



Success of Residents Exiting Hope Again Transition Homes



Abstract

This study shows how elements in the Hope Again program affect *success of residents in attaining a job and stable housing*. Hope Again is a small faith-based, non-profit organization located in East Hollywood, California serving men and women experiencing homelessness. Their eleven member staff serves one men's and one women's transitional house with up to fifteen men plus the house manager and seven women plus the house manager. The participants in this research are five previous and five current residents, as well as six Hope Again staff and one organization with a transitional housing program in the Los Angeles area.

The **qualitative methods** of narrative analysis and grounded theory (one-on-one structured interviews) were used to conduct this research and analyze the data. The pastoral cycle was used to theologically conduct the research process and analyze the data. The final results of the data concluded many residents and staff felt several elements of the program were helpful as well as suggesting areas needing improvement.

The common themes found among the interview responses with residents and staff were: *an outside network for job and housing resources, resident-to-staff relationships, the classes, spiritual growth, and personal qualities needed*. The theme of *case management and individualizing the program* was predominantly mentioned by residents, and *following rules and expectations* and *resident-on-resident relationships* were predominantly mentioned by staff.

Action Outcomes: These results are valuable for Hope Again staff as they seek to improve the transitional housing program and its effectiveness in preparing residents for attaining a job and stable housing. It has assisted them in evaluating which elements to improve, change, add, or remove. Hope Again leadership seeks to clarify among their staff what defines resident success and assuring it is aligned with the executive director's definition. Also, the challenge of fundraising was expressed and how certain elements will not be possible without increased funds.

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Chapter 1: Research Focus

Introduction to Topic

Currently, Hope Again does not have a system of evaluating their transitional housing program and its effectiveness in preparing residents for attaining a job and stable housing. Therefore, evaluating the current program and its elements, such as the scheduled classes residents are required to attend and other required appointments, is an important topic to investigate.

One thing we already knew surrounding this topic was previous residents have exited the transitional homes for various reasons and with various levels of success. Some have exited and:

- Moved into another organization's transitional housing once their time is up at Hope Again
- Entered into a steady job and/or housing
- Been required to leave Hope Again due to drug or alcohol use

We also knew some residents exit Hope Again with a favorable attitude toward the organization and others with a bitter attitude. In order to learn more about the success of residents after they exit and whether they felt they were adequately prepared to do so, it was necessary and valuable to conduct program reviews with previous and current residents as part of the research process. Program reviews with some of the current Hope Again staff also provided insight into their vision for the program and how they perceived it helps residents.

Acknowledgements

A special thanks to my professor, Dr. Viv Grigg, for his relentless assistance and guidance through the entire research process. Next, I want to thank Ross Lokken, Executive Director of Hope Again, for his vision and input on this research project, and for allowing me the opportunity to research the current transitional housing program. To Ilene Slater at Hope Again who made numerous phone calls and initiated many conversations with residents making the connection between the resident and myself possible for an interview to take place.

I'd also like to thank the previous residents, current residents, and Hope Again staff for allowing me the privilege of interviewing them and gathering their valuable experiences and insight into the Hope Again program. Lastly, I am grateful for the time and input through an interview with the San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission (SFVRM) about their transitional housing program. Each of these people and others made this research project possible.

Variables

Some of the factors affecting a resident's successful exit into a job and stable housing situation could be:

- 1) Material taught in the classes does not match the skills residents feel they need in order to grow and successfully exit. (classes currently taught are: relationships, anger management, life skills, Bible study [2 per week], and church service [2 per week])

As recorded in Chapters 5 & 6, the research results show this variable to be true as residents expressed some skills they'd like to learn more about.

- 2) The methods used in facilitating the classes are not effective. As I had the opportunity to live and work as the house manager in the women's house, a resident shared with me there was a class she would write in her journal during because she felt it wasn't helpful (personal communication, February 2016.).
- 3) Time spent individually with residents in weekly appointments with the therapist, case manager, and chaplain might need to be altered to be more focused on job skills and housing searching. As Ross Lokken, the Hope Again Executive Director, has expressed, Hope Again does not currently have a way of evaluating their program (personal communication, February 2016). Therefore, this is an important element of the program to consider.

As recorded in Chapters 5 & 6, the research results show ways residents think these weekly appointments are helpful and ways they can be improved.

- 4) Motivation to move forward, learn, and improve could be a factor affecting the success of residents upon exit. According to Yarosz (2003), "the participants' own attitudes and behaviors had differential impact on their success in the program and the perceived failure of others" (50).

As recorded in Chapters 5 & 6, the research results show how residents' personal qualities and attitude do in fact affect their success in obtaining a job and stable housing.

- 5) Personal grief, stress, anxiety, etc. could be a factor in the resident's ability to move forward. This could also affect the amount of time the individual needs to remain living in the transitional home in order to heal, receive counsel and guidance, and equipping in job or life skills. The research of Richardson and Landsman (1996) showed some of the staff responses about major barriers to a participant's success include: psychological/psychiatric problems, lack of supportive services in the community, and lack of social skills (p. 15). This could all be contributing to the resident's ability to move forward.

As recorded in Chapters 5 & 6, some of the staff comments in the program reviews show their concern for the importance of residents having a church community or other social network as a support and for personal growth. Also, not recorded as a theme in the data results, the staff expressed the importance of the Hope Again therapist and how therapy has helped residents overcome past tragedies and circumstances.

- 6) The house manager and other staff's attitude, work ethics, or expectations for living in the transitional home affect the resident's motivation, stress-level, or focus. The staff plays an important role in the resident's success as shown in the research by Yarosz (2003). Residents commented on the support, helpfulness, and availability of the staff overall, as well as the staff counselors being cheerful, open to listening to their problems, informative, and helpful. (p. 52-54).

As recorded in Chapters 5 & 6, both the residents and staff expressed the importance of resident-to-staff relationships and resident-on-resident relationships as an important factor to their success. Also recorded are residents' ideas of more clearly laying out the program goals and expectations.

- 7) The resident's spiritual response to circumstances. One of the Hope Again staff has observed this as a factor in residents over the years (personal communication, March 2016).

As recorded in Chapters 5 & 6, both the residents and staff see value in the spiritual elements of the program and see evident growth in residents (or residents seeing growth in themselves) and how this helps in their search for a job and housing.

Research Question

The main question this research project sought to answer is:

How do elements in the Hope Again program affect success of residents in attaining a job and stable housing?

This question included an evaluation of the program elements offered by Hope Again to transitional housing residents. The two items explored were the effectiveness in preparing residents for success in a stable job and housing.

Community Relevance

The evaluation and study of this topic is timely and relevant to Hope Again needs, as they do not fully know whether the residents are successful upon exit and how their program is a factor in this success or lack thereof. Therefore, the results of

this research will better equip Hope Again leadership and staff in considering, developing, and implementing necessary changes to the program. As they implement these changes, they can know that what they are providing is more effective in preparing residents to succeed in attaining a job and stable housing.

Assumptions or Presuppositions

Some assumptions before beginning the research were:

- The responses of residents and staff will vary (*the results show the following to be accurate*):
 - Some will evaluate the program as fantastic with some suggestions for improvements.
 - Others will greatly dislike it and feel restrained by the program requirements and rules.
 - Some of the staff will have a positive outlook on the program and feel confident in its effectiveness, while others are questioning whether what they're doing is truly helping.

- This research is important because God calls us to serve and help the poor.
 - Hope Again's mission is to serve God in this way. However, if they do not know how effective their program is, then they may be falling short of what they desire to do.
 - Some residents and staff will express their connection with Hope Again as one of God's doing and how it is furthering their capacity to serve Him (*the results show this aspect to be accurate*).

Population and Locations

In order to gather information to answer the research question, I set up and conducted program reviews with previous residents, current residents, Hope Again staff, and a local organization similar to Hope Again (San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission). I discussed the program with five previous residents, five current residents, six Hope Again staff, and one local organization.

In order to contact the previous and current residents, Ilene Slater, who is one of Hope Again's staff, assisted me by contacting each resident, asking if they were interested in participating in the study, and sharing their contact information with me so I could set up an interview.

To set up program reviews with the Hope Again staff, I made direct contact inviting them to participate in the study. Once they consented to participating, I set up the interview.

I met with the residents and Hope Again staff in various locations and ways. With residents, I conducted the interview in a local coffee shop, diner, or over the phone. With the Hope Again staff, we met in the Hope Again office building in

whichever room they felt most comfortable. The program reviews focused on the participant's perspectives and evaluation of the program and how effective it is in preparing residents in attaining a job and stable housing. I also asked what elements for success they perceived should be included or changed in the program that would better equip residents.

I also interviewed one organization with transitional housing and a similar focus as Hope Again to gain further knowledge of transitional housing programs. This interview focused on learning about their program for residents and the principles used to create and evaluate the effectiveness of the program. I also learned how they evaluate whether the residents are successful.

The remaining chapters will further describe the framework of the study and its findings. In Chapter 2, the findings and methods used in previous studies of transitional housing programs will be explored. Chapter 3 will focus on the methodology used in this research study, its theoretical approach and validity, ethical considerations, and the outcomes and outputs. Chapter 4 discusses the theological framework and how the Pastoral Cycle was used to evaluate this study and its results. In Chapter 5, the findings of the research and description of the data is laid out, which includes defining "success" of residents and the common themes in the program reviews. Chapter 6 further analyzes the data and themes presented in Chapter 5 in regards to how it can be used to better prepare residents in obtaining a job and stable housing. Lastly, Chapter 7 will provide some concluding thoughts as to how the research went and the use of the results.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

In evaluating transitional housing programs for their effectiveness in preparing residents for success in attaining a job and stable housing, multiple studies have been conducted surrounding this topic. Transitional housing is not a new concept and some studies question its effectiveness in ending homelessness or prolonging it. Studies have been conducted interviewing residents as to their perspectives of the program and its elements in preparing them for a job and permanent housing situation. This is important to study because if a program is failing to prepare participants in successfully maintaining a job and permanent housing situation, they may reenter homelessness.

The topics covered in this literature review include: the goals of transitional housing, how various studies and programs define “success,” some successful and unsuccessful elements of programs, the different variables affecting resident success upon program exit, perspectives on the importance of program evaluation and improvement, and use of the methodology in studies similar to the study at hand.

Goals of Transitional Housing Programs & Defining “Success”

One of the main goals as outlined in the report by Elgin Community Coll., Ill. is “job training and placement of the homeless followed by permanent housing” (1992, p. 4). Transitional housing also offers an “alternative to emergency shelters for those in need of long-term housing and services to better transition into being independent members of the community” (McFarland, 2011, p. 14-15).

The National Alliance to End Homelessness (2012) states that one of the main goals of transitional housing programs is to move people into permanent housing more quickly. Similarly, The Urban Institute and The Center for What Works (2006) uses this goal as a way of defining success of participants. According to their definition, when a client graduates the program, this means they “complete the shelter program that assists them in moving to stable housing” and long-term housing needs are met by way of a “rental house or apartment, public housing, Section 8 housing, Shelter Plus Care housing, home ownership, moving in with family or friends within 24 months of program entry” (p. 3 & 4).

According to the study of single homeless mothers conducted by Yarosz, success is defined as evaluators using “traditional outcome measures, such as the women finding permanent housing and permanent jobs, achieving their GEDs, pursuing various adult education program options, and expressing satisfaction with the program” (2003, p. 47).

In another study conducted in Iowa evaluating families in transitional housing programs, Richardson and Landsman defined participant success in terms of housing: “At the time of departure from the program, at least 86 percent had secured housing. Sixty-six percent secured their own housing, 16 percent moved in with relatives, and 4 percent moved into other living arrangements (e.g. residential treatment program)” (1996, p. 20). In their follow-up of 51 program participants about six months after leaving transitional housing, “Long-term housing stability was achieved for at least 65 percent of these former participants; 33 families reported residing in the ‘same (or better) housing as at last contact,’” and “time in the program and successful completion also correlated significantly with housing stability at follow-up” (p. 21).

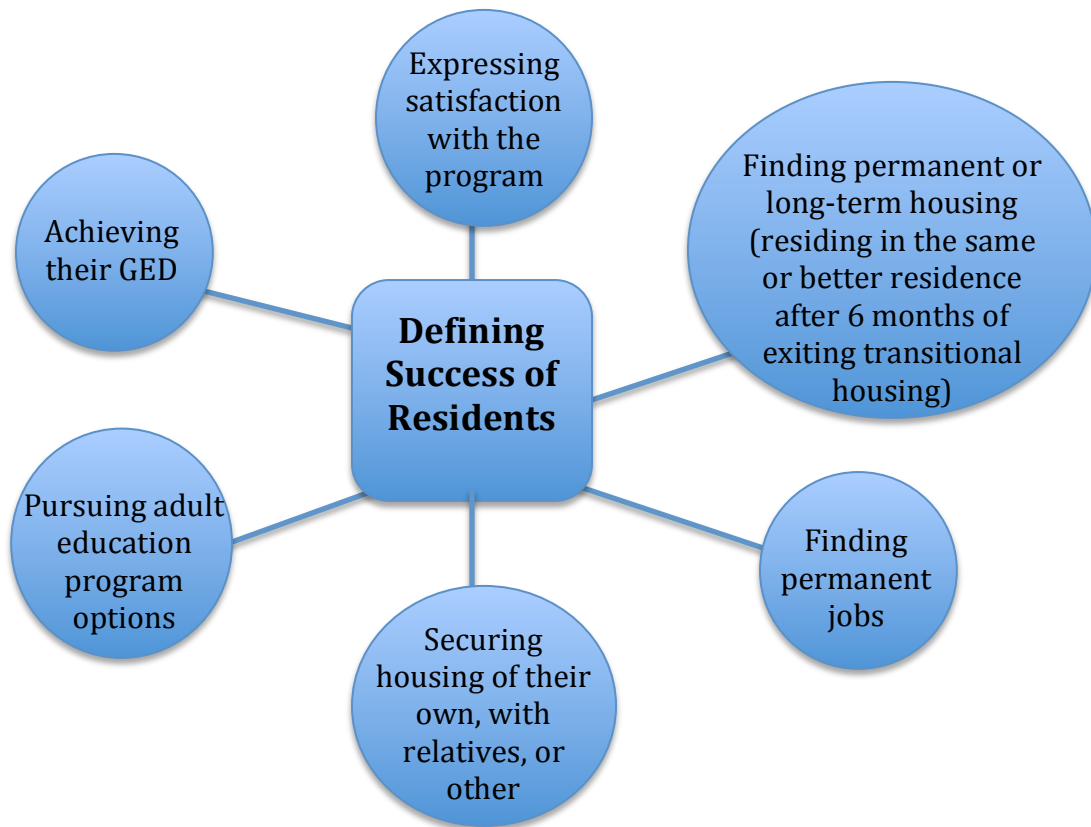


Figure 1: Defining Success of Residents

Successful Elements of Transitional Housing Programs

The Doorway to Hope program researched by Yarosz is defined as “a model program from participants’ perspectives” (2003, abstract). Some of the elements that made this program effective were those implemented from principles of adult education (p. 56-57). Other major factors that contributed toward participant success were resources provided by the community. The elements affecting resident success were:

- 1) "The participants were supportive and helpful to one another."
- 2) "Overall the staff was supportive and helpful."
- 3) "The overwhelming majority of the participants experienced the paraprofessional counseling staff members (FSCs) as being cheerful and upbeat with a sense of humor, open to listening to their problems, informative, and willing to help. Both were 'strong' women who were role models with whom the participants could identify."
- 4) "The program director was available, supportive, and helpful to the participants."
- 5) The psychologist, although he was there on a part-time basis primarily for staff training and development, was supportive and a good listener." (p. 52-54).

Richardson and Landsman recorded that some of the program elements leading to the success of residents were: substance abuse counseling, recreational services, length of time in the program, and attending adult support groups (1996, vi). These elements were also in conjunction with the positive relationship built between the case manager and participant and "a discharge plan which includes accompanying clients through the process of obtaining residency, and engagement, are characteristics of effective interventions" (p. 19).

Hagen's study of homeless women records that some of the needed elements in the program to further success of residents would be the development of services such as: "housing alternatives, training and employment services, health services, and mental health services" (1990, p. 9). Also, another crucial component, as mentioned above in the research of Richardson and Landsman, is the role and relationship of the case manager with the resident. Kaufman writes (as cited in Hagen, 1990), that the case manager is "someone who can 'mobilize the resources necessary to assist a person out of the crisis and on the road to stabilization' as well as a provider of mental health services" (p. 10).

The Urban Institute and Burt found in their research of homeless families that transitional housing programs "appear to help the families who use them to achieve some important goals, such as maintaining stable housing and treating substance abuse" (2010, p. iii). They also found that longer stays in the transitional homes gave the families time to develop skills that assist them in maintaining employment (p. iii). Although this research is focused on homeless families, the principles could also apply to single homeless men and women.

Unsuccessful Elements of Transitional Housing Programs

Yarosz recorded some of the more difficult aspects of the program that residents identified:

- 1) "Many had trouble with program boundaries represented by the rules."

- 2) "Although one participant was moving toward independence and responsibility for problem solving, she did not realize that these were goals of the program."
- 3) "Two participants did not like the way their [paraprofessional counseling staff members] helped them."
- 4) "Although participants had difficulties with their [paraprofessional counseling staff members], they did feel free to go to the other staff for help" (2003, p. 54-55).

In regards to reasons for program failure, one of the reasons Richardson and Landsman writes is, "For the 136 cases for which termination summaries were completed, participants who were not rated as successfully completing the program...[spent] a shorter period of time in the transitional housing program which reduces the opportunity to receive the benefits of services such as support groups" (1996, p. 19). Some of the top areas residents felt they made "little or no progress" while in the program included: housekeeping, housing assistance, education, budgeting, self-esteem (p. 24).

Cunningham, Gillespie, and Anderson discuss how often programs screen potential clients for motivation, administer drug tests, and want to gain an understanding of the individual's willingness to engage with program services prior to accepting them into the program (2015, p. 5). They state that even after screening out these people, "the evidence on transitional housing shows weak results" because participants exit the program before they have permanent housing and/or a job (p. 5).

A result showing the ineffectiveness of programs is "about one-third of transitional housing participants leave for something other than permanent housing" (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2012). This portion of participants exit back into homelessness, another shelter, or simply "disappear."

Successful Program Elements	Unsuccessful Program Elements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance abuse counseling • Recreational services • Length of time in the program • Attending adult support groups • Discharge plan which includes accompanying clients through the process of obtaining residency • Housing alternatives • Training and employment services • Health services • Mental health services • Relational Aspects: • Positive relationship built between the case manager & participant • Participants supporting & helping one another • Staff being supportive & helpful • Counseling staff being cheerful & upbeat with a sense of humor, open to listening to problems, informative, & willing to help • Could identify with the counseling staff members • Program director is available, supportive, & helpful to participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shorter period of time in the transitional housing program (reduces the opportunity to receive the benefits of services) • Little or no progress in: housekeeping, housing assistance, education, budgeting & self-esteem • Trouble with program boundaries represented by the rules • Screening potential clients (for motivation, drug tests & the individual's willingness to engage with program services) • Not realizing that moving toward independence & responsibility for problem solving were goals of the program • Exiting before having permanent housing and/or a job • Exiting back into homelessness by leaving for something other than permanent housing (such as: back into homelessness, another shelter, or they simply "disappear") • Relational Aspects: • Not liking the way their counselor helped them (however, even with these difficulties, participants did feel free to go to the other staff for help)

Figure 2: Successful & Unsuccessful Program Elements

Variables

The analysis of the data by Yarosz “revealed that the participants’ own attitudes and behaviors had differential impact on their success in the program and the perceived failure of others” (2003, p. 50). If a resident’s attitude was toward the importance and value of hard work, then they would be more successful upon their exit. Whereas, if a resident struggles with drugs or has a negative outlook on the rules of the program, they would have a more challenging experience succeeding.

Two other variables affecting residents’ success were community resources and difficulties encountered with the program. The basic attitudes and behaviors that contributed to a resident’s success were:

- 1) "A willingness to work hard to accept responsibility for oneself and one's children."
- 2) "A recognition on the part of the participants that they had control over both the daily decisions and the important life choices that they had to make."
- 3) "A willingness to sacrifice short-term rewards for longer-term goal achievement" (Yarosz, p. 50-51).

Other attitudes and behaviors that led to failure in the program were:

- 1) "Unresolved drug or alcohol addiction or abuse."
- 2) "Failing to take seriously the boundaries represented by the rules" (Yarosz, p. 51).

After asking staff what some of the major barriers were to a participant's success, the research of Richardson and Landsman showed their responses to be the following areas:

- Poor motivation
- Lack of social skills
- Psychological/psychiatric problems
- Lack of "school" skills
- Chemical dependency
- History of sexual abuse
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of employment opportunities & low salaries
- Lack of supportive services in the community (1996, p. 15)

Tools for Program Evaluation & Ways to Improve the Program

Elgin Community Coll., Ill. importantly assesses the evaluation approach: "Evaluation of program effort is a cornerstone of the program's success; effective evaluation gives merit to the staff's efforts and can provide new and more beneficial direction. Successful evaluation results give credence to program design" (1992, p. 6). In addition to this, it is important to use this evaluation of the program, results, services, and staff to "improve outcome measures" when necessary (p. 6).

If organizations implement a way of monitoring the desired outcomes of their programs, this "enables organizations to track progress in achieving the program's mission" and "with this information, program managers can...improve their services" (The Urban Institute and The Center for What Works, 2006, p. 1). It is important to consider ways the program and services can be improved as McDivitt (2012) shared in a presentation titled, "Retooling Your Transitional Housing Program," that rates of return to homelessness within 12 months after gaining permanent housing are: 15% return to shelters, 7% to transitional housing, and 9% to rapid re-housing.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness (2012) shared that some ways to improve transitional housing programs is to shorten the length of stay, which would be moving the program more towards a Rapid Re-Housing model as well as increase the capacity of the program as more people can be served. Also, moving towards a voluntary services model, deciding whether the target population is high barrier or low barrier participants, and changing the number of units per person could positively impact program success.

Qualitative Methodology & How Data is Analyzed

McFarland's research methodology for evaluating the transitional housing program for youth in Michigan uses qualitative methods and one-on-one interviews seeking perspectives on the success of the program from previous and current clients (2011, abstract). The interviews consisted of six open-ended questions and served as the primary data collection method in evaluating the program's effectiveness in preparing clients for permanent, stable housing (p. 23). McFarland's reasoning for using qualitative methods was "because of the difficulty in collecting quality quantitative data" (p. 23-24).

Another key part in McFarland's methods was researchers went to the youth transition home, talked with staff, and met current program participants in order to gain necessary background information prior to conducting the interviews. By doing this, they were able to see how the home operated and what the youth were required to do in the program (2011, p. 24).

In both McFarland's and Yarosz's methods, they used the responses from the interview questions with participants to form themes or categories. Yarosz referred to this as the "cross-classification method" (2003, 50). These interviews as well as those of Richardson and Landsman each contained open-ended questions (1996, p. 28).

The intent and use of the data that McFarland collected is for the organization "to adjust its services to better meet the needs of clients, as designated in the interviews" (2011, p. 25). The analysis of the data was conducted using an interpretative qualitative approach. McFarland writes: "This approach allowed the researcher to determine what [the organization's] participants thought about the program and what changes participants believe should be made. Similar responses to questions seen more than once were considered a theme" (p. 26).

In another study, Elgin Community Coll., Ill. conducted evaluations of the program by receiving responses from staff, area agencies, and the participants. He asked them to participate in an evaluation of the program services, outcomes, and staff (1992, p. 6). Although the data collection contained a survey with quantitative methods, his use of qualitative methods is similar to what was used in the Hope Again research. The qualitative questions portion asked participants "to

qualitatively assess the program- what services should be added, expanded, deleted, changed” (p. 7).

Conclusion

It is important to gain literature about the perspectives, data, and conclusions of previous research studies to give a framework for the research project at hand. After gathering this information and the methodological approaches to the research, I chose to collect the perspectives and experiences of previous residents, current residents, and staff about the Hope Again transitional housing program. This provided valuable insight into how the program can be improved in order to more effectively prepare residents in attaining a job and stable housing.

I also chose to use qualitative research methods because the findings and results of the previous studies proved this to be an effective way of gathering accurate responses from interview participants. Since the goal and measure of success for transitional housing programs is to assist residents in preparing for independent living and exiting with a stable job and housing, then it is vital to know the successful and unsuccessful elements offered in the program. I believe using qualitative methods allowed the participants to adequately describe their experiences, which created well-rounded, extensive results.

Gaining perspectives and evaluation of the program elements from previous and current residents, staff, and another organization that has a transitional housing program served as beneficial data in assessing the program as a whole. Participant responses are also reviewed against the existing literature to assist in validating which aspects of the Hope Again program need improvement. Using the above research and methods of previous research studies helped to affirm the data and will point the Hope Again staff in the right direction of what would be most logical and beneficial to change, add, remove, or improve first.

Chapter 3: Methods

Figure 3: Data Collection Methods

Category	Participants	Specifics	Goals
Program Reviews	5 previous residents (2 men & 3 women) 5 current residents (3 men & 2 women) 6 Hope Again staff	Structured one-on-one interview 30-60 minutes Note-taking during interview of responses	To learn what major elements are & are not effectively preparing residents for attaining a job & stable housing; perspectives on what is needed for successful preparation; theological goal of caring for the poor through action (James 2:15-17)
Interview	San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission (SFVRM)	Structured one-on-one interview 30-45 minutes Note-taking during interview of responses	To learn what their key methods are in evaluating programming & measuring success of residents; receive materials related to the field; theological goal of working together to assist those in need (Ecc. 4:12 & Luke 5:17-26)
Literature Review	Articles, reports, research studies, etc.	15-20 articles Reports, research studies, etc. about transitional homes, research methodology & theology	To learn what previous research studies found about the evaluation of transitional housing programs, their processes & methodology; theology

**See Appendix A for program review and interview questions.*

Theoretical Approach & Validity

The theoretical basis for using the above data collection methods is based on the phenomenology approach, which is under the umbrella of interpretivism. Some important aspects of phenomenology according to Gray are:

- “Current understandings have to be ‘bracketed’ to the best of our ability to allow phenomena to ‘speak for themselves,’ unadulterated by our preconceptions.”
- “The results will be new meaning, fuller meaning or renewed meaning.”
- “The key is gaining the subjective experience of the subject.”
- “Value is ascribed not only to the interpretations of researchers, but also to the subjects of the research themselves.”
- It doesn’t impose “an external logic on a phenomenon” but uses an “inductive approach [that] seeks to find the internal logic of the subject” (2014, p. 24)

The practical research aspects of the phenomenology approach include:

- Studying individuals
- Small number of participants (usually between 5 and 15)
- Using in-depth, unstructured interviews
- The reliability being based on confirmation by participants (Gray, 2014, p. 25).

Although this research study consisted of structured interviews with 17 participants, the phenomenology approach gave the study a solid framework to be based on. This also helps in the validity of the data as the study sought to record the subjective experiences of the participants and not impose external logic on the results but seek to uncover the internal logic of participant responses through an inductive approach. As the data is mostly left to “speak for itself” without the influence of the researcher’s preconceptions, this greatly assists in discovering a new or renewed meaning of the Hope Again program through the results.

The validity is also established through the use of the qualitative methods of narrative analysis and grounded theory in order to conduct the research and analyze the data. The triangulation between previous and current residents, Hope Again staff, and existing literature helps as the research data shows similarities and differences between participant responses and those in the literature. The literature also helped to frame and confirm the structure of this research, as other studies have used similar methods in conducting research and analyzing the data.

Some things that could be affecting the validity of the results are any extremely bitter responses from residents or any staff responses tainted in an effort to cover the lack of performance in their job. As the data was analyzed and Hope Again leadership begins to use the results to consider what adjustments need to be made in the program, some of the bitter results from residents have been taken into consideration only if it was common among some of the other residents. Some comments were removed from the data analysis as an exception to the overall tone of the results. As far as the staff attempting to “cover their tracks” in their lack of job performance and the results being affected due to this, a separate staff evaluation may need to be considered and created by Hope Again leadership.

Lastly, the size of this research project has been done on a smaller scale with only five previous residents, five current residents, six Hope Again staff, and one similar organization with a transitional housing program. Hope Again itself is a small organization with eleven staff members serving a women's transitional house that holds up to seven women plus the house manager and a men's house that holds up to fifteen men plus the house manager. Perhaps the results of this research project would not be consistent in comparison with program evaluations of larger organizations. Also, since this research project contains a small number of participants, it may not give all the possible feedback that a larger pool of participants would.

Research Guide and Assistants

Dr. Viv Grigg (professor and research project supervisor) and Ross Lokken (executive director of Hope Again) both operated as my project guides. Ross and I worked together in the development of the program review questions and research processes. Dr. Grigg reviewed the questions and research process to ensure it was done in an ethical manner. All program reviews and interviews were conducted in English as all the interviewees spoke English.

Ethical Considerations

In order to protect the rights of the interviewees and minimize risk of stress or harm by participating in the research, the following actions were taken:

- Resident and Hope Again staff names were kept anonymous to maintain confidentiality
- Met off Hope Again property if the participant so desired
- Program reviews that were held at a coffee shop or diner, I purchased the interviewee a cup of coffee or meal
- Participation in the research was completely voluntary
- Before beginning the program review, I received verbal consent from the interviewee using the verbal consent script
- To minimize stress and harm by their participation, questions were not revolved around the resident's personal struggles, reasons for being homeless or jobless, family or friend relationships, or anything else evoking deep personal experience and negative or hurtful emotions. Instead, questions were revolved around residents' perspectives and evaluation of the program and how effective it was in preparing them in obtaining a job and stable housing, as well as what elements for success they perceived should be included or changed in the program that would better equip them.

Permissions

I obtained permission to conduct this research from Dr. Viv Grigg, my professor and research project supervisor at Azusa Pacific University (APU). I also

received permission from Ross Lokken, the executive director of Hope Again, who approved each step of the research process and methods for collecting data (*see Appendix B for approval letter*). Since the results of this research function only as an evaluative tool and resource for implementing necessary changes in the Hope Again program, the results will not be published and will only be used within the organization. Due to this, approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at APU was not required. However, I have followed all the regulations and ethical standards in protecting human subjects in research set by the IRB (*see Appendix C for training record*).

Outcomes and Outputs

Research Product (outputs)

The product resulting from the research is two-fold:

- 1) It serves as an unpublished Masters degree final research project
- 2) It is a report and analysis of data for Hope Again leadership as they consider what changes need to be made to the program to better equip residents for success in attaining a job and stable housing. The final product given to Hope Again is a detailed but easy-to-read and analyze report that provides the information needed to make better-informed decisions about the program and preparing residents for jobs and housing.

The decision-making process began with a presentation of the data and analysis of the research to Hope Again leadership. The leadership staff this was presented to included Ross Lokken (executive director) and Dan Wilson (supervisor and case manager). The presentation involved using a report of the research results specifically developed for Hope Again to discuss the major themes and responses gathered in the research.

As the presentation took place, the Hope Again leadership began to realize some of their current realities and areas where they need to take action in improving. These included needing to clarify among the staff what defines the success of a resident so the staff and executive director's goals are aligned. It also included frustrations with lack of funds and the hindrance this causes in being able to hire social workers or job and housing specialists. In this case, the results of this research might be able to be used to present to donors in an effort to raise more funds.

Action Outcomes

The results of this study are used for evaluating and improving elements of the Hope Again program. The desire is that it would increase the effectiveness and quality of what the program offers in preparing residents for a stable job and housing. The results will continue to mobilize the staff in taking the appropriate steps for creating an action plan of what they will improve, change, remove, or add

to the program, as well as how they will do it. This research project serves as a basis for this action plan. As a further outcome of this research, Hope Again staff can also create a process for ongoing evaluation of the program to track whether the changes they implement are effective.

Because Ross Lokken requested this research as a step towards knowing whether what they're offering is truly helping residents or not, the results are invaluable in the hands of the staff. Since this is already a direction they were willing and desiring to go, this research has assisted in equipping them to take knowledgeable and informed steps towards creating a more effective program. A key aspect in this research is that it contains perspectives of previous and current residents. This provides valuable input as the staff considers what is needed to best prepare residents for jobs and housing. They can develop the program to fit the requested and perceived needs of the residents themselves.

Community Benefits (outcomes)

This study benefits Hope Again and the residents they serve currently and in the future as they are able to use the data and results to better develop a program that effectively prepares residents in attaining a job and stable housing. The study also benefits:

- 1) The research participants as residents' voices and perspectives are heard and valued
- 2) The SFVRM as they had the opportunity to share their knowledge and resources
- 3) Hope Again staff as they evaluate their perspectives on the elements of the program with the desire to improve it for residents

The previous residents, current residents, and Hope Again staff who participated in the study have been provided with a summary of the results so they have the opportunity to see their contribution to the research. This summary includes charts illustrating the results, as well as some quotes and a brief description of the data analysis. It also includes a short summary of my presentation to the Hope Again leadership to assure the participants that their responses and experiences in the program have been heard.

With the results of the research, the organization is learning more about how or how not the current program is preparing residents for success in attaining a job and stable housing. It is a tool to help Hope Again leadership and staff create a program that better prepares residents to obtain a job and stable housing.

Using the data, the Hope Again staff can look at several elements of the program and make better-informed decisions on what needs to be changed, added, or removed. Since this research project was collaboratively designed with Ross Lokken, the outcome of the research has been anticipated. Now it can be used to help implement elements that will improve care of the residents. One of these

elements could include hiring a job specialist and housing specialist to the Hope Again staff as discussed in the data analysis in Chapter 6. However, in order to hire these staff, Hope Again would need to raise more funds.

Use as a Vehicle for Fundraising

Considering the purpose of this study, it is not a fundraising proposal nor does it foresee moving in that direction. However, some of the elements needing improvement or to be added to the program would require more funds for it to happen. One element discussed in Chapter 6 as part of the data analysis in relation to providing more outside resources for jobs and housing, is to hire a job specialist and housing specialist to the Hope Again staff.

The general idea is that these two staff members would be solely focused on staying up-to-date with the most recent information and opportunities available for jobs and housing. They would then be able to connect residents with these resources. It could also provide great benefits for residents, such as getting to the “front of the line” for a job or housing through companies Hope Again has agreements and a relationship with.

If Hope Again wanted to move forward in hiring a job specialist and housing specialist, the research data can be used to justify the need for funds in order to increase the program’s effectiveness. Hope Again leadership can bring this data to their existing church partnerships and individual donors and request their financial support.

The next chapter discusses the action-reflection process as the theological framework for this research project. It shows how the pastoral cycle was used and how the various steps of this cycle helped to process the research and maintain a Biblical perspective.

Chapter 4: Theological Framework

Action-Reflection Process: The Pastoral Cycle

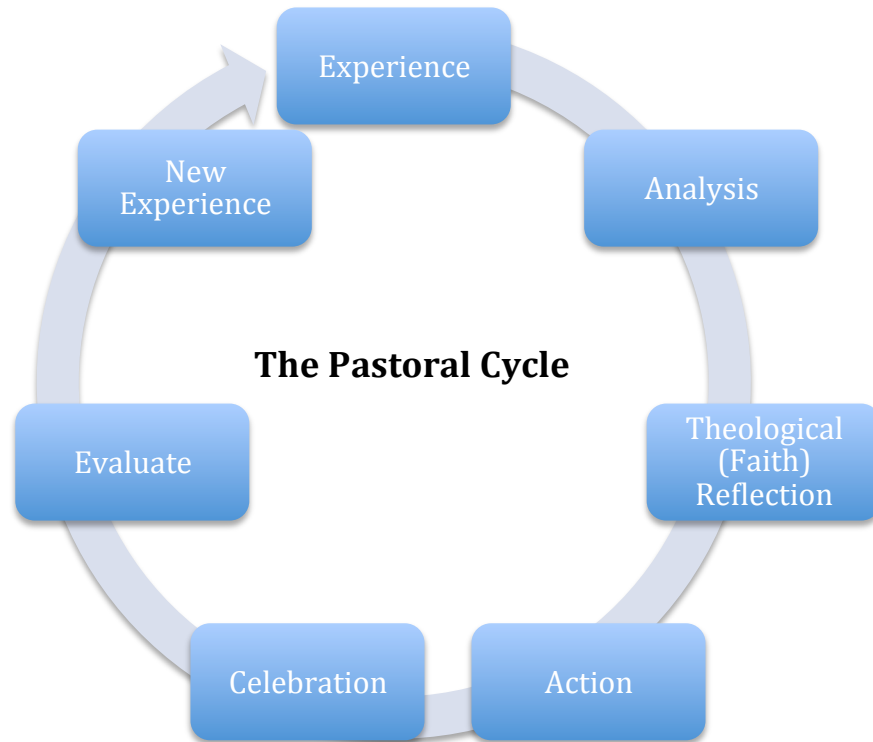


Figure 4: Steps of the Pastoral Cycle

The research project fits within the action-reflection framework through the use of the pastoral cycle. This approach helps with the evaluative purpose of the project, and assisted in analyzing the data and how the Hope Again staff can take action in improving the program. “The Pastoral Cycle” states that it “is a way of engaging ourselves in a program of commitment, action and transformation as followers of Christ in the world. It is a way of helping us to link faith, action and politics within our daily lives” (n.d., p. 1).

The following chart lays out the process of the pastoral cycle according to “The Pastoral Cycle”:

Figure 5: The Pastoral Cycle Process

Steps	Questions to Ask	Reasoning for Step
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do I know of this issue? • What have I experienced of this? • Who are affected most by this & how? • How has the issue arisen? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To realize what experiences & knowledge you & others have • To build on those experiences
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is this happening? • Who gains from this situation? • Who loses out? • Why does this situation continue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand the role we play in the structures • To understand links between our lives & those who we are serving • Need thorough analysis to form basis of work & to identify instances where we might be unconsciously participating in the oppression
Theological (Faith) Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What particular insight/view does our faith, church teaching, scriptures, etc. give us on this issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discerning what our faith says about the realities we're facing • Reflect on scripture, especially through the eyes of the poor & marginalized • Wise to remember that God's place is in everything we do
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What needs to be done to resolve this situation? • What can I/we do? • How will your action change those involved? • How can you tell if it is successful? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide on what you will do/are able to do • Be careful not to take on too much • The objectives set should take into account the resources, talents, & time available
Celebration	<i>(none for this step)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating achievements is vital & could also be opportunity to recruit new people to join the concern • Strengthens group's sense of unity & community • Doesn't have to be only of

		<p>success but could be need to grieve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to spend some time in prayer but doesn't just have to be 'holy' time • Record this time in some way so can look back on it in the leaner moments
Evaluate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What went well? • What didn't? • What lessons have you learned for the next time? • Have you made anyone else aware of the issue? • What do you hope to achieve in the future? • What might you do differently next time? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the same people struggling to do everything? • Have you been able to get more people involved? (Personal invitations may encourage people to do something on a one-time basis, then they may be interested to get involved more) • Although it doesn't come natural, it is the most important part of process • Helps people to know each other & work together • Worth the effort in the long term
New Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do I know of this issue? • What have I experienced of this? • Who are affected most by this and how? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the evaluation, the group now has a new amount of experience to build on • Does the group want to continue on the same issue or move onto something else? • How does the group feel about the way it's working? • What is the next step?

Another perspective on the steps of the pastoral cycle that assisted in conducting this research while maintaining a Biblical perspective of the topic is:

- *Experience: What is happening now, what needs to be changed?*
- *Analysis: Why are things the way they are, and who controls them?*
- *Reflection: What does God/the Bible have to say about this?*
- *Action: What are we going to do to make things different?*

- *Celebration: What have we achieved, and what still needs to be done?* (New Way of Being Church, 2007).

Using these questions to analyze the research process and how the staff uses the final data helps to ensure it is based not only on the collected data but also on Biblical foundations. The questions on experience, analysis, and reflection were answered before beginning the research. The action section was answered once the data had been collected, analyzed, and presented to Hope Again leadership. The celebration, evaluate, and new experience sections can be answered by the Hope Again staff after they have implemented the changes for a duration of time. It will help them to reevaluate and strategize how what they're implementing is working or needs to be fine-tuned.

The following are responses to the categories of the pastoral cycle:

- **Experience:** Currently the program offers assistance with jobs and housing, as well as character and spiritual development through weekly classes and meetings with a case manager, chaplain, and therapist. Residents are required to comply with rules, such as completing house chores, adhering to curfew, attending classes and meetings, attending church on Sunday, and abstaining from drugs and alcohol.
- **Analysis:** Things could be the way they are because resident needs are not being served in a way that best equips them, or the focus in classes and meetings is not on topics assisting in a forward move with jobs and housing.

The people controlling this are both the staff and the residents. The staff decides what will be taught and what rules will be established. The residents choose whether they will comply with the rules and how much effort they will put into applying what they are taught. However, even if a resident is putting forth great effort to apply what is being taught, are they being taught and equipped in the most helpful areas?

- **Reflection:** In order to follow the Scripture verse 2 Timothy 2:15 NIV, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth," the staff needs to be knowledgeable and confident in what God has commissioned them to do in their role at Hope Again with residents. If they know their role is "to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8b NIV), then they will be motivated to have more compassion and patience with residents and to "not become weary in doing what is good" (Galatians 6:9a NIV).
- **Action:** One idea of a next step briefly discussed after presenting the research findings to Hope Again leadership is to clarify the definition of

resident success among the staff, as a key aspect of success mentioned by the executive director was not mentioned by staff in the interview responses. This aspect of success was that of the residents having housing. Hope Again leadership saw this as confirmation that there needs to be clarification as to what their goals are and what they're seeking to accomplish with residents.

Another idea, or perhaps more of a frustration, was that of fundraising in order to implement some things mentioned by residents and staff in the interviews. Hope Again would need more funds to hire social workers and job and housing specialists. Perhaps an action step in this direction could be using the research results to develop a funding proposal that Hope Again leadership could present to their church partnerships, individual donors, or even other potential donors.

The Hope Again leadership and staff will need to spend more time deciding which elements are most necessary to focus on improving first and how they will do it.

In response to developing the program to be most helpful in preparing residents for success in attaining a job and stable housing, this adheres to God's caution that we are to take careful action in caring for those in need. James 2:15-17 NIV says, "Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead." The staff is the third cord together with the resident and Christ as said in Ecclesiastes 4:12 NIV: "Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

In the next chapter, the research findings and data are displayed. The first section focuses on the various ways "success" is defined by the executive director, staff, and the SFVRM. The following section records the common themes found in the program reviews with residents and staff, and it compares the similarities and differences in their responses.

Chapter 5: Findings & Data Description

In this chapter of the study the raw data from the research will be presented using the research question as a framework for identifying themes. In the next chapter, the data and themes that emerged will be analyzed in relationship to how it can provide valuable insight into the evaluation and improvement of the Hope Again transitional housing program. The next chapter will also describe each of the themes and figures in greater detail.

Research Participants

# of Previous Hope Again Transitional Home Residents Interviewed	# of Current Hope Again Transitional Home Residents Interviewed	# of Hope Again Staff Interviewed	# of Other Organizations with Transitional Housing Programs Interviewed
2 men 3 women	3 men 2 women	6 staff	1 organization

Defining “Success” of Residents from Hope Again Staff

The following is a layout of which qualities define the “success” of residents as written by executive director of Hope Again, Ross Lokken.



Figure 6: Executive Director’s Definition of Success

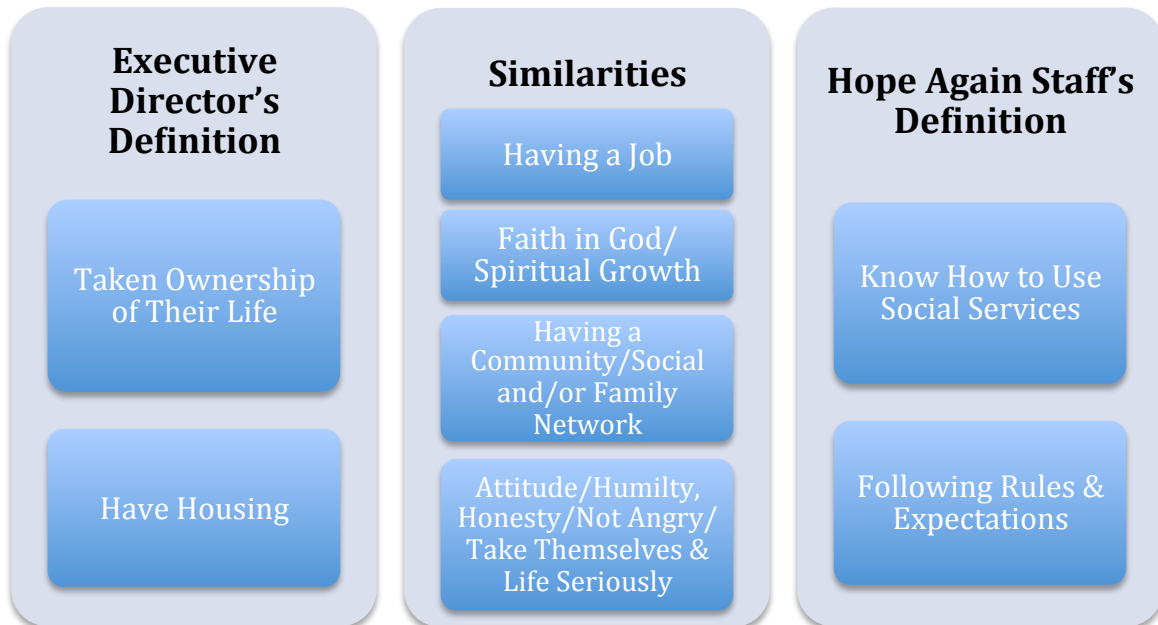
The next chart outlines the responses of the Hope Again staff who were interviewed and their perspectives on how the “success” of residents is defined.



Figure 7: Hope Again Staff's Definition of Success

Below is a layout comparing the qualities of success defined by the executive director and Hope Again staff. The first column shows qualities unique to the executive director’s definition, while the third column shows those unique to the Hope Again staff’s definition. The middle column lists the defined qualities that were similar between both the executive director and the Hope Again staff.

Figure 8: Comparison of Executive Director & Staff Definitions of Success



Measuring & Tracking Resident Success at San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission

In order to obtain a contrasting perspective of the definition of “success,” program elements, and the process of evaluating the program, an interview was conducted with the San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission (SFVRM), a similar organization located in Northridge, CA that also has a transitional housing program.

In an effort to measure and track residents’ success at the SFVRM, every resident is assigned a case manager whom they meet with once per week. During this time, they make goals aligned with the “5 Outcomes for Success” (see *Figure 9 below*), or they may focus on only some of the five outcomes if needed. Then, there is a sequence of “phases” that contain markers with various requirements for each month.

The case manager also assesses if the resident is a fit for the program, addresses any problems during their stay, and gives extensions if needed. One of the more challenging aspects to measure and track is the resident’s spiritual growth.

Some key ways resident success is measured is through the following requirements:

- Program is 3-5 months
- It is focused on employment, housing, and growth
- After 30 days, resident must have a job & maintain it
- Look at heart of resident (ex. If mad at God, that’s okay. Desire is for residents to express honestly what is going on rather than saying all the right words)
- Growth (openness & high accountability are important)
- When residents leave, staff track stable housing, transitional housing, & jobs
 - Staff stay in touch after residents exit but don’t keep statistics of housing & job stability

5 Outcomes for Success



Figure 9: Success as Defined by the SFVRM

Comparing the Definition of Success Between Hope Again & the SFVRM

The “5 Outcomes for Success” laid out by the SFVRM go hand-in-hand with the definition of resident success at Hope Again as each of the five outcomes are also part of Hope Again’s definition. The only part of the five outcomes that is not included in the Hope Again definition is that of “ongoing education.”

Also, the SFVRM has a more structured method of how they measure and track resident success and progress. Although Hope Again has a defined list of what makes a resident successful upon their exit, they do not currently have a process in place to measure and track this success along the way. For example, SFVRM requires the resident to have a job after 30 days and tracks the resident’s progress through the various phases each month. Hope Again does not have a timeline in which residents must acquire a job and doesn’t have requirements at any specified phases.

Another difference is the SFVRM program is 3-5 months, and Hope Again recently implemented a timeframe of 10 months for residents (before this, there was not a defined timeframe).

Themes from Resident & Hope Again Staff Interviews

Some of the common themes or responses expressed during the program reviews with previous and current residents were:

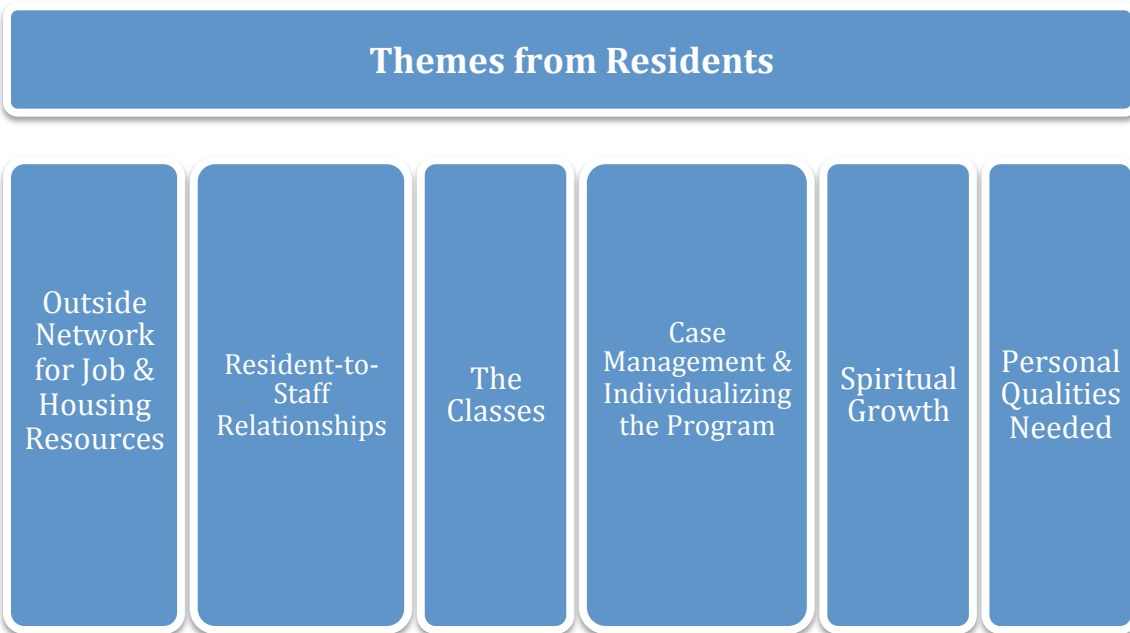


Figure 10: Themes from Previous & Current Resident Program Reviews

Some of the common themes or responses expressed during the program reviews with Hope Again staff were:

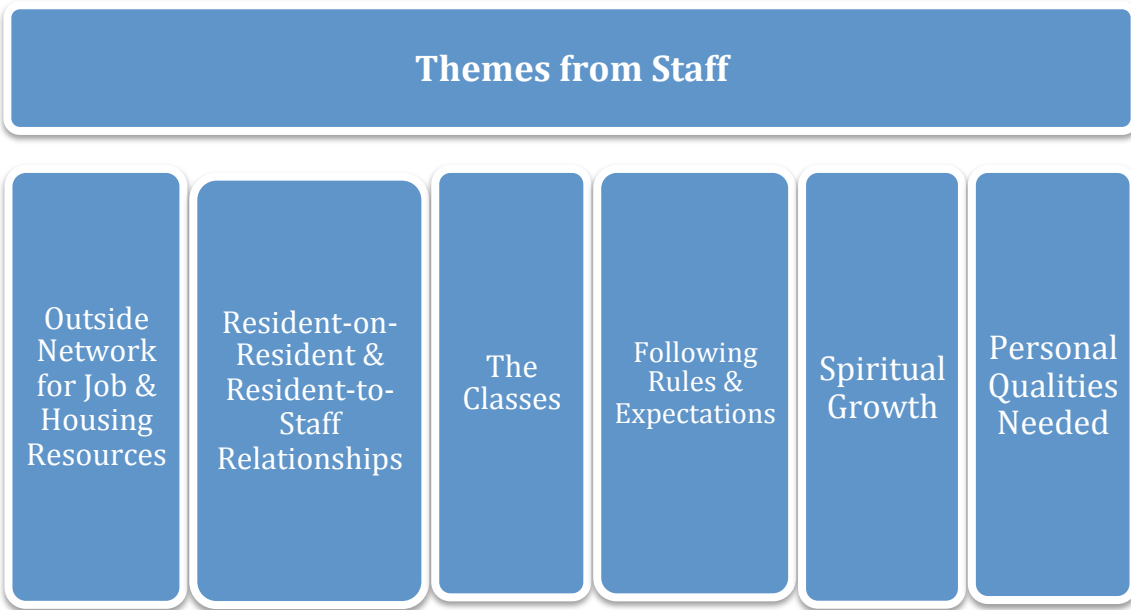


Figure 11: Themes from Hope Again Staff Program Reviews

Below is a graphic comparing the common themes from program reviews with residents and the Hope Again staff. The circles connected to the center circle labeled “Similarities” are themes mentioned by both the residents and the Hope Again staff. The squares on the outer edges are differences that were mentioned by only either the residents or the staff.

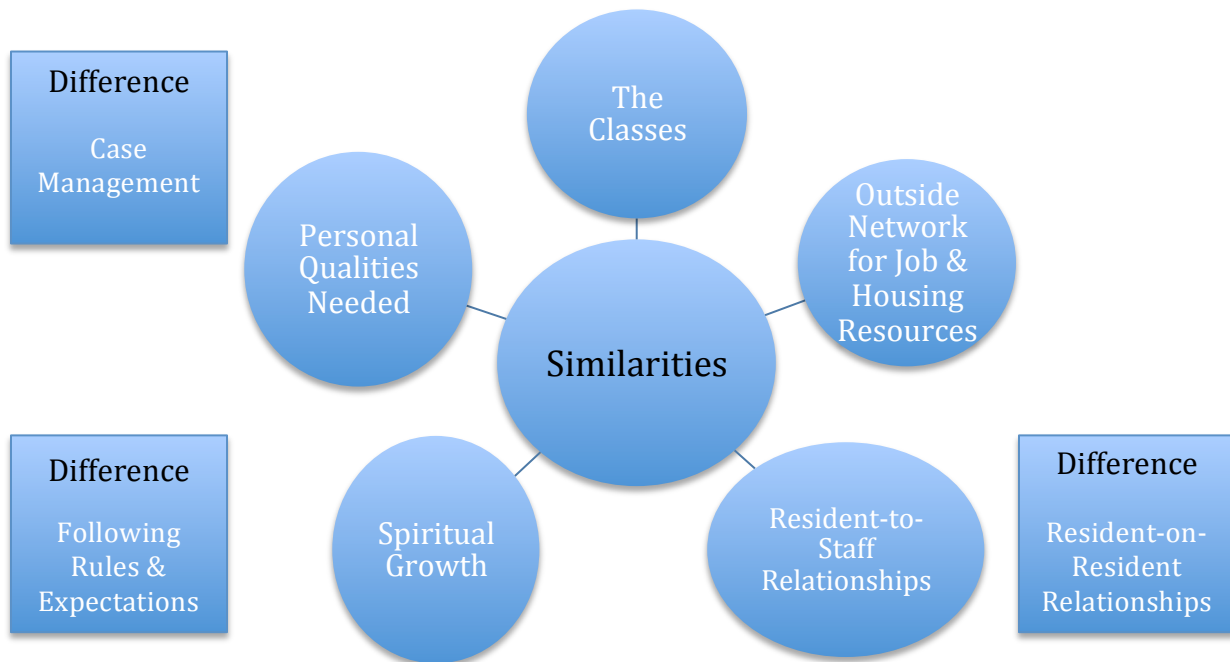


Figure 12: Similarities & Differences Between Resident & Staff Themes

In the next chapter, the definition of “success” and the themes will be analyzed and explained in greater detail in regards to how they can be implemented to improve the Hope Again program. The definition of “success” and the themes will also be briefly compared with the existing literature of previous similar research studies and their findings.

Chapter 6: Data Analysis

This chapter will further analyze the above data in relationship to how it can provide valuable insight into the evaluation and improvement of the Hope Again transitional housing program. It will also attempt to describe each of the above themes and figures in greater detail.

Analysis of the Definition of “Success”

This section provides an analysis and comparison of defining “success” from the perspectives of the Hope Again staff and the San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission.

The Hope Again Staff

Overall, the executive director’s definition of success and that of the Hope Again staff are very similar and agree with one another. This is important as the staff needs to be aligned with the executive director and vice versa. If there is no alignment among the staff and the outcomes they are striving to achieve, then there will be major hindrances in the progress of the residents. Therefore, it is good the staff overall has the same perspective of what defines resident success so everyone is striving towards the same goal.

The differences in the executive director’s definition and the staff’s are important to note. Three of the four differences I would consider relatively minor, while one is more major. The minor aspects are requiring the residents to:

- 1) Know how to use social services
- 2) Follow rules and expectations
- 3) Take ownership of their life

The more important aspect that was mentioned by the executive director as a mark of success is:

- 4) The residents have housing

I think this is a major aspect of resident success as the main purpose of transitional housing is to help equip residents with a stable job and housing situation. This is an element of success that needs to be communicated with the staff so everyone is focused on the same end goal in preparing residents to succeed.

The San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission

It is encouraging to note the SFVRM’s “5 Outcomes for Success” align with Hope Again’s definition of success. The SFVRM seems like a good organization that seeks to serve families in transitional living. I think it is worthwhile to note the outcome of “gainful employment” and the resources they provide to assist residents

in attaining a job within 30 days: The SFVRM has both in-house and out-of-house resources for jobs and housing, resulting in residents usually gaining housing in three months.

One of the common themes from interviews with Hope Again staff and residents was their desire to have an “outside network for job and housing resources.” Perhaps if Hope Again were able to create connections with local job and housing agencies, it would increase resident success in attaining stable housing. It could also speed up the process of attaining a job and housing, which in turn quickens residents’ ability to exit the program successfully. The SFVRM provides a good framework for this process.

Another piece of feedback from the resident program reviews demonstrated that many times the residents do not feel supported in seeking a job and housing by their case manager. Many felt the case manager simply asked them, “Did you find a job yet? Did you find housing yet?” but they didn’t feel supported in being given adequate resources for these things. One way to assist in this area of finding a job and housing is creating the outside network for job and housing resources.

Something else that can help Hope Again residents feel more supported in their job and housing search is a key part in the SFVRM’s program. The SFVRM has a structured process of how they measure and track resident progress. This is important to note as some Hope Again residents mentioned in the program reviews their desire to have clearer guidelines and goals of what to do and what is expected of them in the program. Implementing a structured process with specific goals and requirements at various stages in the program can greatly help measure the resident’s progress. It can also provide clear guidelines and areas of focus for the resident to concentrate on each week and month, and clear up any confusion on what is expected of them.

Another way the SFVRM tracks resident success is by staying in touch with them even after they exit the program. The SFVRM attempts to track the resident’s housing situation and job, however, they do not keep statistics of their housing and job stability. Many residents stay in touch with Hope Again staff after they exit, and some even continue to use the services of Hope Again, such as case management, counseling, or meetings with the chaplain. However, the staff does not have a structure in place to track the stability of their housing or job situation. Perhaps tracking the resident’s housing and job stability after they exit the program can help to know if Hope Again’s outside network of resources is reliable. It can also give an outline of whether the classes, case management, and other elements of the program are effectively preparing residents.

Lastly, perhaps the difference in program length can also affect resident motivation in moving out, as a longer timeframe can weaken an intense focus on attaining a job and housing when the resident has more time to do it. However, a longer timeframe can give the resident more time to find a job and housing as well. I

think this is where the residents' feedback during the program reviews of "individualizing the program" for each resident can come into good use. Each individual resident's needs may require less or more time in the program.

How the Literature Compares

The above definitions of "success" from the program reviews with Hope Again staff and the SFVRM compare similarly with findings from the other research studies discussed in *Chapter 2: Literature Review*. Below are some of the similarities in the definitions of "success:"

- Securing housing
- Finding a job
- Expressing satisfaction with the program (their attitude)
- Pursuing continued education

Noting these similarities in defining "success" helps to know which aspects are most important as studied over previous years. This assists in guiding which elements are most worthwhile to tackle first in improving because we know they are key factors in a resident's success as seen in multiple similar studies.

Explanation & Expansion of Hope Again Resident & Staff Themes

This section provides a more detailed explanation of each of the themes pulled from the resident and Hope Again staff program reviews. It includes residents' responses of what they believe they need to succeed compared with the staff's responses. It also seeks to analyze each of the themes and responses in relation to how they can be implemented or improved in order to aid in the success of residents in attaining a job and stable housing.

A total of seven themes emerged from the program reviews with the previous residents, current residents, and Hope Again staff. Many of these themes were similar between the residents and staff. However, there were some differences in what each thought was more important and needed. Each of these themes will be further discussed in this section.¹

Theme: Outside Network for Job & Housing Resources

Both the residents and staff expressed an outside network to assist in providing avenues to jobs and housing is a needed element in the program. Residents felt this would greatly assist in their search for a job, as outside agencies or partnerships with companies would have information on which jobs are hiring, whether they are blue or white-collar jobs.

Housing agencies would also be of great help as residents expressed it would help them not move into another shelter after Hope Again, know of their affordable options, how and when to apply for certain types of housing, and their options both inside and outside of Hollywood. Residents felt the role of the case manager could

include connecting them with these outside job and housing agencies, companies, and resources. I think this is a great idea to implement as it would enable the resident to go to a reputable agency themselves and sign up for whatever jobs or housing are available. Also, having an outside network helps relieve the case manager of needing to know about all the opportunities out there and leaves the searching up to the job or housing experts at the agency.

Staff expressed that it would be beneficial to bring in outside resources who are specialists in the areas of job and housing. They also had a similar idea as one of the residents of bringing in outside specialists who can teach residents new skills. This resident mentioned creating a small business program where residents who have skills, such as drawing, sewing, making jewelry, housekeeping, baking, etc., could learn how to get loans or sponsors to begin their own business. This resident also commented that it'd be helpful to learn how to make their own business cards and have experts in specific job fields come talk with the residents about how to get into that job field. I think this idea is great as it not only helps pave the way for residents to attain a job but also builds on their current skills of what they already know how to do and enjoy.

One of the staff members stated possibly adding staff positions for both a job specialist and housing specialist would be ideal. However, in order for this to happen, Hope Again would need more funding from donors. The job specialist would keep an eye on companies hiring and perhaps have a connection to get the resident to the front of the line. They could train people in how to write a resume, how to interview, how to dress, and the qualities of a good worker. This aspect answers the desires of many of the residents as well. Many residents expressed they would like more help in each of these things in preparing and applying for a job. Other ideas of the role of the job specialist include having connections with bigger and smaller companies where they can introduce the resident, as well as having a seminar each week to cover each of the above items.

The housing specialist would in essence provide the same services as the job specialists but in the realm of affordable housing. This could range from housing with Section 8, the county, or the city. It is perceived this could open doors for many residents as this staff person would know the in's and out's of housing options.

It is wonderful to realize the similar desires between the residents and Hope Again staff in this theme. I believe if this is further explored and implemented little-by-little that it could provide great, favorable opportunities for the residents in attaining a job and stable housing. I think the best part is the residents would feel very supported as they are connected with specialists in the fields who can point them in the right direction and tell them what they can do to attain the job or place to live.

Theme: Resident-to-Staff & Resident-on-Resident Relationships

In the program reviews, the residents and staff both commented about the overall need to improve resident-to-staff relationships. One of the staff recalled a conversation that took place among the staff about changing their mentality away from an “Us and Them” viewpoint. This staff person remembers this being a powerful time of realizing their viewpoints and the need to change it.

This proves to be an important realization because many residents expressed they feel they don’t have any relationship with the members of the staff and they don’t have a voice. They also shared that due to other residents’ lack of truthfulness, the staff doesn’t trust any of the residents. This has caused discouragement among many residents and a desire to be more respected.

It was encouraging after interviewing the Hope Again staff to learn some of them were very aware the residents feel this way and that things need to change about the way they view the residents. A few of the important aspects mentioned were:

- Not seeing the residents as “them” or as lazy
- Getting to know the residents better
- Encouraging residents more
- Not seeing the residents as a number because people are thought of as numbers in government places.

I’d like to note one staff member stated that once they realized their “us and them” mentality, the staff became more respectful towards residents and didn’t demand as much in piling a lot of work on them.

I think it is important to realize there are also incredibly grateful residents towards what the staff has done for them. Residents commented on:

- The encouragement of the staff being a great support
- The staff often told them, “You can do it,” and they were nice
 - In fact, this resident mentioned the staff is even more helpful after exiting the program.
- Some residents shared they’d like to build a better relationship with the staff through perhaps a game night every other month and decrease the separation they feel between residents and the staff.

The resident and staff’s relationship can be a valuable key to helping residents feel supported and cared for, which in turn can increase their motivation and willingness to receive the staff’s advice in how to attain a job and stable housing.

Lastly, in the area of resident-on-resident relationships, the staff felt this was a key piece to the success of residents as they live in a group living situation in the

transition home. They stated residents can learn to “get out of themselves” and get along with others, as it is not all about them. They learn to be tolerant of each other and live in community hopefully as the Bible says to: “Consider others better than yourselves” (Philippians 2:3).

I liked how one staff member stated group living in the transition home as being the “practicum” where residents have the chance to put into practice what they’ve learned in the classes. I agree with the staff as to the importance and value of the residents having good relationships with each other because it is the first step in learning people skills and anger management. These qualities can also pour over into the job and housing realm as the resident needs good people skills, relational skills, and anger management to succeed in maintaining a job and housing.

Theme: The Classes

Both the staff and residents expressed value in and the helpfulness of the classes required as part of the transitional housing program. Residents felt they learned helpful information about budgeting and goal setting in the Life Skills class, had fun in the Relationships class with interactive games, and were helped to face and deal with issues in Anger Management class. Staff felt the Bible lessons and teachings are most important and that the Relationships, Anger Management, and Life Skills classes also help in valuable ways.

Residents appreciated that the majority of the classes were heavily focused on the Bible, peace, and forgiveness. It helped many to better understand the Bible. One resident commented that it’s like going to “Hope Again University” because there is so much good content provided. As described by one resident, the classes help to “get tools needed to survive in this creepy world.”

A few of the most common suggestions about the classes from residents were:

- Reducing the number of classes each week to provide more time and flexibility for job searching
- Wanting more time of learning job-searching skills, such as how to write a resume, the proper way to fill out a job application, demeanor during an interview & proper attire
- Some classes needing to be revamped to be “age-appropriate,” such as teaching some ways they can prepare for old age

As suggested by a resident, perhaps a workshop at least once a month to focus on job-related skills would be helpful in preparing residents for success in obtaining and maintaining a job. Also, with the age of some residents being close to retirement age, the focus of what they need to learn may be very different from a younger adult seeking to begin their life in the job market. This requires individualizing the program to each resident’s needs and stage of life. Lastly, some residents commented the classes and worship are good, but they feel the number of classes is sometimes a roadblock to the time they are able to job search. Maybe one

way to assist in giving more time for job searching is to have less classes overall or to have one or two days a week where there are the majority of the classes. This would free up the other days of the week for job searching.

Just as the residents expressed, the staff also suggested having more flexibility with residents in the class schedule. One staff member's idea is maybe not needing to have the program every day but maybe just one full day. The thought behind this was when it is every day it sometimes cuts into residents' ability to go to interviews, etc. Also, flexibility is needed because many residents work during the class times. Another idea of helping give residents more time to job search and work would be a staff member's suggestion of not requiring as much adherence to so much programming. This would also help ease many residents' fear of getting kicked out of the program because they're missing programming.

The staff believes the Bible studies are of utmost importance because they provide a foundation and God's Truth that gives faith and trust in God during hard times and helps to change the residents' perception of a relationship with God. However, despite the importance of Bible-related classes, some staff struggle with what a good balance is between providing these classes or more classes like Life Skills and Anger Management. Maybe one idea the staff can do is not make the Bible-related classes mandatory. The SFVRM does this, yet half of their residents still attend. Through this, they see genuine growth in the residents because it is the resident's choice of whether to go or not.

Lastly, the staff sees value in the same classes as the residents: Life Skills, Relationships, and Anger Management. They see how these classes equip residents in maintaining stable relationships that are also important in the job setting. One staff member stated both Relationships and Anger Management go together in maintaining stable relationships and help with people skills for working well with coworkers. These skills also spill over into maintaining housing, especially skills like budgeting and boundaries learned in the Life Skills class. It is comforting to see that the residents and staff overall agree on what should be improved on and what is working well in the classes.

Theme: Case Management & Individualizing the Program

The theme concerning the quality and effectiveness of case management was common only among the resident program reviews. Also, the need for individualizing the program was expressed much more among residents than staff. Therefore, this theme will be analyzed using only the residents' responses.

Some of the positives residents expressed about their experience with the case managers were:

- Case manager was the most help, "They introduced me to the program and I was able to move forward. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for him."
- Help with resumes

- “Helped give motivation & determination to get job and help myself.”
- “Support, speak positive to you, good feedback.”
- Helped an undocumented resident get their papers so they could work
- Looked into resources for resident (jobs & wait list for housing)

Based on the positive responses above, the Hope Again case manager meetings are an encouraging time for the residents. This is great to know, as this is an important element in equipping residents for success in attaining a job and stable housing.

Knowing this, it is also good to note some things residents felt were not helpful about the case management:

- A few residents suggested there needs to be professional case managers, such as social workers. They felt the case management they received was unprofessional and not helpful.
- The case manager introduced the resident to outside sources, but the resident felt it didn’t really help much. The case manager only asked them, “Did you find a job yet? Did you get a house yet?”
- The case manager set a move out date for the resident, but there was no assistance in actually moving out.

In relation to these comments, the residents expressed the following suggestions to improve the case management element of the program. These suggestions also include the residents’ perspectives on why the program needs to be individualized.

- With the case manager, working on “goals that are attainable and measurable to make deadlines and progress.”
- “Goals are managed on a regular basis through case manager and adjusted as needed.”
- Having a timeline with “end point and vision to work towards consistently.”
- “What steps or goals need to do to get from point A to B. Need an outline: a step-by-step list of goals and program expectations because some residents are so lost.”
- “Can tweak outline or goals as grow.”

The residents desire to get a job and stable housing but just need the proper assistance to help them achieve this. By individualizing the program, residents can be more effectively prepared and equipped, as the program would be more based on their needs. I think a timeline with step-by-step goals can greatly benefit the residents. This would enable them and the case manager to track their progress and be encouraged by it. It would also give a clear outline of what is expected of them as residents and give clear framework of the case manager’s role in assisting and guiding them.

Theme: Following Rules & Expectations

The theme concerning residents needing to follow the Hope Again rules and expectations was common only among the Hope Again staff program reviews. Also to be briefly analyzed under this theme is the need for individualizing the program as expressed by some of the staff. Due to this, this section will be analyzed using only the Hope Again staff's responses.

Many of the staff expressed the need for residents to follow the rules and expectations of the program as an important element leading to the success of residents. Although, as some of the staff mentioned, residents complain about the Excused Absence forms and Curfew forms, the staff believes these are important for discipline.

Another rule many of the staff discussed was in reference to write-ups. Some staff think this element needs to be brought back, and others think it wasn't useful when they were implementing it, so that it shouldn't be implemented again. Those who think write-ups are helpful stated they thought it was good because it "gave parameters when things were stepped over." Another staff member said they "should be reinstated because we give a strong warning and threaten residents they will lose their place in the house," but there is no follow up to these warnings. As another staff member stated, they need them again because there are "no consequences for missing meetings or appointments. It holds residents to higher standards." Those who expressed write-ups shouldn't be implemented again stated that they're simply not effective.

The issue about the effectiveness of write-ups is good to note, especially because the staff has varying views on it. I think the staff will need to explore this element more together and decide whether it should be implemented again or if there is a different, more effective way to keep residents accountable for their appointments, meetings, and abiding by the rules.

The second rule discussed among many of the staff was about the 30-day check-in. For the most part, the staff felt this rule is not necessary for the current demographics of residents they have been receiving in recent years. Some felt it is most helpful and needed with residents who are addicted to drugs or alcohol, but since this is not their current demographic, the rule could use some revamping.

After analyzing the staff's responses about write-ups, the 30-day check-in, and also the Excused Absence and Curfew forms, it seems that it would be beneficial for the residents if the program was more individualized to their specific needs and struggles. Some of the rules and expectations required of residents may not be very effective if they must be applied to every resident regardless of their individual circumstances and goals. Some staff expressed the 30-day check-in would be better if it was tailored to and individualized to the person. One staff even stated that individualizing the program is currently a "real weakness in the program," and that

rather than applying the same rules to all residents, it's better to ask, "What do you need to transition?"

Individualizing the rules and expectations would also benefit the staff, especially the case managers, as it would be clearer what each resident is expected to do. The rules would help keep the resident on track in their progress and accompany the outline discussed in the previous section that gives clear steps to success in attaining a job and stable housing. The staff would also be able to better assess which rules would apply best to each resident based on their current situation in job searching, having a new job, and searching for housing.

Theme: Spiritual Growth

One of the major themes the residents and staff discussed during the program reviews was the spiritual growth element. Residents overall noticed a growth in their relationship with God and their understanding of what it means to live as a Christian. The staff overall agrees on the importance of the spiritual aspects in the program and how a resident's faith affects other areas, such as perseverance in job and housing searching.

Some of the comments from residents about their spiritual growth and what they learned were:

- Learning God would provide, don't worry
- "Ask and trust God, He will provide, He will hear."
- A resident commented they now have a "fully dedicated life to Christ"
- Learned to pray, prayer is good, an intimate relationship with God
- Through Bible study, residents know the Bible more. One resident commented they "understand the world, myself, and God better and that He has control."
- "Hope Again provided a foundation that enabled me extra time to reflect on my life, which included 37 years in Scientology. I became acquainted with or reacquainted with Christianity."

Looking at these comments, the residents have greatly benefitted and grown in their spiritual lives with God through the program. This growth will only encourage and stabilize them as they seek jobs and housing. One of the residents also had a suggestion as to how the program can help residents connect with God and each other. They mentioned that it "would be nice if there was little 'God time,' a moment to connect with Lord and others through music and prayer. We could pray for others." This resident also mentioned a byproduct of this could be an "ease of conflict in the home and connection with others instead of everyone being separate. We could get to know the people and become a family."

The residents' positive experiences in the spiritual aspect of the program match the perspectives of the staff. This is encouraging to observe because the staff

believes the resident's relationship with Christ is the most important thing. The following are the staff's comments about the spiritual aspects of the program:

- The most important thing being a resident's "knowledge of and reconnection with God"
- "It helps to have faith to get jobs and housing. They know they'll be okay."
- Residents can learn a Gospel perspective of the value of work
- A resident's spiritual life gives "stability to all else"
- "Sharing the Gospel is important"
- Important for resident to "believe and trust God to work it out. If they don't have God, they don't have this."
- With the Chaplain and Counselor, they can see the "reality of their situation, good or bad" and some residents memorize Scripture

As seen in the comments from residents and staff, the spiritual aspect of the program is well aligned between what the staff desires for residents and what the residents are experiencing. The staff desires for residents to grow in their knowledge of and relationship with God, and that is exactly what many residents are experiencing. As a continued concern of the staff, some of them mentioned that the resident getting connected to a church community is vital to their success as this ensures they have a community of support once they exit the program. Residents can grow in their relationship with Christ while at Hope Again, and continue their support network and growth with a church community after they exit.

A final key component that can foster or hinder a resident's spiritual growth is stability. Some of the staff touched on this aspect saying residents' "lives are out of control," therefore, they need a "stable environment." The staff member also stated, "When life is out of control, they need a place to stop, pause, be peaceful, plant themselves, do 'nothing' for a season, and breathe." They said Hope Again provides this for the residents.

I believe it is true the residents "can't think about their future until they can stop" and rest for a moment. This statement is proved to be true as one resident commented they were grateful to have a "place to relax," especially "compared to the struggle on the streets." Another resident recalled the importance of having a stable place to live: "It helped to stabilize my health so I could do things to get housing." This resident also said at Hope Again they "had companionship and knew someone was there" for them. I think under the element of spiritual growth it is important to foster residents' spirituality by creating an environment spiritually, emotionally, and physically stable. This will help to bring residents closer to God and see value in their search for a job and housing.

Theme: Personal Qualities Needed

Both the residents and staff highlighted some personal qualities residents need in order to succeed in attaining a job and stable housing. These qualities are

also aspects of the residents' attitude toward life. Also, their attitude towards searching for a job and housing can be either helpful or hindering to their level of perseverance.

Below are some of the key qualities residents discussed in the program reviews along with some reasons behind why they believe the quality is needed in order for someone to succeed.

- Motivation
 - “Helped me to get motivated when other residents were there, seeing them.”
 - “After you resign to the fact you’re there for a reason, you can start to work on things.”
 - “A lot of residents aren’t capable of doing it on their own. Hope Again as non-profit needs to be able to pull out this motivation and push residents. However, we’re all adults but we’re here for a reason.”
 - Residents “need an extra push if not already motivated.”
 - Residents “need their butt kicked once a week or every day, or else it becomes a trap and too comfortable.”
 - “I’m not sure how a resident can gain motivation, but they need self-determination and wanting to do better than they are currently.”

- Will
 - “People need to break out of the cycle of being in their comfort zone and want to change because they get stuck in the system of eating, sleeping, etc.”
 - “It’s up to the person to use the Hope Again program resources.”
 - “Many don’t believe in themselves and are negative. Need to bring back positivity. It’s not the staff, it’s the residents.”
 - “Determination. You have to want it for yourself, take action, the matters are in your own hands, put in the work to get it.”
 - “Mentality of wanting to succeed and work hard and have good ethics.”
 - Being “men and women of integrity”
 - Not having a “spirit of giving up or doing the minimum”

- Self-confidence
 - “I came in with fear and hadn’t worked in a long time.”
 - In the house, “I’m learning how to live with others, cooperate, do chores, take care of others, values. Doing what you’re suppose to do, such as going to classes and the meetings.”
 - “Can’t be afraid to give your all because of past experiences with jobs.”

Motivation, will, and self-confidence are the top three qualities residents believe are crucial to their success or the success of other residents. Often times, in order for these qualities to surface and grow, they also “need to feel safe spiritually and emotionally,” as stated by one resident. A few residents mentioned there should be “no making fun of residents and no passive aggressiveness with them and staff.” Part of this happens when situations in the house are not handled quickly and, as a result, the residents don’t feel comfortable. I think motivation to do better, the will to search for a job and housing, and building self-confidence would be hindered if the resident feels spiritually or emotionally unsafe among other residents or the staff.

One of the key qualities mentioned by both the staff and residents is motivation. Both believe this is a key component to success in attaining a job and stable housing because if the resident is unmotivated, they won’t move forward from their current situation. Some other personal qualities mentioned by the staff were:

- Self-confidence
- Motivated to work
- They can move on
- Resident “needs to deal with past issues in their life”
- Perseverance, “stick-to-it-tiveness”
- “Quickly resolving potential roadblocks and keep going”
- Self-discipline, “it’s a job seeking a job”
- “Following through even when don’t want to”
- Having goals
- Desire to work

Self-confidence, motivation, having goals, desiring to work, self-determination, and will are all common qualities across the staff and resident responses. Since these qualities are important to both staff and residents, it would be good to integrate these things into each resident’s outline and goals with their case manager. Perhaps an outline can help guide them to grow in these qualities and the case manager can know how to encourage and challenge them towards growth.

How the Literature Compares

The above themes and responses from the program reviews with Hope Again staff and residents contrast nicely with results from the other research studies discussed in *Chapter 2: Literature Review*. Below are some of the similarities in the themes and responses:

- Housing alternatives
- Training and employment services
- Length of time in the program

- Plan which includes walking with residents through the process of obtaining housing
- Trouble with program rules
- Not realizing or knowing the goals of the program

Relational Aspects:

- Positive relationship between the case manager & resident
- Relationship & support among residents with other residents
- Staff being supportive & helpful
- Relationship between residents and staff

It is encouraging and relieving to see many similar themes and responses from residents in prior studies. This helps to validate the responses received from Hope Again residents and staff knowing they are not an isolated group. Many other similar organizations with transitional housing programs have some of the same successful and unsuccessful elements. The results from previous studies can help frame which themes would be most beneficial to improve upon first at Hope Again.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Using the responses gathered from the 17 participants in this study can help guide Hope Again staff in the right direction of what is most beneficial to improve on first. As Hope Again does not currently have a system of evaluating their transitional housing program, this study provides a beginning step to knowing the present reality of the program from the perspectives of residents and the staff. In order to continue evaluating the program and checking progress of new implementations and improvements, Hope Again leadership will need to develop a system for periodic evaluations.

The small size of Hope Again may cause the results of this study to be different from or not applicable to larger organizations with transitional housing programs. Hope Again currently has a total of eleven staff, housing for a maximum of seven women residents plus the house manager, and a maximum of fifteen male residents plus the house manager. Also, the small number of participants in this study may not have provided all the possible feedback that a larger pool of participants would have.

During the presentation of the research findings, Hope Again leadership responded with gratefulness and deeper understanding of the current status of the program. For example, some of the research results confirmed current frustrations among the alignment of the staff and their perspectives of what defines a resident's success. Also, it sparked a discussion about the difficulties of fundraising and the limitations caused due to a lack of funding. This conversation was started after discussing residents' and staff's suggestions of hiring social workers in place of case managers and having job and housing specialists. Such things are simply not possible without more funds.

Overall, the staff person I presented the research to was encouraged and challenged. He believes this research will be able to help them implement some needed changes in the transitional housing program to more effectively prepare residents for attaining a job and stable housing. There are some challenging tasks ahead for the leadership and staff as some issues will need wrestling with and some need graceful confrontation. However, the staff seems ready to tackle needed changes with the desire of providing better services for residents.

The next steps now that the research is finished and results have been presented to Hope Again leadership are to decide what elements the staff will focus on improving first and how they will do it. According to the response during the presentation with Hope Again leadership, one area that seems needing clarification is the definition of resident success. A key aspect of success mentioned by the executive director not mentioned by staff was that of the resident having housing. Hope Again leadership saw this as confirmation that there needs to be clarification

among the staff as to what their goals are and what they're seeking to accomplish with residents.

I feel this research project has been worthwhile and I've enjoyed conducting the research on behalf of Hope Again. Throughout the research process, it was motivating to know my work was not in vain, and that it would ultimately benefit the mission of Hope Again and its residents. If I did this project all over again, I would figure out some way to gracefully end interviews that went over 45 minutes to one hour. Some interviews were an hour and a half or two hours, and one lasted three hours. I struggled to know how to end the interview without making the participant feel I wasn't hearing their concerns. I think this aspect of very long interviews was one of the biggest time-fillers in the research process that could have been lessened while still acquiring valid results.

In extending the Kingdom of God, this research project sought how to serve the marginalized better through the services provided in the transitional housing program at Hope Again. It desired to equip the staff with an evaluation of the current program so they could learn what needs to be changed, added, removed, or improved. Together we have been sharpening each other (Proverbs 27:17) and living out Ecclesiastes 4:12 NIV: "Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

Appendices

Appendix A: Program Review & Interview Questions

Previous Resident Program Review



Research Project Title: Success of Residents Exiting Hope Again Transition Homes

Research Question: How do elements in the Hope Again program affect success of residents in attaining a job and stable housing?

This study is designed to research how elements in the Hope Again transitional housing program affect success of residents in attaining a job and stable housing. The results of this study will be used for evaluating and improving elements of the Hope Again program. It can increase the effectiveness and quality of what the program offers in preparing residents for a stable job and housing. The results will mobilize the staff to take the appropriate steps in creating an action plan of what they will improve, change, remove, or add and how they will do it

Your participation in this study will give valuable knowledge and perspective into the program and how it can be changed and improved in order to better equip and prepare residents in attaining a job and stable housing.

Interview Questions:

- 1) How long has it been since you moved out of the Hope Again transition home? How long did you live there?
- 2) How many months or years have you been working where you presently are? How many months or years have you been living where you currently are?
- 3) Which element(s) of the program equipped and prepared you the most for moving out into a job and stable housing? Why?
- 4) What element(s) were missing from the program that you expected to be part of it in helping you prepare for a job and stable housing?
- 5) In your perspective, what do residents need in order to succeed in a job and

stable housing?

- 6) What elements do you perceive should be included or changed in the program that would better equip residents for success in a job and stable housing?
- 7) Are there any stories you'd like to share about how the program helped you?

Current Resident Program Review



Research Project Title: Success of Residents Exiting Hope Again Transition Homes

Research Question: How do elements in the Hope Again program affect success of residents in attaining a job and stable housing?

This study is designed to research how elements in the Hope Again transitional housing program affect success of residents in attaining a job and stable housing. The results of this study will be used for evaluating and improving elements of the Hope Again program. It can increase the effectiveness and quality of what the program offers in preparing residents for a stable job and housing. The results will mobilize the staff to take the appropriate steps in creating an action plan of what they will improve, change, remove, or add and how they will do it

Your participation in this study will give valuable knowledge and perspective into the program and how it can be changed and improved in order to better equip and prepare residents in attaining a job and stable housing.

Interview Questions:

- 1) How long have you lived in the Hope Again transition home?
- 2) Which element(s) of the program are equipping and preparing you the most for moving out into a job and stable housing? Why?
- 3) What element(s) are missing from the program that you expected to be part of it in helping you prepare for a job and stable housing?
- 4) In your perspective, what do residents need in order to succeed in a job and stable housing?
- 5) What elements do you perceive should be included or changed in the program that would better equip residents for success in a job and stable housing?
- 6) Are there any stories you'd like to share about how the program has helped you?

Hope Again Staff Program Review



Research Project Title: Success of Residents Exiting Hope Again Transition Homes

Research Question: How do elements in the Hope Again program affect success of residents in attaining a job and stable housing?

This study is designed to research how elements in the Hope Again transitional housing program affect success of residents in attaining a job and stable housing. The results of this study will be used for evaluating and improving elements of the Hope Again program. It can increase the effectiveness and quality of what the program offers in preparing residents for a stable job and housing. The results will mobilize the staff to take the appropriate steps in creating an action plan of what they will improve, change, remove, or add and how they will do it

Your participation in this study will give valuable knowledge and perspective into the program and how it can be changed and improved in order to better equip and prepare residents in attaining a job and stable housing.

Interview Questions:

- 1) What elements in the program do you think are most important in equipping residents for success in a job and stable housing once they exit? Why?
- 2) Are there any elements in the program that you think are less important or not needed? Why?
- 3) What are the indicators of whether a resident is headed toward success before they exit? After they exit?
- 4) In your perspective, what do residents need in order to succeed in a job and stable housing?
- 5) What elements do you perceive should be included or changed in the program that would better equip residents for success in a job and stable housing?
- 6) Are there any stories you'd like to share about how the program has helped a resident?

Local Organization Interview



Research Project Title: Success of Residents Exiting Hope Again Transition Homes

Research Question: How do elements in the Hope Again program affect success of residents in attaining a job and stable housing?

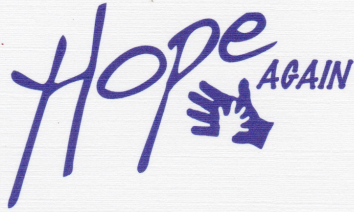
This study is designed to research how elements in the Hope Again transitional housing program affect success of residents in attaining a job and stable housing. The results of this study will be used for evaluating and improving elements of the Hope Again program. It can increase the effectiveness and quality of what the program offers in preparing residents for a stable job and housing. The results will mobilize the staff to take the appropriate steps in creating an action plan of what they will improve, change, remove, or add and how they will do it

Your participation in this study will give valuable knowledge and perspective into the program and how it can be changed and improved in order to better equip and prepare residents in attaining a job and stable housing.

Interview Questions:

- 1) How do you define “success” of residents in the area of jobs and stable housing?
- 2) What are the indicators used to measure this success before residents exit? After they exit?
- 3) What are principles in your program that should never or rarely change that prepare residents for success in a job and stable housing? Why?
- 4) Are there any elements in the program you think are less important? Why?
- 5) In your experience, what do residents need in order to succeed in a job and stable housing?
- 6) Are there any stories you’d like to share about your experience with the program or how it has helped a resident?

Appendix B: Hope Again Research Approval Letter



...to Give You a Future and a Hope. Jeremiah 29:11

April 6, 2016

Dear friend,

We want to commission Elyse Westin to conduct a research project with Hope Again. She will be researching the success of residents exiting Hope Again transition homes and what elements of the program are factors that influence the success of residents in the job and housing market. We have been involved with Elyse in the design of this project.

Elyse's research will greatly assist us as an organization in evaluating our programming and implementing any needed changes to create a more effective program. This research will positively impact both our current and future residents as we seek to equip them for success in the job and housing market.

We look forward to this research project and approve the approach and methods Elyse intends to use to acquire data.

If there should be any need to contact me, my email is rblokken@gmail.com and phone number (323) 661-4004.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ross Lokken". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning.

Ross Lokken
Executive Director

1515 WINONA BLVD, LOS ANGELES, CA 90027
PHONE 323 661 4004 • FAX 323 661 6172 • www.hopeagain.org

Appendix C: CITI Program Training Modules Completed

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM) COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS REPORT*

* NOTE: Scores on this Requirements Report reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See list below for details. See separate Transcript Report for more recent quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- **Name:** Elyse Westin (ID: 5107732)
- **Email:** ewestin14@apu.edu
- **Institution Affiliation:** Azusa Pacific University (ID: 2683)
- **Institution Unit:** AP Seminary

- **Curriculum Group:** Social & Behavioral Research - Basic
- **Course Learner Group:** Same as Curriculum Group
- **Stage:** Stage 1 - Basic Course
- **Description:** Choose this group to satisfy CITI training requirements for Investigators and staff involved primarily in Social/Behavioral Research with human subjects.

- **Report ID:** 17448421
- **Completion Date:** 09/25/2015
- **Expiration Date:** 09/24/2018
- **Minimum Passing:** 80
- **Reported Score*:** 84

REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE MODULES ONLY	DATE COMPLETED	SCORE
Belmont Report and CITI Course Introduction (ID: 1127)	09/25/15	3/3 (100%)
History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)	09/25/15	3/5 (60%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)	09/25/15	4/5 (80%)
The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)	09/25/15	5/5 (100%)
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	09/25/15	4/5 (80%)
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	09/25/15	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	09/25/15	4/5 (80%)
Unanticipated Problems and Reporting Requirements in Social and Behavioral Research (ID: 14928)	09/25/15	4/5 (80%)

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

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**COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)
COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT REPORT****

** NOTE: Scores on this Transcript Report reflect the most current quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. See list below for details. See separate Requirements Report for the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

- **Name:** Elyse Westin (ID: 5107732)
- **Email:** ewestin14@apu.edu
- **Institution Affiliation:** Azusa Pacific University (ID: 2683)
- **Institution Unit:** AP Seminary

- **Curriculum Group:** Social & Behavioral Research - Basic
- **Course Learner Group:** Same as Curriculum Group
- **Stage:** Stage 1 - Basic Course
- **Description:** Choose this group to satisfy CITI training requirements for Investigators and staff involved primarily in Social/Behavioral Research with human subjects.

- **Report ID:** 17448421
- **Report Date:** 04/06/2016
- **Current Score**:** 85

REQUIRED, ELECTIVE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL MODULES	MOST RECENT	SCORE
Students in Research (ID: 1321)	10/01/15	10/10 (100%)
History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)	09/25/15	3/5 (60%)
Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)	09/25/15	4/5 (80%)
Belmont Report and CITI Course Introduction (ID: 1127)	09/25/15	3/3 (100%)
The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)	09/25/15	5/5 (100%)
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	09/25/15	4/5 (80%)
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	09/25/15	5/5 (100%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	09/25/15	4/5 (80%)
International Research - SBE (ID: 509)	09/29/15	3/5 (60%)
Unanticipated Problems and Reporting Requirements in Social and Behavioral Research (ID: 14928)	09/25/15	4/5 (80%)

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**COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)
COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS REPORT***

* NOTE: Scores on this Requirements Report reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See list below for details. See separate Transcript Report for more recent quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- **Name:** Elyse Westin (ID: 5107732)
- **Email:** ewestin14@apu.edu
- **Institution Affiliation:** Azusa Pacific University (ID: 2683)
- **Institution Unit:** AP Seminary

- **Curriculum Group:** Student Researcher
- **Course Learner Group:** Same as Curriculum Group
- **Stage:** Stage 1 - Basic Course

- **Report ID:** 17483567
- **Completion Date:** 10/01/2015
- **Expiration Date:** 09/30/2018
- **Minimum Passing:** 80
- **Reported Score*:** 100

REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE MODULES ONLY	DATE COMPLETED	SCORE
Students in Research (ID: 1321)	10/01/15	10/10 (100%)

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Collaborative Institutional
 Training Initiative
 at the University of Miami

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)
COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT REPORT**

** NOTE: Scores on this Transcript Report reflect the most current quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. See list below for details. See separate Requirements Report for the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

- **Name:** Elyse Westin (ID: 5107732)
- **Email:** ewestin14@apu.edu
- **Institution Affiliation:** Azusa Pacific University (ID: 2683)
- **Institution Unit:** AP Seminary

- **Curriculum Group:** Student Researcher
- **Course Learner Group:** Same as Curriculum Group
- **Stage:** Stage 1 - Basic Course

- **Report ID:** 17483567
- **Report Date:** 04/07/2016
- **Current Score**:** 100

REQUIRED, ELECTIVE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL MODULES	MOST RECENT	SCORE
Students in Research (ID: 1321)	10/01/15	10/10 (100%)

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

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