



MEN TALK

THE MEN'S CENTER NEWS

April 2004/May 2004 VOL. 28 #2

Perpetual Avoidance: The Curse of Living Without a Life

— BY JOHN H. DRIGGS, LICSW

Recently a college student wrote a letter to an advice columnist in a local newspaper:

Dear Advisor: I started college a month ago, and I haven't made any friends. I have a roommate, but she has friends from her old school and doesn't seem to want to make new friends. All of the people on my floor seem to have their own groups already, and I don't think I can fit in with them. I think this is a problem for me, because I am very shy, and people see me differently because of it. I just can't seem to get over my shyness, and it is affecting my whole life.

I need some advice on how to make some new friends, because I don't think I can go through school without them. —Friendless—

Surely this student is wise in recognizing her problem with shyness and asking for help. Hopefully she is merely going through a normal problem of adjusting to college life, one that can be eased by patience and perseverance in socializing. In response, the advice columnist encouraged her to find a new peer group, perhaps a school activities group, where she doesn't have to be the focus and can meet new friends after she continues to just show up time after time. He suggested that having friends is often just a matter of repeatedly showing up and having others get familiar with you and what you offer in relationships. Otherwise, he says, if she remains friendless, she may need to seek some counseling for her shyness.

Indeed, what if her shyness is more severe than a simple adjustment problem? She may have had these problems before, may habitually misread how other people see her, and she may feel so inadequate that all the attention in the world from others may not assuage her loneliness or improve her confidence. She may have a problem--as many of us do--with perpetual avoidance. Such a difficulty may appear minor and go unrecognized but in fact it is a major life issue and deserves attention. Living without participating in life is a real curse.

Perpetual avoidance--where a person avoids socializing to the detriment of embracing comforting human relationships--is a serious personal problem that is on the rise partly because of increasing depersonalization in our culture and disturbing social trends that leave more people to fend for themselves, often with fewer interpersonal skills. People become depressed, develop severe anxiety disorders, and fail to blossom in life when they are persistently shy. Oddly enough, in this age of global technology and telecommunication, personal and social isolation is an increasing problem for many of us and it often goes unrecognized and untreated.

When is avoidance healthy and when is it a problem?

Avoidance is healthy when the needs for doing it far outweigh the costs of not doing it. There are times in our lives when it is advisable to remove ourselves from stressful circumstances and avoid facing overwhelming issues. Many of us may not need to view yet another retake of the two jumbo jets crashing into the World Trade Center and watching it collapse again. We're already so attuned to the horrors of September 11, 2001 and

need no more reminders, despite how the media may see it otherwise. However, there are times when avoidance starts interfering with the happiness of our lives. When we persistently put off necessary tasks or life challenges that would substantially benefit our lives, when we're continuously dishonest with our mates for fear of losing them, or when we ourselves continue to put our heads in the sand in an "out of sight, out of mind" mentality, then avoidance is likely a big problem. It is particularly a problem when we avoid knowing ourselves--when we don't grasp why we act the way we do, fail to tolerate unpleasant emotions within ourselves, and are intolerant to others. Addictive behaviors, obligatory optimism, and self-righteousness are all forms of problematic avoidance.

Why men are prone to avoidance

Men who were raised with the warning--"Big boys don't cry"--are unlikely to share their vulnerabilities in adulthood. Also males may lack many of the neuro-biological, evolutionary-based verbal and social skills that come so easily to women and men may feel more inadequate in social situations. Too many males may be trained to adopt a lone-wolf mentality and avoid socializing unless they are connected to a woman. The reality is that men have the same needs and can develop the same skills that women have in socializing.

Signals of problematic avoidance

Ask yourself the following questions to evaluate your difficulties in this area:

- How willing are you to share your inadequacies with friends?
- How difficult is it for you to express disagreement or conflict with others?
- How often do you call on friends for support?
- Are you likely to initiate friendly conversations with strangers in social situations?
- How open are you to unpleasant emotions inside yourself?
- How many people know the real you?
- How worried are you of rejection or criticism by others?
- How much of your life revolves around escaping--watching TV, web-surfing, etc.?
- How often have you felt that life is passing you by?

Continued on page 2

Library Corner

—RANDY GENRICH,
LIBRARIAN



Using the library is a membership privilege. To check out a book, all you have to do is write your name, phone number, and the date on a checkout card and leave it in the box. Or just come in and browse – you will be surprised at how stimulating it can be to expose yourself to the books in our collection. So come on in and take a look.

We also have many periodicals available for your use, such as:

- Men's Health
- Voice Male
- Lavender
- Men's Journal
- Transitions
- Rainbow Families
- Bi All Means
- Wellness Journal
- The Edge
- and Everyman.

The Jan-Mar 2004 issue focus is on Pornography including powerful excerpts from significant books

Enjoy your library!

Address change notifications from the post office cost the Men's Center \$1.14 each. Please let us know in advance of mailings! Thanks!

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

Editor

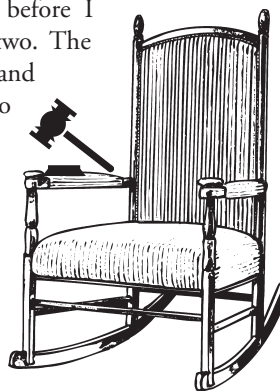
Bill Dobbs

Board of Directors

Bob Eng, Chair
Bill Dobbs, Vice-Chair
Norm Petrik, Secretary
Gerry Obremski, Treasurer
Andy Mickel
Len Zimney
Open seat
Open seat

Letter from the Chair

Hey there. Just a quick word on the Men's Center before I share a thought or two. The last board meeting was long and productive. We continue to work on plans to accomplish our annual goals and if we're clever and committed things will happen. Of course the call for volunteers will be coming. Board members are periodically reminded of the nature of group work and how important it is that participants treat each other well. It's the nature of the beast and we are aware that this is an ongoing job. As always, feed-back to board members on Center matters is encouraged.



Now I'll shift gears.

"How are you doing?" Answer, "I'm so busy." or "I'm stressin." Others I hear most often are about being tired and unsettled in some way. To save time I'd suggest that we now just answer with, "I'm so b.u.s.t.ed (busy, unsettled, stressed, tired)." Working

with low-income families who've caught the county's attention allows me to mingle with very b.u.s.t.ed people and yet often there's a strength in the home that's stunning. Sure, there are many dads who are 'not in the picture' anymore and what's left of extended family is feeling tapped out big time. But if I ask the question to them I might hear something like, "I'm blessed." Psychological testing used to be my first thought after hearing this but not any more. What's the opposite answer to b.u.s.t.ed anyway? Could it be something as sappy sounding as, "I feel loved." or some more manly reply like, "I feel strong because I know good people who care." Think about it the next time you ask the question to a close friend or family member. What will you hope they'll be able to say and what can you do to help?

BOB ENG
BOARD CHAIR

Avoidance continued from page 1

Disturbing social trends

In his reputable research study, *Bowling Alone* (Simon and Schuster, 2000), Harvard Professor Robert D. Putnam found that in the last 30 years American culture has become increasingly disengaged on personal, social and civic levels. People vote less, are less active in community organizations, are less financially generous and volunteer less, involve themselves less frequently in neighborly interactions, are less involved in civic and community action groups, attend church less often and volunteer less often for Sunday school teaching, and they eat dinner less often as a family or entertain friends at the family home less often than they did several decades ago. Bowling leagues, family vacations, company toy drives, bridge groups, and the Rotary Club are on the endangered species list. People seem to pursue private happiness and family interests at the expense of social interconnectedness and civic-mindedness. Too many of us mistakenly believe we can live happily on our own private islands apart from our neighbors and believe what we don't see, won't hurt us.

Why are we avoiding?

Some research has also shown that we avoid socializing because of excessive escapism (TV watching, computer surfing, etc.), leading pressured lives in dual-career families, joining suburban sprawl with less local community identification, having the torch passed from aging, civic-minded generation of elders to less involved youth, and the dampening of community spirit at the workplace due to financial stress and workplace disunity. At the end of a hectic day, many of us just want to curl up at home and avoid our neighbors. I also think we avoid because we are scared of ourselves and we get habituated to patterns of avoidance. Some of us are rather unsure of our own likableness and would just rather pack it in than take risks being close to people, only reinforcing our inadequacies.

Guidelines for facing life

When it comes to socializing, balance is best. Sometimes we need time alone; sometimes we need to force ourselves to be around caring people as we will feel better later. It's wise to see ourselves like other people rather than being eternally unique. All of us need the cuddling of a support group – like a good men's group – prior to making giant leaps in life. Read *Shyness* by Bernardo J. Carducci (Perennial Books, 1999). Life is too short to not fully face it.

John H. Driggs LICSW is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in private practice in St. Paul and co-author of "Intimacy Between Men." (Penguin Books, 1990) . He can be reached at (651) 699-4573.



MEN'S CENTER EVENTS

The mission of the Men's Center is to provide resources for men seeking to grow in body, mind, and spirit; and from that foundation to advocate for healthier family and community relationships.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Apr04 / May04						
	SUPPORT GROUPS General Issues.12:30p.m. 20's GLBT 7:30p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Gay. Issues.in.Mpls... Divorce/Uncoupling/ General Issues in St. Paul 7:30 p.m.	PRESENTATION Circle of Warriors 7-9 p.m. Re-Entry 7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Div/Uncpl/General; ... Male Surv. Sex Abuse. Emotional Abuse 7:30 p.m. Lecture Series 7:00 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUP Men's Bisexual issues.7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUP Safe Sex.10:00a.m.
4	5	6	7	1	2	3
EASTER	BOARD MTG. 7 p.m. ... SUPPORT GROUPS General Issues.12:30p.m. 20's GLBT 7:30p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Gay. Issues.in.Mpls... Divorce/Uncoupling/ General Issues in St. Paul 7:30 p.m.	PRESENTATION Body Chakras 7-9 p.m. Re-Entry 7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Div/Uncpl/General; ... Male Surv. Sex Abuse. Emotional Abuse 7:30 p.m. Lecture Series 7:00 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUP Men's Bisexual issues.7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUP Safe Sex.10:00a.m. ... PRIDE OPEN HOUSE 10:30a.m.
11	12	13	14	8	9	10
BRUNCH 10:00 a.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS General Issues.12:30p.m. 20's GLBT 7:30p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Gay. Issues.in.Mpls... Divorce/Uncoupling/ General Issues in St. Paul 7:30 p.m.	PRESENTATION Natural Step Tai Chi 7-9 p.m. Re-Entry 7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Div/Uncpl/General; ... Male Surv. Sex Abuse. Emotional Abuse 7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUP Men's Bisexual issues.7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUP Safe Sex.10:00a.m.
18	19	20	21	15	16	17
MEN'S RETIREMENT 5:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS General Issues.12:30p.m. 20's GLBT 7:30p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Gay. Issues.in.Mpls... Divorce/Uncoupling/ General Issues in St. Paul 7:30 p.m.	PRESENTATION Shamanism Today 7-9 p.m. Re-Entry 7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Div/Uncpl/General; ... Male Surv. Sex Abuse. Emotional Abuse 7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUP Men's Bisexual issues.7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUP Safe Sex.10:00a.m. ...
25	26	27	28	22	23	24
	SUPPORT GROUPS General Issues.12:30p.m. 20's GLBT 7:30p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Gay. Issues.in.Mpls... Divorce/Uncoupling/ General Issues in St. Paul 7:30 p.m.	PRESENTATION Everything ... About Exercise 7-9 p.m. Re-Entry 7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Div/Uncpl/General; ... Male Surv. Sex Abuse. Emotional Abuse 7:30 p.m.	MT.ARTICLE DEADLINE SUPPORT GROUP Men's Bisexual issues.7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUP Safe Sex.10:00a.m. ...
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
MOTHER'S DAY	BOARD MTG. 7 p.m. ... SUPPORT GROUPS General Issues.12:30p.m. 20's GLBT 7:30p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Gay. Issues.in.Mpls... Divorce/Uncoupling/ General Issues in St. Paul 7:30 p.m.	PRESENTATION Circle of Warriors 7-9 p.m. Re-Entry 7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Div/Uncpl/General; ... Male Surv. Sex Abuse. Emotional Abuse 7:30 p.m.	MT.FINAL DEADLINE... SUPPORT GROUP Men's Bisexual issues.7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUP Safe Sex.10:00a.m. ...
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
BRUNCH 10:00 a.m. MEN'S RETIREMENT 5:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS General Issues.12:30p.m. 20's GLBT 7:30p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Gay. Issues.in.Mpls... Divorce/Uncoupling/ General Issues in St. Paul 7:30 p.m.	PRESENTATION Issues of Divorce and Custody 7-9 p.m. Re-Entry 7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Div/Uncpl/General; ... Male Surv. Sex Abuse. Emotional Abuse 7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUP Men's Bisexual issues.7:30 p.m.	MAILING PARTY 9:00 a.m. SUPPORT GROUP Safe Sex.10:00a.m. ...
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	SUPPORT GROUPS General Issues.12:30p.m. 20's GLBT 7:30p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Gay. Issues.in.Mpls... Divorce/Uncoupling/ General Issues in St. Paul 7:30 p.m.	PRESENTATION Non Violent Communication 7-9 p.m. Re-Entry 7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUPS Div/Uncpl/General; ... Male Surv. Sex Abuse. Emotional Abuse 7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUP Men's Bisexual issues.7:30 p.m.	SUPPORT GROUP Safe Sex.10:00a.m. ...
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY	1976 - In Our 28th Year of Public Service - 2004 Check out our web site: www.tcmc.org email: tcmc@tcmc.org				
30	31	The Men's Center number is 612 / 822-5892 . Call us about Anger Management classes.				

PRESENTATIONS

Workshops and presentations have been a part of The Men's Center offerings to the community since it's beginning 28 years ago.

We welcome your suggestions for new topics and presenters.

Presenters new to the Men's Center are: **Andrew Magill, George Roehrdanz, and Colin Snow.** Returning to continue their support of the Men's Center are: **Timothy Cope, Clarence Jones, Melanie Hanson, Scott Lewis, Andy Mickel, and Andy Miller.**

The Men's Center Board appreciates the volunteer presenters who return from time to time and welcome first timers. Their presentations add a new dimension to our weekly Wednesday night gatherings.

All presentations meet at TMC, 3249 Hennepin Ave. So, Suite 55, unless otherwise noted. These low cost presentations are shown in the Calendar of Events and a more extensive description follows. No pre-registration is needed; entrance fees collected at the door are:

Non-Members of TMC – \$5.

Regular Members (\$20 level) – \$3

Sustaining Members – FREE

Please take time to read the descriptions and plan to attend if they stimulate your interest. Bring a friend to share the experience and acquaint him/her with the Men's Center.

Each presentation is intended to promote personal growth, stimulate your interest in a topic, and to give you an opportunity to interact with other attendees.

Note: All events are for men only unless otherwise stated.

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

DESCRIPTIONS

A Circle of Warriors

Presenters: Andy Mickel & Andy Miller
When: Wed. April 7, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

The ManKind Project is an organization of men working together to improve their lives and help other men. As New Warriors "We are an order of men called to reclaim the sacred masculine provides a model for men to generate and maintain a world in such a way as to include and yet rise above one's own issues for the betterment of one's self, one's own family, tribe, nation and race.

We are all familiar with a man's physical tools (a hammer, a sword, a plow,...) Is this enough? What about integrity, commitment, action and clarity?

I know that most men want and need these tools. The New Warrior Training Adventure can help. Join a circle of warriors to ask questions and hear how the adventure has changed men's lives.

The initiation of men is the hope of the world. - Don Jones, former chairman, ManKind Project.

Body Chakras - Their Developmental Significance

Presenter: Melanie Hanson
When: Wed. April 14, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Open to Men and Women

Melanie will present an overview of the chakra's locations, functions, and developmental significance. This will be an experiential session. There will be visualization to access the chakras to experience the unique mental states and tools for living that they provide. We also consider how the lower chakras might be healed of past negative conditioning. All levels of experience are welcome.

Melanie Hanson has followed a Yogi path for the last 20 years. She practices in Minneapolis, specializing in energy work.

Natural Step Tai Chi

Presenters: Colin Snow
When: Wed. April 21, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Open To Men and Women

Natural Step Tai Chi for health is accessible to anyone regardless of age or ability. The exercises and postures are designed to nourish the mind, body and spirit and are based upon ancient chinese systems of well being. When we play Tai Chi we create a better environment for ourselves and move towards a more harmonious way of being.

Colin Snow, born in London, U.K ,re-located to Mpls in July 2003. An elementary and special needs teacher, but primarily a Tai Chi and Qigong instructor. Colin studied, practiced and trained with the Principal Instructor (Richard Farmer) of Rising Dragon Tai Chi School based in S. Wales. www.risingdragontaichi.com

Since arriving in Minneapolis Colin has established Natural Step Tai Chi and Qigong classes for health and healing. He continues his development in this field under the guidance of Master Chunyi Lin.

For more information please contact Colin at 612 377 6469 or naturalsteptc@earthlink.net

Shamanism Today

Presenter: Timothy Cope
When: Wed. April 28, 7:00-9:00pm

Open to Men and Women

Shamanism is the oldest spiritual tradition known to humanity, yet it remains a vital and viable path today. This presentation will describe the essential nature of shamanism and consider its contemporary manifestations and applications. Come and learn about this often misunderstood spiritual tradition.

Timothy Cope has been exploring the shamanic path for over eighteen years. He is a certified shamanic counselor and maintains a healing practice in Minneapolis.

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Exercise

Presenters: Andrew Magill
When: Wed. May 5, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Open To Men and Women

Regular physical activity is an essential component for physical and emotional health.

In this presentation, you will learn how much and what type of exercise makes sense for you. You will also learn how to integrate exercise into your daily life and stay committed. We will discuss how to decide where to exercise: at a gym, at home, or outdoors. Inexpensive equipment you can use for working out at home or while traveling will be demonstrated. Most importantly, you will learn how to make exercise fun.

Much has changed since high school gym class, bring your questions!

Andrew Magill is a certified personal trainer who specializes in making fitness accessible to all, including seniors, people with disabilities and people who are new to exercise. He runs a personal training business and works at the YWCA of Minneapolis. He particularly enjoys outdoor fitness activities.

A Circle of Warriors

Presenters: Andy Mickel & Andy Miller
When: Wed. May 12, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

The ManKind Project is an organization of men working together to improve their lives and help other men. As New Warriors "We are an order of men called to reclaim the sacred masculine provides a model for men to generate and maintain a world in such a way as to include and yet rise above one's own issues for the betterment of one's self, one's own family, tribe, nation and race.

We are all familiar with a man's physical tools (a hammer, a sword, a plow,...) Is this enough? What about integrity, commitment, action and clarity? I know that most men want and need these tools. The New Warrior Training Adventure can help. Join a circle of warriors to ask questions and hear how the

adventure has changed men's lives.

The initiation of men is the hope of the world. - Don Jones, former chairman, ManKind Project.

Issues of Divorce and Custody

Presenter: George Roehrdanz

When: Wed. May 19, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Mr. Koehrdanz will address you about his personal issues and share his experiences and observations of the divorce and custody process based on his professional and personal involvement. His focus will be on men caught up in the process and steps they can make over the short term and the long term.

George M. Roehrdanz (retired) after forty-three years in the private practice of law. His law practice included a number of divorce and custody matters including his own personal divorce and custody resolution as to four children which extended over a period of ten years.

Non Violent Communication

Presenter: Scott Lewis

When: Wed. May 26, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Open To Men and Women

In a time when we are dealing with shocking violence in our schools, our families and our world, Nonviolent Communication (NVC) offers a radically different approach for connection, cooperation and peace. This interactive and innovative presentation will introduce you to NVC, based on the work of Marshall Rosenberg. NVC has been described as a language of compassion, a tool for positive social change and a spiritual practice. It is built on the premise that all human actions are based on needs that we all are seeking to meet. Connecting with these needs creates a shared basis for effective communication. You will learn ways of communicating without judgment, blame or criticism, creating compassionate connections with family, friends, and others.

Scott Lewis and Michael Merchant are Life Coaches who inspires men and women to step into their brilliance. Through weekly phone calls and email, clients reach goals faster and spark exciting opportunities. Their clients include those wishing to deepen authentic connections through Nonviolent Communication. Scott also supports adults with Attention Deficit Disorder. For a free coaching session call Scott at 651.493.8323 or Michael at 952.953.0440.

What about Men's Health?

Presenter: Clarence Jones

When: Wed. June 2, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Description will be in next issue.

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 TMC operational. Liquid refreshments are available at a separate donation rate. All groups are men only, except where listed for women and men.

- **Minneapolis Location**
3249 Hennepin Ave. S. Suite 55
- **St. Paul Location**
Memorial Lutheran Church
NE Corner Maryland Ave. & Earl St.
(not a mailing address.)

Men's and Women's Issues

General Mixed-Gender Issues

Open to Men and Women

Participants can express what it means to be male or female, and hear constructive feedback in a safe, mixed-gender environment.

- Canceled until further notice

Emotional/Psychological Abuse

Open to Men and Women

This group is for people who are or have been in abusive relationships that interfere with health living.

- Thursday (Mpls) 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Twenty-Something GLBT

Open to Men and Women

A discussion/support/social group for Twentysomething GLBT persons. Any GLBT in her/his 20s is welcome to attend. GLBT topics and issues are discussed in an open, affirming and supportive environment. Ideas for discussion topics or social events are welcome!

- Mondays (Mpls) 7:30 - 9:30 pm

General Men's Issues/Relationship Issues

Divorce/Uncoupling/Family of Origin/Workplace

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.

- Mondays (Mpls) 12:30 - 2:30 pm
- Tuesdays (St. Paul) 7:30 - 9:30 pm
- Thursdays (Mpls) 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Gay Issues

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.)

- Tuesdays (Mpls) 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Re-Entry

This group is intended to focus on the difficulties persons face when leaving a prison environment and reentering the community, where a former prisoner can go for emotional support when he returns to the community, and where he can be openly honest about his discouragements, frustrations, temptations, and fear of public attitudes.

- Wednesdays (Mpls) 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse

You may feel alone. It is a brave step to seek out other men who can share from this perspective the deep feelings of shame. Only by talking it out can freedom evolve from this secret prison.

- Thursday (Mpls) 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Bisexual Men

This group will allow Bi men to explore personal issues of all kinds while learning from each other what it means to be a Bi man.

- Fridays (Mpls) 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Safe Sexual Practices

This group is intended for men who are committed to gaining and remaining in sexually healthy behavior. Especially for men who have been given feedback from others that their sexual behavior has been less than acceptable

- Saturdays (Mpls) 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Men Facing Retirement Issues

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.

- 3rd Sundays (Mpls) 5:30 - 7:00 pm

New GLBT Schedule

The GLBT 20-Something group schedule has changed. Beginning immediately there will no longer be a Saturday or Tuesday meeting. The new meeting time is Monday, 7:30- 9:30 p.m. at The Men's Center. Paul Barnes is the facilitator.

Please tell and bring your friends.

Men's/Women's Group Cancelled

The Monday evening Men/Women support group has been cancelled until further notice (due to lack of attendance).

Here and There

— Edited by Andy Mickel

Upcoming **Monthly Men's Sunday Brunches** (bring something to share/cook up): **Sunday, April 18th** at Daniel Braun's, Daniel Heist's & Pierre Failletaz's: 3409 Portland Ave S, Minneapolis 612-822-3402. **Sunday, May 16th** at Rick Gravrok's, 2925 Monterey Ave S, St. Louis Park, 952-926-6655. (on the west side of Lake Calhoun, off Lake St.) These brunches are **open to all men from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m.**; plan to come and chat and eat for a 1/2-hour to 2-hour period anytime – inevitably some men stay until 2 p.m. 17 men attended February's brunch at Jeff Haas's; more 20 men attended Andy Mickel's brunch in March. - Andy Mickel, 2004-03-16.

D.A.D.s is a new Twin Cities **monthly newspaper produced for fathers** and supporting them. D.A.D.s, P.O. Box 880, Hudson, WI 54016 FFI: <info@dad.s.com> - Don Cherling, 2004-02-01.

Just Between Men Brunch, 1st & 3rd Saturdays of every month at 11 a.m., Pillsbury House, 3501 Chicago Ave. S., Minneapolis. Sponsored by: Just Between Men FFI: Call Sean Dyer at 824-0708 x117, *GLBT Press Newspaper*, <<http://www.glbtpress.com>>, 2003-09-15.

The next **Mankind Project Minnesota New Warrior Training Adventure** will be held April 23-25th at Eagle Lake Camp near Brainerd, MN. The cost is \$595. Open Circle of Warriors at the Men's Center on Wed., April 7, 7-9 p.m. *Contact Andy Mickel 612-279-6416 or see: <<http://minnesota.mkp.org>> for Open House dates/times and with any questions.* Register with Marc Salzl, 15215 Court Rd, Minnetonka, MN 55345, 952-933-0541, <msalzl@mn.rr.com> - Andy Mickel, 2004-03-16.

Minnesota's 2004 Child Abuse Prevention Conference is featuring a Plenary Session by Victor Vieth: "*Unto the Third Generation: A Call to End Child Abuse Within 120 Years*" Conference: \$100, Tuesday, April 13, 8 a.m.-5p.m. at U of Minnesota Continuing Education and Conference Center: St. Paul. FFI: Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota, 1821 University Ave, Suite 202-S, St. Paul, MN 55104, 651-523-0099 or 1-800-CHILDREN

PRIDE Festival 2004 Update

THANKS AGAIN! For last year's successful weekend due to many Men's Center members and friends assisting in the fun and excitement! Last year's After Festival Survey will be applied to the 2004 event held on June 26th and 27th. We will contact last year's booth attendants and we want new participants to share this year's event. Our ears are listening for a CO-coordinator recommendation from YOU people. This year, my schedule will not require me to be in Wisconsin and in Minneapolis on the same weekend as Pride Festival. With that alone, I'm looking for more fun this year! NEWS from Faribault, MN from our (SUPERTRUCK) Operators: A NEW music sound system has been installed on the Men's Center Parade Unit. We are looking forward to having MUSIC BACK in our Sunday Parade! Rich and Mike have spent much time, money and effort to bring to us our (SUPERTRUCK) so, when you see them PLEASE Thank Them for the visibility they have given to the Men's Center!

— JERRY OLSON

<<http://www.pcamn.org>>.

Everyman—A Men's Journal, #63, Jan-Mar 2004 features 11 articles on Men and Pornography including: excerpt from the book, *The Other Side* by Ferrel Christensen. Plus a 4-page interview "Men Working with Mother with Char Tosi, who conducts "Mother's Pillow" workshops for men.

- David Shackleton, 2004-02-10.

Linda Mark's new book: *Healing the War Between the Genders: The Power of the Soul-Centered Relationship* (HeartPower Press, 2004) is about the cultural heart wound that shows up as the male heart wound and female heart wound in both men and women...and that as our society seeks to evolve emotionally and spiritually we are being asked to look at gender, relationships and ourselves through a deeper lens—the soul-centered lens. - Linda Marks 2004-01-28.

Bill Brunton is leading a basic **Workshop** entitled **The Way of the Shaman**, Sat-Sun, May 1-2, 10am-6pm at Earle Brown Heritage Center, Brooklyn Center, \$225 FFI: Rattle and Drum Journeys, P.O. Box 80792, Minneapolis, MN 55408 612-721-5566.

Penn State University's College of Medicine, College of Health and Human Development and the Men's Health Network (MHN) are co-sponsoring the **first in a series of National Men's Health Conferences, May 20-22, 2004 in Arlington Virginia**. The conference will benefit physicians, nurses, psychologists, counselors, public health professionals and others that work with men in a variety of clinical settings in that the conference will present research findings dealing with these gender-specific issues. - Christopher P. Dufour, D.Ed., Penn State Univ., 814/863-5100, <cpd1@outreach.psu.edu> - 2003-08-29

Visit our web site, <<http://www.tcmc.org>> for all kinds of Men's Resources for Twin Cities men! - Andy Mickel. - 2004-01-17.

MEN AND WOMEN IN RELATIONSHIP CLASS

THERE IS STILL TIME TO REGISTER FOR THE NEXT 6 WEEK CLASS BEGINNING APRIL 19AT 6:30 P.M.. THE FIRST 3 CLASSES ARE AT THE MEN'S CENTER, MEN ONLY, THE LAST 3 CLASSES ENDING MAY 10-24, WILL BE AT CHRYSALIS. TALK TO YOUR FEMALE PARTNER AND REGISTER BY CALLING CHRYSALIS AT 612 871-0118. THE CHARGE IS \$10 PER PERSON PER CLASS, BUT NO ONE IS TURNED AWAY FOR LACK OF FUNDS. GIVE IT A TRY TO IMPROVE YOUR RELATIONSHIP.

NORM PETRIK
PROGRAM COMMITTEE CHAIR

Retirement Group

The monthly April support group will be on the 4th Sunday April 25th at 5:30 p.m., instead of the usual 3rd Sunday. In May however we will meet the 3rd Sunday, May 16th. The group is for men who are dealing with the major life transition, ie Retirement. Please come.

NORM PETRIK
PROGRAM COMMITTEE CHAIR

A PRIDE Festival 2004 Open House

has been scheduled for Saturday, April 17th from 10:30am--11:30am at the Men's Center Auditorium. It's Open to ALL Men's Center Member's and friends of the Men's Center. Bring a light food, snack or drink to share. This will be a time to reflect on this year's event. For more information or to volunteer to help with this fun filled event, contact: Burnsville Jerry at (952) 892-0191 or email otrio123@cs.com

20 x 12 Honor Roll

This is a new type of membership that is designed to acknowledge and make it easier for those members who have consistently supported us. Here's how:

- Join by paying \$20 a month (or \$240 at once)
- On the Honor Roll, you no longer need to donate money at meetings
- You are recognized on a Men's Center plaque

Call 612 / 822-5892 today!

The Men's Center ALL-PURPOSE FORM

Clip this form and mail to The Men's Center. A regular annual membership at The Twin Cities Men's Center is \$20. With that you get access to the extensive reference library on Men's Issues, receive the Men Talk newsletter, participation in the annual meeting, and enjoy reduced fees to Men's Center sponsored events. If you are able to afford a membership at the Patron (\$40) level, you get free admission to all Wednesday workshops in addition to all the regular membership benefits.

- 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 \$_____ \$20 (Regular) \$40 (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 Men's Center mailing list; the pre-addressed gummed mailing label is attached.
- I have these feelings, thoughts, opinions, ideas, news items for The Men's Center:

Date _____

FROM: name _____
 Mailing address _____

 Home phone _____
 Work/other telephone _____

Safe Sexual Practices Group

A new group is forming, meeting on Saturdays 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., intended for men who are committed to gaining and remaining in sexually healthy behavior. Some men encounter situations in their lives when they are given feedback from others that their sexual behavior has been less than acceptable. This group will focus on participants remaining safe in their sexual practices and supporting one another in reducing risks of engaging in any additional harmful behavior.

Like all of the support groups at the Men's Center, this is not a therapy group, and it is not intended as an arena for advice giving. The co-facilitators are volunteer members of the Men's Center who have received training from the Center in group facilitation.

A Men's Center Lecture Series on Human Depression

PRESENTED BY DR. JIM DUFFY

A ten-week lecture series on depression will continue each Thursday, from 7 to 9 p.m., until April 15. "Depression" refers to a blue mood or a major clinical depression or anything in between. Some say the word "depression" therefore includes too much, and we should speak of "depressions" in the plural. These two-hour lectures (one lecture per week for ten weeks) present many ideas on depressions as a plurality of human experiences. You can attend any or all lectures. Each lecture has a Q&A period.

Suggested donation is \$5 for each lecture to be paid at the door. Nobody is turned away who cannot pay at the Men's Center. These lectures are not psychotherapy nor workshops on how to overcome depression. They are a low-cost community-education resource open to men and women.

The presenter is Dr. Jim Duffy, humanist educator and frequent presenter at the Men's Center.

THIS SPACE AVAILABLE FOR YOUR AD

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- Full Page 7 1/2" x 10" \$200
- 1/2 Page 7 1/2" x 4 7/8" \$125
- 1/4 Page 3 5/8" x 4 7/8" \$65
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TMC Office Hours: M, Tu, Th, F ;1-4:30pm. Our telephone (612) 822-5892 is answered 24-hours per day by US West voicemail, and an attempt is made to return calls within 1 or 2 days. Our FAX number is (612) 821-6424.

TMC 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 email address: tcmc@tcmc.org

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

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MEN TALK

The Men's Center News

4

The Talk I Would Have Had With Dad

— DANIEL FARRIS BRAUN

We do what we do because of what we know
A knowing in the mind & one of the heart
And of the two the heart is the more powerful
These are the memories I have:
I remember... of shortly after I am born,
Crawling around, climbing about, looking up,
From way down here... how big you are
You are picking me up and holding me high
I remember... the apartment, the kitchen, the floor,
The legs of the table, and the kitchen door,
One window that looks out beyond the parking lot,
And fields of green grass, to where you go;
What is this thing called "work"?
Are you driving that old brown Ford sedan?
I remember... you and the neighbor offering us cigars
After you found out that we had been smoking
Under the huge old tree trunk across the street,
How sick I get, how I swear I'll never smoke, again
I remember... wanting my allowance and you asking
If I wanted to watch an operation, scrub up, put on a gown
You operate for what seems like hours... trying to save
A hand caught by a homemade snow blower
How calm, deliberate you are; sick to my stomach I am
So afraid I will faint, I leave the operating room, again

The man loses only two fingers; how proud I am
Here's the doctors dressing room, the stool for Doc B
I remember... it's the summer of my freshman year
I come to you and say, "Dad, I've been invited to Iran
To visit the family of some friends that I made at school."
I remember... up in my bedroom, you are crying
I am holding you, my big big father, in my arms
It's the first time I have ever seen tears in your...
You... you are afraid I might not come back.
I am holding you
I remember... we are stopping, for a house call
(in days when doctors still make house calls)
You turn and say, "I have to charge prices like this."
The high insurance and things like that...
It was as though we were having a discussion
You were feeling guilty, charging so much
Yet, you let that old woman Frances-in-the-wheelchair
Pay with baking bread and rolls for us, for so many years
You are opening up to me for another moment,
As though, I am a part of your conscience

Mom says that you are a deep man
I guess your depth does not come out in words
Now, I know better the value of the depth
That arises in actions—Solid

Over the years, self-absorbed, I have been

Unable to see the special character in you
You may have been more ready than I know
More willing to open to me your private, special world
But, you nor I could take the initiative
Oh, from having seen from where you came,
I have my ideas why you could not
One was surely not rewarded for self-expression...
In that family, in those times, one had to be proper,
God-fearing, hard-working, without weakness
It's all about being vulnerable, I suspect
What a burden to carry... just to be a man.

Oh, Dad! I just... I wish I could go back
To that baby's body, with greater maturity,
Understanding how you loved me in spite of your silence
How you loved us... of course, all of us
If you only new how the few moments of openness
Between us stand out like beacons in experience!

Dad, we are parts of each others conscience;
And for us, you are the center; you are the hub;
You are the rock; you are the one who carries us;
You are the one who picks us up and holds us high
All with hardly saying a word
What a burden to carry, not being able to say a word
I <love> you, too.

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