects would find some topics or approaches in the workshop program more helpful than others in bringing about those changes.

The questionnaire data was analyzed vertically, that is to say, for the whole group on the various questions, and horizontally, that is to say, for each individual for the whole process. The purpose was to discover the common themes and to see if, for individuals with particular characteristics or with particular concerns,

one approach or topic had been especially important.

The analysis of the questionnaires revealed that subjects' accounts of what topics or approaches in the workshop were important to them were so idiosyncratic that while no topic or approach was particularly instrumental for all subjects, the multidimensional design of the workshop was supported. Subjects with the same or similarly stated objectives were affected by different topics and approaches within the workshop. Those findings provide qualified support for Hypothesis 3.

Qualitative Data . The detailed examination of the qualitative data will expand upon the findings for Hypothesis 3 about the effects of various approaches and topics in the workshop. In addition, the trainers were particularly interested in subjects' comments about the first day of the workshop program. Both trainers thought that periodically, especially during the first half day of the workshop program, subjects had little energy and had difficulty in concentrating on the topics being discussed. Questionnaire responses from both the starters and completers were considered to determine if the trainers' hunches about the first day were supported by information from the subjects. The subjects' responses to the questionnaires supported the trainers'

suspicions that the first day of the workshop was less successful than the second.

Table 11

Reasons for Taking Assertiveness Training

ACCORDING TO TOPIC	NUMBER
Skills Acquisition	15
Self Awareness	9
Information	11
Confidence Building	13
Anxiety Reduction	8
ACCORDING TO SETTING	
Work	10
Family	3
Social/Community	4

In the preworkshop questionnaire subjects were asked two questions. Why did you register for assertiveness training and is there anything in particular that you hope to get out of the workshop? Subjects' responses to those questions were put into categories a posteriori by two raters. The first rater used all categories more frequently than the second rater. In every instance but one, the first rater's choices of category included the second rater's choices. The merged rating presented in Table 11 combines the data from both raters so that if one rater checked off a category, the choice is included



in the count.

The postworkshop questionnaires indicated that subjects had acquired skills, increased self-awareness, and acquired knowledge about assertiveness to some extent. Subjects' perceptions of what they had got out of the workshop are listed, with frequencies reported, in Appendix 3. The variability in the responses was so great that any attempt to quantify the information proved fruitless, however, it is important to examine the great variety in the responses. The number of times that the themes of caring for others and acknowledging their own rights were expressed is particularly notable.

When asked to what extent skills were acquired, several mentioned how to be assertive, in general, but others mentioned assertiveness with respect to specific issues like saying no or accepting compliments. Some subjects mentioned that they had learned to acknowledge their own and others' rights; others that they had acquired specific skills (the way to word responses and statements, or the need to attend to nonverbal behavior). As to which part of the workshop helped them most to acquire skills, some responded with practice in small groups, others with group discussions, and others with role plays by the instructors.

In response to the questions, did you increase your

self-awareness and will that help you to be assertive, there were also a variety of answers. Some subjects indicated that they had become aware of their own response style; others indicated that they had learned to acknowledge that some of the responsibility for relationships did not rest with them. Some expressed that theme differently by stating that they had the right to make mistakes and to judge how important those errors were.

When asked to what extent they acquired new information or principles about assertiveness, the variety of responses was even more noticeable. Two subjects indicated that saying no was important, another two that it was acceptable to have rights, two more that it was alright to express oneself, and so on. In effect, although most subjects indicated that the acquisition of information had been important, which information had been important varied tremendously from one person to another. When asked to indicate which part of the workshop had been the most effective in helping them to acquire information, every aspect of the workshop was mentioned by someone.

With respect to the strengths and weaknesses of the various elements in the workshop i.e. experiential exercises, instructors, lectures, discussions, and

homework there was, once again, great variability in response. The element that annoyed one person, was seen by another as a strength. Several found the experiential exercises contrived or embarrassing; others found the practice and interaction with others useful. The instructors were complimented as knowledgeable, helpful, enthusiastic, and with phrases like good at drawing people out, and on topic; they were criticized for speaking too softly and for being disorganized on the first day. The lectures were complimented as informative, enlightening, and well organized; they were criticized as being disorganized, failing to emphasize major points, and covering too much material on the first day. The group discussions were complimented as informative, fun, encouraging participation, and being on topic; they were criticized for wandering off topic and extending beyond time limits. The homework was seen as good practice that fit with the objectives of the workshop, and could be fit into the activities of the week; it was criticized for being difficult to evaluate because it was so personal and because it was hard to work into the activities of the week.

The anecdotal material provided qualified support for Hypothesis 3 in that the workshop suited some more than others. There were no specific topics or approaches

that were more beneficial to all. Attempts to determine who benefitted more from one approach or topic more than another proved fruitless. There did not seem to be any relationship between the reasons stated for attending the workshop and the topics or approaches that were appreciated the most and least. In spite of the variety of reactions to the topics and approaches, subjects indicated that their initial objectives had been met ( $N = 15$ ), or partially met ( $N = 2$ ).

Although all of the subjects present at the end of the first day indicated that they had benefitted to some extent from the workshop, five of the original group did not attend the second day. Of that five, two did not reply to the letter, two indicated that their absence was for personal reasons, and one that the workshop was not meeting her needs. The latter stated that the program emphasized past events too much and did not offer enough practical assistance e.g. how to word sentences and responses. Her comments are echoed in comments from those who completed the program.

Although the questionnaire responses did not reveal who liked what topic or approach, they did suggest how the first day could have been improved. When participants were asked to rank the various topics in the workshop, socialization was ranked the lowest. That

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result was the same whether the subjects had rank ordered the topics, as requested, or had used the range of numbers as a Likert Scale. The socialization topic, handled as a lecture and group discussion, relied extensively on recall of past experiences, and may have taken too long for the value it gave to the program. The trainers thought that the subjects were well aware of the effects of their socialization and may have found the exercise repetitive and boring.

As written in Chapter II, Lafevre (1984) stated that women want to spend more time on expressing anger than on learning to say no. Following Butler's (1976) injunction to build skills and confidence by beginning with the easy skills, the inclusion of the exercise on learning to say no can be justified because it is a skill of moderate difficulty to be placed between giving and receiving compliments and giving and receiving criticism. The same cannot be said for the exercise on socialization, it may simply waste subjects' time with reminiscence rather than skill building. Expressing anger is difficult and anxiety provoking for women because to express it is contrary to women's upbringing and violates the principle of nonviolence (Gilligan, 1982; Butler, 1976, 1981; Muehlenhard, 1983). Nonetheless, expressing anger is an important aspect of assertiveness. An exercise on

expressing anger and responding to anger included at the end of the program, once subjects' confidence has been increased, would be a powerful addition to the program content.

For a university continuing education course, the lecture and discussion on the effects of socialization can be eliminated or alluded to in a sentence or two. The time saved by deleting the exercise on socialization can be used to begin practical exercises sooner. Specifically, deleting the socialization topic would allow the addition of an exercise on expressing anger during the second day of the program.

Summary . The analysis of the data indicated that the Assertiveness Training for Women Workshop was valuable for the subjects. A chi-square analysis found that the proportions of women of various ages and occupations were not significantly different in the sample than they were for the female work force of Alberta. Chi-square analysis failed to find a significant difference between the starters and the completers with respect to age, marital status, and student status.

After attendance at the workshop, subjects increased in assertiveness and self-esteem as measured by the Gambrill-Richey and the SEI, respectively. The starters

and completers could not be discriminated on the basis of inventory scores. The changes in the Gambrill-Richey scores for the completers showed a significant (.05 level) decrease in discomfort and a significant increase in the probability of being assertive between the pretest and the posttest, and between the posttest and the follow-up. The Coopersmith Inventory (SEI) results were more complex. By the follow-up tests, the results indicated that as assertiveness increased so did self-esteem. The slight decrease in SEI scores at the posttest indicate that the subjects may have questioned their own competence to some extent at the end of the workshop. Any effect of that kind had disappeared by the follow-up when the SEI scores showed an increase over the pretest SEI scores. The changes in the Gambrill-Richey scores were in the same direction as the changes in scores that have been reported in other studies (Table 10). Considered together, the analysis of the inventory data provided support for the validity for the workshop program.

The qualitative data (responses to questionnaires and interviews) suggests that the Assertiveness Training for Women Workshop met the needs of most participants as it was, but that a few revisions could have improved it. The variety of topics and approaches used in the workshop

was successful in that each seemed to have been appropriate for some of the subjects, while none had universal appeal or impact. The lowest rated topic, the effects of socialization, seems to have been unnecessary for the population studied. Subjects were well aware of the effects of their upbringing, and bored by going over old material. The lecture and discussion on socialization can be deleted in workshops with a similar population. The time saved by deleting that topic can be used to add an exercise on expressing and responding to anger.



## V. CONCLUSION

The formative evaluation of the Assertiveness Training for Women Workshop indicated that the workshop had the intended effect, and thereby met the expectations of both the trainers and the participants. This chapter will consider the research findings leading to that conclusion. Following the presentation of the research findings will be a consideration of the implications for the design of assertiveness training for women workshops and for further research.

Research Findings . The nominal data gathered failed to elucidate the relationship between the subjects and the female work force of Alberta and between those who started the workshop program and those who completed it. The proportions of ages and occupations of the subjects did not differ from those of the female work force of Alberta. It is likely, however, that subjects who are self-selected for participation in a university continuing education program do vary from the female work force along dimensions others than the ones examined in this study. The starters and the completers did not vary from each other with respect to the proportions of various ages, marital status, and student status. Those similarities while important should not be allowed to

obscure the possibility that there may be dissimilarities with respect to values, attitudes, aspirations, etc. which were not explored in this study.

The quantitative data, scores on the Gambrill-Richey Assertion Inventory and the Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory, found that self-reports of changes in behavior and feeling were as would be expected. In other words, the findings were that subjects felt less anxiety about being assertive, were more likely to be assertive, and had increased in self-esteem. A slight decrease in the self-esteem mean score at the posttest was probably due to subjects' difficulty in acquiring new behavior or to their fatigue at the end of the program. By the follow-up test, the mean self-esteem score was significantly higher than the pretest. The variability in the Gambrill-Richey and SEI scores of the starters and the completers was such that among those with similar scores some completed the workshop program and some did not. Thus, the starters and completers could not be differentiated from each other on the basis of scores on the pretest inventories.

The qualitative data gave considerable information about the processes by which the program had been effective in bringing about the changes in behavior and affect within the subjects. As predicted, subjects found some topics and approaches more useful than others but

the ones specific subjects mentioned as particularly useful varied greatly between individuals. What was particularly helpful or pleasing to one woman, could be annoying to another. The inclusion of lectures, role playing demonstrations, behavior rehearsal, behavior coaching in small groups, and large group discussions, allowed the workshop program to meet the needs of the subjects, at least to some extent. Each of the approaches seems to have played a part in the acquisition of knowledge, the learning of a new or refined behavior skill, and the reduction of anxiety so that the behavior could ultimately be reproduced in real life situations. The topic of socialization was found to have been the least instrumental in bringing about effects on behavior and affect. Those findings support the multidimensional design of the workshop program.

Implications of the Research Findings . The workshop segment on the effects of socialization was the lowest rated topic in the program. If it were to be eliminated, a behavior rehearsal segment on the expression of anger could be included. Such a substitution would be consistent with the needs of women as reflected in the literature and would increase the overall behavioral content of the workshop for this population. The appropriateness of the workshop program

for a specific population needs to be emphasized. In the experience of the evaluator, workshops with subjects drawn from different populations have benefitted from the inclusion of full day modules on the topic of socialization. For a university continuing education population, the topic of socialization can be eliminated.

The theme of nonviolence should be emphasized throughout women's assertiveness training workshop programs. Women have built a good deal of their self-concept around the idea of taking care of other people. Their self-esteem will take another battering if they are told that their concern for others has been misplaced. Rather, women need support for their concern for others, and encouragement to put their own needs on an equal footing with those of others. In this way, women can make the incorporation of assertive behavior skills consistent with their emphasis on caring. In order to help them to do that, it is important to include specific topics in the workshop program, such as using empathic statements when expressing anger. In this way, women can learn techniques to care for themselves while continuing to show concern for others.

The findings of this formative evaluation study suggest that the program outlined in Appendix 1 and amended in Appendix 2 is effective. However, research

examining adaptations of the program for differing populations may be further pursued. Such research would provide valuable information for trainers who design and lead assertiveness training programs for women.

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## APPENDIX 1

### WORKSHOP PLAN

DAY I 9:00AM-4:00PM

#### 1. Introduction

Research to collect pre-workshop inventories, obtain signed consent forms, and distribute Discrimination pre-test.

"housekeeping"--the day's schedule, where to find washrooms etc.

Handouts distributed with the comment that it should reduce or eliminate the need for taking notes.

Exercise (dyads)--speak with someone you haven't met before and discuss:

Why you have come to the workshop?

What do you hope to change?

One trainer leads participants in a discussion, summarizes the issues that have been presented and describes the principles of change.

Objectives of workshop and responsibilities and rights of participants and leaders explained.

#### 2. Definitions

Lecture--define non-assertive, aggressive, and assertive behavior, using a simple request as an example.

Discuss the verbal and non-verbal components of assertive behavior.

Role-play by trainers--Asking family to wait until 9:00 to discuss matters.

Exercise--In groups of three, each person becomes, in turn, the initiator, the responder, and the observer. The initiator makes a simple request upon three occasions which the responder answers non-assertively, aggressively, and assertively. The observer notes verbal and non-verbal behavior of each style of behavior. Trainers are available to offer ideas and assistance as required.

2(a). effects of the three behavior styles--One trainer asks participants (within the whole group) to draw upon their experience in the exercise in order to discuss the effects of the three behavior styles on self and others in both the short and long term. The second trainer summarizes the discussion on the board.

#### 3. Socialization

Lecture--that the messages we receive as children have implications for the way we think that we can act as adults.

One trainer asks participants to give examples of messages that they got as children and to think about the effect that has had on behavior eg. think of others first, don't be selfish--might lead to the feeling that you don't have the right to put your needs on a equal footing with those of others. The second trainer records the main ideas on the board.

#### 4. Bill of Rights--

One trainer relates the idea of a "Bill of Rights" to the messages of socialization. Participants are asked to look over the Bill of Rights and to decide which one is of particular interest to them.

Exercise--One trainer helps participants to relax using a visualization technique. Once participants are relaxed, they are asked to imagine what their life would be like if they had that right, then imagine that the right was taken away, then get it back again.

One of the trainers asks each participant, in turn, how she felt during the exercise-- generally concluding with the idea that we usually can have the rights we want if we are prepared to give ourselves permission to have them.

5. Initiating Other student/Tutor Contact--One trainer will ask the participants to think of ways that they have used to make social contact--the trainers also make suggestions.

Role-play by trainers--contacting another student using student directory.

Exercise(triads)--in turns, each person practices contacting a tutor or student, acts the part of the student or tutor receiving the contact, or observes the interaction (commenting on voice tone, body language, noting what's well done and suggesting improvement.

One of the trainers will elicit comments about the exercise.

#### 6. Wrap-up

Process the day's experience.

#### 7. Homework for the week

discrimination i.e. make note of others' behavior. Is it assertive? non-assertive? aggressive?

Initiate a student/tutor contact similar to the one that you rehearsed if that is appropriate to you.

## DAY II

## 1. Introduction to the second day.

One trainer leads the discussion about the "homework"--what happened? how did it feel?

## 2. Lecture--Making and refusing requests.

Role Play by trainers--Refusing a family members request to discuss something before your break at 2:00.

Exercise (triads)--1) each participant, in turn, responds to a request made by another participant with just "No". One of the trainers leads a discussion of the exercise. 2) each participant, in turn, responds to a request with "No" and the addition of an excuse. One of the trainers leads a discussion of the exercise, focusing on the leverage that the excuse gives. 3) each participant, in turn, responds to a request with "No" and the addition of only as much more information as they want to add. The observer in each of these exercises is to note, support, and, if appropriate, suggest improvements in both verbal and non-verbal behavior. Trainers are available to offer ideas and assistance throughout the role-playing.

One of the trainers then leads a discussion on the three parts of the exercise with the whole group. Dealing with persons making persistent requests will be raised at this point.

2(a) Lecture--relating the importance of saying "no" to feeling that you have the right to make requests.

Role Play--Asking a family member to assume the responsibility for putting out the garbage.

Exercise (triads)--Each person in turn makes a request. The requester will instruct the responder how to respond. The observer notes voice tone etc. supports and may suggest improvements.

3. Lecture--giving and responding to criticism. The sentence formula proposed by Gordon (1974) is taught along with the difference between observed behavior, inferred intent, and the idea of checking out the meaning of behavior. In giving and receiving criticism, the criticism can be either justified or unjustified. The one criticized can ask for specific information and the criticizer can make the criticism better by giving specific information.

Role Play by trainers--responding to a justified and unjustified criticism--You're so tied up in your studies now that you never give me any time.

Exercise--In the same groups, practice giving and



receiving a justified and unjustified criticism. Group members asked to discuss their feelings about receiving both kinds of criticism.

One of the trainers will lead a discussion, asking each of the participants what they experienced during the last two exercises. Specifically, how did they feel about giving and receiving criticism in this manner.

Dealing with that behavior persistently exhibited by some persons.

#### 4. Giving and Receiving Compliments

Lecture--the importance, of positive assertive statements, relating difficulties in making them and receiving them to socialization messages that were discussed on the last day.

Role-play by trainers.

Exercise--In groups of two, participants practice giving and receiving a compliment.

#### 5. Line Exercise

One of the trainers explains that several groups will be formed (5 or 6 in each group depending upon the number of workshop participants). Each person is to choose a situation that she wants to rehearse, she will rehearse it, in turn, with each person in the group, while all other group members observe, comment on positive aspects of the behavior and suggest improvements. Group members should be reminded to focus on both verbal and non-verbal components of behavior.

#### 6. Conclusion

The trainers encourage a discussion of what has occurred over the two days asking participants to consider their experience and to encourage them to set goals for changes in behavior.

Exercise--an imagined rehearsal of an assertive act.

Evaluation forms, Discrimination Test, Gambrill Richey Inventory, and Coopersmith Inventory are distributed for participants to complete and hand in before leaving. The purposes and importance of the research are discussed and the follow-up procedures explained.

## APPENDIX 2

### AMMENDMENTS TO WORKSHOP PLAN

DAY I 9:00AM-4:00PM

2(a). effects of the three behavior styles

Summarized by highlighting points arising from a discussion in the whole group.

4. Bill of Rights--changed to Interpersonal Rights

One trainer asked the group to brainstorm rights that they would like to have. Participants are asked to look over the Bill of Rights and to decide which one is of particular interest to them. (The rest of the segment continued as in Appendix 1.)

5. Energizer--back rubs

6. Giving and Receiving Compliments

Lecture--the importance, of positive assertive statements, relating difficulties in making them and receiving them to socialization messages that were discussed on the last day.

Role-play by trainers.

Exercise--In groups of two, participants practice giving and receiving a compliment:

7. Wrap-up

Process the day's experience.

8. Homework for the week

-discrimination i.e. make note of others' behavior. Is it assertive? non-assertive? aggressive?

-make note of what situations give you the most trouble with respect to being assertive

-rights--note when yours or others are violated.

DAY II

2. Lecture--Making and refusing requests. (Role play content changed in view of the number of non-students.)

Role Play by trainers--Refusing a friends request to go to a meeting.

3. Energizer--Paper, Tiger, Gun

4. Lecture--giving and responding to criticism.

Exercise--In the same groups, practice (amended to leave out giving) receiving a justified and unjustified criticism. Group members asked to discuss their feelings about receiving both kinds of criticism.

6. Conclusion

Due to time constraints, the visualization and stress reduction exercise was left out.

APPENDIX 3

POSTWORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE

1. To what extent did you acquire specific skills, approaches or techniques from this workshop that you can apply?

8\*                      2                      1                      7                      1                      \_\_\_\_\_  
to a large                      moderate                      not at all  
extent                      extent

\*the rating given by that number of subjects  
What are they?

- how to be assertive (X5 i.e. stated by 5 subjects)
- saying "no" (X5)
- accepting compliments (X4)
- recognizing aggressiveness (X3)
- acknowledging rights of self and others (X3)
- criticizing assertively (X3)
- ways of wording responses or statements (X3)
- increasing comfort with being assertive (X3)
- accepting responsibility appropriately (X3)
- paying attention to non-verbal behavior (X2)
- making requests assertively (X2)
- communications (X2)
- other (X6)
  - accepting the right to say "no"
  - expressing feelings directly
  - learning to speak in a group
  - accepting that everyone makes mistakes
  - using "I" language
  - expressing empathy

Which part of the workshop was the most helpful in this regard?

- practice in small groups (X4)
- group discussions (X2)
- second day (X2)
- role playing by instructors (X2)
- feedback from participants (X2)
- other (X7)
  - dealing with someone who is persistent
  - saying "No" first when refusing a request,
  - group discussions after a concept had been taught
  - responding assertively to a request
  - speaking to the group
  - interaction of the trainers
  - theory behind the questions and answers

2. To what extent did you increase your self-awareness?

7      1      10      1                  
 to a large      moderate      not at all  
 extent      extent

Will that assist you in being more assertive?

- yes (x12)
- learned my own behavior style i.e. aggressive, non-assertive, or assertive (X3)
- other (X5)
  - some responsibility in interactions can be given to other person
  - the right to make mistakes and to judge their importance myself
  - I want more time to make decisions
  - to be assertive without being guilty
  - to speak up

3. To what extent did you acquire new information or principles about assertiveness?

10      3      3      1                  
 to a large      moderate      not at all  
 extent      extent

What are they?

- saying "no" (X2)
- giving myself rights is O.K. (X2)
- it's my choice
- expressing oneself is O.K. (X2)
- assertiveness is not rude (X2)
- assertiveness shows respect for self and others (X2)
- recognizing the three behavior styles, assertive, aggressive, non-aggressive (X3)
- other (X11)
  - behavior is my choice
  - what I observe and what I infer
  - non-assertiveness violates my own and others rights
  - assertiveness is honest, open, appropriate and direct
  - I want to increase assertiveness skills
  - the myth of obligation
  - assertiveness is a skill to be practiced
  - change is possible and slow
  - equalizing the balance of power
  - dealing with people who are behaving non-assertively

Which part of the workshop was the most helpful?

- general discussions on everyday problems (X5)
- the whole workshop (X2)
- other (X13)
  - rights & responsibilities
  - guide to recognizing three styles of behavior
  - theory
  - effects of the three behavior styles on self and others
  - saying "No" appropriately and having the right to do so
  - second day
  - handout
  - interaction of trainers
  - line exercise
  - experiential exercises
  - role playing
  - lectures

4. Major strengths and weaknesses of:

a) the experiential exercises

Strengths

- practice (X3)
- listening to others (X3)
- interesting
- immediate feedback
- identified weak areas
- well spaced over the two days

Weaknesses

- contrived, hard to believe (X4)
- embarrassing (X2)
- time allotted not right (too much, too little) or limits not followed (X2)
- emphasis on family at expense of work place
- participants took them off topic
- limited by time--couldn't explore everything

b) the instructors

Strengths

- A list of complimentary adjectives like, knowledgeable, helpful, enthusiastic, funny, concerned, etc.(X11)
- good at drawing people out
- kept on topic

-allowed each to seek her own level

#### Weaknesses

- spoke too softly
- the first day was too long, disorganized

#### c) the mini-lectures

##### Strengths

- various complimentary adjectives like informative, enlightening (X9)
- well organized
- concise
- neither too long nor too short
- focal points of the subjects covered

##### Weaknesses

- need more organization--emphasis on major points
- too much on first day
- dragged at times
- not enough role playing
- too much noise from heating system made hearing difficult

#### d) the discussions

##### Strengths

- various complimentary adjectives like useful, informative, fun, etc. (X10)
- there are various ways to interpret and handle situations (X2)
- reassuring
- nearly everyone contributed
- wandering topics gently put on track

##### Weaknesses

- tended to get off topic
- too long--time limits should be adhered to

#### e) the homework assignments

##### Strengths

- various complimentary comments like good practice, good, etc. (X5)
- would have done it anyway
- glad really none was required
- something definite to consider and practice
- kept mind focussed on assertive behavior

- aware of situations but didn't practice per se
- something that could be done at all times

#### Weaknesses

- hard to know how effective it was--everyone's situation is so different
- no chance to practice in week
- difficult, did not suit a difficult week

5. Overall, how useful did you find various topics in the workshop? (please rank order the topics below from 1, the most useful, to 7, the least useful. (The data from 6 subjects who answered as if the rank was a Likert Scale are not included.)

Topics	Ranks												Overall Rank		
Definitions	4	1	4	6	2	2	4	1	2	2	2	1	1	4	2
Effects-3 behavior styles	1	2	1	4	3	1	3	2	3	1	2	5	1	1	
Effects of socialization	3	7	5	7	4	6	6	4	6	7	6	6	7	7	
Rights	2	6	6	5	1	7	7	3	1	6	7	2	5	5	
Requests	5	3	2	2	5	5	2	5	5	3	3	4	3	3	
Criticism	6	5	3	1	6	3	1	7	4	4	5	3	6	4	
Compliments	7	4	7	3	7	4	5	6	7	5	4	7	2	6	

8. Overall, the workshop has been ..

5  
excellent
8  
very good
1  
good
1
2  
fair
          
poor

in meeting my current goals.

9. Would you recommend this workshop to another student or friend?

- yes (x16)
- depends a lot on who asked

10. Comments:

Listed below are only the comments made that were not covered in other parts of the questionnaire:

- dislike questionnaires
- would like to see assertiveness workshops in junior high and high schools
- I feel so good.



- would liked to have reflected a few days before responding to this questionnaire
- realized that my aggressiveness made people back off from me

APPENDIX 4

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What was the most important thing you learned through the Assertiveness Training Workshop?

- that I have rights eg. to say, "No", to decide what to give to another person, to be honest with self and others, that assertiveness concerns rights of both persons in an encounter (X 6 i.e. stated by 6 subjects)
- to say, "No" (X 5)
- difference between assertiveness and aggressiveness. (X 4)
- that others also have trouble expressing themselves effectively (X 3)
- how to be assertive and "try it on" (X 2)
- to choose assertive and appropriate language so that what I say is taken as I mean it (X 2)
- that I am more assertive than I realized (X 2)
- to be honest with self and others
- that it is possible to change behavior
- to be more outgoing
- to be more confident
- that I am O.K.
- my defense mechanism is to act like I'm on top of things when I'm not

2. Which subject, approach, etc. of the Workshop was the most crucial to the outcome mentioned above?

- trainers' role plays (X 8)
- small group exercises (X 7)
- not sure (X2)
- small group discussions (X 3)
- lectures e.g. on feelings like anger (X 2)
- sharing with a diversified group of women (X 2)
- dislike role playing
- don't have to be there for everyone in need
- that my phrasing of requests was interpreted as whining and unassertive

3. Has participation in a research project, e.g. knowing there would be a follow-up, affected you?

- no (X 11)
- yes (X 3)
- added interest--in results of whole group, in change in my ideas

- I want to know if my ideas have changed from the first (X 3)
- made the workshop seem more important
- reminded me to practice

#### 4. Comments

- I am more sure of myself, more assertive (X 2)
- some of the questions on the inventories were difficult, e.g. because the questions were geared to younger people, responses would vary according to mood, etc. (X 2)
- Assertiveness Training is great (X 2)
- not sure of whether self-awareness came from course content or the experience as a whole but it's O.K. to feel differently than others (X 2)
- feel comfortable in taking risks on issues of importance
- others' experience and ideas were very helpful
- it's hard to remember to use what was learned--old habits are easier
- haven't used yet

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