



PRIME TIME

A Project for Women in their Middle Years

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Newsletter # 3
April 1978

GOOD NEWS FROM OTTAWA! Prime Time's budget for the fiscal year 1978-79 has been approved. Planning for fall programs is already underway. Most of our current programs are ending this month, but we will be having programs during the summer too. Our office will remain open all year.

Hellie McLelland, a member of the research committee of Prime Time sends the following report:

In addition to offering programmes for women, Prime Time also undertakes research.

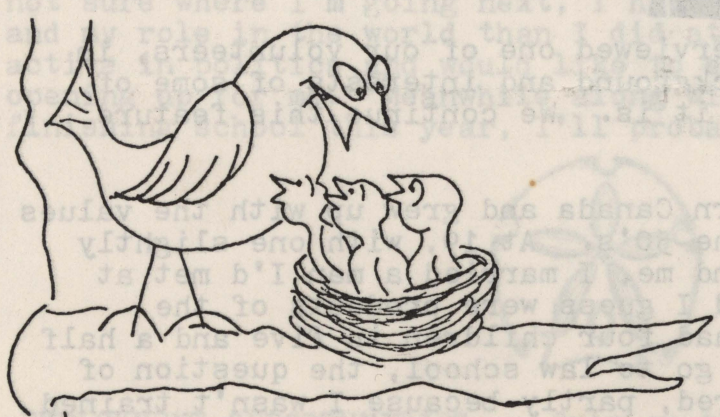
Very little information has been obtained in the past from women themselves about their needs, opinions and feelings in the middle years. Prime Time is starting to collect some of this by giving questionnaires to women taking part in programmes.

Will you help us by completing a questionnaire?

We are proposing to telephone all women whose names are on index cards in our files, to ask if they will complete and return a questionnaire to us. Questionnaires are totally confidential, as your name and address are not asked for, and questionnaires will be mailed out in plain envelopes (with a stamped, addressed envelope for reply). If you do not wish to take part, we shall respect your wish.

Questionnaires so far have provided some interesting information about women in their middle years. For example, most women coming to Prime Time are anxious to do something constructive with their life, and would like to talk about this with someone who shares their interest. Also, many women say they are not comfortable talking to their doctors, and find doctors are not very good either at giving information, or answering questions. The majority of the women have come to the Natural Menopause or Shifting Gears programmes, but there are many who would like programmes on budgeting, health and retirement planning. They say they would like to have more self-confidence, and improve their decision making.

Perhaps YOU have questions you think should be answered by, or for, women in their middle years? If you have, please let us know.



"It's time for you to leave the nest, kiddos. Mother has things to do."

Robert Sims

ATTENTION SPRING CLEANERS!!!!
When you are going through your attic or basement, or before you throw something out, please keep the following in mind: we desperately need more bookshelves for our library - a small desk, a credenza and a refrigerator (small if possible) are the other items we particularly need. All items would be required for two years.

The SUPPORT GROUP is alive and very well and meeting every thursday in the Prime Time office, 2-3:30.

ANOTHER FIRST FOR VICTORIA

For women considering going back to school, Prime Time is co-sponsoring with Gordon Head Community Centre, a five-session discussion group. Because making that first decision to go back is the hardest one of all, Prime Time worker Gretchen Brewin, who has successfully gone back, graduating in 1976, has designed this course with the special interests of women in mind. If the school experience is to be successful some adjustments will be necessary. Through group interaction these changes can be better understood and accepted.

Important to this decision to return to school is feeling comfortable in the education setting. Consequently, brief tours of Camosun and U. Vic. have been arranged. There, the group will meet with members of the counselling centres for some practical advice about courses. Contact with other women who have gone back to school may also be arranged.

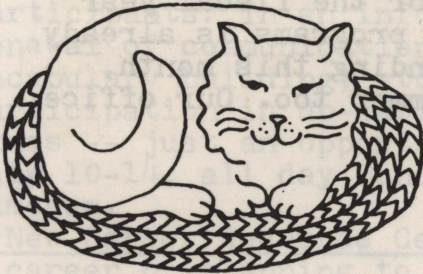
Course Details: Date: Wednesday mornings, May 3-31

Time: 9:30-11:30 am

Place: Gordon Head Community Centre, Lamdrick Park

Registration: At the Centre

Fee: \$10.00



Staff member Eunice Parton found the following piece of timely information --

Characteristics of the non-assertive person

She confuses the goal of being liked with being respected. She has learned to act in inferior ways because she believes she is inferior. She is conditioned to fears of being disliked or rejected, also fears of anxiety, expressions of anger, or feelings of tenderness. She is unable to recognize the difference between being selfish in the bad sense and in the good sense. She constantly aims to please others because she fears she may offend them. She allows others to maneuver her into situations she doesn't want. She feels the rights of others are more important than her own. She is self-conscious before superior and authority figures.

Characteristics of the assertive person

She feels free to reveal herself -- "This is me. This is what I feel, think and want."
She can communicate with people on all levels -- with strangers, friends, family. This communication is always open, direct, honest and appropriate. She has an active orientation to life. She goes after what she wants. In contrast to the passive person who waits for things to happen, she attempts to make things happen. She acts in a way that shows she respects herself, is aware that she cannot always win, and accepts her limitations. She always strives, in spite of the odds, to make the good try, so win, lose, or draw, she maintains her self-respect.



In our last newsletter, we interviewed one of our volunteers, in an effort to share with you the background and interests of some of the women who make Prime Time what it is. We continue this feature with another WOMAN'S STORY.

I was born and raised in eastern Canada and grew up with the values that a lot of other girls had in the 50's. At 19, with one slightly disastrous year at university behind me, I married a man I'd met at university. We wanted children and I guess were products of the propaganda of those times when we had four children in five and a half years. When my husband decided to go to law school, the question of my taking a job was hardly considered, partly because I wasn't trained for anything but also because our children were still so small. They were busy years for me. Looking back I can see that I didn't have a lot of energy left over and often felt pretty dumb around my husband's fellow students. On the whole, I enjoyed being home with the children. I remember the night my husband finished his final exams and wanted me to come out to a celebration with other students. I tried everywhere but couldn't get a sitter so I had to stay home alone. I cried all night. I felt right out of life; I'd been through as much as he had coping with law school but it seemed as if I would never be able to do much with my life.

I had become active in the co-operative nursery school the children attended and had built up some confidence in the area of children's needs. The supervisor of the nursery school and one other very supportive friend encouraged me to take on the presidency of the parent's association which I did. When I was asked to run for the school board a few years later I surprised myself by agreeing. Believe it or not, I did get elected! The first meeting was terrifying but slowly I began to enjoy what I was doing. I was told that I was a very effective trustee and I hope I was. I certainly learned a lot about making a decent speech and preparing for meetings by summarizing reports and reading through agendas.

Just before my three year term as a trustee was up, I resigned because we had decided to accept a job my husband had been offered with CIDA in Africa. It was a very exciting year for us all but in a way for me I was right back to square one again. I did volunteer work in a nursery school and in a sewing co-operative and taught English to adult women but the most important thing that happened was that some of us formed a women's group. It was a consciousness group of a sort and we spent time talking about what was going to happen when we got back to Canada. My children were all in school and on their way and I confessed to the group that I'd really like to go back and finish university. The women gave me all kinds of support, listened to my worries and doubts and eventually I felt confident in making the decision.

We came back from Africa to live in Victoria five years ago. We arrived on the 17th of September and by the 20th I had enrolled in classes at U. Vic. I found out I loved being a student. It wasn't all easy. Essay writing was a real trial for me (luckily my husband helped) and slowly my reading speed and research techniques improved. I found it unnerving to go into the library and sometimes still do. And I was often lonely; there were not a lot of older women on the campus in those days. At the end of my first years, I was encouraged to take honours in political science. By this time our two older children were in high school and thought it was great that mummy had to write essays too. The younger ones used to ask me what I was going to be when I grew up!

Household chores were shared and we were constantly revising our schedules to get them all done. I felt I had to be home for dinner every night, but during exams there were a lot of things that just didn't get done around the house. I graduated in 1976. There I was with a BA and all my options opened up again.

The next thing I did was to participate in the six month internship at the legislature as part of the graduate program at U.Vic. I learned a great deal about provincial politics and began to explore opportunities to work in this area.

Last fall I heard about Prime Time and volunteered as an assistant leader for a Shifting Gears group. That was an exhilarating experience and I sensed how much I'd missed contact with women my own age in the last few years. Out of that feeling came the idea for a course to give women a chance to discuss their doubts about going back to school and I was encouraged by the Prime Time staff to design one. It will be given twice this Spring.

This year I'll have been married twenty years and although I'm not sure where I'm going next, I have a much better sense of myself and my role in the world than I did at 19. I might like to become active in politics and would like to explore some of the options opening up for me. Meanwhile along with two of my children who are finishing school this year, I'll probably be looking for a job.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES -- Ever on the alert for work opportunities, particularly for women in their middle years, there is now an Employment Bulletin Board located in the Prime Time office - to your right as you walk into the office. Do check it out if you are looking for work and if you are an employer, please let us know - we will gladly advertise a job for you.



SOME PROGRAMS TO WATCH FOR IN THE COMMUNITY --

at the Y....

Communications Skills Workshop - a straightforward, step-by-step process to improve your communication skills in daily life. Emphasis on practical application in a low risk setting. Five sessions. Saturday, April 22, 10-4 and tuesdays, April 25, May 2, 9, 16. Cost is \$18.00. Register at the Y.

Preventive Medicine LifeStyle Workshop - A highly spirited and integrated approach to feeling good. An opportunity to take an in-depth look at the various factors that contribute to disease and lack of well-being. Friday night May 5 and all day Saturday May 6. Cost is \$20.00. Register at the Y.

at Camosun College....

Summer College for the at-home woman - This program is designed for women who seek a change from the constraints of the home. Interesting sessions are planned to refresh and stimulate the thinking of the participants. In an informal, friendly atmosphere, focus will be on renewal of communication skills (speaking, listening, reading, vocabulary building, etc.), discussion of significant issues, and participation in up-dating sessions of special interest to women. No exams -- just an opportunity to grow a little. Women of all ages welcome. July 10-14, all day Monday to Friday. Cost is \$50.00. Register at Camosun.

A New Career Resource Centre - Many women in middle years are choosing a career or planning to change their jobs. This centre, located in the Counselling/Admission Office of the Ewing Building is a collection of information to assist in a career search. The centre encourages women to browse through sections on occupational and educational information, job-search strategies, student life, changing roles of women, self-development and lifestyles. Individual counselling and career planning workshops are also available. The centre is open Monday to Friday, 8:30-4:30 and Tuesday and Wednesday nights, 6-8.

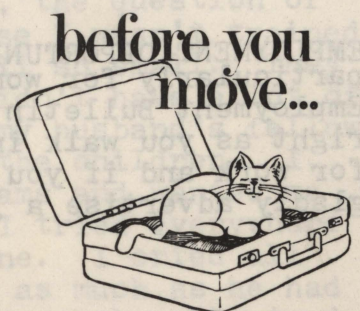
COMMUNITY INFORMATION: The Hard of Hearing Club meets on the second Friday of every month at 7:30 p.m., 1947 Cook St. (door off parking lot on Pembroke). The club is for anyone interested in making new friends, lip-reading classes, and sharing experiences in over-coming mutual difficulties. For more information, call 384-8088, the Vancouver Island Institute for Deaf and Hard of Hearing.



"You married your secretary? So did I."

BLOOPERS DEPT.

Our favourite bloopers to date all appeared in newspapers: sex lectures (instead of six), wife skills (instead of life), and nurseries (instead of bursaries). If you spot any, do let us know!



If you're planning to move, please let us know