

men talk

tcmc
twin cities men's center

in our 45th year
of public service

Feb./Mar. 2021
Volume 45 #1

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

Monks Don't Mind Monastic Life — Why Do We?

— © 2020 BY DR. MIKE OBSATZ

These days, I have been thinking a lot about monks and nuns. I've been to monasteries and cloisters at different times in my life. I have participated in monastic and silent retreats where you eat, pray, and meditate much of the day. I spent 27 years connected to a spiritual retreat center called Clare's Well in Annandale, Minnesota. The Franciscan Sisters, Carol and Aggie, did go out — but they also grew their own food, fed their animals, milked their goats and provided sparsely decorated hermitages for people who wanted more alone time.

Today, as we are forced to socially isolate, it may seem like a major hardship. However, it has been and is a way of life for many spiritual people through the world.

Cloistered Monks and nuns typically don't:

- Go to sporting events, sit in bleachers and eat hot dogs.
- Have pedicures, manicures and massages in offices and stores.
- Go to rock concerts.
- Go to the gym and work out.
- Eat out in restaurants or buy take-out food.
- Socialize in large gatherings.
- Go to cocktail parties.
- Go to large shopping malls and buy a lot of stuff they don't really need.
- Browse the internet and text their friends all day.

But we have not taken the vows that monks and nuns have taken. So, we have become used to the freedom to go and do whatever we feel like doing. We are spontaneous and rely on our distractions, sensual pleasures and social interactions. As we let go of some of this freedom, we hunker down at home. We go for walks in our neighborhoods and forests. We simplify, and turn inward.

It can be like being in a major Minnesota winter blizzard where there is no way to leave our homes. But this blizzard seems like it is going to last a while. Snowbound and homebound.

Stay home. Maintain social distancing. Don't participate in larger events. The gyms, restaurants, salons, bars and many stores are all closed for a while. The hardships are many for those whose income depended upon customers showing up and paying. This is for the purpose of keeping us safe and healthy. This is a crucial time to start living more of monastic and cloistered life.

However, we can livestream church services. We have an infinite number of in-home distractions — television, internet, music, telephone.

Maybe there is a blessing in isolating ourselves for a while. Maybe we can become less reliant upon distractions and turn more inward. Maybe this is a spiritual opportunity.

It is a challenging time. It is hard on many people. Those who treat the ill are courageous and knowledgeable. We are grateful for them, and those who were feeding the hungry, and helping the poor and homeless.

Continued on Page 2

**It Only Takes
a Moment for
a Lifetime
to go By.**

**Be the
Change.**



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

As I write this, I am listening to the inaugural poet honoring POTUS 46 and a hopeful rebooting of our Nation. 22 year old Amanda G. invites us "*The new dawn blooms as we free it. For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it.*"

Being the light of peace and serenity of our true nature as peaceful beings, I sense is a goal for the men of TCMC. Breathing into the energy of our Wicozani, in one word, a commitment I made for the year 2021, in D/Lakota is about modeling balanced health, for ourselves and for those we serve. @ TCMC in body, voice, mind and spirit. Transitions!

Twenty Men attended our annual meeting Jan 9th, and elected Benjamin Alfaro as our newest board member. Gratitude for the lack of drama as the torch of our chair leadership was handed over peacefully. Damon Starks, chair for the past three years, stepped back, & on Jan 11, the board elected me to serve chair for at least one year. Ben Alfaro stepped up to be secretary.

Damon's visionary leadership encouraged us to migrate online, were we continue to connect during the COVID pandemic. With the death of our brother George Floyd in May, we created a

pilot program that looks at issues of race and class affecting our culture. With 3 zoom sessions of 4 hours each, on Saturdays, these topics were confronted in "*Removing the Guard Rails: Healing through Relationships*" outlines and breakout sessions. Alternate Board member Malik Holt-Shabazz led the sessions, attended by up to 14 men from Nov. through Jan 16: mostly local men, & two outstate men from Iowa and the Yukon in Canada.

In 2021 we envision creating more safe intentional spaces and partnerships, where "*all men are welcome*" virtually. Thanks to the generosity of our members and donors, effective home based Zoom Room and conference calls; TCMC continues to be led by our mission of service. Visionary work by our Securing of Future Task Force, led by past Chair Joe S., is pooling from our 44 years experience here in Minnesota, to continue a vibrant presence of service in an expanded service area. More will be revealed. Please consider attending our next board meeting Feb. 8.

In service,

TOM WEAVER
TCMC BOARD CHAIR

Continued from Page 1

People have lost their freedom, their incomes, their health and their opportunities to hug and connect physically.

Let us deepen ourselves and grow in love and a desire to serve others. We can meditate, pray for others, be kind, and be grateful for all the gifts and blessings we have been given.

Maybe out of this can come more kindness, empathy and compassion.

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. This article was written in 2020 a couple months after the COVID-19 pandemic began. It's still relevant in 2021.

EVENTS CALENDAR

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
CALL US ABOUT ANGER MANAGEMENT CLASSES.		SUPPORT GROUP GAY ISSUES 7:30 PM ----- CLASS ANGER MANAGEMENT 7PM	SUPPORT GROUPS HEALTHY SEXUAL BOUNDARIES 5:30 PM ADDICT. BUSTERS 7:30P	SUPPORT GROUPS DIVORCE/GENERAL MEN 7:30 PM SEX ABUSE SURVIVORS 7:30 PM	SUPPORT GROUP SEXUALLY EVOLVING MAN 7:30 PM	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12
	14	15	16	17	18	19
	21	22	23	24	25	26
	28	1	2	3	4	5
	7	8	9	10	11	12
	14	15	16	17	18	19
	21	22	23	24	25	26
	28	29	30	31	FEB/MAR 2021	

PRESENTATIONS

Note: Due to concerns about the coronavirus, the TCMC board had 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 45 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 33 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 further notice. Sometime in 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).

CLINICS

Family Law Clinic

Leader: Rasheen Tillman
Where: Video Chat
When: Wed., Feb. 3, 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: Rebecca Randen and Heather Chakirov

Where: Video Chat

When: Wed., Mar. 3, 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

- 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

The Perspectives Exchange Laboratory (PX Lab)

We believe in the value of your experiences and insight. Our purpose is to provide a venue where individual perspectives are shared through bold conversations. We aim to build a place to be heard and to learn from listening that's centered on a foundation of courage, authenticity, respect, and engagement.

Look for more details about The PX Lab in future editions of Men Talk!

Fundraising & Contributions Help Needed

Attention TCMC members and supporters, the TCMC Fundraising and Contributions Committee can use your help. If you have an interest or experience in Fundraising and are willing to volunteer some of your time; please contact us at tcmc@tcmc.org

Give a Gift
of Men's Center Membership
ONLY \$25



OUTDOOR Monthly Men's Sunday Brunches to resume in April or May 2021.

– Andy Mickel, 2021-01-18.

From our US Mail:

"...I truly admire the TC men's community. As men we struggle, fail, get sad, get mad, and get screwed over by gender politics. You understand and offer an ear for men and women. Keep doing your great work helping men of all types. Yet also spend time to care for yourself—stay positive. A humble, heartfelt thank you! Much respect."
– Jeremy S. 2020-09-23.

"Hello TCMC! Thank you for everything you do. Anytime you need my assistance, please feel free to reach out to me. Thank you!"
– Allan Dahl, 2020-11-15.

"Great job with men!"
– John Driggs, 2020-12-29

"Keep up your good work!"
– Lowell Johnson, 2020-12-29

"Here are my dues for year 2021. Plus a little extra for the larder."
– Francis Baumli, 2021-01-05.

"Gentlemen, I'm thinking of you and would like to thank-you for all you are doing. Please accept this small donation." – Allan Dahl 2021-01-05.

Virtual Minnesota Men's Conference "Into the Belly of Ice and Snow" was held online Jan 29-30 (Fri.&Sat.). [Notice was received too late to incorporate into previous issue of Men Talk.] Guest presenters were: Miguel Rivera, Ben Dennis, Timothy Young, Walton Stanley, and Thomas R. Smith.

"In the northern world, winter is a time for going inside, both physically and psychically. While the purifying cold stills the living world above the ground, below the frost line, the great tap roots continue to thrive and to drink from deep waters.

Among many peoples, winter is the time for stories; for gathering close round the fire and hearing old tales "remembered" that is put back together, sometimes in surprising ways.

This winter, we will not be able to physically gather round the fire as we have done in years past, but we can gather virtually around a story, around poetry, around thoughtful talk."
–Walton Stanley, 2020-12-27. www.minnesotamensconference.com

Addressing the male loneliness epidemic: *Who Stole the Masculine Soul?*
– Jed Diamond

"I was five years old when my 45-year-old father took an overdose of sleeping pills. According to his journal, which I found many years later, he had become

increasingly withdrawn and depressed because he couldn't make a living to support his family. There are millions of men today who are feeling the same pain. Do not give up. There is hope. Reach out. You aren't alone.

"The last entry in my father's journal, written six days before he overdosed, still brings me to tears:

"A hundred failures, an endless number of failures, until now, my confidence, my hope, my belief in myself, has run completely out. Middle-aged, I stand and gaze ahead, numb, confused, and desperately worried. All around me I see the young in spirit, the young in heart, with ten times my confidence, twice my youth, ten times my fervor, twice my education."

"I see them all, a whole army of them, battering at the same doors I'm battering, trying in the same field I'm trying. Yes, on a Sunday morning in early November, my hope and my life stream are both running desperately low, so low, so stagnant, that I hold my breath in fear, believing that the dark, blank, curtain is about to descend."

"Although he didn't die, our lives were never the same."

Read Jed's full blog post at: <https://menalive.com/who-stole-the-masculine-soul/#more-7154> – Jed Diamond, 2021-01-03.

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 wants 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: _____

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR MEN TALK ADVERTISERS!

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!

THANK YOU!

The Men's Center receives generous donations of baked goods from Breadsmith Bakeries. You can find them at 50th and France or online at: www.breadsmith.com



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Half Day (4 hrs)	\$25	\$50
Hourly	\$7.50	\$15

(612) 822-5892

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	3 1/2" x 2"	\$25

(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

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8

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.

25 Years of Successful Classes

**What's
Inside**

Page 1 *Monks Don't Mind
Monastic Life by Dr. Mike Obsatz*
Page 2 *Library Corner
Letter from the Chair*

Page 3 *Feb/Mar Calendar*
Page 4-5 *Classes, Clinics,
Presentations
Support Groups*

Page 6 *Here & There*
Page 7 *Community Ads*
Page 8 *Anger Management*