

men talk

tcmc
twin cities men's center

in our 44th year
of public service

October/November 2020
Volume 44 #5

Explore Your Truth, Find Your Voice at the Twin Cities Men's Center

Coping with Uncertainty: Acting with Integrity and Praying with Zeal

— © 2020 BY DR. MICHAEL OBSATZ

When I was young, my Dad would say to me: “Man proposes and God disposes.” I did not understand what that meant. Much later, as an adult, I read David Richo’s book, *“The Five Things We Cannot Change.”* One of those five is that life does not always go according to plan. John Lennon reminded me in his music that “life is what happens while you are making other plans.”

So, what does all this mean? It means that things happen that we don’t expect. It means that we can not always prepare for the future. It means that we sometimes are going to be disappointed, sad, overwhelmed, confused and resentful.

These months of serious illness, isolation and unpredictability challenge our hearts and minds. We don’t know what is going to happen. We try to make sense of so many people ill and dying. Why now? Why there? Why here?

Some people believe that God is in charge, and this plague is serving some Divine purpose. Maybe it is a wake-up call to see the Oneness of all. Others believe that we are being punished for something we did as human beings. For still others, it is a reminder of the fragility of life.

I am reminded of the Passover story, where God sent ten plagues to the Egyptians because they enslaved the Jews and would not let them go. The worst of these plagues was the killing of the Egyptians’ first-born sons. Jews were to put blood on their tents, so the “angel of Death” would pass over their dwellings, and not kill anyone there. Hence, the name Passover.

As we try to make sense of what is happening, we can only hope that this virus will “pass over” us, so we can live and be free again.

We are told to stay home, avoid crowds of ten or more, and practice social distancing. We can do that. Some of us will, and some of us won’t.

One thing we must not do is trivialize the impact of this plague, this virus that has already affected half a million people and their families.

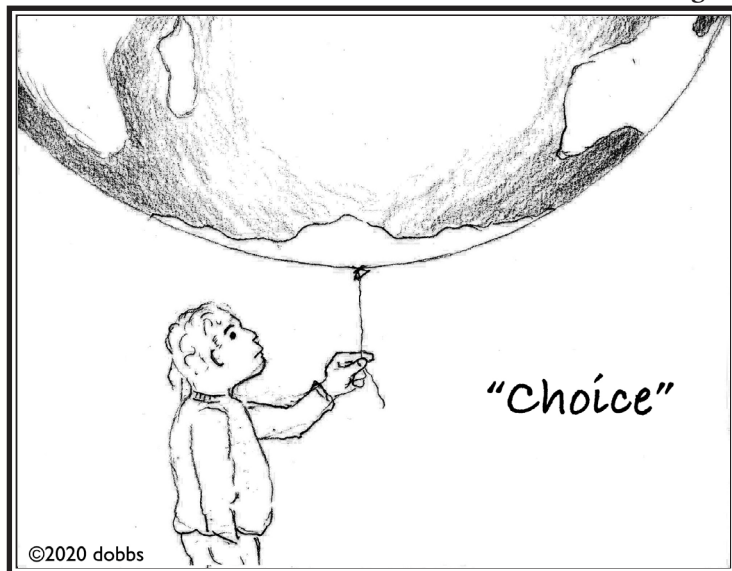
Someone told me today that Minnesota is the number one state in the nation in following the health guidelines, keeping

one’s distance, and washing hands regularly. I hope this is true. I’d like to believe that Minnesota nice means something more than passive/aggressive behavior. I hope it is about common sense, compassion for others, and willingness to work hard and sacrifice when necessary.

I am a member of Unity Minneapolis, a church that is now closed for a while. This church believes that we have a God part inside us to connect us to ourselves, others, and spirit. The church provides a “First Aid Kit” of services while being closed to the public. Ministers are available to phone visits. Weekly and other services are being live-streamed. Prayer chaplains are ready to pray for us. Silent Unity, a national prayer program, exists for prayer support. Service angels are available to shop and do errands for the susceptible elderly among us. Feeding the hungry continues as a mission.

In this time of distance, it is vital to feel connected — emotionally and spiritually. People are reaching out others. Many of us make phone calls daily to friends and family. I have received more than ten offers from friends to go to the store, or do other errands.

Continued on Page 2



Library Corner

— JEFF SPRINGER,
LIBRARIAN



I'm looking for suggestions on what I can do to organize the library and make it more user friendly. What would people like to see in the library? They can text or email me suggestions at 612-275-5861 or jeffreycotspringer@gmail.com.

The books in the Men's Center Library are sectioned off into 14 categories. These categories are: **Fathers, Children & Families, Fiction, Gay & Lesbian, Health & Therapy, Humor, Men's Movement & Masculinity, Men's Stories & Poetry, Miscellaneous, Reference, Relationships & Friendships, Sexuality, Spirituality, Valued Elders, Women.**

In addition to members having borrowing privileges from our library, we also have a reading room with free WiFi access. Stop in for a cup of coffee and catch up on your men's literature, and check out a book to go!

Address Change Notifications

from the post office cost the Men's Center \$1.71 each. Please let us know in advance of mailings!
Thanks!

Men Talk is a bi-monthly publication of the Twin Cities Men's Center. Call 612-822-5892, or e-mail us at tcmc@tcmc.org.

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Letter from the Chair

For nearly forty-four years, the Twin Cities Men's Center has been a critical community resource for Minnesotan men and their families. Despite a turbulent year, we want to extend our deepest thanks to those that stepped up in our time of need and made contributions to the organization. Your donations have helped us sustain in these unprecedented times and has assisted us in shifting our services to an online platform.

To sustain and grow the essential work happening at the Twin Cities Men's Center, we ask you to join us for our annual fundraiser by *Paying It Forward*.

Paying It Forward will help us reach even more men facing a range of behavioral, emotional, and legal needs. Your gift will go far in advancing our mission and sustaining a permanent home for programs to grow and evolve with our community in the future. Donations can be made through our website at: www.TCMC.org

In kicking off the 2020 fundraising season; I want to thank Galactic Pizza for allowing us to coordinate a fundraiser through their establishment and to the MSOP clients for their generous donation.

DAMON STARKS
TCMC BOARD CHAIR

Continued from Page 1

However this situation turns out, I want to believe that it brought out the best in our people — honesty, integrity, kindness, generosity, compassion, and love. Maybe this is the ULTIMATE message. In Brene Brown's words, we are "vulnerable, daring greatly, and rising strong."

I am grateful for those who take this virus seriously, and act out of respect for scientific experts' knowledge, self-love, healthy boundary-setting and loving concern for the common good.

When I was growing up, my mother always said, "This, too, shall pass" when times were bad. But in the meantime, she did all she could to make life work the best for all of us.

Dr. Michael Obsatz is Professor Emeritus from Macalester College where he taught education and sociology courses for 40 years. He is an author, film-maker, workshop leader, and was in the "Men's Survival Resource Guide" written in Minneapolis in the 1970's. His websites are www.angeresources.com, and www.mirrormanfilms.org

MSOP Annual 5k Fundraiser

I am reporting with overflowing gratitude and pride for TCMC. On Sept 24th, I attended the MSOP (MN Sexual Offenders Program) Annual 5k Fundraiser and wow was it a blast. Clients of the program put together this fundraiser every year to benefit a non-profit of their choice and this year TCMC was the benefiting organization. This fundraiser is a big deal for the Clients of MSOP. They created T-shirts to commemorate the event with the TCMC logo and they expressed sincere appreciation for the services TCMC offer. I was sent home with a check and cash totaling \$1471.

Thank you all for the work you do at TCMC. All of your hard work was celebrated today!!!!

— Damon Starks

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
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Oct/Nov 2020

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WEB SITE: WWW.TCMC.ORG
E-MAIL: TCMC@TCMC.ORG
PHONE: 612 / 822-5892

1976 IN OUR 44TH YEAR 2020
OF PUBLIC SERVICE

PRESENTATIONS

Note: Due to concerns about the coronavirus, the TCMC board has suspended all on-premise activities. Support groups, Anger Management classes, meetings, law clinics, and presentations, will be by video chat until further notice. Check our website, tcmc.org, for current info.

The Twin Cities Men's Center has been an important voice in the community for 44 years providing classes and support groups promoting personal growth to many men and women. Professional leaders in the community have led weekly presentations providing a wide opportunity for educational, spiritual and emotional growth for 32 years.

In recent years, attendance of the presentations by TCMC supporters has diminished to the extent that the TCMC Board of Directors has agreed to schedule them intermittently as the interest arises.

The 1st Wednesday of the month Family Law Clinic will continue by providing legal support for those experiencing legal issues.

The Board wishes to express appreciation to the supporters who attended the presentations and the many volunteer professionals who gave their time and talent to support a strong educational component of the TCMC mission.

A small fee is collected at the door for each person attending:

Non-Members of TCMC – \$5.
Regular Members (\$25 level) – \$3
Sustaining Members – FREE

All presentations, classes, and clinics meet by phone or video chat until Dec 31, 2020. Beginning 2021, we plan to resume meeting in-person at The Men's Center, 3249 Hennepin Ave. So, Suite 55, Minneapolis, MN 55408 (unless otherwise noted).

The Twin Cities Men's Center does not endorse, takes no specific position, nor holds any opinion on the presentations, or of any information imparted, or of the presenter(s) themselves. Presentations are the sole product and responsibility of the presenter(s).

Mankind Project Open Circle

Facilitators: Dave Semenchuk
and David Grocott

Where: Video Chat
When: Every Thu., 7:00-9:00 pm

Open to Men Only

ManKind Project Minnesota began in 1990 and over 800 men are in our community. We have more than 20

on-going men's groups which serve as places where men can develop their Emotional Intelligence, practice Accountability to their Commitments of Service to others, and practice Authenticity in Actions and declarations.

This Open Circle enables participants to witness other men practice clarity of self-expression from their hearts rather than their heads. Join us in our 5-round format and ask questions to learn more and even participate yourself if you choose. Our structure is based on the masculine archetypes of King, Warrior, Magician & Lover in Moore and Gillette's book.

CLINICS

Family Law Clinic

Leader: Rasheen Tillman
Where: Video Chat
When: Wed., Oct. 7, 7:00-9:00 pm

Open to all Genders

Targeted to the needs of men or women going through or anticipating divorce or dealing with other family law issues, this Clinic will give you an opportunity to discuss your own questions on such topics as:

- Divorce
- Separation
- Paternity
- Property Division
- Custody
- Spousal Maintenance
- Child Support
- Financial Settlements
- Co-habitation

Attorneys will volunteer their time and expertise for the benefit of those who attend.

Family Law Clinic

Leader: Steve Yasgur
Where: Video Chat
When: Wed., Nov. 4, 7:00-9:00 pm

Open to all Genders

Targeted to the needs of men or women going through or anticipating divorce or dealing with other family law issues, this Clinic will give you an opportunity to discuss your own questions on such topics as:

- Divorce
- Separation
- Paternity
- Property Division
- Custody
- Spousal Maintenance
- Child Support
- Financial Settlements
- Co-habitation

Attorneys will volunteer their time and expertise for the benefit of those who attend.

CLASSES

Anger Management

Facilitator: various
Where: Video Chat
When: See calendar for dates

Open to Men Only, Registration Required

Have you been told that your verbal and emotional expression of anger is out of control? Have you lost your job or spouse because you "blew up" one too many times? Have you been hit with a court order to take an Anger Management Class? Learn how to manage your feelings with the Twin Cities Anger Management Program. This is one of the best, and most affordable, programs in the area. It's ideal for men who desire to significantly improve their relationships at home and at work.

The focus of the twelve week anger management class is both education and support. Through class interaction, experiential exercises, lecture, and homework assignments, men will develop new ways to manage their feelings of anger. Following completion of the class, participants can join an ongoing support group to reinforce their new skills. These ongoing support groups will also be facilitated by the trained volunteer facilitators.

Classes are filled on a first come, first served basis. Currently, there are classes on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays.

Please call TCMC at 612-822-5892 to be placed on the waiting list. State name, address, telephone, preferred starting class. Or if you need further details, call our Anger Management coordinator, John Hesch, at 612-229-3102.

SUPPORT GROUPS

"The mission of the Men's Center Support Groups is to create a safe place, in times of personal and social challenge, for any men and women to receive and give support to one another and share feelings and experiences to facilitate SELF-ACCEPTANCE and PERSONAL GROWTH."

The Men's Center support groups are hosted by a trained facilitator. Although each group has a specific focus, all groups are Open to general discussions and attended as a Drop-In basis. Support groups begin promptly at 7:30, so arrive early such that you can browse the many resources and library materials. A donation of \$3-9 helps keep TCMC operational. Liquid refreshments are available at a separate donation rate. All groups are men only, except where listed for all genders.

• **Location:** Video Chat - request a link a using "Contact a Group Facilitator" at <<https://www.tcmc.org/programs-support-groups-twin-cities-mens-center.html>>

General Men's Issues/ Divorce/Uncoupling

Open to Men Only

Men express feelings about separation, divorce, breaking up with a lover, and topics such as child custody/legal hassles. Men can express what it means to be a man in our culture and other issues in their lives.

Location: Video Chat

- Mondays 12:30 - 2:30 pm
- Thursdays 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Gay Issues

Open to Men Only

Men express feelings about life's challenges and experiences, and what it means to be gay and male (you don't have to be gay to attend.) This is the Twin Cities longest running gay support group.

Location: Video Chat

- Tuesdays 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Addiction Busters

Open to all Genders

Struggling with chemical or behavioral addiction? AA not helping you? Frustrated with twelve-step programs? Don't like feeling powerless?

Want to bust your addiction rather than being busted FOR your addiction? Would you like to talk about Rational Recovery, SMART Recovery, the works of Stanton Peele, Ann Fletcher, James Prochaska and others in a supportive, confidential, comfortable atmosphere? Come to Addiction Busters support group and discuss alternative, cognitive approaches that may help you battle your addiction in new and different ways!

Location: Video Chat

- Wednesdays 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Choosing Healthy Sexual Boundaries

Open to Men Only

Do you have concerns about your sexual behavior? Are you receiving negative feedback about your sexual choices? Worried about excessive, compulsive or obsessive sexual activities? Too much pornography in your life? Too many strip clubs? Ever feel like a sex addict? Feeling uncomfortable about inappropriate fantasies/thoughts/urges? Hurting or disappointing someone you love?

This group is a confidential, non-confrontational and non-judgmental place to talk with other men about healthy sexual boundaries.

If you are currently participating in or have completed a sex offender treatment program you are welcome. If you have never been involved with the legal system you are also welcome. Facilitated by: Tommy Jones, Thomas Koepke, Sean Kratz, Bobby Schauerhamer and Gary Weldon.

Location: Video Chat

- Wednesdays 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Sexual Trauma & Abuse Survivors

Open to all Genders

Co-facilitators: Jerry Buchmeier, PhD (Therapeutic Counseling) & Kathleen McDowell, MA (Human Development)

Many adults have been sexually abused in childhood or adolescence, or have experienced sexual trauma as adults. Whether you have clear memories or vague recollections, perhaps you experience feelings of shame, self-hate, guilt, fear, anger, grief, or embarrassment. Sharing your story and feelings with others can release these feelings, while creating and renewing patterns of comfortable, healthy,

and rewarding interactions with people of both sexes. This support group provides a safe environment to share your experiences and learn about how others are coping with these issues. Join us in developing healthier attitudes and behaviors that transform us from survivors into living life to the fullest. Questions, call Jerry, 763-546-4133.

Location: Video Chat

- Thursdays 7:30 - 9:30 pm

The Sexually Evolving Man

Open to Men and Transgender Men

If sexuality is at the root of our existence and "change" is the only continuous thing in life. Why would our sexuality, how we identify ourselves, desires, and experiences be any different? This group is for men who are evolving sexually and question how the evolving intersect with their day to day life.

Location: Video Chat

- Fridays 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Men Facing Retirement Issues

Open to Men Only

A support group for men thinking about retirement or who have already retired. It is an opportunity to share feelings with other men about the importance of work and what happens when paid employment is no longer part of a man's life.

CANCELLED

Removing the Guard Rails: Medicine through Relationships

TCMC Race & Class Session: Saturday, November 7, 2020

10:00am-1:30pm, Zoom Video

Since 1976, men have been discovering the Twin Cities Men's Center to find emotional support from other men — in all of life's transformation situations: discovering who I am and what I want; experiencing the end of a marriage or a relationship breakup; exploring sexuality; learning about father-son relationships; facing retirement; re-entering society after a time-out in prison; managing expression of anger, etc. The Twin Cities Men's Center has been creating trusting, life-giving, creativity, co-learning spaces and places for over 44 years.

Now through the Twin Cities Men's Center "Securing Our Future Taskforce" (SoFT) comes a Courageous Conversations and Relationship building series for participants to discuss race and class in their lives that combines discussion and action.

This series of 3 Race and Class discussions will be ongoing group conversations to eliminate racism and tackle class divisions by establishing an ongoing learning process and thus creating a willingness to learn about, begin, and undoing the adverse impact of race and class on men, organizations, and communities. The First Class will be on Nov 7th, two others to follow.

Please sign for this first pilot conversation by contact the Twin Cities Men's Center at tcmc@tcmc.org or 612-822-5892

Last of the season **OUTDOOR Monthly Men's Sunday Brunch**, drop-in anytime 10am-1pm (bring something to share/cook up): **October 18th OUTDOORS at Tom Borden's**, 3933 41st Ave S, Minneapolis 55406 651-792-5040 (east of Minnehaha Blvd) co-hosted by Rick Gravrok. **November 15** - Very dicey weather outdoors, so we will probably not have brunches until next Spring. The **OUTDOOR** brunches have proved to be very popular: 16 men attended Frank's outdoor August brunch and 15 attended Andy's outdoor September brunch. – Andy Mickel, 2020-09-22.

"Thank you to TCMC for facilitating the AM sessions. I sincerely appreciate TCMC." – Edward Nyasani, 2020-07-31.

"I really appreciated my first meeting last night! This group was extremely beneficial and greatly appreciated TCMC offers a video service." – First time Support Group Attendee, 2020-08-03.

"Keep up the good work. Your efforts and support is definitely appreciated." – Jerry Daniels, 2020-08-15.

"Wishing you and your organization safety and continued wonderful service to our community." – Jon Horick, 2020-08-18.

"I hope the Men's Center can continue to serve men and the community." Thanks, – Michael Gardos Reid, 2020-09-08.

As a **non-profit social organization for gay men**, **GAMMA** produces a

bi-monthly events newsletter publicizing potluck gatherings and other social events. These include Happy Hours, Cocktail Hours, Bridge games, etc. FFI: **GAMMA**, c/o Jerry Swenson, 8315 Duluth St, Golden Valley 55427. – Jerry Swenson, 2020-08-01.

"I am a Veteran, served as an army medic 1970-72. I'm totally committed to the work of **Veteran Resilience Project (VRP)**, fighting to make EMDR trauma therapy available to Minnesota veterans. This is a significant effort to end veteran suicide, homelessness, and the impact of military sexual assault, and I ALWAYS INVITE DONATIONS TO THE PROJECT AT www.resiliencemn.org. In that vein, I am doing the National American Legion Commander's 100 MILE WALK FOR HOPE. His suggestion is at least a mile a day, adding up to 100 by November 11. I walk every day anyway, so chose to include four 20-22 mile walks, representative of the number of veterans who each day choose to take their own lives. My first 5 miles actually became an August 15 strenuous hike at Afton State Park, sponsored by Veterans Voices, www.mnhum.org/veterans-voices/ My story on the Legion site is www.legiontown.org/node/6697, sent in before I had dates below:

On October 14 on the 11 a.m. live show at the Mpls Children's Hospital TV channel I started after serving as an army medic. It is at www.childrensmnstarstudio.org/our-history/. From there to the 3 p.m. Save Our VA from privatization vigil, at the North Lot of the Park and Ride Lots, on the edge of the Highway 62 Crosstown Bridge. The VA is far from perfect, but I fear,

only slightly "tongue in cheek", that privatization might exclude veterans for pre-existing conditions like PTSD. The National Save Our VA Campaign is not only working to end severe understaffing at the VA, but also to improve VA services where needed. This walk is also in support of the **BRANDON ACT**, introduced at the Federal level in the House and Senate to demand absolute confidentiality in all veteran mental health care. Privacy is inherent in the work of VRP, but its lack in military circles is a major deterrent to veterans reaching out for help. From the VA Vigil I walk on to Mississippi National Park Recreation Area, as one of my goals is to finish walking all the National Parks before I hit 100 years old.

Nov 4, down Como Ave to the Como Park Labyrinth for a 2 p.m. meditational walk on **POST ELECTION BEST FOR THE COUNTRY**. From there on to the Como Park Golf Course, in honor of my friends, the Como Boys, led by persistent Veteran, Tim Daulton. November in Minnesota is too cold for golf, even as Covid cancelled the Como Boys annual golf fundraiser for Veteran Resilience Project. Still, they are working toward some other Hole in One funding effort for VRP. From the golf course I'll head toward Larpenteur and Highway 61 where my 61st birthday 61 Mile Hike began. That hike, pre VRP, called for less war, and an end to obfuscated mental health care for veterans.

If you think you might join in some way, check in first, as things can change. larryjvfp@gmail.com – Larry Johnson, 2020-09-05.

Have You Overcome Adversity? Would You Like to Earn \$20?

Jane Gilgun, Professor, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities is looking for men to interview for research on success stories, stories of men who have coped with and overcome adversities. She pays \$20 per interview. She typically does three interviews because she want men to tell me their life stories, and this can take time. The first interview is for men to learn about the research. They will receive \$20 for that interview whether or not they choose to be part of the research. If interested, men can text or leave a voice message at 612-237-6126.

All are welcome.

Twin Cities Men's Center ALL-PURPOSE FORM

Men's Center members are entitled to: participate in our annual & monthly Board meetings, receive *Men Talk*, use the reference library, and enjoy reduced fees to Men's Center-sponsored events such as Weds. presentations.

- I want to sustain the activities of The Men's Center by becoming a "20 x 12 Honor Roll Member."
- Please ENTER/RENEW my membership at The Men's Center for the next 12 months:
Enclosed please find \$_____ \$25 (Regular) \$50 (Patron).
- I want to make an additional, tax-deductible gift of \$_____. (*Thanks much!*)
- My new|correct address|phone is printed below.
- Please remove me from The Twin Cities Men's Center mailing list; this also cancels *Men Talk* deliveries.
- I have these feelings, thoughts, opinions, ideas, news items for The Twin Cities Men's Center / *Men Talk*

DATE: _____

FROM Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work/Cell Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

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Family Law Clinic

Every 1st Wednesday of the month, the Men's Center is proud to present the Family Law Clinic. Targeted to the needs of men or women going through or anticipating divorce or dealing with other family law issues, this Clinic will give you an opportunity to discuss your own questions on such topics as:

- Divorce
- Paternity
- Custody
- Child Support
- Co-habitation
- Separation
- Property Division
- Spousal Maintenance
- Financial Settlements
- Your personal issue

Attorneys will volunteer their time and expertise for the benefit of those who attend. A nominal fee of \$5 is charged for the public. Members of the Men's Center receive a courtesy discount.

Where: The Men's Center, 3249 Hennepin Ave S #55, Minneapolis MN 55408

**When: Every 1st Wednesday from 7:00 to 9:00 PM
Just come! No advance registration required!**



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(612) 822-5892
tcmc@tcmc.org

TCMC Office Hours: Monday through Friday 12:00pm–4:00pm (unless otherwise posted on our online calendar). Our telephone (612) 822-5892 is answered 24-hours per day by voicemail, and an attempt is made to return calls within 1 or 2 days. Our FAX number is (612) 821-6424.

TCMC is in the lower level of "Uptown Office Park," a brick office building on the Northeast corner of West 33rd Street and Hennepin Avenue in south Minneapolis. Enter through the door on the north (3249) end of the building (it has 2 numbers: 3249 and 3255!), immediately turn left and descend the stairway through the fire door to Suite 55. (Formerly) handicapped access is easiest through a side door on West 33rd Street.

Check out our web site: www.tcmc.org or correspond at our e-mail address: tcmc@tcmc.org

The Twin Cities Men's Center
3249 Hennepin Avenue South, Suite 55
Minneapolis, MN 55408 USA

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twin cities men's center news

men talk

Anger Management Program

Have you been told that your verbal and emotional expression of anger is out of control? Have you lost your job or spouse because you "blew up" one too many times? Have you been hit with a court order to take an Anger Management Class? Learn how to manage your feelings with the Twin Cities Anger Management Program. This is one of the best, and most affordable, programs in the area. It's ideal for men who desire to significantly improve their relationships at home and at work.

The focus of the twelve week anger management class is both education and support. Through class interaction, experiential exercises, lecture, and homework assignments, men will develop new ways to manage their feelings of anger. Following completion of the class, participants can join an ongoing support group to reinforce their new skills. These ongoing support groups will also be facilitated by the trained volunteer facilitators.

Length of Class: 12 consecutive weeks

Number of Participants: Limited to 12 men per class

Cost: \$265 for TCMC Members (\$275 for Non-Members)

Starting Dates: Classes are filled on a first come, first served basis. Currently, there are classes on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays.

Please call TCMC at 612-822-5892 to be placed on the waiting list. State name, address, telephone, preferred starting class. Or if you need further details, call our Anger Management coordinator, John Hesch, on the Anger Management phone 612-229-3102.

24 Years of Successful Classes

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