

HELPING MEN RECOVER
Why Gender Specific Services are
Necessary for Men

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“When I grew up I learned two things about what it takes to be a man. Number one, I learned to fight. And number two, I learned to drink”
- Jo, *A Man’s Way Through the Twelve Steps*

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The Last Uncharted Territory for the Field

- ▣ Long overdue
- ▣ Assumption that all treatment and services have always been focused on men and men’s issues.
- ▣ Women’s work and the importance of women’s issues will always be incomplete and diminished if men are not doing their work.
- ▣ The world has changed; the expectations of men have changed.

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Men's Issues, Really?

- ❑ This is not bold, brilliant, or extremely innovative - it is simply needed.
- ❑ Men and women are already doing much of this work with men but it has never been legitimized as an actual area of practice.
- ❑ This is not about the services currently provided men not being effective - it is making them more effective.
- ❑ It's time to put all of the issues on the table.

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- ❑ "The masculine show of emotion in American male culture is a proscribed, not prescribed, social act. To be emotional is to be weak and feminine. A.A. inverts this cultural proscription."
❑ - p.25, *The Inside Man*

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The Inside Man: The Social Construction of Masculinity in the Culture of Alcoholics Anonymous

- ❑ Masters Research
- ❑ Qualitative Study - interviewed 20 men
 - 18 to 54 years old
 - 2 to 12 yrs of sobriety
- ❑ Masculinity as a performance
 - Emotional Socialization
- ❑ "Relaxed Masculinity"

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☐ "I tell my sponsor I love him and that's something I never thought about doing. I tell my brothers I love them and that's something I never thought about doing. It's easier to be around men, now. I used to have to be around women because that's what made me feel good. Now I can be around men. I can give men hugs - that's something I never did (he laughs) and today it's just an automatic thing."

☐ - Mike, *The Inside Man*

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A Man's Way Through the Twelve Steps (10/09 - Hazelden)

☐ A laymen's guide to recovery looking at:

- the scripts we follow for being men and how they get in the way of our ability to fully immerse ourselves in the Twelve Steps
- how the Twelve Steps have the ability to help men tap into what is greatest about being men.

☐ Core Issues

- Emotional Awareness
- Relationships
- Grief
- Anger
- Violence, Abuse, and Trauma

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☐ "Before recovery, a real man was the guy with the fancy sports car who had the corner office and the trophy wife...He was probably fairly detached, aloof, and smug...I spent a lifetime hating looking in the mirror. Today, the guy who looks back at me in that mirror is a member of the community...The corner office is irrelevant today."

☐ - Peter, *AMW*

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Helping Men Recover

- ▣ Based upon Covington's groundbreaking *Helping Women Recover*
 - Fall 2010 from Jossey-Bass
- ▣ Authors: Dr. Stephanie Covington, Dan Griffin, and Rick Dauer
- ▣ Community and Criminal Justice version
- ▣ Four Modules
 - Self
 - Relationships
 - Sexuality
 - Spirituality

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Helping Men Recover

- ▣ Male-Specific - all content is placed within the context of what it means to be a man and how men are raised
- ▣ Relational Cultural Theory
- ▣ Trauma-Informed
- ▣ Strengths-Based

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Men's Movement

- ▣ Result of Women's Movement in late 60s and early 70s
- ▣ Various Iterations:
 - Men against Violence
 - Mythopoetic/ Mankind Project
 - Academic
 - Promise Keepers
 - Million Man March
- ▣ False perception of men "naked in the woods, banging drums, learning how to cry"BUT...

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The New Psychology of Men

- A New Psychology of Men
 - Inspired by feminist scholars
 - Questioning the traditional male role & the traditional masculine interpretation of psychological development (Freud, etc.)
 - Men are not the problem - how men are socialized is the problem
 - Homophobia, violence, devaluation of women, detached fathering, emotional illiteracy
 - Power, Privilege, and Pain
- Men's Issues: TIIP

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Relational Cultural Theory

- Jean Baker Miller / Stone Center
- Response to male-centric psychology that over-emphasized individuation and separation as key to adult growth
- Central Tenets
 - All people yearn for connection
 - All growth occurs in connection - "through and toward relationship"
 - The impact of disconnection → can lead to Relational Competence
 - Strategies of disconnection - lead to inauthenticities & and to greater connection

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RCT and Men

- Over the years, theorists have come to see that all people yearn for connection and live in relationship
- Dr. Stephen Bergman
 - Self in Relation vs Separated and Individuated Self
 - Male Relational Dread
 - Agents of Disconnection
 - AA/ Asking for Help & Reaching Out
 - Power Analysis
- "Men and women are not from Mars and Venus but we do come from different countries."

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RCT and Men

- Dr. Larry Anderson, PsyD and Dan Griffin, M.A.
 - Inadequacy of traditional male treatment model
 - Applying relational theory to addiction treatment services for men
 - Looking at men's lives in context of their relationships
 - Focus on sexuality
 - Power and Powerlessness
 - Trauma is a major issue for men – how men are raised in our society is inherently traumatic

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□ “All that trauma and immaturity kept me on the run from relationships and from myself. In recovery, I’ve learned how to stay engaged, to talk about issues, and work them out.”

□ - Joe, AMW

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Why Trauma-Informed Services?

- Trauma is pervasive
- Trauma’s impact is broad and diverse
- Trauma’s impact is deep and life-shaping
- Trauma, especially interpersonal violence, is often self-perpetuating
- Trauma is insidious and differentially affects the more vulnerable
- Trauma affects how people approach services
- The service system has often been retraumatizing

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Definition of Trauma

The diagnostic manual used by mental health providers (DSM IV-TR) defines trauma as, "involving direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury, or other threat to one's physical integrity; or a threat to the physical integrity of another person; or learning about unexpected or violent death, serious harm, or threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or other close associate."

(American Psychiatric Assoc. [APA] 2000, pg. 463).

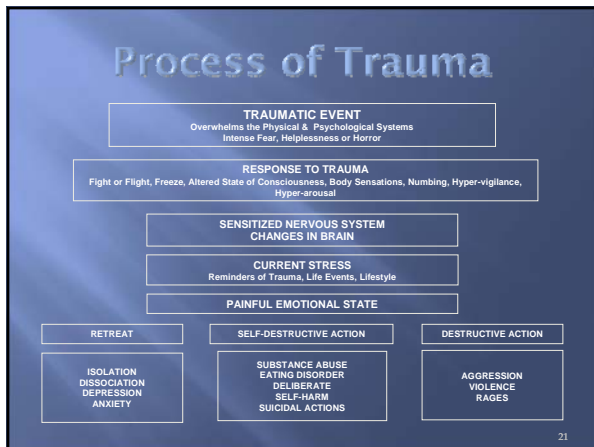
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Definition of Trauma (cont.)

"The person's response involve intense fear, helplessness or horror (or in children, the response must involve disorganized or agitated behavior)."

(American Psychiatric Assoc. [APA] 2000, pg. 463).

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▣ “ I hit him hard and remember the fear on his face as he was lying down and me crying out loud to ‘fight like a man.’ ...I think that something clicked there that said: ‘It’s okay, there’s a tool you can use any time if somebody hurts you or rejects you. That’s your go-to option.”

▣ - Miguel, AMW

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Trauma & Abuse

- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Domestic violence
- Witnessing abuse/violence
- Self-inflicted violence
- Stigmatization
 - Incarceration
 - People of color
 - Poverty
 - Gay, lesbian, transgendered
 - Mental Health Issues
 - Physically challenged

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Men and Trauma

- Little research on addressing and/or treating men with addiction and trauma histories.
- Two main research studies including men with PTSD
 - The National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Survey (NVVRS), 1988.
 - The National Comorbidity Survey Report (1990)

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How Men Respond to Trauma

- 90% of male sexual abuse survivors did not report the abuse until they were adults.
- Men are socialized to ignore or deny emotional pain.
- Men tend to **externalize** emotions/feelings through anger and aggression.
 - Get tougher
 - Learn to fight/survive
- Women tend to **internalize** emotions/feelings; I'm bad, I need to try again, e.g.

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▣ "I was emotionally and physically abused. It took me some time to really see the emotions I had were tied into my resentment of my father for the abuse. I remember when he would call us worthless, no good, and so on. Nothing was scarier than being the worthless person I feared my dad said I was. That fear has persisted."

▣ - Brandon, AMW

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How Men Respond to Trauma

- The path to manhood is paved by emotional trauma
- For most men - ignoring/denying pain is essential for a successful masculine performance
- Men are perpetrators - they are the *cause* of trauma
- There is no way to see men as "victims" and still as men.
- Men suffer abuse → suffer alone with the abuse → which leads many to becoming abusers

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How Men Respond to Trauma

- Men respond different to similar events
 - “No big deal”
 - “Just get over it”
 - “Suck it up”
 - “Don’t be a wimp”
 - “Never let them see you sweat”
 - “Pull yourself up by your bootstraps!”
 - “Suffer in Silence”
- But the real reason is.....

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“Real Men Can Handle Anything!”

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□ “Transformations slowly happen as I allow myself to love all that was not loved. The abuse happened in my youth. I have lived in a safe world since then and have tried to use it for healing.”

□ Quinn, AMW

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Helping Men Recover

- ▣ River Ridge Treatment Center
 - ▣ Pilot Groups:
 - ▣ 2008 (Fall)
 - ▣ 2009 (Spring/Summer)
 - ▣ 2009 (Fall)
 - ▣ Connecticut 2009 (Fall)
- ▣ Advisory Group of Experts

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Module A: SELF

- ▣ 5 Sessions
 - ▣ Exploration of Self
 - ▣ Male Socialization
 - ▣ Investigation of Past
 - ▣ Understanding of Social Self and Inner Self
 - ▣ Emotional Awareness
 - ▣ Anger Funnel

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- ▣ "All men have feelings, whether or not they want to admit it. I came into the program not knowing how to name what I was feeling. Now, after years of practice, I can name them and experience and acknowledge all the feelings that I have, whether or not they are manly."

▣ - Andy, AMIV

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Module B: RELATIONSHIPS

- ▣ 6 Sessions
 - Family Dynamics
 - Barriers to Healthy Relationships
 - Relationship with Father
 - Relationship with Mother
 - Healthy Relationships
 - Communication Styles

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▣ “My ideas of manhood said that we should only reveal our emotional side with women, so to be in a meeting and hear men discussing their innermost struggles and weaknesses was a real milestone.”

▣ - Rob, AMW

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Module C: SEXUALITY

- ▣ 4 Sessions
 - Sexuality 101
 - ▣ Sex Sober
 - Unhealthy Sexuality
 - ▣ Sex Addiction
 - ▣ Sexual Assault
 - ▣ Pornography/Masturbation
 - Healthy Sexuality
 - Intimacy
 - ▣ Communication

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☐ "I went from sleeping with anyone to not caring at all about the act of sex, to being scared shitless of sex."

☐ - Casey, AMW

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Module D: SPIRITUALITY

☐ 3 sessions

- Living in Community
- Power and Control
- Grief
- Choosing the Man You *Truly* Want to Be

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☐ "Look at what we grew up with. We have the Marlboro Man...and the ultimate 'I can do it myself' image...John Wayne and Clint Eastwood...Just by force of will we control and dominate everything around us."

☐ - Peter, AMW

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