



MEN TALK

THE MEN'S CENTER NEWS

August/September 2008 VOL. 32 #4

Breaking the Silence Around Sexual Abuse

— © 2008 BY ALLAN ANDERSON

Why aren't we talking about it?

Honestly talking about my child sexual abuse, sexuality and all the subsequent effects has taken me through many layered self-explorations over decades. The Men's Center has been an important resource through it all, from initially showing me men had complex feelings and could even talk about them and be supported. After a childhood of fear, shame and neglect, I learned to talk about myself and my life and feel the support of having others listen and understand. However, I've found child and adult sexual abuse has been and remains a complex and difficult subject that is mostly avoided at the Men's Center as by men and society at large.

The silence about sexual abuse is certainly not because of a lack of child or adult victims, or a lack of serious effects. In fact, about one in six boys is abused by age 16 and about 10% of adult rape victims are male. So sadly, all of you reading this know victims, many of our center's members are victims or are in intimate relationships with victims. The immediate effects and aftermath for males is largely the same as for females and is generally measured by severity and frequency of abuse, the age when it occurs and the support available to the victim. The effects of sexual violence are frequently life-long and severe. Males in particular are much more likely to keep silent and not seek support or help. Perhaps as damaging as the abuse is not being believed when they do. I kept silent until my 20's until I told a therapist I met at the Men's Center, and some memories of abuse have only come back to me 40 years later. Only now am I speaking more freely about it.

Victims find various ways to escape from the experience but become then cut off and isolated. One's own body cannot be trusted and "it" becomes alien to "you". Children so effected have trouble in their child development and become adults with missing basic skills from childhood. Healing from sexual abuse involves trying to reestablish a connection to people, oneself and a world which became impossible to understand or even experience. At the same time, the psychological defenses and childhood adaptations to horrible environments that children and adults are capable of make it very stigmatizing and simply incorrect to see abuse survivors as wounded, limited, scarred or fragile people. In many ways, I have come to feel my abusive past gives me very powerful insights into others, great strengths and access to spiritual perspectives of life that others perhaps lack.

Talking to others and experiencing support, acceptance and understanding is a basic feature of healing. But it is especially difficult for men and boys in a society that is very uncomfortable with seeing males as helpless victims. We all want to avoid this truth and say, "It's

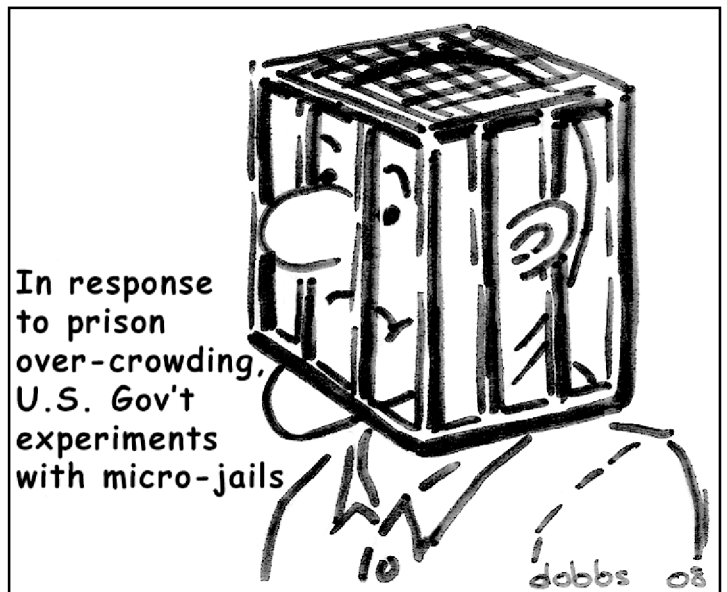
over now, get on with your life", "Can't you just get over it now?" and "Forget it. It was just sex." But I cannot seem to completely forget though it helps for a while. And many have encouraged me to try.

I recently decided it would help me to talk more about my experience with other men. I sought an abuse survivor's group for the safety and understand like minded men could provide. But in this land of 10,000 groups for shopping addiction to alcoholism, I could not find a group for male child sexual abuse victims. Over and over, I was told "We can't find men who want to talk about it, or they don't show up when they say they do." Right now, I find the silence around these issues unbearable.

Women beginning in the 70's created Rape Crisis Center's and over the long term have made great improvements in the awareness of sexual violence. Men have benefited from this but have not found their own voice. And many male survivors tell me Rape Crisis Centers often do not respond in helping ways to male victims. This is my experience as well. I believe especially young adults and children benefit from frequently hearing age appropriate messages that help them speak up for themselves and get help in all the situations they are likely to get into, as well as the potentially truly abusive ones. Prevention and early detection of abuse is key.

Many might see this as a "women's issue" but I can't support that.

Breaking the Silence 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. 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:
Critique of Pure Reason by Immanuel Kant, *The P Town Murders* by Jeffrey Pound, *Textimony Time: A Positive Perspective on Homosexuality* by Pastor Lowell Endahl, retired. These are available for checkout 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
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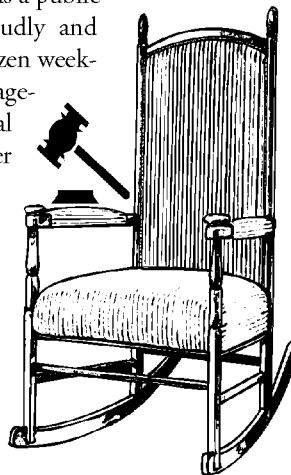
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Greetings from the Chair

Greetings members and friends of the Twin Cities Men's Center. We are now in our 32nd year as a public service organization. We proudly and consistently provide nearly a dozen weekly support groups, anger management classes, Wednesday topical presentations, and an every other month publication. But we are unable to do this without your support.

Like any organization, we rely on our funding sources to maintain the service of our mission. You are our funding source. We do not receive any government grants or funding from private organizations. For many years we have been able to maintain our services based on membership fees, class or presentation fees, and special donations.



Men's Center,

The financial health of the Men's Center is often a reflection of the general economy. We have seen a decline in some areas of donations. We are presently able to maintain without a reduction of services.

What you can do to help. Consider updating your membership, if you have not already done so. We continue to send out the Men Talk to people long after their memberships have expired. If possible, a special donation would go a long way in keeping the services we offer going strong.

In gratitude for your interest and support of the Twin Cities

**BOBBY SCHAUERHAMER,
 CHAIR OF THE BOARD**

Breaking the Silence continued from pg 1

Men need to speak out for themselves, about themselves. Where are the men involved in this issue? What would help you "find your voice" and be part of the healing of our community?

Resources:

The web site www.jimbopper.com is a psychologist at the Harvard Psychiatry school. He has an accurate summary of statistics and what is mostly known and not known.

www.malesurvivor.org, is a very active web site for males and "friends and family" overcoming sexual victimization. Men can read publicly viewable messages, can communicate anonymously and can join the site to participate in a non-public member area. Real time chat, private messaging and bulletin board messages are available.

Victims No Longer, by Mike Lew is a good book on male child sexual abuse effects and healing. What keeps you from speaking about this issue? How often has this come up in our groups and lives and do you feel able to respond effectively?

Men's Center Fall Potluck Picnic, Sunday Sep 14th 3pm

It will again be at Powderhorn Park, Minneapolis. Come to the South Side of the Park, the closest parking is at 13th Ave and 35th St S. Walk down the hill toward the lake, we will begin grilling at 3 p.m. If you prefer not to grill bring another dish to share. The Men's Center will provide beverages and dessert snacks. Bring your drum if you have one, we will do some drumming. Powderhorn Park is 3 blocks west of Bloomington Ave and 5 blocks South of Lakes St. So please come and have some fun with other men. – Norm Petrik, Program Comm Chair

Men's Retirement Group Schedule Change

The monthly Men's Retirement Support group will meet the 4th Sunday of August, the 24th, and the 2nd Sunday of September, the 14th, at the usual time of 5:30 p.m., instead of the usual 3rd Sunday. The group is for men who are thinking about or have retired, and want an opportunity to discuss feelings about this major change. Welcome if this sounds like it might help you. – Norm Petrik, 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. The next classes will begin on Monday Aug 4, and Thursday Sept 4.

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.

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

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

(612) 822-5892

THANK YOU!
 The Men's Center receives generous donations of baked goods from **Wuollet's** and **Breadsmith Bakeries**. You can find them at 25th and Hennepin or 50th and France or online at:
www.wuollet.com
www.breadsmith.com




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

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 e-mail address: tcmc@tcmc.org

The Men's Center
3249 Hennepin Avenue South, Suite 55
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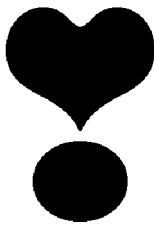
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Special Men's Center Workshop Open to Men & Women...

Getting to the Heart of Cultural Competence in Relationships

A brief introductory workshop to a unique method for promoting:



- Cultural Wellness for Individuals and Groups
- Healing Racism in the Body
- Integration of Mind and Body for Cultural Wellness
- Overcoming Conscious and Unconscious Prejudice
- An Inside Out Approach for Empowerment and Social Change
- Awareness of Internalized Male Oppression

Thursday evening, August 28, 7:00 - 9:15 p.m.

A \$10 donation per person is requested. Registrations handled by Eric Mann <brokrboy@bitstream.net> or 612-729-1220.

Tommy Lee Woon is Dean of Multicultural Life at Macalester College. He has 30 years of experience in leading human relations workshops in promoting self-care, personal empowerment, and social change. He has a M.S. in Counseling and completed a 3-year training program in Somatic Experiencing.

Peter Levine's book, *Waking the Tiger*, dealing with trauma healing using Somatic Experiencing (SE) technology will serve as the basis for relational & cultural healing of the kind Mr. Woon will be presenting.

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