

SOCIAL SUPPORT IN PARENT GROUPS

by

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#### ABSTRACT

Social support research to date has been hindered by the use of methodologies which ignore the context in which the support process takes place. Using grounded methodologies, and examining support comparatively across group settings, the present study takes a contextual perspective on the study of social support. Questionnaires and transcribed discussions conducted with members of six parent groups provide the data for combined qualitative and quantitative analyses.

The study examines three key elements of parents' support: sources, transactions and attributions. Important contextual differences were found between the parent groups in each of these elements of the support process. Substantively, a broader range of elements of the three support components is implicated for future research. The three mutually dependent components have been combined in a classification scheme to allow joint examination, recognizing their interrelatedness in the support process.

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

The literature on social support has expanded considerably in quantity and diversity in recent years. However, due to the fact that until recently there has been little agreement on the meaning of social support, the field is characterized by confusion and an inability to integrate findings. Attempts to construct a comprehensive, unitary definition of support have met with limited success.

Recently researchers have indicated the need to specify the support construct. Rather than treating support as a unidimensional construct, current efforts are being directed towards understanding the components that make up the support process. Three important components of support are the subject of this thesis: network sources, transactions and perceptions.

Existing research on the dimensions of support has suffered from two failings. First, efforts have primarily been divorced from the daily realities of support; hence they reflect abstract, hypothetical conceptualizations of the term. Second, efforts at arriving at the meaning of support have often "stripped away" (Mishler, 1979:2) the

context in which the meanings arise. These meanings are shaped by the characteristics of the social and physical environment; crucial factors in the understanding of social processes, such as support.

Social supports are particularly crucial for parents (Power and Parke, 1984). "Since families are the primary context for all their members' social development, the extra-familial supports available and accessible to them in their societies and living places are of great importance" (Maas, 1984:178). The current study examines the three dimensions of support across six parent support group settings. Support groups are selected as a currently popular means to help parents cope with the needs and stresses of parenting.

This study is different from other support research in two important ways. First, the methodology of this study uses a grounded approach to the specification of the concept. Open-ended questions, which do not predefine the topic, are used to generate data "from the community" (Kelly, 1986:582). Second, the multiple settings of this study address a need to study support contextually. This study directly addresses problems with the conceptualization of support, in the hope that it will assist researchers out of the "conceptual morass" (Schumaker and Brownell, 1983) in which they find themselves.

## 1.1 Chapter Outlines

In Chapter 2 I present the current state of the literature and the research problem. I discuss three components of support - sources, transactions and attributions - that constitute the focus of the study, and then demonstrate the methodological problems and acontextual nature of current research. I discuss research methods in Chapter 3, including: the collection of data, the contexts of the six groups, and the analyses to be conducted on the data. In Chapters 4 and 5 I present findings relating to the sources, transactions and attributions of support and discuss them in light of the literature. I present a categorization scheme in Chapter 6 to be used for contextual analysis of the three components of the support process. I then summarize the study and suggest future directions for social support research.

## Chapter 2

### SOCIAL SUPPORT: THEORY AND RESEARCH

This chapter reviews the literature on social support and identifies key problems addressed in this thesis. First, current conceptualizations of support are described and critiqued. Then, the three key elements of the support process are presented and the literature discussed in light of these components. Finally, the importance of grounding research and examining support in context is discussed.

#### 2.1 Conceptualizations of Support

Through the past few years the research on social support has been profuse. During the years 1982 to 1984 over 450 entries were recorded under the heading of "social support" in the Psychological Abstracts (Brownell and Schumaker, 1984:6). An annotated bibliography of social networks (Biegel, McCardle and Mendelson, 1985) recently documented 1340 entries, 550 directly related to social support.

Support research has been characterized by a confusing array of operationalizations of the social support construct. One author states it includes "a plethora of idiosyncratic measures (often post hoc) exhibiting dubious relevance to unclear concepts" (Vaux, 1985:245). Another suggests that "the concept of social support has been operationalized in a somewhat bewildering assortment of ways" (Wilcox, 1981:98). At the core of this research problem are conceptual and methodological problems (House, 1981; Schumaker and Brownell, 1984).

#### The Specificity of Support

The conclusion of a host of recent researchers is that the support construct is not unitary and would benefit from being more precisely specified (Barrera, 1986; Fiore, Coppel, Becker and Cox, 1986; Jacobson, 1986; Schumaker and Brownell, 1984; Shinn, Lehmann and Wong, 1984; Tardy, 1985; Vaux, Phillips, Holly, Thompson, Williams and Stewart, 1986). This conclusion is substantiated by evidence which suggests that there are low correlations between the components of support (Barrera, 1986). Concludes Barrera, "the social support construct should be abandoned in favor of more precise concepts that fit narrower models of stress-distress relationships" (413).

A variety of conceptual schemes have been offered in the past few years specifying the components of support. House (1981) conceptualizes four dimensions:

1. source

- 2.content
- 3.general(daily) versus problem focused (crisis)
- 4.objective versus subjective.

Tardy (1985) outlines five dimensions of support, similar to those of House, and evaluates eight measurement instruments in terms of their utility for assessing these five dimensions.

- 1.source (network)
- 2.content
- 3.description versus evaluation
- 4.available versus enacted
- 5.provided versus received.

In a somewhat different vein from the above, Gottlieb (1983) provides a "classification scheme of helping behaviors" with four general categories. His work is unique in that categories are empirically derived from interviews.

- 1.emotionally sustaining behaviors
- 2.problem solving behaviors
- 3.indirect personal influence
- 4.environmental action.

Fiore, Coppel, Becker and Cox (1986) examine four elements of support. They find the only "important dimension for adjustment" is satisfaction with support (93).

- 1.network contact frequency
- 2.satisfaction with support
- 3.perceived availability
- 4.use of support.

The three main components of support cited by Sandler and Barrera (1984) are:

- 1.support network characteristics
- 2.receipt of supportive transactions
- 3.satisfaction with support.

Vaux and Harrison (1985) suggest support is a meta-construct composed of three components:

- 1.network characteristics
- 2.supportive behaviors
- 3.subjective appraisals.

Similar to the two above, Barrera (1986) outlines three important dimensions of support:

- 1.network embeddedness
- 2.enacted support
- 3.perceived support.

The above taxonomies, together with other conceptualizations of support from the literature, include a variety of dimensions. Table 1 lists these dimensions according to how frequently they are cited in the literature. The two most commonly examined dimensions are support sources and support transactions. The perceptual dimensions of support are less often measured, but equally important, as is discussed later.

## 2.2 The Three Components of the Support Process

The preceding overview of the conceptualizations of support

TABLE 1  
DIMENSIONS OF THE SOCIAL SUPPORT CONSTRUCT

DIMENSIONS	SIMILAR TYPES IN LITERATURE	REFERENCES
SOURCES	network members	1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10
TRANSACTIONS	exchange content, interactions	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
AVAILABILITY	availability, quantity	3, 4, 7, 9
APPRAISAL	description, perception	1, 9, 10
BEHAVIORS	helping behaviors	4, 7, 10
UTILIZATION	orientation to utilization	3, 7, 9
NETWORK	system, network characteristics	2, 8, 10
SATISFACTION	evaluation	3, 8, 9
FOCUS	general or problem focus	4, 5
DIRECTION	received, or provided	9

REFERENCE KEY:

- 1-Barrera, 1986:413
- 2-Cochran, Gunnarson, Grabe and Lewis, 1984:48
- 3-Fiore, Coppel, Becker and Cox, 1986:97
- 4-Gottlieb, 1983:54-56
- 5-House, 1981:23
- 6-Power and Parke, 1984:957
- 7-Rook and Dooley, 1985:17-19
- 8-Sandler and Barrera, 1984:37
- 9-Tardy, 1985:189
- 10-Vaux and Harrison, 1985:246

indicates three recurring components: network sources of support; transactions of support and their content; and perceptions of

<sup>1</sup>  
support . Three similar components are presented in the work of Vaux, Phillips, Holly, Thomson, Williams, and Stewart (1986:196):

1. support network resources (e.g., the size, structure, and relationship characteristics of support networks);
2. specific supportive acts (e.g., listening, comforting, advising, loaning money, socializing or assisting with tasks);
3. subjective appraisals of support (perceptions/beliefs that one is involved, cared for, respected and/or having one's social needs met).

Multi-dimensional conceptualizations reflect the recent emphasis on the specificity model, however, difficulties arise in the application of this model. Researchers have tended to assume independence between the components of support. The result is that causal linkages between these support variables are obscured. The support phenomenon is best understood as a process in which elements are causally linked and temporally located (Jacobson, 1986).

The three components - network sources, transactions and perceptions - are interrelated in the support process. As Vaux and Harrison (1985:246) state:

Certain kinds of relationships constitute social resources. Like a savings account, an individual can draw

upon them (for affection, advice, assistance, etc.) in times of needs, or simply gain comfort in their existence. Within these relationships, certain kinds of interactions are likely to take place (e.g., physical comforting, listening empathically, loaning money, giving advice, etc.), but the nature, quality, timing, and degree of these interactions may vary in any given relationship. Further, the existence of these relationships and the occurrence of these interactions are likely to lead the individual to feel supported (e.g., loved, cared for, esteemed, involved, and capable).

This description of the interaction of the three components provides a rough sketch of the process of support. Readers are cautioned, however, that this portrayal is highly speculative, and intended as an heuristic device rather than an accurate depiction of the process.

The three components are linked to three basic questions about support: 1) who gives support; 2) what type of support is given; and 3) why is it supportive (Depner, Wethington and Ingersoll-Dayton, 1984:40; House 1981) which are used to review the literature on the support process.

#### Networks: Who gives support?

Social networks provide the social resources from which support is drawn. Researchers have included a broad range of network members in their studies of support. The most frequently included supporters are family members, friends, neighbors, and professionals. Workmates, confidants, community organizations and one's self are among the host of less commonly included network members (House, 1981; Tardy, 1985). Further elaboration of these types is provided in Chapter 4.

Studies indicate the importance of social support networks to parents (Lein, 1983; Maas, 1984; O'Donnell, 1983). In particular friends and neighbors in diverse "loose knit" networks offer less conflicted support (Bott, 1971; Hirsch, 1980). Less dense networks are helpful for such things as finding child care (Powell and Eisenstat, 1983), and reducing depression (Hammer, Gutwirth and Phillips, 1982). Strained or "conflicted" (Sandler and Barrera, 1984) relationships may provide mixed support to families. Unger and Powell (1980) note that value conflicts sometimes reduce the support provided by extended family members and in-laws to family members.

Characteristics of relations affect network sources. Reciprocity (Wellman, 1981) and multi-strandedness (Hirsch, 1980; Kazak and Wilcox, 1984) are two relational characteristics thought to be prevalent among supportive relations. Reciprocity indicates that exchanges go in both directions. Strandedness refers to the number of types of exchanges which occur through the tie. Structural characteristics of networks, such as size, density, and boundary density, also influence support, however this topic is beyond the scope of this discussion (see Gottlieb, 1981 for an excellent review).

Not all researchers have maintained the conceptual distinction between networks and support. Some have referred to the social network as synonymous with the support network (Hammer, Gutwirth and Phillips, 1982; Lein and Sussman, 1983; Tolsdorf, 1976) implying the false assumption that all network members are supportive (Wellman, 1981). It

has also been suggested that not all supporters must belong to the network (Schumaker and Brownell, 1984) i.e., a stranger may be supportive. However, these cases appear to be rare (House, 1981) and will be excluded in this examination. In summary, social support is generally considered a distinct but resident element of social networks.

Transactions: What type of support is given?

Support transactions are the behaviors, events or exchanges which are named as supportive and occur across network ties. Numerous researchers have reviewed work on support transactions (Gottlieb, 1983; House, 1981, Tardy, 1985). Prominent types include instrumental support (e.g., help with cleaning or moving); financial support (e.g., loaning money); emotional support (e.g., listening empathically); informational support (e.g., suggesting resources, giving advice); and demonstrative support (e.g., giving physical comfort, showing affection).

Some prominent reviews of social support research (House, 1981; Schumaker and Brownell, 1984) focus primarily on support "acts" to the exclusion of the less tangible types of support transactions. The importance of these elements appears to be becoming more apparent in the literature. Less behavioral types of transactions include: being needed (i.e., having the opportunity to nurture); being reassured of worth (Fiore, Coppel, Becker & Cox, 1986); sharing the same beliefs (i.e., ideological, Power and Parke, 1984) and indirect personal influence (i.e., providing unconditional access, Gottlieb, 1983).

### Appraisals: Why are events supportive?

Support appraisals reflect the subjective component of the support process (Vaux, Phillips, Holly, Thompson, Williams and Stewart, 1986:196). Appraisals include satisfaction with support, evaluation of support adequacy, attributions of support and perceptions of support. Some researchers focus exclusively on the subjective aspects of support (Cobb, 1976). In response Vaux et al state that "'support' (the information) is in fact support only if it leads to certain beliefs in the individual - a patently phenomenological view" (1986:197). However, most researchers believe that the subjective element is just one important component of support.

Evidence from two studies indicates that satisfaction with support is especially important for psychological adjustment. Satisfaction with support appears to be a more important determinant of psychological well-being than network contact frequency, perceived availability of support, the use of support, receipt of support transactions, and social support network characteristics (Fiore, Coppel, Becker and Cox, 1986; Sandler and Barrera, 1984). While these studies are suggestive further evidence is needed to substantiate the claim that satisfaction with support supercedes other dimensions of support in importance.

### 2.3 A Critique of the literature

Much of the above research has been criticized for methodological problems (Brownell and Schumaker, 1984; Tardy, 1985). Essentially it has suffered from two weaknesses. First, it is largely based on "a priori" (House, 1981) definitions which are not grounded in everyday social life. Second, researchers have largely ignored the influence of context and the differences in meaning across groups and settings.

#### Grounding Support Research

Few research efforts have been aimed directly at understanding the meaning of support. Rather "The majority of social support research has been conducted with hastily developed or post hoc measures of imprecise or obscure constructs" (Vaux, Phillips, Holly, Thomson, Williams and Stewart, 1986:195). The study of support has often been divorced from the daily realities of the process and consequently conceptualizations tend to reflect researchers' own perceptions of the term and assumptions about the nature of support.

House notes two possibilities for developing conceptualizations of support. The traditional approach involves generating definitions deductively: "Perhaps because these authors feel that they have a good intuitive sense of the meaning of social support, they have developed largely deductive or a priori definitions of support (1981:17).

However, as an alternative he suggests "asking ordinary people to describe actual relationships in which they are involved and which they consider supportive" (1981:18).

This second method is an example of the grounded approach based on the phenomenological, naturalistic perspective . Phenomenology "attempts to ensure a rigorous starting point since no investigation can be better than its point of departure" (Giorgi, 1975:84). Thus the application of this technique helps develop a conceptualization of the support phenomena.

Grounded research is especially useful in the study of "processes" of "social interactions" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:114). Gottlieb suggests "classification of informal helping behaviors, which is grounded in the everyday experience of those taking part in such transactions, can inform our understanding of how citizens define social support" (1978:106). This approach is more "objective" for examining the social definition of support phenomena. Colaizzi states

Objectivity is fidelity to phenomenon. It is a refusal to tell the phenomenon what it is, but a respectful listening to what the phenomenon speaks of itself (1978:52).

Through the grounded approach "constructs are generated from the community" and "embedded in the community" (Kelly, 1986:582). The method fundamentally differs from the "top-down" hypothetico-deductive approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) in that it is rooted in the daily

realities of social phenomena (Kelly, 1986).

### Support in context

The second major weakness of support research is that studies have primarily been acontextual (Cohen and Syme, 1985) and by their design attempt to exclude "confounding" contextual variables. Devoid of context virtually all social interactions become meaningless (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Mishler, 1979). Yet researchers, Mishler states, "behave as if context were the enemy of understanding rather than the resource for understanding which it is in our daily lives" (1979:2) <sup>4</sup>.

Jacobson (1986:258) specifies the contextual effects on support:

Both the appraisal of events and... behaviors as supportive are influenced by the context in which they occur... including the contexts of situation, time, personal characteristics, social structure, and culture.

The comparison of groups or settings fosters understanding of the above contextual components. Vaux states that multi-setting research is important because "important features of the context in which the support operates (e.g., the nature of the stressors experienced or the sources of available support) are likely to vary across subpopulation groups" (1985:90).

Miles and Huberman note that multiple site research

increases generalizability, reassuring oneself that the events and processes in one, well described setting, are not wholly idiosyncratic ...there is much potential for

greater explanatory power as well as greater generalizability than a single case study can deliver (1984:151).

Yet, says Vaux (1985:89), "very few studies have actually compared levels of support or patterns of support effects across subpopulations". Glaser and Strauss note that "sociologists have yet to explore the many possibilities for generating theory by the active creation of diverse comparison subgroups within a survey" (1967:211).

As will become clear in the next chapter, my thesis addresses both of these weaknesses. It utilizes grounded methods to derive a conceptualization of support and applies them across contexts to allow comparison of the effects of setting.

#### 2.4 Conclusion

Researchers have struck upon the importance of social support and conducted a profusion of studies in the past few years. However, the diversity of their conceptualizations of support, coupled with methodological problems, have made the strike a mixed success. After more than a decade of support research no substantial conclusions can be drawn about the elements of the support process.

The present study addresses the three most prominent components of the process: networks, transactions and appraisals. It suggests that

the confusion in the literature over the conceptualization of social support is primarily methodological. Grounded methods are proposed as a way of tapping the social reality of the phenomenon. Most importantly, the study proposes to draw out the effect of context on support by examining a number of parent support group settings.

## Chapter 3

### RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter outlines the methods used to address the research problem described in Chapter 2. It explains the manner in which the data were collected and analyzed, as well as the potential weaknesses in the study. The chapter begins with a discussion of the issues confronting researchers of social support.

#### Methodological Issues

The researcher considering how best to study support is faced with two main options (Depner, Wethington and Ingersoll-Dayton, 1984). On the one hand, the quantitative approach normally involves the categorization and quantification of types of support and stressors (Jacobson, 1986). Quantitative data allow the use of computerized statistical techniques to determine patterns and relationships of variables.

On the other hand, the qualitative approach is particularly useful in exploratory research when the parameters of a topic are not clearly understood. Qualitative analysis is more descriptive than explanatory and leads to a greater breadth of understanding, but fewer singular

solutions (Greene, 1985).

The quantitative and qualitative approaches are useful for different reasons:

Complementing the reliable, hard and replicable data of quantitative research, qualitative research offers information that is valid, real, rich and deep. Therefore qualitative research is uniquely suited to serve functions that quantitative research does not perform well (Depner et al, 1984:49).

However the reverse is also true. Reduction of qualitative data can be difficult, and quantitative methods are helpful to summarize the information the qualitative methods produce.

Some researchers have noted the relevance of combining the two methods in a mixed methods approach (Greene, 1985; Guba and Lincoln, 1982), particularly for the study of support (Barrera, 1981; Depner, et al, 1984). "Recognizing the multi-faceted nature of support, it appeared that studies incorporating a multi-method approach to assessing support would have distinct advantages over those that adopted a single approach" (Barrera, 1981:72) <sup>5</sup>. These advantages are illustrated in my analysis. Qualitative methods are used to identify themes in the parent group discussions, and quantitative methods are used to categorize and summarize the results. These analyses are intended to yield concise, interpretable, and valid results while remaining sensitive to the range of support dimensions in the data.

### 3.1 Data

The data have been collected in a study of parents' support called the Parent Networks Project (PNP) (Anglin, in press). This project studied the topic of support in a general way, without attempting to limit the concept of support.

The PNP study has two specific advantages over previous studies of support. First, the researchers used open-ended questions and discussion without prestructuring response categories. This methodology fits the grounded approach, as discussed earlier (see page 14). Second, the PNP collected these data from six different parent group settings. Thus, contextual influences on support sources, transactions and attributions can be evaluated by making comparisons across the groups.

#### The Parent Groups

The PNP surveyed parents in six existing parent groups. From three to ten people were present at the discussions which were moderated by one or two members of the three-person PNP team. The process began with a short 15 minute questionnaire which asked the respondents to name people or groups who provide "help, support or encouragement" (see Appendix A) and to provide basic demographic information. The questionnaire was followed by a one to two hour discussion on the issues brought to light by the questionnaire. The researcher/moderators began the discussion by asking if members had any comments about the supporter lists they had completed on the questionnaire. Moderators did not direct the discussion but instead let the conversation follow the participants'

interests. Participants were asked to clarify statements when the meaning was unclear; otherwise no specific prompts were used.

Discussions were not restricted to parenting, but covered a wide range of topics. Each discussion was tape recorded and later transcribed.

The resulting data includes 36 questionnaires and 6 transcripts whose total length is 150 pages .

The groups were selected by the project's principal researcher, James Anglin, on the basis of a thorough knowledge of the parent support network in the area. A dozen local groups were informally contacted and invited to participate in the study. While most groups expressed an interest in participating, restrictions of time and money limited the sample to six groups. The six groups were selected for their diversity, so as to broaden the range of contexts of support. The sample and group descriptions below demonstrate this diversity.

#### Sample characteristics

The sample consists of 36 people of whom 80% are female. Sixty-one percent are married, and half of these are married couples with both members in the study. Respondents' ages average 30.9 and range from 18 to 53. All but eight live in Victoria, more than half (55%) having lived in the city for over 5 years. Most (63%) live in single family dwellings as opposed to apartments (22%) or other accommodation. The majority of the participants are not employed (61%) nor attending school (70%). Of those who are employed, over half work full time.

The respondents' children at home range from age 0 to 21 years (mean=7.6). Most of the parents (78%) have one or two children, the

maximum being four. Two members of the sample are not parents but are included because they are group members. Exactly half (18) of the parents indicate that they use some type of full or part time day care for their children and half have at least one child in school.

### 3.2 The Group Context

In this section each group is described in terms of the nature of the discussion and then summarized in demographic terms.

#### PARENTS OF TEENS (n=7)

This group meets once a week in the evening in one of the members' homes. The group has existed for over four years but individual members have joined and left the group over time. Like many self help groups of this type the members are part of a broader parent organization<sup>7</sup>. These parents are frequently dealing with serious problems such as their teenage childrens' drug abuse, alcohol abuse, and delinquency. In the group they discuss shared concerns and ways to cope with these problems.

This group has the oldest children of the sample (their first and second child average 15.5 and 12 years respectively) and are themselves the oldest members of the sample (mean age=40). Six of the seven members are married, five are employed, five are women, and all have one or two children. Their eleven children are all over age ten except for one five year old.

## SINGLE PARENTS (n=3)

This meeting occurred at a morning "drop-in" for single parents which happens once a week at a center for single parents. The center has offered the "coffee and chat" drop-in for two years. The three mothers in this study are among the most regular attenders of this program. They have a number of difficult problems, such as inadequate incomes, infrequent employment, and of course no spouse with which to share the child care burden.

This is the smallest of the six groups. Two of the members are unemployed and the third works part time. All are single mothers. Their ages are 21, 28 and 29 and their children are aged 3, 6, and 9 (one child each).

## FAMILY LIFE (n=8)

This is the only group located outside of greater Victoria. It was originally created for a short course on childrearing at the local Health Clinic. When the course ended group members continued to meet. Members have met weekly for close to two years, longer than any other group. This discussion took place in the evening at the Health Clinic. The members report that the group had a profound effect on their lives; in fact, two couples indicate that it saved their marriages.

The group includes three couples, and seven of the eight members are married. Five members are women, five are employed and the average age across the group of eight is 31. This group has the largest families in the sample, ranging from one to four children, whose average age is eight years.

NEW PARENTS (n=5)

This group is for mothers of newborns. They have met weekly in the daytime for over three years. Their meetings take place in the members' homes located in a semi-rural setting outside of the city. The group is part of a network of similar groups organized on the self-help model to link together parents of newborns. During the discussion for this study five women and four of their babies present.

All of these women are married, and none is employed outside the home. They average 30 years of age and all have one or two children. The children's ages average under two years.

COUPLES SUPPORT (n=4)

This group was created by a local psychologist for couples with two children. The purpose of the group is to help both members of each couple cope with issues of concern, i.e., lack of information, emotional problems or childrearing needs. It also uses the self-help format, however, unlike most such groups, they meet for half a day, once a month for a combination dinner and discussion group. When we met with the group they were meeting for the third time, in the evening at one of the member's homes. It was an intense meeting covering topics of deep concern to the participants. The discussion includes several observations on sex-roles and their relation to support.

Two couples of the usual five were present for the discussion. They are all aged 30 to 34. Both couples' first child is of the preschool age

(3-5) and second child a toddler (0-2). The two women in the group are homemakers, and their husbands are employed out of the home.

#### SELF DEVELOPMENT COURSE (n=9)

This last group met on a full-time, daily basis for six months as part of a paid self development course funded by a department of the federal government. The discussion took place at a single parent agency which hosts the classes . Self development and skill building was the aim of the program, with the intent that the participants would become personally and financially more successful and independent. The discussion centered on practical types of support such as money, food, cooking, child care, car repairs, shopping and moving.

This all female group is the largest, representing one-quarter of the sample. None of the participants have employment outside of the course as they attend full time. No members are married but six were once married. This group is the most diverse with respect to children: two members have no children, and the remainder have from one to three children. The children's ages vary from 1 to 19, averaging eight years. Demographically members of this group are the youngest of the entire sample (mean age=25).

### 3.3 Analysis

Analysis of the PNP questionnaire data was carried out using standard quantitative methods for the categorization, coding and

reduction of open-ended responses (Bailey, 1983). The lists were read, categories were formed, and data were coded and entered into a computer. Analyses on these data are described in Chapter 4.

Group discussions were painstakingly transcribed from audiotape onto a word processor. For the analysis of these transcripts I utilized the thematic method described by Giorgi (1975). To draw out the "themes" in the transcripts his phenomenological method uses three phases which are described fully in Chapter 5. They are outlined briefly here.

First, I read the entire transcript and determined the natural divisions which occur, for example, at a shift in the conversation. A unit could vary from two or three sentences to several minutes of dialogue. Then I numbered these units and gave a short description of their key themes; e.g.,

"5.12 - Long term relations are supportive".

Second, I used the descriptions above, as well as the original transcripts, to write an exhaustive, numbered list of themes (shown in Appendix B) relating to the two research questions (see below). This list served as the basis for classification and quantification of thematic types.

Third, I wrote the non-redundant themes from the above list into "situated descriptive summaries" summarizing the discussions (shown in

Chapter 5).

The process was first applied to draw out themes related to transactions and then repeated to elicit themes related to attributions. Below, is a summary of the analyses of sources, transactions and attributions applied to the questionnaire and transcript data.

1. Analysis of support sources - The "who" of support: (Chapter 4)

In this analysis I describe the range and quantity of support sources (both persons and groups) identified on the questionnaire. Support sources are categorized in nine types and summarized for the entire sample. Percentage distributions are generated for each group, demonstrating differences between contextual settings. I also explore patterns of support sources; examining first, covariation using correlation and factor analysis, and second, group differences using discriminant analysis. Lastly, I examine the supporters referenced in discussions to compare with those listed individually on the questionnaires.

2. Analysis of support transactions- The "what" of support: (Chapter 5)

Transactions include exchanges, acts, or events perceived as being supportive. In one part of the analysis I classify and quantify themes from the group discussions related to transactions of support. These themes are derived in the second step of Giorgi's method using the research question "What types of events are supportive?". The resulting themes are listed and summarized for the entire sample and for each group. In the second part of this analysis I use Giorgi's descriptive summaries to characterize the group differences on transactions.

3. Analysis of support attributions- The "why" of support: (Chapter 5)

Attributions are the reasons which respondents perceived as having led them to attribute supportiveness to an event. In this analysis I identify themes using the research question "Why are events supportive?". Themes are listed and

quantified for the entire sample and for each group. Descriptive summaries of attributions are included with those above on transactions.

### Expected Tensions And Threats To Validity

The analyses include several tensions having to do with my own biases. The use of "human instruments" (Guba and Lincoln, 1982:245) cannot help but result in such biases. As a counter-measure it is suggested that researchers itemize their biases, as I have done here. In presenting these biases my intention is to expose them in order to recognize their effects, rather than to try to resolve them.

The groupings of supporter categories is one area which reflects my biases. Although my research is intended to allow categories to emerge from the data, images of other categorization schemes invariably shape the results. In particular, prior reading on the topic of support sensitized me to the types of support most often discussed, namely "instrumental", "emotional" and "informational". As well, analysis of the questionnaires predisposed me to see the same supporter groupings when I later analysed the transcripts.

Another area of bias occurs in the analyses of the transactions and attributions. I have read extensively in the literature related to support and my resulting assumptions, interests, hunches and biases have undoubtedly shaped my interpretation of this qualitative data. My interpretation of the transcripts has been influenced by:

1. contacts with data and respondents not described in the research methods i.e.

- prior and subsequent meetings I had with the parents;
  - the recalled experience of the discussion (I attended five of the six discussions);
  - the tonal inflections on the discussion tapes (I transcribed four of the discussions)
2. Based on my own personal work experience I am particularly sensitive to parental needs for:
- support from family;
  - support from groups;
  - support from structured organizations/settings
3. I presuppose that people attribute support to factors such as:
- not being judged;
  - feeling part of a community
4. I believe that:
- support can come from sources besides individuals, e.g., networks, organizations
  - females frequently offer more support than males
  - the perception of support is equally as important as the actual exchange of support

#### The Evolving Methodology of the Parent Networks Project

There has been experimentation, discussion and conjecture at many points in this research project. The newness of the subject matter, as well as the relatively unmapped methodological territory necessitated giving up reliable, tried and proven paths for potentially more valid approaches. In part, some of the results are based on the kind of empathic understanding that Guba and Lincoln point out are the unique strengths of "human instruments" (1982). The results emerged through an

evolving series of analyses. In summary, it is safe to say that my analytic strategies did not come straight from a textbook, nor are conclusions simply a restatement of computer output.

### 3.4 Conclusion

I have chosen the methodologies for the present study with the intent that they will be sensitive to these parents' experience of support, while providing sound and valuable results. The study used a general approach which is grounded in the community and utilized multiple settings to provide a range of support contexts. The sample and group descriptions demonstrate the diversity of the parents surveyed and the resulting broad range of support issues covered. The three parts of the analysis focus on the "who, what and why" of support. Potential threats to the validity of the findings result from my biases and preconceptions.

On a personal note, I should emphasize that there have been many valuable learning experiences throughout the research process. The steps to the completion of this research have been many and varied. Not reported here are a variety of approaches which were tried but did not succeed. I also kept a journal throughout the study, and recorded my thoughts, hunches, and apprehensions at each stage. Retrospection

suggests there was learning throughout, even during the occasions when I stared in frustration at the huge, but seemingly mute pile of data.

The learning involved a great deal about methodology and research, as well as the substantive topic of support. Nonetheless, the interest in social support for parenting, which originally motivated me to pursue this topic, remains.

## Chapter 4

### SUPPORT SOURCES: THE "WHO" OF SUPPORT

This chapter presents the analyses of support sources. Results are summarized first for the entire sample and subsequently for each of the six groups. Correlations, factor and discriminant analyses are conducted attempting to determine the underlying structure of the support categories. Support sources from questionnaire and discussion data are compared. Lastly these results are discussed in view of the literature on support sources.

#### Supporters

The questionnaire (Appendix A) asked respondents to list the initials of the people and groups which are "an important source of help, support or encouragement". It also asked them to indicate the supporter's relation to them beside the initials. Respondents listed from 2 to 20 sources, averaging 10 each for a total of 359 listed supporters.

These open ended questions elicited 43 different types of supporters which are rank ordered by percentage (Table 2). These 43 types have

TABLE 2  
SUPPORTERS LISTED  
(in descending order of percent)

SUPPORTER TYPE	PERCENT OF TOTAL
friend	21.4
mother	6.4
sister	5.8
parent group	5.6
government agency	4.5
brother	3.6
son	3.3
father	3.1
non-gov't org or society	3.1
husband	2.5
workmate	2.5
another self help group	2.5
group members	2.2
neighbor	2.2
inlaw mother	2.2
doctor	2.2
social worker	2.2
counsellor	1.9
daughter	1.9
spouse	1.7
child doctor	1.7
club	1.7
wife	1.4
best friend	1.4
child psychologist	1.4
child teacher	1.1
church	1.1
health nurse	0.8
service org, ie daycare	0.8
sister inlaw	0.8
child school counsellor	0.8
employer	0.8
child parent (exspouse)	0.8
child babysitter	0.6
respondents' teacher	0.6
other parents	0.6
school	0.6
grandfather	0.6
aunt	0.6
self	0.3
uncle	0.3
brother inlaw	0.3
midwife	0.3
TOTAL	100.00

(359)

TABLE 3  
CATEGORICAL TOTALS: PERCENTAGE AND HISTOGRAM

SUPPORTER	PERCENTAGE	HISTOGRAM
Immediate family	11	*****
Family of origin	19	*****
Extended family	1	*
Friends	28	*****
Inlaw relations	3	***
Child supporters	6	*****
Professionals	8	*****
Group members	3	***
Group	20	*****
	100	

(359)

KEY:

GROUPED CATEGORY	COMPONENTS
Immediate family	= self, husband, wife, son, daughter
Family of origin	= father, mother, sister, brother
Extended family	= grandfather/mother, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece
Friends	= friend, best friend, neighbor, workmate, boss
Inlaw relations	= inlaws: mother, father, sister, brother
Child supporters	= childs: teacher, babysitter, friend, doctor psychologist, school counsellor
Professionals	= doctor, health nurse, social worker counsellor, midwife
Group members	= group members, other parents
Group	= parent group, self help group, gov't agency non-government agency, clubs, school, church, service organizations

Note: Terms beginning in upper case refer to categorized types, terms beginning in lower case are not.

9

been classified into nine categories (Table 3) . The components of each category are listed in Table 3. Of the nine types **Friends** was most often mentioned, followed by **Group**, **Family of origin** and **Immediate family**. In the discussion below, the support sources named by each group are compared with those of the whole group.

#### 4.1 Parent Groups

Comparisons between groups reveal their contrasting support networks. To permit group comparisons, categorical totals have been listed as a percentage of the total supporters listed by each group (Table 4). It also compares average number and total number of types of supporters named.

##### Group 1 - Parents of Teens

Altogether these older, employed parents list 54 supporters, averaging eight each. This is low in comparison with other groups, possibly indicating that they find few supporters for their youth related difficulties. Six group members are married but only two name their spouse as a support. Every member includes the group itself as a support. This group's list of supporters match the total sample's on the top four types. ..

##### Group 2 - Single Parents Group

These three single mothers list 36 supporters, averaging 12 each, which is higher than the sample norm. However, they cite the fewest number of types (15) indicating less diversity in their support

TABLE 4  
 CATEGORICAL TOTALS: PERCENTAGED WITHIN GROUPS  
 (ranked by percentage)

CATEGORIES	PARENTS OF TEENS	SINGLE PARENTS	FAMILY LIFE	NEW PARENTS	COUPLES SUPPORT	SELF DEV GROUP
Friends	28	36	27	29	25	29
Groups	22	14	26	20	20	13
Family of origin	17	25	11	20	25	24
Immediate family	13	3	7	13	18	13
Professionals	4	19	8	2	3	12
Child supporters	7		14	2		5
Inlaw relations	4		3	9	3	2
Group members		3	4	2	8	1
Extended family	6			2		1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
	(54)	(36)	(100)	(45)	(40)	(84)
AVERAGE NUMBER LISTED PER GROUP MEMBER	8	12	13	9	10	9
TOTAL NUMBER OF TYPES LISTED PER GROUP	24	15	25	17	18	25

network (Table 4). The percentage of "Immediate family" listed is the lowest but the "Family of origin" category, "Friends" category and "Professionals" categories are the highest. This group is distinctly different from the overall sample. They are more likely to be single, younger and have fewer children. They also list fewer types of supporters and a higher number of friends and family of origin.

#### Group 3 - Family Life Group

These predominantly married and employed parents draw on a wide range of supports, from both persons and groups, indicating a diverse support network. They name the greatest number of supporters (100), averaging the highest (13). They also name among the most types of supporters (25). They name the highest percentage of "Groups", including more "agencies", "clubs", "churches" and "schools" than the norm for this category and the highest percentage of child supporters (as is shown later these two categories are strongly correlated in the total sample as a result).

#### Group 4 - New Parents Group

These five women are all married but none is employed outside the home. All name their husbands as supportive and four of five name their "mother-in-law" as supportive, a far higher percentage than any other group (as we will see later "husband" and "mother-in-law" variables are strongly correlated in the total sample largely because of this). They name the highest number of "neighbors", possibly as a result of their rural environment. The supporters cited by this group are similar to the whole sample except that "Family of origin" is equal in importance to "Groups".

#### Group 5 - Couples Support Group

The two couples in this group have a high percentage of "Immediate family" and "Family of origin". They are the only group to name all the types of "Friends", including "friend", "best friend", "neighbor", "workmate" and "boss". Unlike any other group they name a considerable number of "group members" or "other parents" as supportive and all list their group itself as supportive as well. They are unique because an equal number of "Friends" and "Family of origin" are listed, making it the only group in which "Friends" is rivaled as the most mentioned supporter.

Group 6 - Self Development Group

This group is diverse in age, number of children and age of children. These young, single, unemployed group members name among the most types of supporters (25). The supporters they list cover every category. "Groups" are mentioned least often, perhaps resulting from the fact that of all the groups they had met for the shortest length of time.

Group Differences

There are striking differences among the groups' support profiles, particularly between the Parents of Teens, Family Life, and Self Development groups. The first is notably short of supporters and troubled with difficult teenage problems. In comparison, the Family Life group has a wealth and diversity of supporters. This is surprising because demographically members of the two groups are similar - i.e., predominantly employed and married. The very different nature of their problems may well be the critical factor. The Self Development group appears to be similar to the Parents of Teens in that they have relatively few supporters. They differ, however, in that they are young, single, unemployed and their problems are more personal and financial in nature. This may account for their greater reliance on support from Family of Origin and Professionals.

There are also large differences between the Couples Support and Parents of Teens groups. The Couples Support Group named the most group members of any group, whereas the Parents of Teens named none. Ironically the Parents of Teens had existed for far longer than the newly formed Couples Support Group. This may indicate that over time

the group itself has become more supportive than individual members to the Parents of Teens.

There is remarkable uniformity in the average number of supporters named. These group means (range=8-13) vary within three units of the sample mean (10) while individual scores vary considerably (range=2-20). What this may indicate is that regardless of group size, there is a mix of members who are well "socially embedded" and those who are not.

These analyses are suggestive: however the reader is cautioned not to assume these numerical quantities of supporters translate directly into either real or perceived support. Supporters vary a great deal in the amount of support they give.

## 4.2 Analyses

Correlation, factor and discriminant analyses have been conducted on the data with the intention that they may help identify underlying support patterns.

### Correlations

A correlation matrix was generated for the nine categories of supporters (Table 5). Several of the larger "r" values in this table

TABLE 5  
CORRELATION MATRIX OF SUPPORTER TYPES  
(pearson "r")

	I M F A M I L Y	O R F A M I L Y	E X F A M I L Y	F R I E N D S	I N L A W S	C H I L D S.	P R O F ' L S	G R O U P M B R. G R O U P S
IMFAMILY								
ORFAMILY	-.08							
EXFAMILY	-.12	-.18						
FRIENDS	-.19	.29	-.07					
INLAWS	.21	.04	-.08	.23				
CHILD S.	.05	-.18	-.06	.11	.13			
PROF'LS	-.35	.31	-.24	.36	.06	.04		
GRP MBR.	.18	.19	.09	-.04	-.04	-.28	.05	
GROUPS	-.16	-.04	.17	.20	.11	.64	.08	-.07

## KEY:

IMFAMILY =immediate family

ORFAMILY =family of origin

EXFAMILY =extended family

FRIENDS =friends, neighbors, coworkers

INLAWS =in law relations

CHILD S. =child supporters, teachers, ex-spouses, babysitter etc.

PROF'LS =professionals, teachers, doctors, and others

GRP MBR. =group members and other parents

GROUPS =self help groups, clubs, community organizations

GRP MBR. =group members and other parents

GROUPS =self help groups, clubs, community organizations

are worth noting.

"Immediate family" and "Professionals" are negatively correlated ( $r=-.35$ ). This means that it is possible that parents who lack personal supporters, (e.g., spouse or child) replace them with professionals (e.g., counsellor). This replacement phenomenon<sup>10</sup> occurs in the Single Parents Group. However, "Family of origin" is positively correlated with "Professionals" ( $r=.31$ ) indicating the opposite of this phenomenon. The positive correlation between "Friends" and "Family of origin" ( $r=.29$ ) indicates a tendency for those who mention more "Friends" to also mention more of their own family as being supportive. The correlation between "Child Supporters" and "Groups" is almost entirely a result of the Family Life Group's high ranking on these two categories. It is not a trend which carries across the other groups.

Factor and discriminant function analysis can be used to determine underlying factors in the above nine categories<sup>11</sup>. It is noted that the nature of the data makes the use of factor and discriminant analysis necessarily exploratory and suggestive. The findings must be interpreted with caution, given the small size of the sample and the low measure of sampling adequacy (i.e., the Keyser, Meyer, Olkin statistic =.477,) (Norusis, 1985:129). Furthermore, in the case of factor analysis, all cases from the six groups are pooled, thereby obscuring the group context, an important element in understanding the

support process. Nonetheless it is felt that these exploratory analyses are suggestive for future research.

### Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is a method designed to find underlying dimensions in a set of variables. It is useful for the present purpose of identifying covariation within the nine categories presented above.

It was difficult to interpret the first principal components analysis because some of the nine variables loaded on several of the four factors created by the analysis. Therefore, the solution was rotated under the Varimax criterion. This time the nine categories loaded onto the four factors in a more interpretable manner (Table 6) loading seven of the nine categories on the first three factors. These three factors together explain 56.6 percent of the variation. The "scree" test suggests that Factor 4 is of lesser importance as it explains very little (12.5%) of the variation.

"Friends", "Family of origin" and "Professionals" load most highly on the first factor (loadings of .70 .69 and .76 respectively). On the second factor "Child supporters" and "Groups" have the highest loadings (.82 and .88 respectively). Variables with the largest loadings on the third factor are "Immediate family" and "In-laws" (.81 and .67 respectively).

The loadings on Factor 1 suggest a strong linkage between the three variables that characterize the factor: Family of origin, Friends and

TABLE 6  
 FACTOR LOADINGS MATRIX OF SUPPORTER TYPES  
 (principal components, factor loadings)

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 3	FACTOR 4
IMFAMILY	-.35	-.14	.81	.07
ORFAMILY	<b>.70</b>	-.23	.09	.16
EXFAMILY	-.31	.28	.34	<b>.68</b>
FRIENDS	<b>.69</b>	.28	.06	.00
INLAWS	.22	.25	<b>.67</b>	-.04
CHILD S.	-.05	<b>.82</b>	.15	-.27
PROF'LS	<b>.76</b>	.03	-.19	-.17
GR. MBR.	.17	.28	.23	<b>.75</b>
GROUPS	.11	<b>.88</b>	-.04	.14
eigenvalue	1.98	1.79	1.34	1.24

PRINCIPAL FACTOR VARIABLES: ORFAMILY CHILD S. IMFAMILY EXFAMILY  
 FRIENDS GROUPS INLAWS GR. MBR.  
 PROF'LS

KEY:

IMFAMILY =immediate family  
 ORFAMILY =family of origin  
 EXFAMILY =extended family  
 FRIENDS =friends, neighbors, coworkers  
 INLAWS =in law relations  
 CHILD S. =child supporters, teachers, ex-spouses, babysitter etc.  
 PROF'LS =professionals, teachers, doctors, and others  
 GRP MBR. =group members and other parents  
 GROUPS =self help groups, clubs, community organizations  
 GRP MBR. =group members and other parents  
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Professionals. As might be expected these three categories correlate strongly among themselves. One might interpret this factor as representing those which form a common core of support available to all sample members.

The second factor is largely a result of the high correlation between its two strongest elements (Child supporters and Groups) which occurs primarily as a result of the Family Life Group's high scores on these two categories (see Table 4). These high scores do not occur within the other groups but this factor suggests that parents with certain needs, such as those in the Family Life Group, may obtain help both indirectly through those who help the child and directly from agencies and other groups.

Factor 3 can also be traced to high scores, this time between In-laws and Immediate family (particularly between mother-in-law and husband) in the New Parents group (see Table 4). This finding does not hold up across all of the other groups but is suggestive of the importance of very close family members for parents in this group. To a degree, both factors two and three represent extreme scores found predominantly in one group rather than a trend across all six groups.

Factor analyses have rarely been discussed in the support literature. It appears this topic is still too recent to expect to find research of this nature. In one notable exception Hirsch and Rapkin (1986) surveyed nurses and report that "best-friend", "spouse" and "adult family member" form one cluster; the other being co-worker

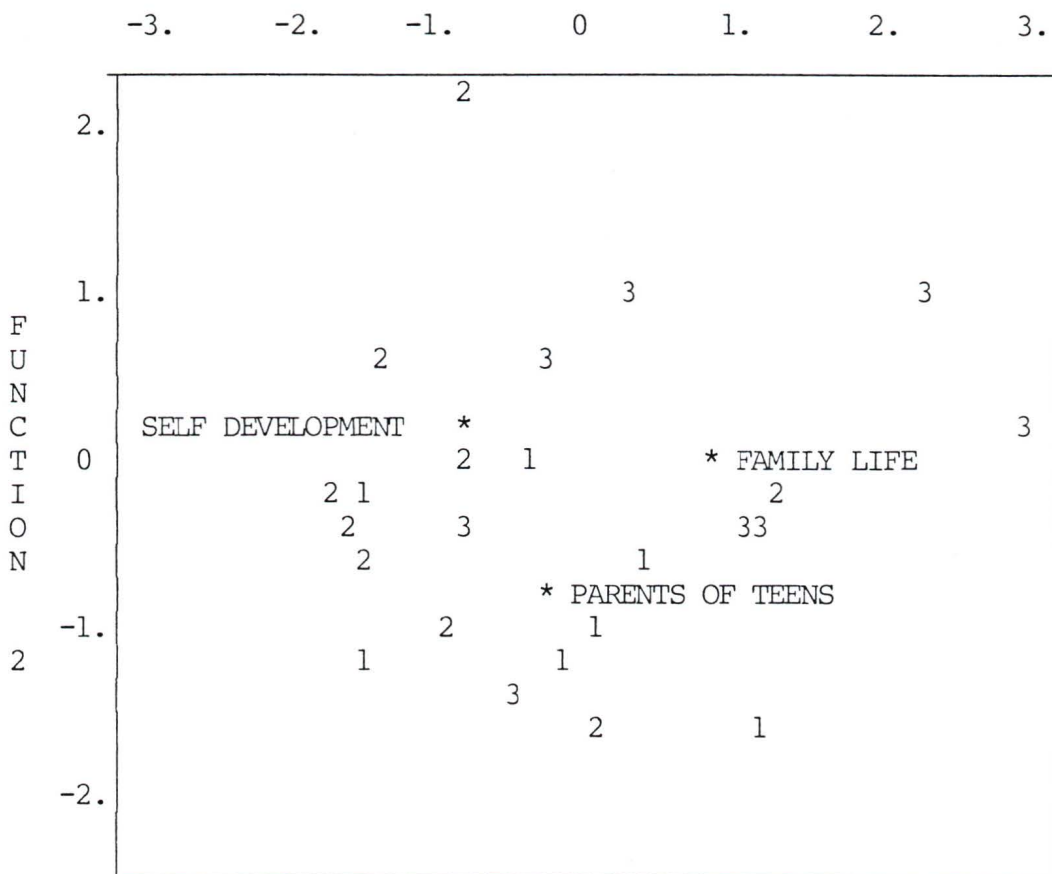
and supervisor. Their first factor resembles my own. Further verification will have to wait for more research using these techniques.

### Discriminant Analysis

Discriminant analysis attempts to find linear combinations of variables that discriminate between mutually exclusive groups. The three largest groups were included in the discriminant analysis, utilizing five supporter categories to attempt to differentiate between the groups. The analysis derived two discriminant functions and then plotted the cases on a two dimensional axis representing these functions. Again, given the limitations of the data this analysis is necessarily exploratory but is nonetheless suggestive of the utility of this technique.

The discriminant functions scatterplot demonstrates some ability to distinguish between groups on the basis of their choice of supporters (Table 7). The first function explains three-quarters of the variance. The selection of Groups, such as the parent support group, agencies, clubs and others, proved to have the largest correlation with this function (.88). The Family Life Group had the highest score on Function 1 which is consistent with their reliance on Groups as a source of support. Function 2 explained much less of the variance (25%). The variable correlating most strongly with it was Professionals (.88), who were frequently listed by the Family Life and Self Development groups but not by Parents of Teens.

TABLE 7  
 DISCRIMINANT FUNCTION ANALYSIS: ALL GROUPS SCATTERPLOT  
 FUNCTION 1



SYMBOL	GROUP	Canonical discriminant functions evaluated at group centroids.	
		GROUP	
1	PARENTS OF TEENS		
2	SELF DEVELOPMENT GROUP	GROUP	FUNC 1 FUNC 2
3	FAMILY LIFE	PARENTS OF TEENS	-.10 -.53
*	GROUP CENTROID	SELF DEVELOPMENT	-.63 .26
		FAMILY LIFE	.79 .17

Pooled within-groups correlations between discriminating variables and canonical discriminant functions. Variables ordered by size of correlation within function.

	FUNC 1	FUNC 2
GROUPS	.88	.20
CHILDS	.58	.29
PROF'LS	-.01	.88
ORFAMILY	-.31	.48
FRIENDS	.26	.48

key: see Table 6

Overall the two groups least alike on Function 1 were the Family Life and Self Development groups. The two groups least alike on Function 2 were the Parents of Teens and Self Development groups. Overall, the analysis suggests Group support is important to differentiate between these three largest groups, as indicated by the first function.

Even in this brief, exploratory foray into discriminant analysis the results appear to be consistent with findings discussed above. Unfortunately no other examples of the use of discriminant analysis were found in the literature, but it appears this form of analysis could be useful in future research that draws on larger samples.

#### Sources: Questionnaires and Discussions

It is interesting to compare the supporters named on the questionnaire with those mentioned in the discussions in order to see what impact, if any, the group context had on discussion of sources (Table 8). The supporters cited in the discussions have been counted in thematic analyses described fully in Chapter 5, and are included here to compare with the questionnaire results.

The results validate the findings that **Friends, Groups** and **Immediate family**, in that order, are the three most important support sources to these parents. The order and percentage distribution of the nine types of supporters are approximately the same for the discussion and questionnaires, indicating that the two types of data yielded

TABLE 8  
 TYPES OF SUPPORTERS: COMPARISON OF METHODS  
 (percentage)

	DISCUSSION	QUESTIONNAIRE
FRIENDS	24	28
GROUPS	25	20
FAMILY OF ORIGIN	18	19
IMMEDIATE FAMILY	9	11
PROFESSIONALS	7	8
CHILD SUPPORTERS	6	6
IN LAWS	5	3
GROUP MEMBERS	3	3
EXTENDED FAMILY	3	1
total	100	100
	(123)	(359)

comparable results.

One notable exception to the similarity is that Groups are more often cited as support sources in the discussion. Given that the discussions occurred immediately following the questionnaires with the same people present this would appear to substantiate the importance of the subtle but significant contextual effects. The context of the discussion brought out a slightly different set of supporters than the context of the questionnaire.

#### Comparison of Groups

As a further comparison of the two data sources, the discussion themes in Table 8 have been broken down and percentaged by group (Table 9). Comparing Tables 4 and 9 demonstrates that for individual groups the supporters referenced in the discussions vary a great deal from those named on the questionnaires. For example, on the questionnaires Friends were the modal supporter type for five of the six groups. Yet in the discussions Friends were the modal choice in only one group, while Groups were the modal choice four times. Groups were thus mentioned more in the discussions.

Another major difference is the range of sources mentioned by individuals compared to the range discussed in the groups. The Self Development Group members covered each of the nine categories but their discussion covered only five. The New Parents named family of origin as second most frequent supporter but in group discussion they were not

TABLE 9  
 TYPES OF SUPPORTERS DISCUSSED BY GROUP  
 (percentages)

CATEGORIES	GROUP						TOTAL
	PARENTS OF TEENS	SINGLE PARENTS	FAMILY LIFE	NEW PARENTS	COUPLES SUPPORT	SELF DEV COURSE	
Friends	19	6	17	21	25	67	24
Groups	10	22	42	32	44	7	25
Family of Origin	13	44	21		19	13	18
Immediate Family	10	17	8	5	6	7	9
Professionals	10	6	8	16			7
Child Supporters	19					7	6
Inlaw Relations	3			21	6		5
Group Members	3	6	4	5			3
Extended family	13						3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	(31)	(18)	(24)	(19)	(16)	(15)	(123)

cited at all.

The Parents of Teens made reference to the most supporters (31) of any group. This is in sharp contrast to their listing of supporters on the questionnaire, where they averaged the fewest. This may be a result of the fact that the discussion dealt extensively with why certain types of people were not supportive: e.g., teachers, principals, and social workers.<sup>12</sup> This had to do with their particularly difficult teen-related problems and consequent difficulties finding supporters. As a result their discussion covered every type of supporter, more than any other group.

An example of a group whose discussion was dominated by one type of supporter is the Self Development group. Their modal category was friends, comprising two-thirds of all the supporters they discussed, while groups accounted for only 7 percent. Their age, student status and other life circumstances may be the reason they refer to friends most when they discuss support, unlike their similar but older counterparts, the Single Parents. Another possible contributing factor is the nature of group participation. The Single Parent drop-in is based on voluntary participation whereas the Self Development Course is a daily program which they are required to attend. Mandatory attendance may foster friendships among the group members, especially because they are together every day.

The Family Life, New Parents and Couples Support groups all focus primarily on the group and on their friends as supportive. These

support profiles may coincide because these groups are all predominantly comprised of married parents with pre-adolescent children. They find support from the group because it provides the place and time to deal with their common problems.

The contextual effects appear to have an important influence on group to group differences in support sources. As discussed in Chapter 2, these contextual differences include an array of characteristics of the participants, as well as of the groups themselves.

#### 4.3 Discussion

The supporters named on the questionnaire have been summarized in Tables 2 and 3 (pages 33 and 34). The discussion begins by examining the literature relevant to these tables.

Over the years various researchers have cited a broad range of support sources. Specifically, three taxonomies from the literature are compared with the categories drawn from the present study. Tardy (1985) lists the following sources: family, close friends, neighbors, co-workers, community, and professionals as key "network members". However, he leaves out the distinctions of immediate, extended and families of origin found in the present study. He also does not include support from "In-laws", "Group members" or "Child supporters", but, his community category appears to be similar to the "Group" category.

House also has presented a taxonomy of supporter types (1981). He identifies nine types of supporters: spouse, other relative, friend, neighbor, work supervisor, co-workers, caregivers, self-help group, and professional. He expands the "Friend" category to include four variations: neighbor, work supervisor, co-workers and friends, but does not include child supporters (his sample was not entirely parents). Additionally, he includes only one type of group, the self-help group excluding church, school or any other type of organization.

Lastly, Vaux and Harrison (1985) have studied mature students and derive the following supporter types: spouse, immediate family, extended family (including in-laws), intimate sexual partner, close friend, and social acquaintance. They also include several types identified by location: neighbor, church/organization, work/classmates, sorority/fraternity in a recognition of differences in physical context. Furthermore, their taxonomy recognizes the contextual differences implied by distinctions between immediate and extended family. However, it does not include professionals or those who help the child.

The above support source taxonomies and others have been summarized in Table 10. In general these findings illustrate that most studies include the same common sources of support, namely: relatives, neighbors, workmates, and friends. However, beyond this common core there is less consistency. It has been suggested that finer

TABLE 10  
REFERENCES TO SUPPORTER CATEGORIES

SUPPORTER CATEGORIES IN THE PRESENT STUDY	STUDIES REPORTING THE SAME CATEGORY
relatives/family	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
neighbors	1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8
workmates	2, 4, 5, 7, 8
friends	3, 4, 5, 6
professionals	2, 3, 7, 8
close friends/confidants	2, 7, 8
spouse	2, 5, 8
self help group	2, 8
family of origin	1
extended family	8
inlaw relations	8
group members other parents	4
institutions	5
community organizations	7
children	none
child supporters	none
self	none

REFERENCE KEY:

- 1-Cochran et al, 1984: 48
- 2-House, 1981: 23
- 3-Kazak and Wilcox, 1984: 645
- 4-McGuire and Gottlieb, 1979:
- 5-Power and Parke, 1984: 957
- 6-Stokes, 1983: 145
- 7-Tardy, 1985: 189
- 8-Vaux and Harrison, 1985: 246

NOTE: References were listed only in the most precise category they fit either major categories (i.e., relatives) or subcategories (i.e., family of origin).

distinctions are necessary to reach a better understanding of support (Tardy, 1985; Vaux, 1985). For instance, the table shows that few researchers make important distinctions between the types of family: immediate, extended or origin. As well, neither children nor child supporters are acknowledged in the literature.

#### Unrecognized Support Sources

The categories on the lower half of Table 10 demonstrate that there were several types of supporters not recognized in other researchers' conceptualizations. These include "self", "children", "child supporters" (e.g., child's teacher, child's doctor). This finding suggests the grounded methods used by this study derived a broader range of support sources than conventional methods. Surprisingly, even those studies which sampled only parents (Cochran, Gunnarson, Grabe and Lewis, 1984; Kazak and Wilcox, 1984, McGuire and Gottlieb, 1979) did not include children or child supporters.

"Groups" were another category found to be important in the present study but not recognized in the literature. The two examples in the literature which studied support groups (McGuire and Gottlieb, 1979; Powell, 1983) did not assess the Group as a source of support. Of the studies reviewed only four recognized that support can come from an institution, organization, self help group or other Group source (see Table 10). The large number of Groups mentioned in the present study, particularly in discussions, reflects the importance of the group context in eliciting this type of supporter.

The nature of these parent groups suggests the effect of another significant factor. These data were collected in the context of a support group and at the same time the research inquired into support. It seems certain that the members' perspectives on support have been altered by their presence in a group which convenes for the primary function of providing support. Perhaps, as a result, there is more discussion of the group itself, more supporters named in the group, and fewer supporters named among ties external to the group.

#### Supporters discussed

The findings in Tables 4 and 9 (pages 36 and 50) illustrate substantial differences between groups in both questionnaire and discussion data on supporters. It is possible to make conjectures about some of these group differences, as has been done earlier (page 39).

The first of these differences was attributed to difficulty of problems, experienced by the Parents of Teens. House (1981) and Gottlieb (1983) also refer to the impact of severity of stress on choice of supporter. Indeed the parents themselves voiced this feeling by stating "the professional I go to when there is a deep need". The "stress-coping" model of support (Depner, Wethington and Ingersoll-Dayton, 1984) suggests the same notion though modelling a direct effect of stress on support. However researchers have yet to develop models specifying the different types of support as they relate

to different levels of stressors, as suggested by Barerra (1986).

The frequent reference to friends in the Self Development Group may have been influenced by their life circumstances. In particular, the group has lower incomes and higher unemployment than other groups. Powell (1983; 1984) measured similar variables, also with low income, single parents, however, did not sample more than one group. He found that participants who were more involved with the instructors of the course dropped out sooner than those more involved with other parents. This substantiates the importance of the "self help" model which links parent to parent. He found that loose-knit, friend dominated networks predicted longer participation in the program indicating a correlation between friend and group support. This would appear to contradict the case of the Self Development group which discussed friends far more frequently than groups.

The ability to uncover the effects of setting has been illustrated above. To attempt to account for the differences between groups' discussion of supporters considerably more research needs to be done across group settings.

#### 4.4 Conclusion

The present study supports the existence of a common core of

supporter types similar to those found in the literature. Friends, family, neighbors and professionals appear among the most prominent supporters. However, notable omissions in the literature include: self, children, child supporters, community organizations, institutions, and the distinctions between immediate versus extended family.

Correlation and factor analysis indicates that those who name friends as supportive are likely to also name family of origin and professionals. However, few people name immediate family along with professionals. Discriminant analysis indicates group members differ as to whether they find groups supportive, particularly members of the Family Life versus Self Development Groups.

Substantial group to group differences were found in the study. Some examples were related to factors such as differences in members' needs, life circumstances, nature of group participation and other contextual variables. Considerably more research is needed to begin to specify and verify contextual variables.

Comparisons between supporter types derived from questionnaire versus discussion data indicate the importance of the contextual differences between the groups. In particular the discussion context increases the salience of group support and reduces the range of support types discussed.

## Chapter 5

### TRANSACTIONS AND ATTRIBUTIONS: THE "WHAT" AND "WHY" OF SUPPORT

This chapter examines the transaction and attribution components of support. Support transactions are the exchanges, interactions and other events, which parents define as supportive. Support attributions are the factors to which parents attribute the supportiveness of the transaction.

The transcribed discussions of the six groups are the data for the following analysis. First, thematic analysis is used to identify the themes related to transactions and attributions. Next, these themes are categorized and quantified for the whole sample and for each group. Descriptive summaries are provided for each discussion, portraying the variation between the contexts. Finally the results are discussed in light of the literature.

#### 5.1 Thematic Analysis

Group discussions were broken down into theme units. This involved the thematic analysis described in Chapter 3 (see page 27). Examples are given below to illustrate each of these steps.

First, I read the original transcript carefully two or three times. Then I divided it into naturally occurring units (consider the following section of a transcript).

(beginning of unit)

Jane: I just thought of my mother-in-law (supporter reference) in Edmonton. There isn't that immediate kind of support, but I know that I can count on her, as I did in a recent crisis, just like that, she would be there, but (beginning of quotation) it is a wonderful feeling...to know if you need somebody...really need them, that they would come at a moment's notice, (end of quotation) and that is a kind of support that is extremely valuable.

Tom: That is a special kind of friend.

Jane: It may not happen, but knowing it's there...

Tom: How do you know it's there? I am not questioning that it is, but what makes that relationship so special, did it happen before?

Jane: No I knew that it was there. I knew that she would want to have been called and told and want to be in the position of doing that. I mean that perhaps that was something she would want to be

(end of unit)

Then the unit was given a number and label summarizing the unit theme.

i.e., 4.13. what a person could do may be support

If a supporter was referred to in the theme the type of supporter is listed.i.e.,

"mother-in-law"

Finally, a quotation was chosen from the unit to represent the theme. i.e.,

It is a wonderful feeling...to know that if you need

somebody... really need them that they would come at a moment's notice."

In this way 129 themes were identified in the six transcripts (Appendix B). The three columns of the Appendix are:

1. the unit label, indicating the theme number and a phrase describing the theme;
2. the supporter referred to in the theme (often implicitly);
3. and a quotation taken from the theme and intended to represent the theme. The quotation serves the important function of expressing, without interpretation, the respondent's exact words.

#### Categorization of themes

Following the thematic analysis the common themes were grouped as shown in Appendix C. The columns show the same information as those in Appendix B without the quotation. The themes are grouped into sixteen types of transactions and seventeen types of attributions listed on the left of this appendix. A concise version is provided with a single example for each category (Table 11).

It is recognized that biases may have influenced these categories, as described in Chapter 3, noting that the categories may in part reflect the researcher's preconceptions of the subject matter. These themes are not intended to be an exhaustive set, but to represent the range and diversity in the transcripts.

TABLE 11  
THEMES AND QUOTES: TRANSACTIONS AND ATTRIBUTIONS  
(ranked in descending order of frequency)

SUPPORT TRANSACTIONS

THEME CATEGORY	UNIT NUMBER AND LABEL	SUPPORTER	QUOTE
CHILD RELATED	6.15.being there for the child	friend	"they were over three or four times a week after the separation, to be there when the children needed someone to talk to...and you know it is something I have never forgotten
TALKING	2.15.listening is supportive	family	"one of my biggest things is that I need to really talk to clear my thoughts. Then I can do something with it.
INSTRUMENTAL	6.13.supporters offer tangible help	friends	"[they] help me do a meal, or maybe grocery shopping because it is hard for me to take three kids... helping me around the house.
AVAILABLE	4.13.what a person could do may be support	mother in law	"that is a wonderful feeling...to know that if you need somebody...really need them that they would come at a moments notice
UNDER STRESS	4.17.different needs require different support	counsellors	"the professional I go to when there is a deep need...a paid counsellor you can just go in there and give them all of it.
KNOW RESOURCES	6.21.support in coping	friend	"you have to have a friend that has been

Table 11 con't

	with the system		through "the system" in order to find out
			what you are entitled to.
DEMONSTRATIVE	4.19.children may give	daughter	"she gives me some too, in her own very clumsy
	support physically		way like when she just comes up and rubs you
BEING NEEDED	2.26.being needed is	family members	"that's where I feel I get the most support
	support		because I know they really need me.
SELF ESTEEM	6.6.promoting belief in		"there is a coordinator of a course...who
	self is supportive		has been a support to me with encouragement
			to realize my own value, to keep me going for
			a while when I felt like I was really nobody.
COPING	1.29.coping support	parents	"We didn't change it, we just learned
			how to live with it
LISTENING	3.4.supporters are those	mother	"I put the person I would listen to the most
	you listen to		"I would listen to her no matter what she says
EMOTIONAL	1.36.emotional support	friends	"There is always an emotional dimension
	is the key		to it
NONACTION	4.12.what a person	mother in law	"she is pretty good about not..not saying how
	doesn't do may be		she used to do it [rearing children]
	support		
SAME BELIEFS	1.28.ideological support	mother	"I took all my books home and gave them to
		father	my mother because I wanted their support in
			what I am doing...and they are terrific
DRAMA	2.23.drama support	soap operas	"I could deal with their (the character's)
			problems'.
CHOICE	6.2.choice of advice	mother	"I go to her for specific things...I can
	is important		either take her advice or not

Table 11 con't

## SUPPORT ATTRIBUTIONS

THEME CATEGORY	UNIT NUMBER AND LABEL	SUPPORTER	QUOTE
CRTISTS	1.18.crisis open up closed support	family	"When J. took the overdose of pills two days before Christmas thats when I reached out to them
ALLOW OTHERS	3.28.need to ask/allow support	family	"maybe I could go to them...maybe they'd be more supportive if I did go to them
GROUP SIMILAR	5.22.shared experiences make a safe group	group	"I was in really safe environment to do that and just tell them all because some of those people...knew what it was like.
VALUES SIMILAR	4.21.non-judgmental atmosphere is critical	group	"you know your family judge you, and there are times when you desperately need not to be judged and that is a wonderful place.
SIMILARITIES	1.13.similarity of concern		"Just knowing that there are other people out there with either the same kinds of problems...was a big help
GROUP SPIRIT	3.13.group enthusiasm is supportive	group	"It was the enthusiasm...when you came back with [very little] success and everyone got ecstatic about it and you figure well maybe he isn;t such a bad kid and you went away and kept at it
PERCEPTION	1.34.support is perceived	teachers	"Like I felt like there was someone out there who understood what I was going through
SEX SIMILARITIES	5.8.talking with same sex	workmate	"It seems to be important to have another male perspective
TIME KNOWN	5.12.long term relations are supportive	best friend	"she has known me for the longest time and known me through enough things that I can

Table 11 con't

LOCALITY	4.1.country setting	neighbors	just talk to her without explaining anything  "it was exactly what I wanted...the  community feeling, I came from the city  with none of that
AGE	3.21.age affects	professionals	"I went and saw this lady...[who] must have  been fifty or sixty years old and I felt like  I was talking to my grandmother...she really  made me feel uncomfortable
CHANGING CONCEPT	2.21.concept of support   changes		"I used to think of support as a really major  thing. Now I think of it a something that will  help push me over a bump and keep going.
EFFORT	5.7.less effort for   family support	brother	"there is no effort required to pour into the  thing [relationship], you can take each other  largely for granted
GROUP DIFFERENCES	3.11.group differences   offer support	group	"everyone in this group has a different skill  thats why I like it.
GROUP SAFETY	3.16 group trust and   acceptance makes it safe	group	"they would really open up and tell you  I mean I was saying things I had never said  before ...because everybody else was
CONSTANCY	4.5.constancy is   supportive	group	"you know its there...the time and the place  are set aside to talk or discuss or to listen.
DISSIMILARITY	6.7.dissimilarities allow   for support exchanges	friend	"we do swaps, she likes to play mom now and  then so she takes my little guy downtown.

### Transactions: Their relation to needs

Transactions relate to the need met by the support (House, 1981). The four most frequent support transactions discussed are those on child related support, instrumental support, talking support and available support. Transactions related to the child indirectly meet the needs of the parent by assisting the child. When others give help to the child this can be a support to the parent. Instrumental support meets a tangible need, such as money, or food; or a physical need, such as moving belongings. Talking support refers to the need people have to talk. Some parents express the benefits of being able to talk about their problems. Available support addresses the need to have someone you can count on.

### Attributions: Evaluations of support

Attributions primarily have to do with why the parent evaluated the event as being supportive <sup>13</sup>. The four most common reasons are: group similarity, value similarity, the effect of crises, and the result of allowing support. Support is frequently attributed to similarities, both between group members and between individuals. Support is also often attributed to crises such as the loss of a family member. Curiously, the finding of support is considered a result of the increased need the crisis presents. Many parents also attribute support to their own acceptance of it. This category, allowing support, may also involve asking for support.

## 5.2 Group Differences

### Transactions

Support transactions mentioned by the six groups vary considerably in number and type, as shown in the cross-tabulation of groups by transaction theme (Table 12). This table is listed in descending order of theme frequency. The first four categories are mentioned by four or more groups while the bottom nine transactions are mentioned by two groups or less. The top four types - child related, talking, instrumental and available - are significantly more important than the others; in fact they account for over half of the total transaction themes. The most unusual group is the Couples Support Group, which mentions only two themes related to transactions, whereas the rest have at least five different types. These and other group differences will be explored later in this chapter.

### Attributions

In comparison to transactions, groups are quite diversified in their choice of attributions (Table 13). On average, groups mention eight different types of attributions (range=4 to 12). The top four types of attributions are mentioned by all but one group. This group, the Self Development Group, mentions only four attribution themes in total.





The transcripts differ in the topics they cover. For example, the Couple's Support Group is concerned foremost with gender issues. Parents of Teens, Family Life, and Couples Support Groups show more concern with "Crises" as they affect support. The Couples Support and Self Development Groups feel that "time known" influences support. All groups, except the Family Life and Self Development Group, list "shared values" as a key attribution. Discussion will later explore more differences in attributions across the groups.

#### Descriptive summaries

Descriptive summaries (Giorgi, 1975:100), previously described on page 27, are used below to summarize the discussions which took place. These descriptions are used in later discussion of the contextual influences on support.

#### Parents of Teens Group:

These parents seek more emotional than material support. This could be because they are older and generally well off. They find their best emotional support comes from others like themselves who have experienced their particular problem. This may include professionals, but is more likely to come from other parents. These parents also get support from anyone who directly helps the child, such as teachers, because this relieves the parent's isolation in dealing with the issue even though it may not change the child. These group members find little support from their own parents, partly because of the nature of the problems they are faced with. Their parents' moral positions makes them likely to be judgmental about the child's behavior, and therefore value differences reduce support. It is supportive to find out that there are others with the same problem. It is also supportive to find someone who understands what they are going through. Much of the support they receive is not intended to change

the child's behavior, but to help the parent cope with it. The support group is a powerful medium to offer this type of support because the group members have a shared experience and they accept and do not judge each other. The onset of a crisis is sometimes looked back on as a good thing because it brings out support where there was none before. In fact, some parents joined the group as a result of a crisis.

#### Single Parents Group:

These parents find instrumental support particularly useful, e.g., money, food, babysitting, hugs, and haircuts. Being needed by children or the elderly is a type of support to them. They are the only group to discuss the self as a source of support and to discuss the anxiety of leaving supporters. As in some other groups they rely on their parents for support, but most family members offer mixed support due to value conflicts. As in other groups: support given to their child is helpful; it is supportive to find others with the same problems as themselves; and long term friends are supportive. It is important to have someone to talk to, or a good listener to help sort out problems. Someone who knows how to deal with the system and knows what resources or benefits are available is a support. They require more support to deal with the day-to-day problems than crises. Perhaps because they are dealing with "chronic" problems, such as low income, single parenthood and difficult children, again, the support they receive is most often to cope with, rather than to remedy problems.

#### Family Life Group:

This group find groups, agencies and professionals offer the type of support they often require. Their group is very powerful support for several reasons. The atmosphere of trust, the enthusiasm, the range of skills, and the similarities all combine to create a bond. These parents are very conscious of their families' support needs and actively seek support from their relatives, neighbors, employers, spouses and others. Factors which seem to reduce the support are dissimilar ages and values, supporters who lack experience of the problem, and "bad luck". Some realize they could ask for support from some family members they have not looked to before.

#### New Parents Group:

These mothers live in a rural area and find it has a community feeling the city lacks. As a result

neighbors are an important source of support to them and are easy to meet. Mothers-in-law are supportive whereas parents are likely to be judgmental and their support mixed. Some of these parents are reluctant to ask for support from their parents. Unlike friends, families sometimes hold expectations of value similarity which get in the way of the acceptance necessary for support. These parents feel that having a baby had a profound effect on them for three reasons: first, because newborn children need support; second, because having a child was the reason some of them left work to become homemakers; and third, because having the child seemed to reduce their ability to make friends. They find a lot of support from their group. It's many benefits include: a quick way to meet similar people; a time and a place to talk about issues; a safe, non-judgmental place, to air or "dump" feelings; and an opportunity to be exposed to different lifestyles, values and family patterns. Emotional support and child care support are important. Some find emotional support comes from within the immediate family (husband and children) except when there is a crisis. Others find they often need extra-familial emotional support. In really difficult times they feel the best support comes from a paid counsellor who can be expected to listen completely.

#### Couples Support Group:

In some respects the men in this group differ from the women in that they have differing needs, feelings, and ideas of support. Women in the group look more actively for support related to family while the men feel more in need of support for job related needs. Husbands' and wives' needs reflect their different work. The group offers more support to the women than the men. The similarities between the mothers make it a safe place to tell their feelings. Both sexes more often talk about their troubles with people of the same sex than with the opposite sex. Both couples have experienced crises in the past few years, and feel the crisis in part changed their choice of supporters. Most support comes from long term friends, particularly following a crisis such as the loss of a family member. Financial support in times of shortage is more important to the husbands, while daily emotional support, especially talking, is more important to the wives. For one husband, family relationships are easier to maintain than friendships due to the value similarity he perceives between family members.

Another member suggests that when adults and their parents share similar values and lifestyles they are more supportive to each other.

#### Self Development Group:

This group needs support to deal with day to day survival issues, rather than crises as in the Single Parents Group. Talking is very supportive to them, and good listeners are helpful. Support comes from someone who has been through the system, and knows what benefits one is entitled to. Support from family is predominantly financial rather than emotional. Friends provide most of the emotional support. Long term friends are particularly important to those that have them. Support is often found from similar others, for instance another single parent with a preschool child. An important theme is the ability to be in control, for example: to choose whether or not to accept advice; to be able to say good-bye and leave if you were visiting a friend; or to be able to go to someone who "you know would be there for you".

### 5.3 Discussion

The discussion focuses first on the support transactions covered in the literature and examines the present findings in light of these. It then summarizes the literature on support attributions beginning with a discussion of support as a dependent variable. Finally, group differences and the effect of context are discussed.

#### Support Transactions

Of the sixteen support transactions found through the foregoing analysis three occur frequently in published support instruments (Table

TABLE 14  
REFERENCES TO SUPPORT TRANSACTIONS

TRANSACTION	SIMILAR TYPE	REFERENCES
INSTRUMENTAL	"instrumental"	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 13
EMOTIONAL	"emotional"	1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 10, 13
KNOWLEDGE OF RESOURCES	"informational"	2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 13
SAME KNOWLEDGE	"social comparison"	2, 4, 9,
SELF ESTEEM	"reassurance of worth"	1, 2, 3
DEMONSTRATIVE	"physical comfort"	2, 6,
TALKING	"talking"	3
LISTENING	"listens"	3
COPING	"emotionally sustaining"	3
BEING NEEDED	"opportunity to nurture"	2
CRUCIAL	"accompanies in a stressful situation"	3
CHILD RELATED	"child related"	1
AVAILABLE	"unconditional access"	3
SAME BELIEFS	"ideological"	6
CHOICE	none	
NONACTION	"	
DRAMA	"	
OTHER POSSIBLE TYPES NOT FOUND IN THIS STUDY		
	"financial"	13
	"socializing"	1, 2, 13
	"environmental action"	3

REFERENCE KEY:

- 1-Cochran et al, 1984: 48
- 2-Fiore et al, 1986: 97
- 3-Gottlieb, 1983: 54-56
- 4-House, 1981: 23
- 5-Procidano and Heller, 1983:
- 6-Power and Parke, 1984: 957
- 7-Scanzoni, 1981: 202-203
- 8-Stokes, 1983: 145
- 9-Tardy, 1985: 189
- 10-Unger and Powell, 1980: 569-571
- 11-Vaux, 1984: 105
- 12-Vaux, Burda, Stewart, 1986: 159
- 13-Vaux and Harrison, 1985: 246

14). Over three-quarters of these appear only occasionally in the majority of research. "Instrumental", "emotional" and "informational" types of support are common aspects of studies (Cochran, Gunnarson, Grabe and Lewis, 1984; Power and Parke, 1984; Unger and Powell, 1980) however the "child related" and "available transactions", which were very prevalent in this study, have seldom been used elsewhere in the literature.

Some of the least discussed support transactions had to do with affect and cognitions. These transactions are distinct in that the salient feature is what is felt or thought, rather than what is exchanged. "Available" support is one such type. Respondents state that it "is a wonderful feeling to know that if you need somebody... really need them... they would come at a moment's notice". Second, being able to "make a choice" is supportive, especially for younger parents. This is sometimes as result of being allowed to be in control. Third, "non-action" by a network member is supportive, i.e., when the respondent knows that the supporter refrained from a bothersome behavior which they used to do. Last, "drama" support refers to the supportiveness of soap operas. This unusual finding results from the fact that people feel they can solve the television character's problems, and their own problems seem less difficult in comparison. This resembles other social comparison cognitions (Festinger, 1954; Singer, 1980). All of the above provide some insight

### Attributions of support

Many studies of social support have examined social support as an independent variable (Fiore, Coppel, Becker and Cox, 1986; Procidano and Heller, 1983; Sandler and Barrera, 1984). However, in order to move towards creating support interventions, research needs to consider it as a dependent variable. Some studies have begun to do this (Cochran, Gunnarson, Grabe and Lewis, 1984; Stokes, 1983; Vaux, 1985; Vaux and Harrison, 1985). The support attributions in these studies are compared with the attributions given by parents in this investigation (Table 15).

This Table compares the attributions found in the present study with similar concepts in the literature. The seventeen types of attributions have been categorized into four groups to simplify the comparisons of results with the literature. Three major differences between attributions found in this study and those found in other studies will be discussed. First, "Group traits" emerged quite strongly as a factor influencing the support the group offered. No studies examined the impact of the group itself, even among those which surveyed parenting groups. This finding could be important to those studying the self-help movement and the sociology of groups.

Second, the finding of crises as a significant perceived influence on support demonstrates the effect of one the less common support models (Barrera, 1986:422; Depner, Wethington and Ingersoll-Dayton, 1984). This model suggests stress and support are causally linked to

TABLE 15  
REFERENCES TO SUPPORT ATTRIBUTIONS

TYPE	ATTRIBUTIONS	SIMILAR FACTOR	REFERENCE
<u>Supporter Traits</u>			
	sex	gender differences	1, 2, 6, 11
	age	age differences	1, 2, 11
	values similar	ideological similarity	6, 10
	similarities	similar traits	2, 11
	dissimilarity		none
	time known		3
	constancy		3
	effort		none
<u>Group Traits</u>			
	group similar		"
	group spirit		"
	group unlike		"
	group safety		"
<u>Self Influence</u>			
	perception	subjective support	1, 13
	change concept	changing need	6
	allow others	utilization orientation	2, 12
<u>Other Influence</u>			
	crisis	level of stress	4, 10
	locality		none
Other Possible Factors Not Found In This Study			
	network characteristics, size, density		8, 11
	nurturant qualities		11
	ethnic similarity		11
	social class similarity		11
	psychological state		2, 9
	family obligation		7, 10
	norm of reciprocity		7

## REFERENCE KEY:

- 1-Cochran et al, 1984: 48
- 2-Fiore et al, 1986: 97
- 3-Gottlieb, 1983: 54-56
- 4-House, 1981: 23
- 5-Procidano and Heller, 1983:
- 6-Power and Parke, 1984: 957
- 7-Scanzoni, 1981: 202-203
- 8-Stokes, 1983: 145
- 9-Tardy, 1985: 189
- 10-Unger and Powell, 1980: 569-571
- 11-Vaux, 1984: 105
- 12-Vaux, Burda, Stewart, 1986: 159
- 13-Vaux and Harrison, 1985: 246

each other, and both directly affect outcomes. If crises have a direct effect on support, as reported by these parents, crises may enhance support at the same time that support buffers the effect of crises (see Barrera for an excellent discussion of support models).

Third, several self influence attributions were derived. "Self influence" refers to the power of individuals to change their perceived support through their thoughts or actions. There is increasing recognition of attributions of this type in the literature (Barrera, 1985:71; Rook and Dooley, 1985; Vaux, Burda and Stewart, 1986:159; Vaux and Harrison, 1985). The present findings reinforce these results in the literature.

#### Group Differences

Some of the differences in transactions and attributions between groups can be traced to characteristics of the setting or participants as is illustrated below.

The Parents of Teens discuss the highest number of child related themes. Possibly these themes dominate this discussion in the same way that child related concerns dominate their lives. Parents with children requiring special attention require a great deal of support to cope with those needs (Kazak and Wilcox, 1984). The attributions they cite suggest that this group feels supportiveness results from similarities. The self-help nature of their group may lead them to equate support with "being in the same boat", a fundamental principle

of their group.

The Single Parents Group discuss demonstrative support i.e., hugs and affection, particularly from children. They discuss the importance of self esteem, and support from ones' self. It is probable that due to the lonely nature of single parenthood they rely on themselves and their children as major sources of support. Perhaps due to their age and continuing dependence on their parents, establishing a circle of friends with similar values is important to them.

Groups which attribute support to crises are almost entirely (7 of 8 occurrences) groups with married members. The married couples may find that they generally require less support, except when their needs exceed their resources, i.e., during a crisis which then lead them to attribute the support to the severity of the situation. With one exception (House, 1981:22) researchers fail to specify crisis oriented support as distinct from daily support.

The Couples Support Group name only two transactions. Instead they name the most attributions. This may be related to the fact that this discussion is dominated by the search for explanations of sex differences in support. Like many married couples these group members turn to their spouses for most of their support (Power and Parke, 1984). This leads them to compare their relationships with other couples, and to try to understand what accounts for the differences in support received. They also discuss most of the other categories of attributions, focussing on the issues of similarities, time known, and

crises as these effect the supportiveness of relationships.

Almost all of the support transactions of the Self Development Group occur in the four most common categories: child related, talking, instrumental and available. Even events such as a haircut are considered important support, whereas these are not likely to have been important to members of the Parents of Teens Group. Like the Single Parents, these group members' lives are dominated with their and their childrens' needs. Their employment situation and income are difficult problems in that they also leave them with few resources on which to rely.

#### 5.4 Conclusion

Thematic analysis conducted on the transcribed discussions has illustrated the potential wealth and diversity of meanings of support in the discussions of support by these parents. Some new support transactions have been uncovered and also some existing types have been substantiated. Cognitive and indirect (i.e., child related) types of support are not discussed elsewhere in the literature. However the instrumental, emotional and informational support transactions in other work have been substantiated.

The relation of needs to transactions was discussed. Groups whose

needs are more crisis and child oriented specify child related transactions as more supportive. Their most supportive resources are those which are always available to help them through crises. Groups for single parents find their own daily survival needs require the most support and they specify transactions that meet these needs. By necessity they rely on themselves and their children for support.

Analysis of support attributions exposed two types of attributions with implications for the literature. Group traits, particularly similarity, are suggestive of the importance of support groups in bringing together people with similar needs. Of more theoretic significance is the attribution of support to crises, particularly among the groups of married couples in this study.

## Chapter 6

### CONTEXTUALIZING SUPPORT RESEARCH

This chapter presents an integration of Chapters 4 and 5. A classification scheme is presented which specifies source, transaction and attribution for a given support event. The use of this device is then illustrated through the classification of sources and transactions for three selected groups. The contextual influence on support is discussed. Finally, the study is summarized and implications for future research are presented.

#### 6.1 Classification Scheme

The classification scheme (Table 16) combines major elements found in the present study with additional elements found in the literature into three lists representing the components of support. The scheme allows researchers to create either an instrument such as a questionnaire, or a coding sheet to classify open ended responses.

TABLE 16  
 CLASSIFICATION SCHEME OF SUPPORT SOURCES,  
 TRANSACTIONS AND ATTRIBUTIONS

- List 1: R gets support from: \_\_\_\_\_  
 List 2: They support by: \_\_\_\_\_  
 List 3: Which is support because: \_\_\_\_\_

R gets support from:		List 1: SUPPORT SOURCES
	self	immediate family
	husband	
	wife	
	son	family of origin
	daughter	
	father	
	mother	
	brother	extended family
	sister	
	grandfather	
	grandmother	
	uncle	friends, workmates and neighbors
	aunt	
	friend	
	close friend	
	members of a group	in law relations
	neighbor	
	workmate	
	employer	
	brother inlaw	persons who support your child
	sister inlaw	
	father inlaw	
	mother inlaw	
	child's teacher	professionals
	child's babysitter	
	child's friend	
	child's doctor	
	child's counsellor	groups, clubs, organizations
	child's parent(exspouse)	
	doctor	
	health nurse	
	social worker	groups, clubs, organizations
	counsellor	
	teacher	
	self help group	
	government agency	groups, clubs, organizations
	non-gov't organization	
	church	
	school	
	club	

Table 16 cont'd

## List 2: SUPPORT TRANSACTIONS

The following list itemizes the various types of support which may be given. They are grouped into four general categories.

They support by:

- |            |   |  |
|------------|---|--|
| BEHAVIORAL | / | talking to R                                     |
|            | / | listening to R                                   |
|            | / | doing things for R                               |
|            | / | providing things for R                           |
|            | / | showing support to R through their actions       |
|            | / | connecting R to resources                        |
| EMOTIONAL  | / | socializing with R                               |
|            | / | helping R learn to live with a problem           |
|            | / | needing help from R                              |
|            | / | helping R feel better                            |
| COGNITIVE  | / | helping R feel better about self                 |
|            | / | being there for R at a crisis                    |
|            | / | being unconditionally available to R             |
|            | / | having the same beliefs or understanding as R    |
|            | / | allowing R to make choices                       |
| INDIRECT   | / | not being a trouble to R                         |
|            | / | helping R's troubles seem less                   |
|            | / | providing feedback or a point of comparison to R |
|            | / | helping someone who R normally helps             |
|            | / | acting on environmental causes of R's stress     |

Table 16 cont'd

**List 3: SUPPORT ATTRIBUTIONS**

The following are factors to which the respondent attributes the support. R may be asked for reasons they consider the event supportive.

**Which is support because**

the supporter:

SUPPORTER TRAITS	/	have the same values as R
	/	are similar or have the same problem as R
	/	have different experience than R
	/	are same sex as R
	/	are similar age to R
	/	have known R for a long time
	/	are consistently and dependably there for R
	/	have a relationship with R which needs little effort
	/	are a nurturant kind of person
	/	are a family member and are obligated to support R
/	are in the same social or cultural strata as R	
/	feel they must return a favor to R	

the group:

GROUP TRAITS	/	members are similar in need or experience
	/	has a positive enthusiastic spirit
	/	members having different experience
	/	provides an atmosphere of trust and acceptance
/	has positive network qualities of size, density etc	

R:

SELF INFLUENCE	/	changes to perceive support
	/	defines support to match existing interactions
	/	allows others to support
	/	feels positive about a lot of things right now

or:

OTHER INFLUENCES	/	a crisis demands R seek support
	/	the locality, neighborhood, makes it possible

List 1 details the support source and includes the common core of supporters: e.g., friends, neighbors and family. As mentioned earlier (Chapter 4), most of these elements have been presented by previous authors. There are some distinctive elements however, including institutional sources such as agency, club and school, and child related sources, e.g., child's teacher and child's counsellor.

List 2 is divided into four broad conceptual groups. The list covers two groups of transactions qualitatively different from the majority in the literature. These are: cognitive types of transactions, for instance "allowing 'r' (respondent) to make choices"; and indirect types of transactions, such as "helping someone who 'r' normally helps" (e.g., the child).

Elements on List 3 are again categorized into four groups. Of theoretical interest are those categorized as group traits i.e., "The group provides an atmosphere of trust and acceptance". Also of interest are some supporter traits including: "have a relationship with 'r' that needs little effort".

Optimal use of the classification scheme involves utilizing all three lists together. However, the present study does not have a large

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enough sample to be able to do this . There are too few themes to produce a sufficiently dense cross-tabulation of all three components. Therefore, only two have been used in the section below to illustrate the use of the classification scheme.

## 6.2 Sources and Transactions in Three Groups

The utility of classifying support across more than one dimension is demonstrated in this section. A cross-tabulation of sources and transactions is presented for the Parents of Teens, Family Life and Self Development groups (Table 17). These three largest groups differ substantially in the characteristics of their group members, their networks and the group environment. The groups are compared below to allow examination of the effects of settings on sources and transactions.

The Parents of Teens discuss a predominance of transactions related to the child. As mentioned, this is a group for parents of difficult teenage children. Their child related transactions come mostly from those who help the child, or from a friend of the parent. The friend dominated networks of this group demonstrate their preference for support from non-family, and especially group members.

The Family Life Group discusses more transactions to do with talking than to do with children. Transactions occur within a diverse network of supporters. Their context is differentiated by the number of health professionals and agencies on which they rely.

The Self Development Group shows a strong tendency towards friends

TABLE 17  
CROSSTABULATION: SOURCES BY TRANSACTIONS

1. PARENTS OF TEENS

I	O	E	F	I	C	P	G	G
M	R	X	R	N	H	R	R	R
F	F	F	I	L	I	O	P	O
A	A	A	E	A	L	F		U
M	M	M	N	W	D	'	M	P
I	I	I	D	S	S	L	B	S
L	L	L	S			S	R	
Y	Y	Y						

CHILD RELATED	1	1	3	1	4	1	
TALKING		1					1
INSTRUMENTAL							
AVAILABLE							
CRUCIAL	1						
KNOW RESOURCES							
DEMONSTRATIVE							
BEING NEEDED							
SELF ESTEEM							
COPING	1						
LISTENING							
EMOTIONAL			1				
NONACTION							
SAME BELIEFS	2						
DRAMA							
CHOICE							

KEY:

- IMFAMILY =immediate family
- ORFAMILY =family of origin
- EXFAMILY =extended family
- FRIENDS =friends, neighbors, coworkers
- INLAWS =in law relations
- CHILD S. =child supporters, teachers, ex-spouses, babysitter etc.
- PROF'LS =professionals, teachers, doctors, and others
- GRP MBR. =group members and other parents
- GROUPS =self help groups, clubs, community organizations





as the source of their support. This group's needs cause them to value instrumental or financial support. They find it is important to know support is available, again perhaps as a result of their needs. The financial situation of these single parents causes them to look for people who can supply information on benefits.

The Parents of Teens Group have more emotional needs, in comparison to the Self Development Group who have more physical and instrumental needs. Members of the former are older, more financially established and concerned with their childrens' safety, and well being. Members of the latter are more concerned with their own welfare and survival, as a result of being young, poor, single parents.

### 6.3 Summary of Findings and Implications for Future Research

#### Methodology

The key findings of the study are methodological as much as they are substantive. First, it appears clear that the use of the grounded approach led to a greater range of results than if "a priori" definitions had been used. For example, children and groups would not likely have been found to be important supporters as existing literature does not refer to these types of support. The implications of this finding are that researchers should work to develop better

understanding of the day-to-day use of the term "support" prior to testing hypotheses. Mixed methods may be used to maximize the validity of the findings. Purely quantitative methods should be used cautiously, recognizing their implicit "assumptions" (Mishler, 1979:3). In particular, caution should be used when creating measurement instruments to ensure they adequately correspond to the respondent's meaning of support.

The influence of examining support across contexts is the second major finding of the study. Interesting observations were made possible as a result of the ability to compare settings. One example is the significance of crises for married parents versus daily coping support for younger single parents. Also important are the differing supporter resources available. Neighbors are a major resource to the New Parents Group, who live in a rural area, while other urban groups' supporters may include friends and family who live a considerable distance away.

Future research should be designed to include several settings so as to recognize the potential influence of context. This multi-context research is especially important for investigation of social processes (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Miles and Huberman, 1984).

### The Support Process

The parents who participated in this study live with intimate knowledge of social support because it is important to them. To them,

support is a process whose components cannot be separated. This is illustrated by the many quotations (Appendix B) which include reference to all three components of support: source, transaction and attribution e.g., "She (best friend) has known me for the longest time and known me through enough things that I can just talk to her without explaining anything".

Researchers need to recognize that the elements of support are causally linked, and that independent measurement of elements obscures their interactions in daily social life. At the same time these components of support cannot be divorced from their context and methods need to be utilized that take context into account.

Support research has been recognized as multi-faceted (Barrera, 1986) yet measurement strategies do not reflect this recognition. My research indicates that researchers can benefit by looking at support from at least three angles. Asking the questions "Who provides support?", "What support do they provide?", and "Why is it support?", as presented in the classification scheme generated in this study, would help to focus attention on the causal interrelation between support sources, transactions and evaluations as well as allowing a more complete range of variability in these components.

#### 6.4 Conclusion

My thesis has stressed that research to date has been hindered by the use of methodologies which restrict the meaning of support and ignore the context in which the meanings take place. Using grounded methodologies, and examining support comparatively across group settings, leads to a different perspective on the meaning of social support.

The results of the present study are suggestive of the importance of examining meanings in context (Mishler, 1979). This is particularly true of social processes, such as support. The three components of the support process have been combined in a classification scheme which may be helpful in future empirical inquiry into this area.

## Footnotes

1. This framework is largely the result of the committed work of Alan Vaux (Vaux, 1982). In the past five years Vaux has created and published three paper and pencil instruments for the measurement of these components: Social Support Resources, a measure of number and type of social network support sources (Vaux, Burda and Stewart, 1986; Vaux and Harrison, 1985); Social Support Behaviors, a list of supportive acts and transactions (Vaux, Reidle, and Stewart, in press); and Social Support Appraisals, a measure of the subjective perceptions of support (Vaux, Phillips, Holly, Thomson, Williams, and Stewart, 1986).

2. Wellman (1981) argues for the use of social network analysis to examine social support. He states other support research methods are plagued with inaccuracies and biases.

3. See Guba and Lincoln, 1982, 1983. To an extent the naturalistic paradigm opposes the traditional, positivistic paradigm. It assumes that inquiry is value bound rather than value free, and fundamentally the researcher is inter-related with the respondent. The object of the "naturalistic" researcher is to produce "context bound working hypothesis" [and] "ideographic statements" rather than generalizations (see Guba and Lincoln, 1982:237 for elaboration). However, the two paradigms share in common the pursuit of validity, reliability and objectivity.

4. The literary meaning of 'context' involves the meaning of words in the surrounding text. This definition is recognized but is not applicable here.

5. Greene suggests four means of cross-method fertilization: 1) incorporate questionnaire data into interview summary 2) use interview categories to cluster questionnaire variables 3) use factor analytic results from the questionnaire to develop a table for the interview summary 4) incorporate interview themes as major interpretive aids in the questionnaire summary (1985:9). Depner et al (1984:48) have suggested three ways in which it is possible to combine the two methodologies. They suggest qualitative methods can "define the parameters", "suggest interpretations" and "provide examples" for quantitative research.

6. The collection and reduction of the PNP data has had a large impact on the initiation of this research prospectus in two different ways. 1) The concept of deriving definitions directly from the respondents themselves emerged as a result of reading the transcripts. Repeatedly statements appeared suggesting that respondents had developed a personal definition of support, and had identified factors which they perceived affected the availability of support. In retrospect the parents in the project were much more self conscious of

the whole process of support they were engaged in than the researchers expected. 2) The substantive nature of those definitions lead to the identification of substantive themes. One potentially significant theme was the existence of "network" support (non-person source). The many other substantive themes included: a) differences between support from friends and support from family, b) men's and women's differing support needs, c) indirect support, e.g., through a child, and d) the existence of support specific to child rearing.

7. Note: the organization cannot be named for reasons of confidentiality

8. Note: the organization cannot be named for reasons of confidentiality

9. Upper case denotes grouped categories i.e., Friend. Lower Case denotes ungrouped categories i.e., workmate.

10. Covariation among support types indicates they are complementary. Types which vary inversely could be thought to replace one another. This will be termed the replacement phenomenon.

11. An attempt was made to derive both factors and clusters from the full set of 43 supporter types (Table 2); however the data set was not large enough to allow sufficient variables to pass the tolerance test. When the remaining variables were run the 13 factors which were produced were not identifiable. The KMO (Norusis, 1985:129) statistic (.20) indicated that measure of sampling adequacy was too low. The KMO statistic for the analysis of the nine variables was marginal (.477).

12. This finding is suggestive of a novel approach to the study of support, namely the study of factors which subjects identify with the lack of support. The examination of the traits of unsupportive persons, groups, or environments may be useful to future interventions into support. The question remains however, as to whether these traits can be considered the mirror image of supportive traits and whether their reverse would indicate supportiveness.

13. The attributions of support found in this study include a varied collection of reasons. They include characteristics of supporters, groups, situational factors and antecedents. Future examination of the attributions of support may benefit from developing these distinctions more carefully.

14. The conditioning model (Depner et al, 1984), is reinforced by the finding of "Coping" support. In this model stress has a direct effect on outcomes, but its effect is conditioned by support. The existence of coping support demonstrates that this model has validity.

15. A proper application of Table 16 would require a much larger set of data. Data would need to be collected on all three dimensions for every theme.

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The prime focus of our project is to understand the help, support and encouragement that parents may give and receive. This part is concerned with those people and organizations with whom you are involved in supportive relationships.

We would like you to list those people who are presently important to you. These may include:

- family (immediate family, in-laws, relatives, etc),
- friends (workmates, social friends, neighbors, etc) , or
- professional helpers (doctors, social workers, ministers, teachers, etc.)
- or others.

**SUPPORT SOURCES**

Please list below, the initials of each person who is an important source of help, support, or encouragement to you. Then indicate their relation to you in the space beside their initials.

- Examples: **J.T. Brother**  
**J.R. Social Worker**  
**P.R. Friend**  
**S.B. Work mate**  
**J.J. Child's teacher**

INITIALS      RELATION TO YOU

**SUPPORT GIVEN**

We recognize that people may give as well as receive support. Please list below those persons to whom you give help, support, or encouragement.

(Note: If you have already given a persons' name whom you would include on this list just indicate them with a star (\*) on the previous list. Thank you.

INITIALS      RELATION TO YOU

There may also be groups or organizations with which you have contact which may provide help, support or encouragement. These may include:

- recreation groups, service clubs, self-help groups etc.
- institutions, church, schools etc.
- others

Please list these below.

If there are groups or organizations to whom you give help please list these below. (If you have already listed them please star (\*) them on the previous list.)

THANK YOU SINCERELY. Your time and consideration has been greatly appreciated.

Jim Anglin, Shelly Sanderson,  
Reed Early, 721-7979  
Parent Networks Project

APPENDIX B

THEME LISTING BY GROUP

GROUP: PARENTS OF TEENS

UNIT LABEL	SUPPORTER	QUOTE
1.1. Support to child	{neighbor {friend {grandparents	{ { {"They are always phoning and sending money, {giving support any way they can
1.2. A model to the child	{friends	{"Our kids really look up to them {they identify with them.
1.3. Help with the child or their problems	{child psychi'st {child teacher {social worker	{ {"Has gone out of his way to let us know {how things were going
1.4. They have been through it so they know	{the group	{"an alcoholic can help another {alcoholic because they have been {through it
1.5. Support is who you call on the phone	{uncle	{
1.6. process	{	{
1.7. Teen children are support	{	{
1.8. process	{	{
1.9. support a function of maturity	{son	{"It just reminded me of my youngest {son and how mature he is and how {much support he gives me when I need it
1.10. support dependent on asking for it	{family	{"I didn't want to tell them anything
1.11. Crisis bring out support	{	{

1.12.support is dependent on asking for it	{friends   	"I didn't give them the opportunity to support me 
1.13.similarity of concern	{       	"Just knowing that there are  other people out there with either  the same kinds of problems  or worse kinds of problems  than I've got was a big help
1.14.Family don't provide emotional support	{family 	"We don't really share our troubles  just our good times
1.15.support may be constantly changing	{professionals 	
1.16.own limitations on family support	{mother   	"I always have this feeling that I  don't like to lay too much  on my family, because they  have their own problems
1.17.family are not support due to judgement	{ 	"Most family members tend to give you  unwanted advice
1.18.crisis open up closed support	{family   	"When J. took the overdose of pills  two days before Christmas thats when  I reached out to them
1.19.some support is crucial	{family   	I finally reached my desperation point  I guess you'd call it, that's when I needed  crucial support.. it wasn't just the minimal
1.20.similarities of others	{group members 	other people who have been through it themselves
1.21.stressful times need special support	{ 	
1.22.support helps define the problem	{group 	"The support I needed was to discuss  and really find out what my problem was
1.23.small things are supportive	{group member 	"If you phone someone once, just to  say How are you? then you have  given support, no matter how small.
1.24.child's teachers may be supportive	{principals  teachers 	"Just knowing that they were trying to  help her (the daughter)...and would keep  me informed as to whether she was at school

1.25.the group itself is supportive		"It has an existance beyond the individuals  within it
1.26.child's teacher may not support		"In some cases they (teachers) denied the existence  of the problem    "I know and I'm sure they know    that they have a profound effect on the kids
1.27.social attitudes towards teens		
1.28.ideological support	mother  father   	"I took all my books home and gave them to  my mother because I wanted their support in what  I am doing...and they are terrific  "They tried to get through to (the child) to  reason and talk with him
1.29.coping support	parents 	"We didn't change it, we just learned  how to live with it
1.30.nearness affects support	neighbors 	"The first two people..are very close in the  neighborhood
1.31.support to child is supportive	sister  brother in law	
1.32.distance need not affect support	uncle  aunt	
1.33.comfort affects support		"Comfortable, I think thats what it is 
1.34.support is perceived	teachers   	"Like I felt like there was someone out there  who understood what I was going through  "The other person may see it and feel it as support  from you but to you its not
1.35.the many types of support	groups 	"Any time I get involved in any thing  my stress level goes down...give me support
1.36.emotional support is the key	friends   	"There is always an emotional dimension  to it  "I can go to these people for anything,  money...whatever...everything and anything
1.37.professionals need	counsellors	"Generally to be effective they have to have

experience of problem | |been there themselves  
 1.38.process | |

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 GROUP:SINGLE PARENTS

2.1.introductions | |  
 2.2.services to child |agency |  
 are support | |  
 2.3.coping support |agency |"so far what I found is that  
 | |the people were mostly helping me to handle  
 | |things instead of helping him  
 | |"helping you deal with it is sort of  
 | |like putting a bandaid on it  
 2.4.value differences |mother |"she's got the old fashioned ideas of raising him  
 among family |brother |and I'm more into STEP but she doesn't agree with  
 | |STEP  
 2.5. own limitations | |"my family is very supportive, but there  
 get in the way of family | |are things....I wouldn't tell them because they  
 support | |are so far away and they would just worry.  
 2.6.family can be too | |"I accomplished more by leaving  
 close | |my family than being with them.  
 2.7.self as support | |"I've realized now and it seems so obvious, but  
 | |it wasn't to me, that really true happiness is  
 | |found in yourself, not by depending on others  
 | |to bring it too you  
 | |"when you're having a hard time and you figure  
 | |your friends would phone ...but nobody ever did  
 2.8.safety in group |single parent |"I know that everybody that walks through that  
 support |agency |door has something thats a trouble for them.  
 | |"its safe here.  
 2.9.anxiety in leaving |parent agency |"I'm going to have to leave here one day. and  
 support |friend |I don't want to. This is my safe place.  
 2.10.demonstrative |children |"I get the love from them that I never got when I  
 support | |was growing up.I find it very easy to hug a child  
 2.11.being needed is |elderly person |"she needs me I need her. This is the thing.

support		
2.12.values conflict	mother	"they both don't agree with my way
with support	brother	
2.13.support connections	social worker	"like she provides me with financial help
		when I need it...anything I need...like play
		therapy, or a counsellor, I can go to her.
2.14.financial support	family	"They're always sending me money.
2.15.listening is		
supportive	family	"one of my biggest things is that I need
		to really talk to clear my thoughts.
		Then I can do something with it.
2.16.lack of money		"I think its the fact that I don't eat
creates many stresses		properly the whole month that I find really hard
		to take.
2.17.children offer	teenage child	"they are a mixed support, they are, they aren't.
mixed support		
2.18.value conflicts	mother	"My ideas are different than hers
2.19.process		
2.20.perceived adequacy		"I thought I don't have enough support. And
of support varies		just doing this questionnaire I really do
		have a lot
2.21.concept of support		"I used to think of support as a really major
changes		thing. Now I think of it a something that will
		help push me over a bump and keep going.
2.22.anxiety over	agency	
leaving support	elderly person	"I have to leave two other things right now
		and they are my support, my BIG support,
		and I'm scared.
2.23.drama support	soap operas	"I could deal with their (the character')
		problems'.
		"it made me think of something else other than
		me. They made me feel safe.
		"their problems are so bizarre they make yours'
2.24.process		feel little
2.25.support from		"it can be a support system through a hug

actions		
2.26.being needed is support	family members	"that's where I feel I get the most support because I know they really need me.  "I feel better about ones I can give support to as well as get support from.

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GROUP: FAMILY LIFE

3.1.introduction		
3.2.talking is supportive	friends	"we just sit down and talk kids all the time
	family	
	doctor	
3.3.age influences support choices	mother	"thats because I'm twenty...I see her a lot  I might be married but I still see my mother  almost as much
3.4.supporters are those you listen to	mother	"I put the person I would listen to the most  "I would listen to her no matter what she says
3.5.marriage affects support system	father	"my father, I listen to him, now that I am  married
3.6.crisis bring out support	friends	"we've made a lot of friends that we couldn't  have  made before [son's illness]
	doctor	"we were very fortunate in having a doctor that  recognized the complaint
3.7.employer can be supporter	boss	"I talk to her the most
	co-worker	"she's been a lot more understanding and  flexible with my working hours as well
3.8.instrumental support	father	"he'd loan me some bucks...and the muscle  around the house
3.9.crisis can bring out support	father	"being pregnant all by myself...at first  I was really terrified to tell them but the  minute I told them it was like GREAT ...
	family	
	neighbors	
3.10.new neighborhood can be supportive	neighbors	"all the neighbors in our new neighborhood have  come up and personally introduced themselves so I  can rely on them too...offered babysitting

3.11.group differences offer support	group 	"everyone in this group has a different skill  thats why I like it.
3.12.group similarities help support	group 	"you don't have to explain yourself  "it helped us to find out that we weren't the  only ones with similar problems with that age child
3.13.group enthusiasm is supportive	group 	"It was the enthusiasm...when you came back with  [very little] success and everyone got ecstatic  about it and you figure well maybe he isn't  such a bad kid and you went away and kept at it
3.14.group social events are supportive	group 	"we had fun days and we had picnics
3.15.talking can be no support	counsellor 	"It was sort of a Health Unit where they talked  and they never ever had seen the children and  and they would tell me everything I already knew
3.16.trust and acceptance are important	group 	the one thing about this group...is the fact  of how honest everybody was and they would  really open up and tell you. I mean I was saying  things I had never said before, would never  say to anyone because everybody else was.
3.17.group is supportive	group 	"what went on in the group was much more  informative, enjoyable and helpful
3.18.group leader models support	group leader 	"it felt like she knew what I was talking  about...yeah she had an amazing way of  getting you to talk so, openly.
3.19.support affects marriage	group 	"if we wouldn't have gone to this parent group  meeting we would have been separated right now  "I wanted him to come to the group so he  could see where I was in a different light
3.20.support carries over to home	group 	
3.21.age affects support	professionals 	"I went and saw this lady, like not to  offend her age or anything, must have been  fifty or sixty years old and I felt like  I was talking to my grandmother...she really made

		me feel uncomfortable
3.22.age may not affect support	group	"its not just the age but its how well they can relate to your situation
3.23.need reciprocity for support	professionals	"he doesn't like come back with anything...you're the one doing all the giving
3.24.feedback on child is supportive	daycare	"they are giving me a lot of positive feedback that he isn't as bad as I thought
3.25.similarities of problems	group	"one of the nicest things of this group was to find that other people were having the same concerns.
3.26.services are supportive	government	"a lot of other things made us feel very positive towards the community and the country
3.27.process		
3.28.need to ask for support	family	"maybe I could go to them...maybe they'd be more supportive if I did go to them
		"you know if no-one comes to you you don't think you can go to them
		"darn I'm not going to do that any more, you know. I'm not going to allow that to be cut off
3.29.process		
3.30.differences offer support	group	"it was interesting talking to guys, how they have to deal with things
3.31.process		

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GROUP: NEW PARENTS

4.1.country setting influences support	neighbors	"it was exactly what I wanted..to meet with other mothers with other children and the community feeling, I came from the city with none of that
4.2.having children influences need		"if we had kids in the city we probably would have looked for it more
4.3.having children influences ability	friends  neighbors	"I really wanted to meet friends, and I have had no trouble meeting friends but once I

to find support		stopped working and had this baby I felt I lost the ability to meet people
4.4.group commonalities speed support system	group	"if you meet someone in the street its a long process before you get to know them and feel OK about phoning them
4.5.constancy is supportive	group	"you know its there...the time and the place are set aside to talk or discuss or to listen.
4.6.sharing feelings is supportive	group	"it was just nice...when S...said how much she enjoyed motherhood
4.7.child care is support	group members	"they look after A. when I need it.
4.8.neighbors are easy support	neighbors	"its easy top connect with neighbors...you can just just go to see their garden or say...does your kid want to come over
4.9.need for emotional support is a function of stress		"I get almost all my emotional support from my husband...I haven't had a crisis for so long I've almost forgotten what one's like.
4.10.groups allow one to unload problems without worry	group	"whatever your emotional crisis was at that point you wouldn't want to burden one person with that but it might be easier on the group
4.11.different types of supporters exist		"there were two categories of people; those that are in a similar situation themselves and give me emotional support just by the very fact of being in that situation and then people who basically help look after the kids which also gives me a break...a different kind of support
4.12.what a person doesn't do may be support	mother in law	"she is pretty good about not..not saying how she used to do it [rearing children]
4.13.what a person could do may be support	mother in law	"that is a wonderful feeling...to know that if you need somebody...really need them that they would come at a moments notice
4.14.a person may need to be allowed to support	mother in law	"she feels she needs permission...I let her do that..take over my family and my house

		and care for all of us.
4.15.asking for support	in laws	"we don't know if we could ask...if we ask
may cause uneasiness		they may say yes because they feel obliged to us
4.16.support needs to	professionals	"I guess support is where you feel comfortable
feel comfortable		about getting it and giving it
4.17.different needs	counsellors	"the professional I go to when there is a
require different		deep need...a paid counsellor you can just
support		go in there and give them all of it...lean
		totally on
4.18.work may or may not		"even when things are going badly you are
be a support		there [at work] with a whole pile of other
		people and you can sort of forget about it
		"my job isn't very social...I have very little in
		common with the other workmates
4.19.children may give	daughter	"she gives me some too, in her own very clumsy
support		way like when she just comes up and rubs you
4.20.reciprocity of		"I feel that support, most often it works both
support		ways...I couldn't give to some person all the
		time without their giving back
	family	"I think there is something that happens with
		families...you can't not give support..there is
		a bond there
4.21.non-judgmental	group	"you know your family judge you, and
atmosphere is critical		there are times when you desperately need not
		to be judged and that is a wonderful place.
4.22.patterns carry	friends	"I find that it expands into relationships
over to other relations		outside the group [non-judgement]
4.23.judgmental patterns		"your family expects you to share their values
are slower to change		and if you don't its a direct judgment back at
in families		them and its a threat if you don't accept
		their values
4.24.seeing different	group	"there are so many different styles, and they
lifestyles is helpful		are all fine and they all work well
4.25.being exposed to	group	"the [group] has a whole set of values
new valucs can support		

4.26.process		
4.27.support is necessary and unpredictable	group   	"I guess you just get it where you can...  fast food support...speed support 

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GROUP: COUPLES SUPPORT

5.1.members of previous group banded together and formed a group	   	"we'd been kicked out of L's class, when our  kids were five months old, and we felt we  needed ongoing support
5.2.commonalities help	group     	"all of the women have a three year old...so  we have that in common  "she had her first child 6 weeks after my  first child and her second child 6 weeks after my  second child...which is wonderful
5.3.impromptu support	neighbor   	"she found out it was my birthday in a couple of  weeks so she came over...and said...well why  don't you bring the kids over to me on your  birthday and you guys go out.
5.4.need to accept a supporter	mother 	"once I accepted her for who she really is  she was a lot of help
5.5.effort is needed to set up support when family are distant	   	"I think that support is very important...you  know my parents are 8000 miles away 
5.6.distant family may help in crisis	father 	"he secured a loan for me 
5.7.less worry from family support	brother     	"there is no effort required to pour into the  thing [relationship], you can take each other  largely for granted  "obviously our values are similar  "if he is busy that night he's just going to tell  me
5.8.talking with same sex person	workmate   	"We were in the car all the time and we discussed  everything under the sun and he talked a lot  about his relationship and stuff like that

		"It seems to be important to have another
		male perspective
5.9.long term relations		"I have to know someone for a long time
are supportive		before I can go spilling my guts to them.
5.10.size of group	group	"I don't like it if I am going to say my piece
affects support		and then everybody has to stop and listen
5.11.supporters listen		"[they] are either willing to listen to someone
		and just sit there and be as open as a book...
		or all the time they are thinking and they are
		reading another book inside their head
		"I need somebody to just listen
5.12.long term relations	best friend	"she has known me for the longest time and
are supportive		known me through enough things that I can
		just talk to her without explaining anything
5.13.loss of support		"because my parents have both died I look
makes one hesitant		at the world as how much do people know
to trust		me and how easy is it for me to talk to them
5.14.physical exertion	dance class	"[it] is a real support for me because I
is support		get my frustrations out
5.15.trust is very	spouse	"I tend to trust only the people that have
important		been around for a long time...I don't let him
		support me as much
5.16.in laws may not	mother in law	"his mother is a support to her son and his
be supportive		father is a support to his son and when it
		comes right down to it that is where their
		allegiance lies
5.17.support is dependent	mother in law	"she is very traditional...she is so offended
on value similarity		by women who talk about working when they
		have kids...thats why its not support
5.18.men/women differ on		"women seem to need support, they seem to
the need to vocalize		need each other, to vocalize, to talk about
		what is happening in their lives.
5.19.men/women differ	groups	"I need to talk...I don't know if that need
in whether they seek out		has been hammered out of them, like you have
support		to be a man and you have to be strong

		"I wonder if men don't have that experience
		{[of being supported] and if you don't experience
		{it you don't miss it
5.20.workers seek work	workmates	"I have to be at work seven and a half hours
related support		{a day so the kind of support I seek is the kind
		{of support required to solve those problems
5.21.male/female diff-		"I think women are natural support givers
erences		{and men have a really hard time doing that.
		{I mean you [husband] weren't brought up to do
		{that in your family.
5.22.shared experiences	group	"I was in really safe environment to do that
make a safe group		{ and just tell them all because some of those
		{people...knew what it was like.
5.23.support is safety	group	"I would be happy to be able to say something as
		{crazy as I can't stand this child and I wish he
		{would disappear for two hours" and not be told
		{that there is something wrong with me for
		{thinking that.
5.24.male/female diff-	group	"[he] will say "We have a problem with [child]
erences in preference		{to bed at night and we would like to hear from
for support for support		{someone with the same problems", whereas i
		{would say something a little more personal that i
		{happening to me at the time and usually the
		{answer to his question is a little faster than
		{the answer to mine.
5.25.support opportunities	group	"It's [the group] a time slot...really to sit
need to be arranged		{down and you do it...if you are busy it is just
		{hard to do..you go home you are dealing with
		{different things.
5.26.match of parents'		"if your parent lifestyle is very similar to
and own lifestyle		{yours you might find a lot of support from them
		{and not need help from friends.
5.27. support patterns	neighbors	
may carry from one		
generation to the next		

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GROUP: SELF DEVELOPMENT

6.1.introduction		
6.2.child related support	ex-spouses	"I put their [the children's] fathers because they really help out and its pretty well a shared thing and I feel comfortable with them having the kids
	mother	"I go to her for specific things...I can either take her advice or not
6.3.financial help is also emotional support	friends	"I have a few friends who help me out financially...if I feel I need to get out and socialize then I don't have to worry about the money
6.4.crisis support is especially important		"when my husband left me the first time my sister sister drove all the way to Alberta with her husband...packed my stuff up and drove me back... I lived with them for three months, free...It was the biggest boost of my life.
6.5.available support		"I know they are there if I need them.
6.6.promoting belief in self is supportive		"there is a coordinator of a course...who has been a great support to me with encouragement to realize my own value, to keep me going for a while when I felt like I was really nobody.
6.7.dissimilarities allow for support exchanges	friend	"we do swaps, she likes to play mom now and then so she takes my little guy downtown.
6.8.similarities allow for sharing the duties	friends	"when the kids are at home and they are fed up with you and you are fed up with them it really gets difficult, so we do a lot of moving dinners and have the kids all together plus then the chores don't seem so bad when you have someone that you are yakking with.
6.9.choice is important	friends	"you can say "good bye" when you have had enough
6.10.friends and family		"the help I get from family is mostly financial

differ in type of support		from friends its a lot of emotional.
6.11.obligations hinder support		
		"I find that between me and my friends ...
		it is an easier kind of relationship where I
		don't have to support them and they don't
		have to support me and that makes it easier
		to do...
6.12.supporters offer suggestions		"someone that I could talk to for suggestions...
		not going over there strictly to talk about
		my problems, but have a general sort of visit.
6.13.supporters offer tangible help	friends	"[they] help me do a meal, or maybe grocery
		shopping because it is hard for me to take
		three kids... helping me around the house.
6.14.supporters do what you are unable to do	friends	"I have a lot of men friends that will do the
		repair work on my car...or put up swings and
		repair things in the house...and like electrical
		or shampooing carpets
6.15.being there for the child	friend	"they were over three or four times a week
		after the separation, to be there when the
		children needed someone to talk to...and you
		know it is something I have never forgotten
6.16.advice is support when you ask for it		"she gave me some good advice the majority of
		time when I asked for advice.
6.17.long term friend are special		"she would say "gee you handled that well" you
		know really supportive. All the things I had
		to deal with she was there....she was there
		when I was born...I turned blue, she unwrapped the
		umbilical cord from around my neck...
	friends	"even if you don't see them that often,
		you just pick up where you left off...I have a
		friend I have known for 23 years...we met each
		other when we were three and we have been
		really close ever since then.
6.18.talking support	friends	"just talking to other single parents and
	agency	that you pick up on a lot of hints of things

		(to do and there is always somebody there to talk to,
		(to, its really good.
6.19.unconditional support	sister	("its like I can go to them and talk to them
	friend	(about anything.
	boyfriend	("I can trust him, open up, sort of a best
		(friend, and he has been there...given me
		(a bit of advice, not telling me what to do
		(but given me advice and support.
6.20.process		
6.21.support in coping		("you have to have a friend that has been
with the system		(through "the system" in order to find out
		(what you are entitled to, and I would like
		(to know about the ins and outs

## Appendix C

## Theme Listing by Category

## SUPPORT TRANSACTIONS

TRANSACTION	UNIT LABEL	SUPPORTER
CHILD RELATED	1.1. Support to child	neighbor
		friend
		grandparents
	1.2. a model to the child	friends
	1.3. help with the child	social worker
	or their problems	child psychi'st
		child teacher
	1.24.child's teachers may	principals
	be supportive	teachers
	1.31.support to child	sister
	supports parent	brother in law
	2.2.services to child	agency
	are support	
	3.24.feedback on child	daycare
	is supportive	
	4.2.having children	
	influences support need	
	4.3.having children	friends
	influences ability	neighbors
	to find support	
6.2.child related	ex-spouses	
support		
6.15.being there for	friend	
the child		
TALKING	1.5.Support is who you	uncle
	call on the phone	
	1.22.support helps	group
	define the problem	
	2.15.listening is	family
	supportive	
	3.2.talking is supportive	friends
		family
		doctor
	3.18.group leader	group leader
	5.11.supporters listen	
	6.12.supporters offer	
suggestions		
6.16.advice is support		
when you ask for it		
6.18.talking support	friends	
	agency	

INSTRUMENTAL	2.14.financial support	family
	3.8.instrumental support	father
	4.7.child care is	group members
	support	
	6.3.financial help is also	friends
	emotional support	
	6.13.supporters offer	friends
	tangible help	
	6.14.dissimilar supporters	friends
	do what you are unable	
to do		
AVAILABLE	3.10.new neighborhood	neighbors
	can be supportive	
	4.13.What a person could	mother in law
	do may be support	
	5.25.support opportunities	group
	need to be arranged	
CRUCIAL	6.5.available support	
	6.19.unconditional support	sister
		friend
		boyfriend
	1.19.some support is	family
	crucial	
KNOW RESOURCE	1.21.stressful times	
	need special support	
	4.17.different needs	counsellors
	require different	
	support	
	4.27.support is	group
DEMONSTRATIVE	necessary during stress	
	2.13.support connections	social worker
	3.26.services are	government
	supportive	
BEING NEEDED	6.21.support in coping	
	with the system	
	4.19.children may give	daughter
	support	
SELF ESTEEM	2.10.demonstrative	children
	support	
	2.25.support from	
	actions	
COPING	2.11.being needed is	elderly person
	support	
LISTENING	2.26.being needed is	family members
	support	
COPING	2.7.self as support	
	6.6.promoting belief in	
LISTENING	self is supportive	
	1.29.coping support	parents
LISTENING	2.3.coping support	agency
	3.4.supporters are those	mother

EMOTIONAL	you listen to	
	1.36.emotional support	friends
	is the key	
NONACTION	4.12.what a person	mother in law
	doesn't do may support	
SAME BELIEFS	1.28.ideological support	mother
		father
DRAMA	2.23.drama support	soap operas
CHOICE	6.9.choice is important	friends

## ATTRIBUTIONS OF SUPPORT

CRISIS	1.11.Crisis bring out	
	support	
	1.18.crisis open up	family
	closed support	
	3.6.crisis bring out	friends
	support	
	3.9.crisis can bring	father
	out support	family
		neighbors
	4.9.need for emotional	
	support is a function	
	of stress	
	5.6.distant family may	father
	help in crisis	
ALLOWING OTHERS	5.13.loss of support	
	makes one hesitant	
	to trust	
	6.4.crisis support is	
	especially important	
	1.10.support dependent	family
	on asking for it	
	1.12.support is dependent	friends
	on asking for it	
	1.16.own limitations on	mother
	family support	
	2.5. own limitations	
	get in the way of family	
	support	
GROUP SIMILAR	3.28.need to ask	family
	for support	
	4.14.a person may need	mother in law
	to be allowed to support	
	4. asking for support	in laws
	may cause uneasiness	
	5.4.need to accept	mother
	a supporter	
	4.4.group commonalities	group
	speed support system	
	5.2.commonalities help	group
	1.20.similarities of	group members
	others	
	3.12.group similarities	group
help support		
	5.22.shared experiences	group
	make a safe group	
	2.8.safety in group	single parent
	support	agency

	4.6.sharing feelings	group
	is supportive	
	5.1.members of previous	
	group banded together	
	and formed a group	
VALUES SIMILAR	5.17.support is dependent	mother in law
	on value similarity	
	1.17.family are not	
	support due to judgement	
	2.4.value differences	mother
	among family	brother
	2.12.values conflict	mother
	with support	brother
	2.18.value conflicts	mother
	4.21.non-judgmental	group
	atmosphere is critical	
	4.2 .judgmental patterns	
	are slower to change	
	in families	
SIMILARITIES	1.4. They have been	the group
	through it so they know	
	1.13.similarity of	
	concern	
	5.26.match of parents'	
	and own lifestyle	
	6.8.similarities allow	friends
	for sharing the duties	
	1.37.professionals need	counsellors
	experience of problem	
	3.25.similarities of	group
	problems	
GROUP SPIRIT	3.13.group enthusiasm	group
	is supportive	
	3.17.group is supportive	group
	1.25.the group itself	
	is supportive	
	1.35.the many types of	groups
	support	
	3.14.group social	group
	events are supportive	
	5.10.size of group	group
	affects support	
PERCEPTIONS	1.34.support is perceived	teachers
	2.20.perceived adequacy	
	of support varies	
	4.16.support needs to	professionals
	feel comfortable	
	1.34.support is perceived	teachers
	2.20.perceived adequacy	
	of support varies	
	4.16.support needs to	professionals

	feel comfortable	
SEX SIMILARITY	5.8.talking with same sex	workmate
	person	
	5.18.men/women differ on	
	the need to vocalize	
	5.19.men/women differ	groups
	in whether they seek out	
	support	
	5.21.male/female diff-	
	erences	
	5.24.male/female diff-	group
	erences in preference	
	for support	
TIME KNOWN	5.9.long term relations	
	are supportive	
	5.12.long term relations	best friend
	are supportive	
	5.15.trust is very	spouse
	important	
	6.17.long term friends	friends
	are special	
LOCALITY	1.30.nearness affects	neighbors
	support	
	1.32.distance need not	uncle
	affect support	aunt
	4.1.country setting	neighbors
	influences support	
	5.5.effort is needed to	
	set up support when	
	family are distant	
AGE	3.3.age influences	mother
	support choices	
	3.21.age affects	professionals
	support	
	3.22.age may not	group
	affect support	
CHANGE CONCEPT	1.15.support may be	professionals
	constantly changing	
	2.21.concept of support	
	changes	
	5.20.workers seek work	workmates
	related support	
EFFORT	5.7.less worry from family	brother
	support	
	4.8.neighbors are	neighbors
	easy support	
	5.3.impromptu support	neighbor
GROUP UNLIKE	3.11.group differences	group
	offer support	
	3.30.differences offer	group
	support	

GROUP SAFETY |3.16.trust and acceptance |group  
| are important |  
|5.23.support is safety |group  
|4.10.groups allow one to |groups  
| unload problems without |  
| worry |  
CONSTANCY |4.5.constancy is |group  
| supportive |  
DISSIMILARITY |6.7.dissimilarities allow |friend  
| for support exchanges |

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