

The Decline of Motivation?

From Commitment to Dropping out of Volunteering

Galit Ventura Yanay, Niza Yanay

This article studies volunteerism through the phenomenon of dropping out. By ascertaining the achievements, difficulties, and dilemmas of volunteers at the Center for Assistance to Victims of Sexual Assault, we explored the process of dropping out as an encore to understanding the meaning of volunteerism that ends with abandoning a desired activity. On the basis of a longitudinal study, we argue that dropping out is not always a product of waning motivation—for many volunteers, dropping out was extremely difficult—but rather the outcome of unabridged discrepancies between “ought” and “actual” experiences. Volunteers expect to feel good about themselves. In contrast, the organization expects them to act as free agents who can independently manage feelings of pain and self-doubt. When such discrepancies between expectations and reality occur, feelings of anger and disappointment set in. As a result, devoted volunteers drop out in order to preserve their positive self-feeling. It is our contention that in order to understand the nature of volunteers’ dropout and perseverance, close attention should be paid to processes of self-regulation in the context of the specific relations between the volunteers and the organization.

VOLUNTEERING IS one of the most prosocial of behaviors. Yet people who volunteer are not necessarily altruistic. Studies show that volunteering is a self-rewarding activity (regardless of its direct outcomes) and that it enhances pleasure, life satisfaction, and well-being (Meier and Stutzer, 2004). It is not unreasonable to assume that people who volunteer expect to feel good about themselves in the anticipation that volunteering will contribute to their positive self-image and feelings. But what happens when volunteers begin to feel inadequate, or even dangerous to others? Or when volunteering produces anxiety, pain, or fear instead of a positive sense of self? Does this discrepancy between expectations of feeling good

and actual experiences of pain and anxiety decrease the attractiveness of volunteering? Will it eventually sway volunteers to disengage from an organization? We shall try to draw some guidelines for exploring these questions, but our main challenge in this article is to understand how the motivation to volunteer wanes—if “waning” is the proper term—and under what personal and institutional conditions highly motivated people will paradoxically terminate their activity and drop out.

Volunteer dropout is perhaps one of the most basic problems of all volunteer organizations. To a large extent, the life expectancy of a volunteer organization depends on its ability not only to enlist volunteers but also to retain them. Excessive dropout can be fatal to the organization, which is a good reason to study its causes and factors. This is how we came initially to the Center for Assistance to Victims of Sexual Assault in one of Israel's largest cities.¹

Although this inquiry focuses on a unique volunteer center, we believe that an understanding of the dropout phenomenon in the center is relevant to other social service organizations, both governmental and nongovernmental, that deal with specific populations such as AIDS patients, children at risk, and drug addicts; hotlines providing mental health support to youths in distress; and environmental and peace organizations.

There is a great deal of research on volunteerism's motivations and course. Who volunteers, and why? At what stage of life do people tend to volunteer, and in which places? What are the benefits and sacrifices of volunteers? These are just some of the questions that arise in a field that has preoccupied economists, psychologists, and sociologists for years. Volunteerism is a service that one person provides to another or to the public out of his or her own free will and without any material reward (Cnaan, Handy, and Wadsworth, 1996).

There are two main classical reasons for volunteerism—other-directed and self-directed motives (Sills, 1957)—that in many ways still characterize a basic assumption regarding volunteerism in the current literature. Among the most prevalent other-directed motivations are the desire to help others, solve problems, change the face of society, or rectify injustices in the community. Among the self-directed motives are the need to talk with people, make friends, feel needed, or make use of an existing talent (Black and Dinitto, 1994; Gidron, 1977; Morrow-Howell and Mui, 1989; Ryan, Kaplan, and Grese, 2001; Solomon, 1997; Wardell, Lishman, and Whalley, 2000; Zakour, 1994). There are also therapeutic motivations, whereby volunteerism is undertaken to aid in the struggle to reduce loneliness, depression, and other forms of emotional deprivation (Mostyn, 1983; Wardell, Lishman, and Whalley, 2000), or circumstantial motivations, such as an organization's proximity to the volunteer, media influences, and situations in which volunteers have actually experienced receiving assistance themselves (Field and Johnson, 1993; Shalev, 1990).

At the same time, researchers have found that it is difficult to point to certain specific rewards that might influence perseverance (Wilson and Musick, 1999). This is to say, it is hard to predict the perseverance of volunteers from goals and rewards. The expectation of specific rewards can change over time in light of a volunteer's changing assessment of the reality that he or she is confronting within the organization (Solomon, 1997). Another problem in forecasting perseverance stems from the fact that what fosters a commitment to volunteerism does not necessarily lead to perseverance. Sometimes, despite great commitment on the part of volunteers, they drop out. Thus, for instance, perceptions of volunteerism as being of value, acquisition of learning in the course of volunteerism, and the desire to acquire a skill (Clary and others, 1998) were found to be associated with creating commitment, but perseverance per se was specifically associated with positive results of volunteerism, satisfaction with the work, and good relations with people (Lammers, 1991). The questions "Why do people volunteer?" and "Why do volunteers persevere?" allude perhaps to different motivational attributions. Similarly, we might claim that the questions "Why do people persevere?" and "Why do people drop out?" lead to other answers and conclusions.

For example, when volunteers were asked straightforwardly why they dropped out of an activity, the most striking and unexpected finding was a change in living circumstances such as place of residence or job (Blake and Jefferson, 1992). This answer may represent a social appeasement of sorts, because it casts the volunteer's solution in the least negative light. But it also suggests that the reasons for volunteering and the reasons for dropping out may represent two separate questions.

Additional reasons for dropout were found to be related to dissatisfaction stemming from the discrepancy between reality and the self-image formed by the individual, misdirection and faulty placing of volunteers for a job, low level of challenge, tension among the volunteers and professional staff, inefficient use of volunteers' time, difficulty in dealing with a type of client, lack of professional support, and burnout (March and Simon, 1964; Blake and Jefferson, 1992; Haski-Levental, 2005; Lammers, 1991; Miller, 1989; Schindler-Rainman and Lippit, 1971; Solomon, 1997; Capner and Caltabiano, 1993; Cyr and Doerick, 1991; Wilson, 2000; Claxton, Catalan, and Burgess, 1998). We can see from this list of disconnected factors that the literature on volunteer dropout, like the literature on the reasons people volunteer, varies according to what people say in a particular context, time, or circumstance, and that their answers differ greatly, often depending on the kind of questions they are asked, incidental memory, life histories, or social desirability. From a long list of goals, needs, causes, and reasons, however, it is hard to understand, beyond anecdotal reasoning, why people persevere or drop out.

We suggest taking a different theoretical approach to the problem of dropout, on the basis of the current social-psychological

The dropout phenomenon is a complex process driven by both individual and organizational perceptions, both "ought" and "actual."

literature on motivation that posits links among cognition, affect, and action, particularly what is known as positive outcome-focus framing (Sorrentino and Higgins, 1986; Gollwitzer and Bargh, 1996; Deci and Ryan, 2000). This literature draws attention away from the causes and reasons that motivate people and emphasizes experiences and processes of self-regulation within specific (organizational) contexts. Within this framework, we argue that the study of self-discrepant experiences (Higgins, Roney, Crowe, and Hymes, 1994; Higgins, 1987) of volunteers, as well as the situations that create these gaps between self-expectation to feel good and actual experiences, produces a better understanding of both perseverance and the phenomenon of dropout. The emphasis in this approach is not on the psychological makeup of volunteers or, in contrast, on organizational weak spots, but on the situation that promotes self-regulation, which includes both the volunteers and the organization as one interacting body. From this perspective, the dropout phenomenon is a complex process driven by both individual and organizational perceptions, both "ought" and "actual." Moreover, in contrast to studies that have focused on the psychological functions that volunteer activities serve (Clary and others, 1998), our focus is on those aspects of tensions, paradoxes, and contradictions that disserve both the organization and the volunteers. Dropout, we argue, is the problem of neither the volunteers nor the organization alone. Each side considered in isolation provides only partial knowledge about volunteerism or the dropout phenomenon. Each can fulfill its side of the contract and yet feel anger, frustration, and agony. Hence, we stress that the decision to drop out of volunteering, like the motivation to volunteer, is not connected to one's personality or character structure and connected only indirectly to goals and purposes. Rather, the process of dropout (or perseverance) is contingent on self-expectation and the distance of this expectation from actual experiences during and after training. It is therefore important to pay attention to the particular nature of the gaps and discrepancies between the volunteers and the managerial staffs, and particularly between anticipated and actual self-feelings in the organizational context of volunteerism. Hence, we can see both dropout and perseverance as two modes of self-regulation.

The Study

The Center for Assistance to Victims of Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence is an emergency hotline facility. It functions as an independent association that grew out of a group of women from the local community who organized to address the special needs of this population. The center's services include an emergency hotline; accompanying victims to hospital, court, and police; and providing legal counsel to victims. The center is run by a central committee that

includes three or four veteran volunteers and three paid professional employees: a coordinator of volunteers, a trainer, and a treasurer.

Over two years, we conducted formal and informal observations, participated in tutorial sessions and social gatherings, examined various documents, witnessed many incidents, and were involved in private conversations. In addition, we interviewed twenty women (from a total of sixty volunteers) who were chosen through a purposive sample (in contrast to a random one) so as to represent various groups regarding age (from twenty to fifty years old), education (from high school to master's degree), duration of volunteerism (from four months to more than one year), and time of dropout (immediately following the course and during the first year and afterward).

To the standard sample of dropout studies—volunteers who drop out versus volunteers who persevere—we added three new categories: (1) “vacillating” volunteers who are considering leaving, (2) volunteers who no longer actually work but are still on the organization's contact list, and (3) volunteers who completed the training course but did not start working. Each semistructured, in-depth interview began with a general inquiry: “Tell me everything that happened to you from the moment you decided you wanted to volunteer until the day you dropped out.” We asked the interviewees to relate as many incidents, stories, and feelings associated with this process as possible. The study was presented to the interviewees as research on volunteers' perseverance and experiences of dropout.

Results and Discussion

We first discuss the volunteers who completed the course but did not start volunteering, then the volunteers who dropped out within a period of one year to eighteen months. From these two groups, we draw general conclusions.

The First Critical Moment: Dropouts Who Completed the Course But Did Not Volunteer

On entry, the motivation to begin the course for assistance to victims of sexual assault was extremely high among all the volunteers. Each training course lasted four months and gave the women volunteers a serious and thorough training by presenting a range of topics in human psychological affairs, women's status in society, and power relations between men and women. The volunteers learned about the world of sexual assault victims and the various issues and agents of treatment (police, social workers), and they attended workshops on empathy, compassion, and guilt. During the course, the volunteers exercised reflexive methods related to their own past and present experiences and practices. The discussions in the course were personal and intimate, and the atmosphere was intense but collaborative and emphatic. Hence, time and again we heard from participants

that their experiences during the course were very powerful and fulfilling emotionally, socially, and intellectually, and that the course had a dramatic impact on the volunteers' consciousness, knowledge, and interrelations. One volunteer, for instance, said: "The course was very, very intense, an experiential course, up close and personal. We had a really high-powered course, really powerful from an experiential aspect. Many of the women underwent stuff and there was room to share, and we were a very tight group." Another said: "It's the first time we were in the company of women capable of openness; it was at a stage when I was still closed to matters of candor, or the disclosure of personal details. I was certainly in a completely different state, and the course greatly empowered me from the standpoint of my ability to express myself, to out personal matters; it very much changed my view on life."

We were therefore surprised to discover that the dropout rate was very high immediately following the course (about 50 percent). The percentage of dropouts among those who had not begun work on the hotline was higher than among volunteers who did begin working and left (about 25 percent). It is also important to note that immediately following the course the dropout numbers among young volunteers were higher than among older volunteers, and that women who had previous volunteering experience persevered longer than those who had never volunteered before. Likewise, volunteers who were victims of sexual violence stayed longer.²

Whereas we had expected that an empowering and moving course would stimulate the volunteers' motivation and bolster their confidence, we found that it sparked great ambivalence and conflict. After the course, many postponed working on the emergency hotline, expressing fears and anxieties at starting. How are we to understand such a paradox? Why did so many women feel unable to begin volunteering after such a meaningful experience and prior to a much anticipated activity? On the basis of the interviews, we claim that, paradoxically, owing to the nature of the training (intensive, long, experiential, inspiring, and powerful) many volunteers experienced what we have termed "motivational saturation," which cut short a beloved activity.

"In the beginning, after the course, what I wanted to do is [leave]," said one woman who had stopped coming to the center immediately after the course. "OK, I got the point, I went through some processes, now it's time I went." Another said, "I see the course as a sort of group therapy. Each one told about the problems, everything came up. And after the course I felt there had been treatment. That I talked and there was improvement. There was a small crisis as it were, [and] afterwards I emerged stronger."

What are the volunteers telling us? Has the climax of volunteering occurred (and passed) already during the course? Did the course constitute the peak of the volunteer experience?

Our hypothesis is that the course's greatest strength is exactly its greatest weakness. We claim that the course, being psychologically

and emotionally enriching, was experienced by many volunteers as the pinnacle of volunteerism. The experiences that the volunteers underwent as a group were so powerful that by the end of the course they felt exalted, overwhelmed, and overburdened—so much so that many could not bring themselves to begin the first shifts and after a series of postponements eventually dropped out. If we look at the act of volunteering as a type of exchange, it can be said that the volunteers' tremendous mental and emotional investments in a long and fulfilling course are among the factors that prompt them to feel that they have already "paid" for the numerous rewards of the course; that they have already "proved" their commitment, seriousness, and perseverance to the organization and to themselves; and that they have already satisfied their motivation. This interpretation suggests that the women's motivation did not actually wane but instead was fulfilled.

A gap between the training process and the organization's operating philosophy of nonintervention is, in our view, also related to motivational saturation. Voluntary organizations often hold the view that volunteerism is based on free will and choice, and that therefore there should be no prompting or motivating of the other side. Such organizations often grant their volunteers the freedom to take the initiative in scheduling their own first shifts. "She's a volunteer, and I can't make her perform her shift," said one of the center's leading staff. We often heard the administrators contend that they did not want to pressure the volunteers or force them to do anything they did not want to do. This approach, however, conveyed to the volunteers that perhaps they were not really needed by the organization. One interviewee said, "If they don't call me, they aren't in mind of me and apparently don't need me." When no such summons arrives immediately after the course and no initiative is taken to help schedule shifts, the volunteer feels uncomfortable. Do they really need her? Has she not met the course's requirements? The apprehensions already present are strengthened and reinforced, the fear that she might be not practiced enough and therefore not needed. "Apparently I'm not yet ready to work the hotline and that's why the organization doesn't call me" becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. So the organization expects the volunteers to begin working without delay, while the volunteers on their part feel frustrated and frightened, even embarrassed, waiting for encouragement and for a summons from the organization that never comes. Both sides are left equally surprised and helpless.

This scenario is supported by other studies showing that the bond with the organization constitutes one of the primary rewards for the volunteers (Solomon, 1997), and that volunteers expect recognition from the organization, a feeling of belonging to it, to be given attention and an opportunity to influence its affairs. It is extremely important to volunteers that the organization should need them and sometimes even give them the feeling of "being unable to cope without them" (Gidron, 1977; Haski-Levental, 2005); this is

By the end of the course they felt exalted, overwhelmed, and overburdened—so much so that many could not bring themselves to begin the first shifts and after a series of postponements eventually dropped out.

An organizational philosophy of nonintervention can be misinterpreted as abandonment rather than as the delegation of autonomy and freedom.

particularly important after an intensive course that leaves volunteers saturated with experiences of both fulfillment and anxiety.

We do not mean to contend that training courses should not be thorough and empowering; this would be ridiculous. However, we argue that coordinators and trainers should pay attention to the phenomenon of “motivational saturation,” which on the one hand stimulates a shared venture but on the other hand demands individual attention and recognition. We further argue that an organizational philosophy of nonintervention can be misinterpreted as abandonment rather than as the delegation of autonomy and freedom.

A Second Critical Moment: Dropout After a Year or More

Until now we have focused on volunteers who dropped out immediately following the training course. What happened to veteran volunteers? What happened to those volunteers who overcame the initial obstacles, began working, persevered for a year, and then left? What causes those persevering beyond a year to drop out?

Volunteers who persevered spoke of many difficulties in defining the boundaries and limits of their job. What are we, they asked: listeners, friends, therapists, guides? Indeed, the organization repeatedly emphasizes that the role of volunteers is not therapeutic; they should assist the women victims but are enjoined from treating them psychologically. But is it that easy to apply the distinction between assistance and therapy? During the course, the distinction is defined as akin to the distinction between a therapist and a good friend. The volunteers are not expected to diagnose the caller; promote any mental, emotional, or conscious process; or schedule a subsequent series of meetings with the caller. They are told to use intuitive emotional tools such as conversation, understanding, support, and empathy, and to leave treatment fantasies outside the orbit of the conversation. However, the difference between therapy and assistance that is clear to the professional staff is apparently not as clear to the volunteers. What degree of responsibility do we bear? Are we really friends of the callers? Are we really as autonomous as the organization's ideology depicts? Is a volunteer allowed to express an opinion? Are the volunteers and callers really equal? Such questions were frequently raised in the interviews.

On more than one occasion we heard volunteers express the desire that the organization set limits for them and determine how often a good volunteer needs to attend the hotline. The volunteers expected the organization to instruct them more plainly regarding what they can say and do, but especially what they should not say and do. As one of the volunteers said:

The main topic which caused me long hours of distress is the matter of what my role and degree of responsibility is as a volunteer. How much am I allowed, and to what extent I have to take responsibility for somebody when she calls. To

what extent are we really in a balanced array of power and, if not, to what extent am I allowed to intervene? To what extent am I supposed to intervene? If someone tells me that she's going to hurt herself, then they tell me at the center that I must intervene. But if she does something that in my view is mistaken, am I permitted to act?

The unavoidable ambiguity conveyed by the organization produced a sense of confusion and vulnerability. It was not the lack of instructions that troubled the volunteers but rather the ambiguity created by the organization's open-ended answers and its philosophy of nonintervention. This ambiguity ultimately resulted in a feeling that the organization had abandoned the volunteers to deal with the difficulties on their own.

After repeated complaints on the part of volunteers, the staff decided to renew the discussion on the role of the volunteers in order to draw sharper lines and limits to the volunteers' roles and functions. The concept of assistance versus treatment came up again, as well as the difficulty of distinguishing between them. The volunteers requested stricter guidelines, such as: "Don't meet after ten meetings." "Don't meet with more than one victim." "Don't conduct long nocturnal conversations with a serial caller who switches identities to hog the line." Expressing a common concern, one volunteer said, "The whole topic of absence of boundaries, because of the kind of people we are, everyone wants to give, if you don't place boundaries I'm liable to give too much and get hurt myself. They [the administrators] were unwilling to set limits [as to] how many meetings you can have with a victim and no more."

However, the organization's administrators refused to define such clear guidelines. "Whoever can't take it can go," the staff insistently claimed, sticking to their belief that fixed boundaries cannot be set, and that a work "recipe" would only hurt the flexibility of both the organization and the volunteers.

The dilemma we have uncovered here is not a simple one. Persevering volunteers spoke of confusion, overload, and a growing feeling of vulnerability, which they called "secondary trauma." Their lack of knowledge of how to manage emotional difficulties and work ambiguity without organizational protection was among the leading factors responsible for further dropout among those who persevered after a year. Those who managed to stay beyond a year were those who could manage their anxieties by being more forgiving of their own mistakes, learned more from them, empowered their assistance in their own eyes, and relinquished any desire for magical solutions. They learned not to be disappointed, to correct themselves, and to suffice with little in the sense that any assistance at all from the staff was already a lot. There were some who invested less time in volunteerism each week as a strategy, but volunteered for many more years.

Concluding Remarks

Our aim in this study was to learn how and why the motivation of volunteers wanes, to better understand the experience of volunteerism. Assisting people who have undergone traumatic experiences is not a simple emotional task for volunteers, regardless of their commitment or training. Contrary to our common anticipation, we found that even when the volunteers felt depleted of strength and energy, and even when they sometimes spoke of “dying” in the process, dropping out was no less difficult and ambivalent. If dropping out is such a difficult process, and if the motivation to volunteer does not really wane when volunteers drop out, why don't they stay? Why do they leave? Are there other mediating factors? We suggest three main interconnected answers particularly relevant to social service organizations that provide social, juridical, medical, and psychological assistance (in contrast, for example, to educational or art organizations) and that make emotional and professional demands on their volunteers, who often must struggle with both strong anxiety and empathy at the same time.

First, a long and empowering training course can, paradoxically, work in a direction opposite to its objectives. Once the volunteers feel experientially fulfilled and motivationally “saturated,” they will drop out regardless of their motives and goals. Although not all organizations offer their volunteers a long and intensive training course, those that do should pay close attention to the problem of motivational saturation in the early stages following the course.

Second, we contend that the discrepancy between what volunteers ought to feel following the course—security, support, sharing, and positive self-feeling—and the anxiety, ambiguity, and loneliness that they can potentially experience as a result of the strong emotional demands required by their hotline work with social or medical traumas increases the numbers of dropouts whose motivation is to avoid negative feelings. Social service organizations should pay attention to these potential discrepancies and offer more support for the sake of better emotional work.

Third, if an organizational philosophy of freedom and nonintervention that perceives of volunteers as autonomous agents remains tacit and misunderstood, it can give rise to anger and feelings of abandonment, eventually leading to volunteers' dropping out.

Volunteers differ in their personalities, characters, goals, and needs. There is no one schema for success in volunteering. Likewise, volunteerism, we claim, does not depend on specific personal traits or types of goals. By raising the question of why highly motivated people who are dedicated to helping others drop out immediately following an intensive training course or soon after, we have switched the focus of the study from factors that stress psychological purposes

to issues that address contextual and relational problems. The emphasis on the relations between the volunteers and the organization opens a new space of inquiry that focuses on affective outcomes.

The phenomenon of dropout, as we heard from our interviewees, is always an ambivalent process and not a hasty and instantaneous decision. It occurs within a context of relations contingent on both self and organizational regulations. In the case of a high number of dropouts, one needs to pay close attention to the specific discrepancies, tensions, and paradoxes between the organization and the volunteers that arise because of discrepant experiences. Generally speaking, most volunteers wish to contribute and promote things worthy and meaningful. Volunteers wish to help others and themselves, but first and foremost they expect positive self-feelings (Higgins, 1996); they do not expect to feel pain, fear, anxiety, or low self-esteem, or to cause damage to callers. In contrast, and rightly so, organizations expect trained volunteers to be active, autonomous, and contributing agents. They do not expect volunteers to feel needy themselves. When misunderstandings occur as a result of these discrepancies, it is no wonder that anger and disappointment set in. When, in the process of negotiating boundaries and ambiguities, volunteers and managers fail to minimize the gap between what ought to be and what actually is, both contribute to producing the conditions for volunteer dropout.

Of course, one might suspect that the Center for Assistance to Victims of Sexual Abuse and Violence was poorly managed and did not obey the basic rules for retaining volunteers (McCurley and Lynch, 2005). This, however, was not our impression after two years of observations. This argument would be an easy way out, in our opinion. Our analysis led to the conclusion that an unbridged difference between the organization's volunteering philosophy of nonintervention and the volunteers' need for positive self-feeling helped to structure a situation conducive to a high dropout rate. After the training course the staff, who believed in the autonomy of volunteers, never (purposefully) pressed them to start their work. So volunteers who already felt fulfilled but also enthusiastic and anxious left because they could not manage the feeling of abandonment. Similarly, volunteers who invested time and effort in the organization left after a year or so, feeling bad. Again, the staff did not intervene; they gave support and advice, but first and foremost they saw the volunteers as free agents who can come and go and decide for themselves. One could criticize the organization's specific attitudes and principles, but the point is more general. Every organization has a tacit or explicit philosophy or guidelines. The important issue here is to be aware of and recognize those guidelines as important factors in regulating a positive self-feeling—one of the important motivations for volunteerism.

*An unbridged
difference
between the
organization's
volunteering
philosophy of
nonintervention
and the
volunteers' need
for positive self-
feeling helped to
structure a
situation
conducive to a
high dropout rate.*

Notes

1. Our primary intent, which was to conduct a study on how volunteers manage their emotions in social service organizations such as the Center for Assistance to Victims of Sexual Assault and Violence, changed as a result of our meeting with the coordinator of volunteers, who was troubled by the high rate of dropout at the center and in other similar centers around the country. In fact, she urged us to expand our research to include questions pertaining to the emotional processes and meaning of dropout.

2. Of twelve volunteers who left immediately after the course, ten were under the age of thirty and two were more than forty. Of eight volunteers who continued, seven were over forty and only one under age thirty. Nine volunteers were victims of sexual abuse, rape, and family violence. Of these, only one left following the course, and six others after a year. Of six women with previous volunteering experience, one left immediately after the course and five persevered over two years.

GALIT VENTURA YANAY is a doctoral student in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva, Israel.

NIZA YANAY is senior lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva, Israel.

References

- Black, B., and Dinitto D. "Volunteers Who Work with Survivors of Rape and Battering: Motivation, Acceptance, Satisfaction, Length of Service, and Gender Differences." *Journal of Social Service Research*, 1994, 20, 73–97.
- Blake, R., and Jefferson, S. *Defection . . . Why? An Insight into the Reasons for Volunteers Leaving*. York, UK: Kestrecourt, 1992.
- Capner, M., and Caltabiano, M. "Factors Affecting the Progression Towards Burnout: A Comparison of Professional and Volunteer Counselors." *Psychological Reports*, 1993, 73(2), 555–561.
- Clary, E. G. and others. "Understanding and Assessing the Motivations of Volunteers: A Functional Approach." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1998, 74(6), 1516–1530.
- Claxton, R.P.R., Catalan, J., and Burgess, A. P. "Psychological Distress and Burnout Among Buddies: Demographic Situation and Motivational Factors." *AIDS Care*, 1998, 10, 175–190.
- Cnaan, R. A., Handy, E., and Wadsworth, M. "Defining Who Is a Volunteer." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 1996, 25(3), 364–383.
- Cyr, C., and Doerick, P. W. "Burnout in Crisis Line Volunteers." *Administration and Policy in Mental Health*, 1991, 18(5), 343–354.
- Deci, E., and Ryan, R. "The 'What' and 'Why' of Goals Pursuits." *Psychological Inquiry*, 2000, 11(4), 227–268.

- Field, D., and Johnson, I. "Satisfaction and Change: A Survey of Volunteers in a Hospice Organization." *Social Science and Medicine*, 1993, 36(12), 1625–1633.
- Gidron, B. "Volunteering and Its Rewards." *Journal of Social Security*, 1977, 14–15, 51–63.
- Gollwitzer, M. P., and Bargh, A. J. (eds.). *The Psychology of Action: Linking Cognition and Motivation to Behavior*. New York: Guilford Press, 1996.
- Haski-Levental, D. "Once and for All: Retention and Dropout of Volunteers at Rape Crisis Center." M.A. dissertation, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 2005 (in Hebrew).
- Higgins, E. T., Roney, C. J., Crowe, E., and Hymes, C. "Ideal Versus Ought Predilections for Approach and Avoidance: Distinct Self-Regulatory Systems." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1994, 66(2), 276–286.
- Higgins, T. E. "The Self Digest." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1996, 71, 1062–1083.
- Higgins, E. T. "Self-Discrepancy: A Theory Relating Self and Affect." *Psychological Review*, 1987, 94(3), 319–340.
- Lammers, J. "Attitudes, Motives, and Demographic Predictors of Volunteer Commitment and Service Duration." *Journal of Social Service Research*, 1991, 14, 125–140.
- March, J. G., and Simon, H. A. *Organizations*. Pittsburgh: Graduate School of Industrial Administration, Carnegie Institute of Technology, 1964.
- McCurley, S., and Lynch, R. *Keeping Volunteers: A Guide to Retention*. Kemptville, Ont.: JTC Books, 2005.
- Meier, S., and Stutzer, A. "Is Volunteering Rewarding in Itself? Evidence from a Natural Experiment." Working paper no. 12, Center for Research in Economics, Management and the Arts, 2004, www.crema-research.ch.
- Miller, L. E. "Understanding the Motivation of Volunteers: An Examination of Personality Differences and Characteristics of Volunteers' Paid Employment." *Journal of Voluntary Action Research*, 1989, 14(2–3), 112–122.
- Morrow-Howell, N., and Mui, A. "Elderly Volunteers: Reasons for Initiating and Terminating Service." *Journal of Gerontology Social Work*, 1989, 13, 21–34.
- Mostyn, B. "The Meaning of Voluntary Work: A Qualitative Investigation." In S. Hatch (ed.), *Volunteers, Patterns, Meanings and Motives*. Berkhamsted, UK: Volunteer Centre, 1983.
- Ryan, R. L., Kaplan, R., and Grese, R. "Predicting Volunteer Commitment in Environmental Stewardship Programs." *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 2001, 44(5), 629–648.
- Schindler-Rainman, E., and Lippitt, R. *The Volunteer Community: Creative Use of Human Resources*. Arlington, Va.: NTLInstitute/Learning Resources, 1971.

- Shalev, S. "Altruism: Sociological Analysis of Volunteers' Contribution to Volunteers Organizations." Ph.D. dissertation, Tel-Aviv University, 1990 (in Hebrew).
- Sills, D. *The Volunteers: Means and Ends in a National Organization*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957.
- Solomon, M. "The Meaning of Voluntarism for Volunteers in a Rape Crisis Center." M.A. dissertation, Bar-Ilan University, 1997 (in Hebrew).
- Sorrentino, R. M., and Higgins T. E. *Handbook of Motivation and Cognition: Foundations of Social Behavior* (vol. I). New York: Guilford Press, 1986.
- Wardell, F., Lishman, J., and Whalley, L. "Who Volunteers?" *British Journal of Social Work*, 2000, 30, 227–248.
- Wilson, J., and Musick, M. A. "Attachment to Volunteerism." *Sociological Forum*, 1999, 14(2), 243–271.
- Wilson, J. "Volunteering." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2000, 26, 215–240.
- Zakour, M. J. "Measuring Career-Development Volunteerism: Guttman Scale Analysis Using Red Cross Volunteers." *Journal of Social Service Research*, 1994, 19(3), 103–120.