



# MEN TALK

THE MEN'S CENTER NEWS

April / May 2008 VOL. 32 #2

## *Not Running On Empty*

— © 2008 BY JOE SZURSZEWSKI

It's an all-too-common scene. One spouse surprises the other with the news that he or she wants a divorce. The effect is devastating, and the surprised spouse can't understand what's happening or why. Statistically speaking, the spouse getting the shattering news is much more likely to be the husband. The utter shock and crushing pain guys feel upon hearing the news is evident in the words they use to describe their emotions: "It felt like a lightning strike", "I was blindsided" and "It was like getting shot down by a Messerschmitt out of the sun – I didn't even know there was a problem until the cockpit was on fire and I was bleeding." If you're a man in this situation, what can you do? Is your life over? Are you doomed to an existence of misery, regret and self-loathing? If you remember only three words from this article, make sure it's these three: It gets better. If you don't believe me, that's fine. I didn't believe it either. Just keep it as a possibility at the back of your mind.

My own story goes like this. In the space of 3 weeks, I was diagnosed with and had surgery for cancer; I was diagnosed with a separate disorder that forced me to radically change my diet for the rest of my life; and my wife of 18 years, whom I loved dearly, told me while I was still recovering from surgery that she no longer loved me, she was moving in with another man, and she wanted a divorce. If anyone could feel just justified in thinking his world had just imploded, it had to be me. It wasn't just that I felt my life was over - I knew with complete and absolute certainty that I couldn't survive the excruciating despair I felt. I reacted angrily to friends and family who told me that I would eventually get over it. If I "got over" it, that somehow cheapened my pain and meant my marriage didn't match the romantic "I would die without you" ideal of love so prevalent in our culture. Or so I thought.

As the months dragged by, I stayed home a lot and cried. I felt sorry for myself and wondered what the next tragedy was going to be. Would I get hit by a bus? Or

lose my eyesight and not be able to continue working as a photographer? Maybe my cancer would recur and put me out of my misery. Occasionally, however, I caught myself laughing or enjoying some simple pleasure. I tried to tell myself this wasn't appropriate for someone in my situation, but I couldn't stamp out all the random enjoyment in life. And fortunately so — isn't happiness, whatever its origins, just as valid an emotion as the vast emptiness I felt? Yet at the time, it just felt wrong.

Slowly – so slowly I didn't realize it – I began taking small steps back to health. I found a divorce support group at the Men's Center and discovered I was far from alone. I saw a therapist who helped me realize that I could either drive myself crazy trying to change what I could not change, or I could work on adapting to my new circumstances. And I did a lot of thinking. I thought about my part in the end of my marriage. I thought about the unfairness of what had happened. And I thought about my future. Eventually, I reached an astonishing conclusion: I was getting over it. No

*Not Running on Empty continued on pg 2*



**Library Corner**

– *RAY CLARE, LIBRARIAN*



We are pleased to offer our members a unique and extensive collection of quality reading on men's topics.

As a Men's Center member, you are eligible to check out books from our library. The next issue of Men's talk will list the recently donated books – watch for it! And while you are enjoying our many book resources, consider a browsing our large and growing selection of periodicals.

- Men's Health
- Lavender
- Transitions
- Men's Journal
- Voice Male
- Fathering Today

**Recently Added to the Library:**

*Recovering from Boyhood Sexual Abuse*, a documentary CD by Ethan Delavan, donated by Dr. Mic Hunter, an educational TV talk show about the GLBT community produced by Kim Pride, and *Love! Valor! Compassion!* Tandem Video. The above are available for check-out in the Men's Center Office.

**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. Call 612-822-5892, or e-mail us at [tcmc@tcmc.org](mailto:tcmc@tcmc.org)  
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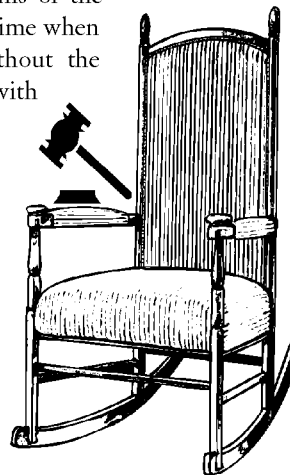
**Greetings from the Chair**

Spring is a time of great awakenings and renewal in nature. It has many wonderful things to offer in terms of the burgeoning of plant life and a time when we can feel free to travel without the barriers and risks associated with winter.

So why is it that I find myself more erratic in my mood every spring. This paradox is possibly in less need of analysis than it is in acceptance and understanding.

That gives me pause to appreciate the availability of the Men's Center as a consistent source of support for nearly a hundred men that attend one of our support groups on a weekly basis. There is nothing more important in adversity than finding a place with

consistency. I believe that the Men's Center continues to function after over thirty years as a reflection of the needs of men to have a safe, supportive environment. I am proud to serve in this important organization.



I am reminded of the many stories that I have heard of men bravely surviving adversity and sharing their stories with others. I am commonly reminded of strength in their own survival abilities, but also the strength in healing and support in sharing. I am grateful for the availability of the Twin Cities Men Center for those who seek out support.

**BOBBY SCHAUERHAMER,  
BOARD CHAIR**

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one was more surprised than I. It was slow, painful, and often felt like 99 steps backward for 100 steps forward, but it was getting better. Somehow, despite myself, I was getting better. I felt like a pilot who runs out of fuel at 40,000 feet, only to discover he has a reserve tank he didn't even know existed. I firmly believe that everybody has such an emotional reserve tank, a kind of natural instinct for emotional health that kicks in when it's needed the most.

*Joe Szurszewski is a new board member and I facilitate the Thursday evening divorcel/uncoupling/general issues support group. Also, he sometimes hosts the Wed. Family Law Clinic.*

**Pride Volunteers Needed**

Anyone wishing to help out with the Men's Center PRIDE booth at Loring Park or the Men's Center float in the parade on June 28 and 29, 2008, call John Ruud at **651-808-0291**

– Joun Ruud, TCMC Pride Coordinator

**Men's Retirement Group Schedule Change**

The Men's Retirement Group will meet Sunday April 13th at 5:30pm, the 2nd Sunday, instead of the usual 3rd Sunday meeting. We will meet as usual in May on the 3rd Sunday at 5:30 pm, May 18th. This group is for men who are thinking about or have retired and want an opportunity to discuss their feelings about this major life change. Welcome if this sounds like it might help you.

– Norm Petrik, Group facilitator







## Here and There

– Edited by Andy Mickel

Upcoming Monthly Men's Sunday Brunches (bring something to share/cook up): April 20th at Andy Mickel's, 106 SE Arthur Ave, Minneapolis, 55414, 612-331-8396. (in Prospect Park off University Ave near I-94 and 280). May 18th at Rick Gravrok's, 2925 Monterey Ave S, St. Louis Park, 55416 952-926-6655. (on the west side of Lake Calhoun, off Lake St.). 10 men attended both the February brunch at Eric Mann's. - Andy Mickel, 2008-03-01.

Robert Bly was named the state of Minnesota's first poet laureate on February 27, 2008 by governor Tim Pawlenty. FFI: <<http://www.robertbly.com>> <<http://www.minnesotahumanities.org/Special/poet.htm>> - Steve Karnowski, 2008-02-27.

The next ManKind Project-Minnesota New Warrior Training Adventure will be held April 25-27, 2008 at Eagle Lake Camp near Brainerd, MN. The cost is \$650, with many payment plans and a robust scholarship fund available. To register, contact Taylor Burr, 651-274-1212. To learn more, attend an Open Circle event: Observe, Ask Questions (or Participate if you like) in a safe container with a group of men who are practicing authenticity and connection to feeling at Open Circle of Warriors events at the

Men's Center every 2nd Wednesday, 7-9 p.m. Contact Andy Mickel with any questions 612-279-6416 or see: <<http://minnesota.mkp.org/>> for Open I-Group dates/times. - Andy Mickel, 2008-03-02.

The film "Journeyman" a documentary about rites of passage, mentoring, and male culture in America by Charlie Borden and Kevin Obsatz premiered in November, 2007 in Minneapolis and continues to draw very strong interest and pack movie houses in select screenings across the United States. See: <<http://www.mirrormanfilms.org/>> for further information or to order a DVD copy online. - Charlie Borden, 2008-02-15.

"Prevention Works: Igniting Change for Families" is the theme of Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota's annual conference April 23-24 at the U of Minnesota St. Paul Campus. Conference tracks are • child abuse and culture • parent leadership • institutes for healthcare professionals • self-care for parents and professionals • research to support our work. Keynote address from Judge William Thorne, Jr, "Using Diversity as Best Practice, not Political Correctness". Workshop with U of Minnesota Professor Priscilla Day, "Cultural Strengths in Raising Healthy Children" and Institute with Prevention Consultant

Cordelia Anderson, "Countering Normalization of Sexual Harm". \$185 before April 1, \$205 before April 18 deadline. FFI: <<http://www.pcamn.org>>, 1-800-621-6322. - 2008-03-03.

Annual Newsletter of the Tracking Project "bringing the pieces together again" Upgraded web site<<http://www.thetrackingproject.org/>>, Thanksgiving Address: Greeting to the Natural World, Hawaii Arts of Life, 2007, Nurturing the Roots (NTR) Cottonwood School, 2004-2007, Arts of Life, Projeto Pegadas Brasil 2007, NTR Mentor Outreach 2006-2007 Circulo dos Saberes II, Hawkeye, Training, Dreamtracking & Tracking in the Southwest 2008, Schedule of Classes & Gatherings, 2008. FFI: The Tracking Project, Box 266 Corrales, NM 87048 505-898-6967 <[thetrackingproject@earthlink.net](mailto:thetrackingproject@earthlink.net)> - John Stokes, 2009-02-01.

Men and Women Who Work With Men (MWWWM) meets informally to network every 1st Friday morning at Maria's Cafe, 1113 E. Franklin Ave., in Minneapolis 55404. Randy Genrich, 2007-11-12.

Be sure to stay in touch with Men's Center workshops, classes, support groups and other events at: <<http://www.tcmc.org/>> - Andy Mickel, 2008-02-02.

## Addiction Busters for Veterans cancelled

Unfortunately, due to low attendance, the Addiction Busters for Veterans support group has been cancelled. However, interested vets are welcome to attend the popular Tuesday evening Addiction Busters group. We'd like to see you there!

TOMMY JONES, SUPPORT GROUP FACILITATOR

**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.  
(You won't receive Men Talk if this box is checked.)

I have these feelings, thoughts, opinions, ideas, news items for The Men's Center:

Date \_\_\_\_\_ FROM: name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Work/other telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**Anger Management Program**

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:** \$215 for Men Center Members  
(\$225 for Non-Members)

**Starting Dates:**  
Classes are filled on a first come, first served basis. Please call TMC 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.

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[www.wuollet.com](http://www.wuollet.com)  
[www.breadsmith.com](http://www.breadsmith.com)




**UPTOWN AREA SPACE TO RENT**  
**The Men's Center, 3249 Hennepin Ave S**  
Space Rental Rate Schedule:

	Non-Profit	Profit event
Full Day (8 hrs)	\$50	\$100
Half Day (4 hrs)	\$25	\$50
Hourly	\$7.50	\$15

**(612) 822-5892**

**YOUR AD HERE!**  
**MEN TALK ADVERTISING RATE SCHEDULE**

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
Biz Card	2" x 3 1/2"	\$25

E-mail the editor at [tcmc@tcmc.org](mailto:tcmc@tcmc.org)

**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](http://www.tcmc.org) or correspond at our e-mail address: [tcmc@tcmc.org](mailto:tcmc@tcmc.org)*

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**MEN TALK**

**The Men's Center News**

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# Family Law Clinic

## NEW

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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