New Warrior Training Adventure of the ManKind Project

One man’s essay on the subjects of the ManKind Project (MKP), MKP’s New Warrior Training Adventure (NWTA), and MKP iGroups

Are you the man you thought you would become?
Dedicated to all my Warrior brothers...wherever they may be.

To Dancin' Wolf for her love, encouragement, patience, and friendship.

To Shannon, Emma, Sarah, Poppy, Dick, Little Crow, and all my relations.
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What is the NWTA all about?

Monday, February 07, 2005

We are about celebrating masculinity, we are about teaching integrity and accountability.

We are about laughter and tears.

We are about the pleasures of sonhood, fatherhood, brotherhood, and even cousinhood.

We are certainly about friendship.

We dare you and challenge you and bless you to come into our space and play with us.

We are about the joy of being a man.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:43AM (-08:00)

Comments

- Rrramone

Old Faithful Wolf, thanks for visiting my blog, but even more thanks for creating this one. Love it! I hope that many men are drawn to it. Blessings.

Glorious Cheetah
WHAT IS THE NEW WARRIOR TRAINING ADVENTURE (NWTA)?

The NWTA is a weekend process of initiation and self-examination that is designed to catalyze the development of a healthy and mature masculine self. It is the "Hero's Journey" of classical literature and myth adapted to our modern culture. It is a profound inward journey of self confrontation: facing the deep fears and the old wounds that keep our lives from working the way we want. And, it is a gateway into a fellowship of men informed by rigorous honesty and a level of trust that most men never know. Whether a man is on a life upswing, or down the trenches of his existence, the NWTA will help him take a good, hard look at his life-to see what's working, and what isn't. The man will get a clear sense of what it is he needs to "work" on in order to effectively change his life and become more potent and generative in his family, work and community.

WHY IS THE TERM 'INITIATION' USED?

In traditional cultures, at a certain time, young men were taken away from their mother's sphere of influence and put through an ordeal that taught them experientially about themselves and the world of men. The initiation challenged the boy to 'put away childish things' and access the more mature aspects of his masculine self. Because our modern culture lacks an informed tradition of male initiation and because many of us did not have close relationships with our fathers, our initiation into healthy masculinity has been hit or miss. Psychologically, un-initiated males are 'puers' (the latin term for boy) and remain stuck in immature ways of relating. Under stress, this weakness at our core may manifest in different, even opposite ways; from depression and lack of focus to tantrums and violence. Either way, it drastically affects our relationships with women and our trust of other men. The training weekend is designed to shed light on the 'un-initiated' parts of ourselves and to begin the process of strengthening and maturing where necessary.

AN ORDER OF MEN?

The ManKind Project is not a front for any hidden spiritual, economic or political organization or agenda. There is no 'guru'...the network is structured and administered democratically. There is global intention and local attention. Along with many other men's organizations, our aim is a worldwide shift in how masculinity is defined and experienced by men, regardless of race, religion, culture or economics. But this is only accomplished if we enrich and support the lives of our local 'brothers' day to day. While The ManKind
Project is by no means exclusionary, the intense weekend experience of the New Warrior Training Adventure creates a common bond that becomes a foundation for true community. This bond is strengthened through ongoing interaction in weekly support groups, advanced trainings and other chosen projects.

**WILL THIS TRAINING HELP ME IN MY WORK/CAREER?**

While not a management training weekend, it does address vital issues that have implications in the workplace. Effectiveness at work is directly proportional to our ability to access our full potential. The training is also designed to assist you in bringing your entire life, including your worklife, into focus giving you a clearer sense of your personal mission. You will also learn basic conflict resolution skills that will enhance your ability to deal with interpersonal issues at work.

**HOW MIGHT IT AFFECT MY INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS?**

Intimate relationships are fertile fields for projections of all types. It is with our loved ones, more than our friends and associates, that we all too often find ourselves caught in a complicated web of irritating irrationality. Often, at the root of our emotional patterns with our lover are wounds from the past that remain unhealed. During the NWTA weekend you will begin to address some of your emotional baggage and lighten both your load and the load you ask your loved ones to carry for you.

**HOW MIGHT IT AFFECT MY ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHER MEN?**

As a rule in our culture, men do not treat other men with integrity. Racial, class and ethnic prejudice abound. Even among our friends, neighbors and business acquaintances, just below the surface politeness that lubricates our competitive and hierarchical milieu is often a well disguised wall of indifference, distrust and/or outright antipathy. The NWTA weekend and the ongoing integration groups that follow are specifically focused on ways to overcome the dysfunctionality of man to man communication and interaction in our daily lives. The result is the discovery of new levels of support and camaraderie that continually strengthen over time.

**WHY AREN’T THE DETAILS OF THE WEEKEND DIVULGED IN ADVANCE?**

There's all the difference in the world between a concept and an experience. Our commitment is to give you a transformational experience along with information you can use. We use the element of surprise to intensify and deepen the processes on the weekend and we ask you to trust us in this regard. All activities during the weekend are optional but you will get the most benefit if you participate fully. In the final analysis, you run your own training through the responses and decisions you make along your journey. The staff serve as your guides and mentors, but you choose your own level of commitment, and you decide how far you will explore the inner terrain of your life, to discover the treasures, and obstacles buried within your self. Remember, the training is mostly staffed by volunteers who have gone through the same experience and found it very worthwhile.

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I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
The ManKind Project (MKP) is an international non-profit organization of men mentoring men into mature manhood. MKP does this better than another other organization I know of. They help men identify and fulfill their life mission, live life with integrity and authenticity, deepen their capacity for durable healthy relationships, and become more effective as a man of service in the world. MKP does all this through helping men face their shadow, clean up their baggage and become exquisitely accountable for the effects of their actions.

This remarkable experience begins with an extraordinary weekend called the New Warrior Training Adventure (NWTA). This powerful, gorgeously constructed, experiential initiatory weekend is then followed by attending ongoing men's groups where the work begun during the weekend continues. Because MKP is a non-profit organization of men mentoring men, there is no fee for attending the ongoing groups that follow the NWTA weekend. The only fee involved is for attending the weekend and the subsequent training program that prepares men to effectively utilize MKP's ongoing men's groups. I can tell you first hand that these costs are more than well worth the money...even if you choose not to attend an ongoing group following the weekend!

I have consistently seen men accomplish more during the NWTA weekends than they would have been likely to accomplish in 6 months of therapy. And if they are currently in therapy, or want to be, the weekend is likely to get them more focused and clear about what they want to accomplish in their therapy than they would ever have been without it. The same positive impact occurs with men attending the weekend who are involved with a twelve step program.

NWTA weekends are held throughout the world. The Los Angeles and San Diego MKP communities provide these initiatory weekend approximately every two months. Men can attend the weekends in any location they wish. If there is an MKP community near where they live, they can then do the training in their own community that will prepare them for
joining an ongoing MKP men's group there.

The MKP International website is http://www.mkp.org/. From there you can access all the MKP communities around the world. If you're in the Los Angeles area, you can also directly access their NWTA weekend workshop schedule via http://www.mkpla.org/. You can directly access the San Diego community's NWTA weekend workshop schedule via http://www.mkpsd.org/.

If you decide to attend an NWTA, and would like me to consider being part of the staff for your weekend, let me know, as this is part of the service work I do. (Because MKP is a service organization that is in integrity with its mission, staff are not only not paid, but they actually pay a modest fee to be on staff in order to cover the cost of being there for the weekend).

I am certain that the more men who are exposed to this remarkable resource, the better our world will become. As MKP puts it, they're out to change the world for the better, one man at a time.

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I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:44AM (-08:00)

NWTA Article in the Fort Collins Coloradoan

Tuesday, February 08, 2005

From the Fort Collins Coloradoan

Program restores healthy masculinity

By Will Walters

In my last column (April 24), I said we needed to strive more to just be human, own our mistakes and be who we are.
Little did I know that the next day I would have such a remarkable opportunity to confront my own advice.

That day I embarked on a two-day journey into self-examination with 25 other men that would in some ways change my life.

Dubbed "New Warrior Training Adventure" and conducted in the mountains near Buena Vista by the ManKind Project of Colorado, the weekend involved a process of discovery and initiation, shedding and bonding.

The 26 participants ranged in age from 20s to 60s and came from all walks of life. Protestants, Jews, Catholics, Buddhists, atheists -- I think about the only thing we all had in common was a desire for self-improvement. For me, that meant many things, but more than anything it meant finding greater self-awareness and integrity with myself.

Over the course of growing up, I somehow managed to separate my conscious mind from many of my emotions without ever realizing it.

By stuffing the unacceptable parts of myself (for instance, feeling and being able to effectively express anger toward loved ones who I was afraid might in turn withhold love and acceptance from me) into the subconscious realm, I was able to avoid conscious anxiety and pain. But all that hiding from my shadows managed to do was send all that anxiety and pain into my subconscious instead.

It was still there, just inaccessible to me, and felt nonetheless by those around me. In the process, I cut myself off from all that I am -- the good, the bad and the ugly -- and in so doing avoided taking responsibility for myself.

It's a tragedy that so many men in our culture seem to fall into that trap. The trap takes many forms and guises. For me, like many men, hiding from traumas and injuries became hiding behind them -- a passive but poisonous escape from being accountable for myself.

Over the years, these things had been catching up with me in my relationships, in my work and ultimately in my own sense of well-being.

So a little over a year ago, as parts of my life were becoming more and more disintegrated, I began a process of growth and self-discovery with the help of a seasoned counselor. Ultimately, he encouraged me to attend the New Warrior Training, the "hero's journey" of classical literature and myth adapted to our modern culture.

About two weeks before the training, I ran into a man at a social gathering who had attended the training, so I asked him to tell me about it. He looked me in the eye and said only one thing: "It will change your life."

Then he turned to my date and said, "it will change yours, too."
For someone with a Ph.D. in calm skepticism, I have to admit, that didn't sit very well.

So I showed up at the training with my diploma in one hand and my "bull" meter on red alert in the other.

Details aside, suffice to say my skepticism was met by a process whose central tenet is to foster integrity and accountability among men.

I came away more in touch with my heart, the wild man in me, my desire to live in integrity with who I am and what I'm doing with my life.

If you are, or know, a man with a shadow or two and the courage to step into them, check out the Mankind Project.

It might just change your life.

For more information, see Colorado MKP.

Originally published Thursday, May 8, 2003

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 11:54AM (-08:00)

New Warrior from the Sentient Times

Wednesday, February 09, 2005

The New Warrior Training Adventure is an male-initiation process. Simple and complex.

Male-initiation has taken place for thousands of years...up until the last 100 years. In the scheme of things, when looked at in the timeline of our species, the last hundred years
has seen vast intellectual growth and the leaving behind of many of the tribal traditions. Any wonder than that male-initiation has been virtually left behind, as well?

The last hundred years is a speck of time on our species time line. Yet, we have changed so much. Is it possible that there are many things we still need from our past? Is it possible that it is still embedded in our genes to need the older men to carry us into manhood? Is it possible that deep down, in our mushy, slimy guts, we feel the need to be initiated?

ManKind Project, the men of MKP, offer men the chance to step into this space.

This article talks to male-initiation, the NWTA, and some of the founders of MKP.

I’m out.
Old-faithful Wolf

From Sentient Times Aug/Sept 2003

New Warriors
By John Darling

Back before urban civilization and organized religion, boys were initiated at puberty. Initiations provided a sense of mission for their lives, of belonging to the tribe, of reverence for women, of connectedness with earth, nature and the cycle of days, seasons and lives, of their coming role as fathers, and their place in the web of spirits and deities.

The older men led them in this and it was usually out away from the village and their mothers and younger children. It was secret, so they didn’t know what they were in for. It was terrifying, so they would shake lose from their accustomed ego roles and go through a death-rebirth, but, since it was secret, they wouldn’t have any idea what they were being reborn into. But they could see by looking at older boys that the rites of passage had made them different. The older boys knew something.

It was a ritual experience filled with pain, darkness, drums, chanting, masks, suffering, fear. It was an intentional and permanent severing of the ties with mother and her world. It was childhood’s end and the creation of a new being, one bonded to other men. It was intended to shape men who could handle the job of being warriors. Men who would ensure the survival of the tribe by understanding their place and the tribe’s place in the cycles and balance of nature—hunting, territory, birth, mating, death, storytelling, ritual and the tribe’s relationship with powerful and unseen powers.

We don’t have that now. It’s almost gone from even the most remote tribal systems. While many bemoan the loss of immersion in tribe, nature and spirit, it’s hard not to think our progression into mind, ego, urban life and individual isolation was not inevitable—if not intended. And it often seems we can never live that deep connection so many of us long for.

But thousands of men are experiencing that deep connection—not living in tribes, but beginning to find other men and enacting that same initiation. They’re called the New
Warriors and they've been doing it for almost 20 years in North America, Europe and South Africa. What goes on is secret but it's founder, Bill Kauth, now of Ashland, says, "You come Friday night and go down into some intense games that bond you with other men. On Saturday, you work on your life's mission and we create a situation for each man to go deep into his heart. We use ceremony and ritual. On Sunday, we prepare men to take what they've learned back into the world."

I've been asked several times what was the most important thing I learned. Well, the games were intense all right. And the "situation" indeed took me deep into my heart. But what shifted everything was looking straight into the eyes of 60 men and seeing who they really were. A lot of pain there, in every face. I've seen it—but never really seen it. It's called the Shadow, a Jungian term meaning everything we, most of our lives, don't want to see and spend a lot of energy stuffing, managing, hiding and being run by. But these men have learned to bring it out of the dark, learn its secrets, love it and integrate it into their lives.

The Shadow is what Iron John is all about. In myth, he's a large, slimy, shaggy, smelly humanoid living in a swamp near the king's castle. He is captured and caged by the king because he makes people disappear in his swamp. When the prince, a young boy, lets his gold ball roll into the cage, Iron John keeps it. He'll give it back if the prince gets the key to the cage and sets him free. Where's the key? Iron John answers: under your mother's pillow.

In this myth, the centerpiece of Robert Bly's bestselling book Iron John, we have all the elements of the mystery around what happened to men's power, fire, energy, intelligence, passion, during 5,000 years of civilization. Iron John, though obtuse in the refinements of urban or courtly life, somehow possesses the golden ball—emblematic of the missing spirit, self-reliance and wholeness of a prince coming into manhood. To possess it, the prince must embrace the shadow and free savagery itself—though this wild energy may bring harm to the order valued by the King and Queen. What stands in the way? Mom. To be whole and have his power, the prince must betray her, seek to his own instinct and basically cut the cord with mom. He does. And he rides off into the wide world on the shoulders of Iron John.

That's what was on the faces of those men: Iron John, reclaimed. The shadow brought to the light and worn, like a cloak won in battle. The making of men distinct and apart from their mothers and from that energy embodied in their wives or lovers. What initiated men grow out of is the old patriarchal mask of strength and domination behind which we live out (and hide from) an unhealthy relationship of fear, dependence and mother-fixation toward women, said Dennis Mead-Shikaly, an Ashland personal coach, New Warrior facilitator and executive director of New Warriors in the mid-1990s. "Men coming out of the training tend to be strongly committed to healthier, more honest relationships with their partners. It can shake a woman up but most say they love the men we send home to them."

When Bly began lecturing and writing articles in the early 1980s—and especially when his book and PBS show with Bill Moyers came out around 1990—men responded with a huge hunger for initiation and for knowing other men without the long-conditioned competitiveness, distancing and armor. Huge numbers still are hungering—like every man in the van ride to the training—coping with the end of marriages and long relationships. They couldn't explain it. But it begged the question: why are we all here together, seeking initiation into the camaraderie of men right after ... well ... after not
finding it with women? Our American mythos says the family will give us all we need. But what happens after the first divorce and millions of shattered men can’t see their kids half or all of the time … and are mostly clueless why the pairbond dream didn’t work out. Something’s missing. Is it the key that frees the wildman? It’s under the female’s pillow. Who put it there? One immediately thinks mom did. What if we put it there? What if she doesn’t even want it? But it hardly matters. There can be only one concern—to get the key. And that’s a big part of initiation.

And what is initiation? It’s taking males from the psychology of the boy to that of the man, says Carl Griesser of Ashland, executive director of the ManKind Project, the umbrella corporation for New Warriors. In our culture, we pretty much leave that to just happen—with rituals of driving, drinking, drugs, sex, leaving home and getting your apartment, sometimes going into the military to seek the direction of older warriors of a different sort. But it doesn’t just happen, Griesser said. You have to become spiritually conscious and only older, conscious men can teach that.

The primal urge for initiation is largely lost in the culture but lives on in instinct, says Mead-Shikaly. It’s absence, across the planet accounts for much of how life is out of balance. Men are out of touch with themselves. What the Warriors are working to bring back is that ancient practice of being accountable, responsible, emotionally awake and able to relate to women in good ways, he said. Spiritually conscious, he adds, means learning again to be part of the fabric of life and knowing that what we do impacts everything else, all people, all life in that fabric and not thinking we are above or exempt from it.

At the training, men are confronted with the question: who do you serve? We don’t get asked that very often. We are conditioned to believe we serve ourselves, our bank account, mortgage, our career track, our ego images, and, when we make family, our partners and children and their agendas. Men quiver at the question, said Mead-Shikaly. “It confronts their denial and takes them out of that get-what-you-can mindset. Their mission can shift to service.”

This opens the door for men to create a deeper mission that includes all life and the fate of the planet, creating what Kauth calls “social capital”—the trust, vision and mutual relationships that are the “glue of society.”

Warriors often say their best work happens in the ten-week Integration Groups that follow the training and usually go on for years. I was judging and terrified and told the facilitators I couldn’t think of any six guys I’d less rather be with—a comment we would laugh heartily about later, as it became clear how much of what we see in others, especially in intimate relationships, is projection. We externalize our Shadow on that person doing that thing that we most don’t want to look at in ourselves. But in doing the work, one always ends up looking in the mirror at that scared little boy trying to hide out from the deeper work. Finally, I laughed, “It’s all projection, isn’t it?” Yes, the facilitator said, a huge part. But that’s how we bring out the Shadow, own it, love it and integrate it.

Griesser nails is succinctly: “Most men are terrified of other men.” Hence all the man-chat about sports, politics, cars, hunting, fishing, etc. We’re bred to compete, says Mead-Shikaly, and it’s become almost instinctive. It’s painfully isolating. “We hide our weaknesses and that keeps us lonely, separate and afraid. From that place we get sick and do sick things, like trying to dominate women and the planet.” Kauth adds “War is obsolete and men now must battle what’s inside, not outside.”

We live in chaotic, often painful times, personally and globally, and a lot of this is coming from a death-rebirth in the way we do relationships. Men are realizing that they can’t get
from women everything they need and want in life—and that this in fact is part of the
shadow of patriarchy that men themselves created over many millennia. In isolating
women in rigid roles with home, marriage and motherhood, men isolated themselves, too.
And, although love-marriage-children-home are huge steps in life, they are not men's
initiation. A woman can’t initiate a man—only men can. Men who’ve been there.

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I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:53AM (-08:00)

MKP: Religious or Cult?

Wednesday, February 09, 2005

From the MKP Web site

Is this a religious group?

There are spiritual elements to the New Warrior Training Adventure, as men are
challenged to look into the deeper parts of themselves. But the Mankind Project isn't
affiliated with any church or sect, nor do we have any political association. Part of the
mission of MKP is to create circles in which all men are welcome and supported,
regardless of political or religious beliefs.

Is this a cult?

The nature of a cult is to ask its members to give up their own lives and devote
themselves to a single leader or doctrine. The Mankind Project takes the opposite
approach, challenging each man to define the life that works best for him, and to live that
life fully with the support of a growing network of other men.

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In my iGroup, we have men of all different backgrounds, religions/spiritualities, cultures,
sexual orientations, etc. That is part of the blessing of my group. I get to see the world in
so many ways every Monday night.

I am consistently challenged to see the world through the perspective of my brothers in
my group. What I get is a perspective that is only offered by sitting in this type of men's
circle.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:16AM (-08:00)
The Men's Movement Turns Twenty

So have men really changed?

By Brian Marks, from Shepherd Express Metro: Cover Story: (sorry, this link has broken)

Why would grown men go into the woods, pound drums and perform chants in the name of self-discovery?

"I had just broken up with a woman I was living with and felt I needed a jolt," said Steve, who declined to be fully identified. Steve wanted to re-evaluate his goals and felt a men's group could help him discover and articulate his mission in life by whoing him "how to be more of a mature and healthy man."

These self-discovering rituals, often termed the 'men's movement,' received a fair amount of press when it emerged here in Milwaukee in 1985. Many critics were baffled as to why men, who had dominated and oppressed women for millenniums, would need a movement. In fact, hundreds of men's groups have formed since the '60s, focused on everything from father's rights to even women's rights. The mythopoetic men's movement founded here, later called the ManKind Project, MKP, has a more introspective focus. It has since become one of the bigger and more influential men's groups.

Steve, who has participated in the men's movement for eight years, said the experience helped him become more accountable for what he does and says he will do.

Having taken a "pass in spirituality" prior to his MKP participation, Steve said the training proved to be a "spiritual kick in the head" that continues to play out in his life.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:33PM (-08:00)
What's All the Secrecy About?

Thursday, February 10, 2005

Why don't we tell men about what transpires during an NWTA weekend?

It's pretty simple, really. I think there are two parts to this:

One part is that this is an initiation weekend. That in itself pretty much speaks for itself. If we told you what was going to transpire, your experience would be polluted. I, for one, do not want that to happen for you.

We have two uninitiated men in sitting our iGroup circle-of-men right now who are attending an NWTA on 2.18.2005. They have been in the circle for a couple months. As initiated men, we take this very serious and guard their experience with great care. Not one of us wants to give away anything to corrupt these men's time at the NWTA. So we are all very diligent to keep the weekend processes and experiences out of our iGroup. It can be challenging. In the past we have had to ask an uninitiated man to step out of the circle (out of the building, in fact) so that an initiated man could talk openly about a process that occurred during his NWTA. Both men's needs were taken into account. Both men got what they needed.

The second part is that, during an NWTA, we use processes that we regard as scared. What sacred means is that the processes have special meaning and standing and we do not want to randomly give that out. Again, it goes back to creating a space for men to come into that is unique and unpolluted for every man.

The NWTA is mostly about the uninitiated man. Each man does his NWTA differently than another man. If you knew what was going to happen, that would take some of uniqueness away.

When I attended my NWTA, I had no idea what was to transpire. Looking back, I see that there was no other way for me to get my unique experience.

So what stands between you and your NWTA?
Beyond Your Inner Child: Meet Your Inner Warrior

Friday, February 11, 2005

All Men are Invited to Investigate Worldwide Organization, 30,000 Strong

Miami, FL--(HISPANIC PR WIRE)--January 19, 2005--The Florida New Warrior Community of the ManKind Project, a nonprofit men's organization, will hold an Open Circle from 7:30 to 10 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 25 at the UU Congregation, at 7701 SW 76th Ave. The free event includes a discussion of men's issues and introduces the New Warrior Training Adventure, a weekend retreat for men offered regularly across the U.S. and in other countries. Florida's first-ever New Warrior Training Adventure will be held March 4-6 in Homestead. The MKP is a supportive network that encourages leadership, staying power, self-knowledge, comradeship, integrity, connection to feeling, and strong ties to family and community. All men are invited.

Devised in 1984 in Milwaukee by three men with backgrounds in educational psychology, engineering, and therapy, the NWTA Weekend is a modern educational training modeled on the initiation rites that traditional societies use to mark the transition from boyhood to manhood. Nearly 30,000 men have experienced the NWTA. Almost every weekend brings another training somewhere in the world, led by a small team of highly experienced men and a volunteer staff of local men. There are 35 ManKind Project centers in the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

NWTA graduates who want to continue the personal work that they began on the Weekend are invited to join small Integration Groups, weekly or biweekly self-run laboratories for developing leadership skills and teamwork; some "i-Groups" have lasted for ten or twelve years or longer. Many MKP members have gone beyond their personal
work with service projects in their communities. Some of these service projects, the ones in prisons, for example are very dramatic; projects that focus on youth groups or soup kitchens tend to be quieter, but no less significant. An affiliated organization, Woman Within, offers weekend trainings for women. The MKP’s New Warrior Training Adventure gets strong responses from participants. Will Walters, a columnist for the Fort Collins Coloradoan, wrote that he "showed up... with my [Ph.D. in calm skepticism] in one hand and my 'bull' meter on red alert in the other... I came away more in touch with my heart, the wild man in me, [and] my desire to live in integrity with who I am and what I'm doing with my life."

On the other side of the world, Tetile, an ethnic Xhosa veteran of a 2002 South African NWTA, said: Many men are walking around with empty spaces, they want to fill it up with things they don't even know. Then you get to the course [the NWTA], and you are walking around with a dragon in your body, and that scares you. So you need to pull out that dragon, then you find yourself and you have a new vision for the whole world.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:32AM (-08:00)

Valentine's Day and NWTA

Monday, February 14, 2005

Want to give your partner something to smile about, something unique, something your partner will never forget? Give your partner the real you.

Do the New Warrior Training Adventure weekend; get real with you. You will love it. Your partner will, too.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:40AM (-08:00)
Drum Is Still Beating For Men's Movement

Tuesday, February 15, 2005

By Robert L. Kaiser
Chicago Tribune Staff Writer
November 14, 1999

This afternoon he was Executive Vice President for Human Resources.

Tonight he is Great Horned Owl.

The transformation of Mark Shircel, which occurs without even loosening his yellow necktie, takes place just after nightfall on a shadowy loading dock beneath the Kennedy Expressway.

Here, between an old tire and a weathered hand truck inside a men's-clothing warehouse, Shircel and two-dozen other men gather arm-locked in a circle--all wearing stickers scrawled with the names of animals.

The unlikely group, whose members range in age from 18 to 58 and sport everything from Nikes to wingtips, includes a pastor, a factory worker, a commercial airline pilot, a medical technician, a private detective, and an executive--the 42-year-old Shircel--whose joyless workday ended with laid-off employees parading through his office to be processed out of the firm.

These are the most recent Chicago-area initiates of the New Warrior Training Adventure, a 48-hour weekend retreat for the modern American man seeking to make himself "tough and loving, wild and gentle, fierce and tolerant."

"How are you different now?" group leader George Rounds asks, exhorting the men in a hushed and solemn voice.

Soaring Eagle and Majestic Giraffe and Big Sky Moose listen raptly.
In the next room, 125 people have assembled for a ceremony in honor of the men. It's a strange and mysterious rite of passage for 25 ordinary Joes carrying on the extraordinary rituals of a men's movement that seems to be gaining newfound credibility.

The movement emerged more than a decade ago with the mythopoetic musings of Robert Bly and, perhaps somewhat presumptuously, borrowed icons and rituals for its white-male middle-class displays of angst from African and Native American cultures.

Now, with the recent publication of feminist Susan Faludi's book "Stiffed: The Betrayal of the American Male," and the release of this season's hit movie "Fight Club," the story of modern man's struggle for purpose in a fickle world of shifting gender roles is hot again.

"In today's society, men just don't communicate," Shircel said. "I mean we don't speak from our hearts. It's like, 'How's the football game, the cars, the fishing,' that kind of crap. And it just didn't feel right to me."

The New Warriors' retreat changed all that, he said.

"On the way home, I had this unbelievable feeling that I had actually talked to a man."

Undoubtedly most Americans ceased to contemplate men's groups after their highly publicized heyday in the early 1990s, when the movement peaked amid the beating of drums and the smirking of detractors. But the show has gone on, albeit largely out of the public consciousness.

The rituals continue today, not only in the woods and hills of Middle America, but in the Evanston office building where therapists Bob Mark and Buddy Portugal, co-founders of the locally based program called Men's Room: Victories of the Heart, do their work; and in rented space in Chicago's highly visible Mural Building on North Ashland Avenue--the Bigsby & Kruthers warehouse in which graduates of the New Warriors program meet in weekly sessions that build on the weekend retreats of the New Warriors.

New Warriors--the only international program of its kind and one of the oldest and largest in the country--is operated out of 27 centers worldwide by The Mankind Project, a not-for-profit group whose primary mission is to sponsor the retreats. Its Chicago center, the program's second-oldest and its largest, has graduated 3,000 initiates since opening in 1985.

For New Warriors and other such groups that have survived since America's initial fascination with them waned, little has changed--even as an unlikely champion has taken up the cause and pop culture has indoctrinated a new generation.

"I think we're a voice in the wilderness," said Dave Lindgren, program director for Mentor's Action Network, the not-for-profit Chicago organization that sponsors the follow-up sessions for New Warriors.

Popular culture and the mass media have not always been kind to the men's movement.

"We have not set out to put ourselves at the top of the public-relations heap," said Chuck Heisinger, executive director of the Mankind Project, "because we know this is a sensitive issue."

But he added: "Our organization is at a crossroads. Are we going to be just a white, middle-class men's organization, or are we going to be all-inclusive?"
New Warriors groups comprise mostly middle-class white men with a few African-Americans, Hispanics and other minorities. The retreat costs $600, but in the interest of diversity organizers sometimes reduce or waive the fee.

"In many instances, these were highly educated men who at midlife could say, 'OK, I'm tired of being a manager and tired of choking my feelings back to do this job,' " said Michael Schwalbe, a professor of sociology at North Carolina State University and author of a book on the men's movement, "Unlocking the Iron Cage."

"It takes a lot of privilege to be able to do that."

The Mankind Project co-founder is Rich Tosi, an ex-Marine and former engineer with General Motors who dreamed up the whole idea years ago while sitting at a kitchen table in Wisconsin with two other men. He initially thought the notion of men's groups was crazy.
But groups such as New Warriors do invaluable work, Tosi said.

"When groups of men are together, the energy and what is done and what is talked about is very different than if men and women are together," he said.

New Warriors is the only nationwide men's group that crosses boundaries of race, class and religion, said Robert Moore, a psychoanalyst at the University of Chicago. Many of the other large men's groups, such as Promise Keepers, are Christian.

In 2000, Heisinger expects New Warriors to place renewed emphasis on community service. Although some initiates have gone on to start or become involved in volunteer outreach programs designed to help everyone from schoolchildren to prison inmates, many others have not taken the initiative.

"I don't think we've always given them the tools," Heisinger said.

Though the overall men's movement has waned since its heyday, Men's Room co-founder Portugal said his program's retreats—which also draw on certain Native-American rituals—still attract about 25 new participants each time.

"If you have a lot of middle-age men going through their lives feeling demoralized, dispirited, mildly depressed and sort of aimless, these programs are a tonic," Schwalbe said.

At Mentor's Action Network, in the Bigsby & Kruthers warehouse, New Warriors initiates can order drums painted with an image of the animal for which they have been named—Visa or MasterCard accepted. A drum 18 inches in diameter costs $250, including standard drumsticks.

Mentor's Action Network is not part of The Mankind Project, but the two groups often work hand-in-hand. The offices of Mentor's Action Network are where initiates graduate after weekend initiations and then gather on weeknights to meet in follow-up sessions with others from their retreat group.

Juan Alegria, arriving for his group session one recent Tuesday night, greeted another initiate with a bear hug.
“My friend, Wolf with Open Eyes,” said the 39-year-old Alegria--a.k.a. Loving Hawk--as he embraced Dale Nowicki, 45.

Nowicki beamed.

"Absolutely," he said.

Alegria, a native of Nicaragua who works for a social-service agency specializing in youth guidance, went through an initiation weekend in January 1995. He served as a staff member on Nowicki’s retreat, where the two met.

Nowicki, of Riverside--a credit manager who went through initiation in January 1998--got his nickname, Wolf with Open Eyes, this way:

“I was born cross-eyed. I was in my early 30s before I would even look anybody in the eyes," he said.

Now, his gaze flinty and unwavering, he points out: "I always look everybody in the eye when I talk."

Once all the men arrived, they walked outside in the shadows under the highway and beat drums and waved smoking sage sticks at each other as motorists roared past overhead. There was Winking Hyena. And Screaming Lion. And Fearless Tiger.

The men straggled back inside and shut themselves in sparsely furnished rooms with names like Coyote Den and Bear Cave to talk and shout, chant and bellow, grunt and laugh--until it was time to go home to their wives and families. Or, in the case of 41-year-old Paul Conover, a sales consultant from Chicago who found out about New Warriors from a corporate head hunter, to a bar with a fellow New Warrior to watch the World Series over a beer.

“I like the safety," Conover said. "There's a place to go where I can express my feelings and thoughts --a safe container."

"Safe container" is a catch phrase for these men, who sometimes seem to speak a language all their own. Theirs is an exclusive club. Initiates are sworn to secrecy, are loath to allow interlopers into their midst.

Each has signed an agreement. They are forbidden from talking about what happened to them that weekend in the woods.

"It's nothing that's bad or evil. It's not a cult," Nowicki said. But he hasn't even told his wife about the retreat. "So for us, it's kind of put a little bit of a wedge between us."

"A lot of these guys may feel like they're sort of ordinary characters in their everyday lives," Schwalbe said. "Now they're part of something so powerful and important that it's not to be shared indiscriminately with others."

New Warriors is promoted and marketed almost exclusively by word of mouth.

"It's not something that can be marketed very well, with men showing up not understanding what's going on," Tosi said. "You have to have a friend say, 'Just do it, trust me.'"
Shircel, who lives in suburban Barrington, decided over a half-eaten plate of pancakes one morning to go on one of the retreats. It was at breakfast that his friend Joel Mazzenga finally talked Shircel into it.

The weekend, which begins with each man being stripped of his name and given a number, is one of submitting to the unknown, of support and confrontation, of enduring rituals such as the ancient, Native-American sweat lodge: a small enclosure with hot, steam-producing rocks in the middle. Worldwide, 15,000 men have been through this.

On a recent cold autumn night at Mentor’s Action Network the men who went on the latest retreat waited on the loading dock to step through a narrow doorway and be cheered like the home team.

“You’re the wild men,” group leader Rounds tells them.

In the next room, where the graduation ceremony would take place, someone was beating a drum. The wives and girlfriends were there that night. One wore a name tag scrawled with the words "Mrs. Golden Bear."

Another, Barb Soltysiak, smiled as she waited for her husband, 56-year-old Larry, a private detective known as Gray Wolf.

On the loading dock, Shircel stood quietly, the hint of a smile on his face. A thoughtful man with a master's degree in counseling, Shircel had been apprehensive as he drove up to Lake Geneva for the retreat.

When it was all over, he sat in his car for five minutes before starting the 45-minute drive home, his breath fuming white in front of his face, his hands shaking.

"I just couldn't believe what I'd just experienced," he said.

Now, four days after being rendered speechless, he must find the words to tell all those people out there what the weekend meant for him.

"It's time," someone said.

The men stepped through the narrow doorway and the crowd went wild.

"Ho!" Majestic Giraffe, a 41-year-old pilot for United Airlines, said to those in attendance. He pounded the floor with the talking stick, a Native-American tool that would be passed to each man before he spoke.

"Ho!" the crowd bellowed.

"I'm Ed Fernandez," Majestic Giraffe said. "I was financially secure, but my life didn't work for me. I rode the train and walked around the city but I was lonely inside.

"Now I look forward to the rest of my life."

The crowd exploded happily:

"Ho!"
Soon Shircel took the floor.

"My name is Mark Shircel--Owl," he said.

Mary, Shircel's wife of 14 years, smiled. Their son, 4-year-old Carl, abandoned a toy airplane and waved at his father from the crowd.

"I'm up here a lot, not down here," Shircel said, first pointing to his head, then to his heart. "This weekend allowed me to reach down into my heart."

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:25AM (-08:00)

48 Hours to Change Your Life

Wednesday, February 16, 2005

If you take a look at the MKP website, at the calendar section, you'll see there's at least one NWTA over 40 weekends in 2006. Between the 40 centers all over the world, and 40 weekends, do you think you can find 48 hours to change your life?

Too busy? Too afraid? Too new-age for you? Too much money?

Blah blah blah, I haven't heard an excuse yet that has held up after a man went through an NWTA.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:19AM (-08:00)

Going Deeper

Wednesday, February 16, 2005
I have a great deal of respect for the ManKind Project, and I can’t begin to explain the
degree of love that is aroused within me when I think of the amazing men—men of all
shapes and sizes, men from many walks of life—whom I have met through MKP and who
have had the courage to go through the New Warrior Training Adventure. What a ride
when all went on !!!

I am aware that for many of us the NWTA experience was our first major plunge into the
world of self-realisation, personal growth, self-transformation—call it what you like. I am
aware that for many of us this powerful dive into the inner realms of our psyche has
opened us up to an entirely new way of living. What a blessing. What a profound gift. I
give thanks to all those visionary brothers that have carried MKP from its early humble
 beginnings 20 odd years ago, to where it is today, with myself and many other men here
in NZ (and all over the world) going through this important initiatory process.

I am equally aware that for myself (and a number of other New Warriors) MKP is in fact
not the seed from which my journey into experiencing my authentic Self has sprouted
forth—but rather it was another fine petal that has now been added to the mystic rose
that was already blossoming deep within my heart and soul. This path of self-
transformation is one I have been on for much of my life, from my early teens to now. It is
a path that has many challenges, yet one that ultimately provides many wondrous fruit
from which I now nourish myself whilst here in this world. I know there are other MKP
Warriors that share a similar story in this regard.

So here’s my invitation, my encouragement, to all those MKP Men for whom NWTA was
essentially their first step into waking up to this realm of new possibilities. My invitation is
this:

Go deeper.

Allow the profound experience you had through your Warrior Weekend to become the
spring board from which you shall now lift yourself into new heights of self-exploration
and transformation. I can’t begin to tell you just how rich and profound a life awaits you.
All it takes is a clear intent and a deep surrender. I would like to suggest that MKP has
cracked open a perceived “barrier” within you, and this has allowed a new level of awareness to flow through you and be known by you. I stand to be corrected if this is not true to your experience.

Yet this, my brothers and friends, is simply the humble beginnings of something that has the power and potential to carry you and your life into an entirely new level of experience. Yet, only to the degree that you are willing to pursue that path. The break through that I know you experienced on your NWTA weekend will in fact be just one of many. It may have been the first major such breakthrough you can remember experiencing, yet I know with all my heart that many even greater breakthroughs await each of us. MKP itself had small beginnings—that first breakthrough from being just an inspiration in the minds of a few men to becoming the first NWTA weekend—and yet it has now blossomed into a global phenomena through the ongoing dedication of many, but only as the result of many even greater breakthroughs. Your own awakening also has the potential to quietly blossom into a global phenomena that will in some small way help transform this world.

There’s more. There’s more. Seek it out and IT will seek you and pluck you up from wherever you are and carry you along such a splendid path of awakening.

To whatever degree you still find yourself inwardly diverging from the experience of deep love, inner peace, and contentment… that is the degree to which there is more that your soul is waiting to share with you, to release you from, so that you may truly walk this Earth as a free man. A man free to express and live his mission in a way unique to you yet just as powerful as ANY other person you can think of from human history.

What we went through was as “initiation”. An initiation into not only what it means to be an authentic man in today’s world, but also an initiation into what it simply means to “be”. An initiation is: “The act of initiating, or the process of being initiated or introduced.”

Yes, this is the beginning of a process. We have experienced an introduction. An introduction to a new perception of Self; and any introduction worth my time and energy is an introduction that then leads into a deep and lasting relationship. In this case, not so much a relationship to some thing out there—a person, an institution, a job—but rather a relationship with Self.

Every man who has an affiliation with MKP that goes on to do deeper and even more profound inner work is naturally going to bring all their new found gold—their new-found gifts of wisdom and love—back into MKP and hence back to every other man that is part of MKP and who will ever be a part of MKP. This will in fact happen even if that man never has any further affiliation with MKP for we are all connected on unseen levels, and in going through the same initiation that all other New Warriors go through we have all been united in spirit.

This is powerful stuff. May I not underestimate it.

The ongoing self-transformation of each New Warrior will play a part in the self-transformation of every other New Warrior.

What more can I say?

I wish you all the best on your journey,
Robert L Moore, PhD - Four Initiations: Masculine Initiation

Time is late and we are in a desperate situation. Look at your political leaders and listen for anybody that is going to step up and name masculine initiation, or the lack of it, as a serious world-wide problem. You are going to have to listen a long time before you hear anybody that is even talking about this, and even longer before you come across anybody who really knows what is going on. Those in the echelons of power do not have a clue that it is not merely economics, it is not merely education, it is not merely any particular social location or television show or rap song, that is the source of our difficulties: it is the whole lack of a system of masculine initiation and eldership.

Initiation is what the New Warrior Training Adventure is about. Make the call.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:41AM (-08:00)

Don Jones on Men

Friday, February 18, 2005
From A Man Overboard:

"I think the deeper meaning of my poem 'Anthropos Rising' says something is happening in our society where men are opening themselves up to the arrival of a new whole masculinity that transcends the patriarchal, mercenary and macho ways of being a man,' he said, 'and where he steps into a new relationship with women and other men in the world."

ANTHROPOS RISING
By Don Jones

The Anthropos is rising!
The age-old, original man is coming to claim us from our shadow imitations of manhood!

Patriarchal Man is dying!
You know him well - the one who feeds on dominance over women and children -
The one who lords it over other men,
And who rapes even the earth itself in the godawful illusion that he owns even Her.

Macho Man is a zombie -
a walking dead man who tries to keep himself alive by worshipping fire power.
He stalks the earth with grotesque bravado,
threatening the life of everything that breathes,
unable to connect with anything except out of this Killer.

Mercenary Man is a joke!
He has substituted money for the true riches of life,
and has lost any sense of mission other than the bottom line.
His days are numbered, and his feverish grip upon Things will never save him.

The Anthropos is rising!
The gates of history are swinging wide to welcome
The New Man, The True Man, The Whole Man!

The man who loves woman, not in the tired, old seductive way, but genuinely from the heart, and joins with her in the embrace of equality!
The one who loves and nurtures little children because he sees in them the seeds of a new world in the making!
The one who blesses and does not curse other men because they are courageous brother warriors whose saving mission is the same as his own!

The man who reverences the earth, and protects Her, and helps Her become the majestic Mother Garden she was intended to be from the beginning.

The Anthropos is rising! The Anthropos is rising!
I beg, I plead with you to welcome with me the rising of the Anthropos - the Man who though long in coming is striding through the gates even now!

MORE>>>>

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:23AM (-08:00)

One Man at a Time, by Barbara Marlowe and Jeffrey Goldwasser

Friday, March 04, 2005

I find this to be an excellent article on what the New Warrior Training Adventure looks like from a female perspective.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
One Man at a Time

by Barbara Marlowe and Jeffrey Goldwasser

What woman hasn’t wished that men would just go off somewhere and fix themselves? Take care of their own business and learn how to feel? Become better husbands, fathers, brothers or lovers? Grow up and at long last, nurture that hurt little boy inside?

What would it be like to love such a man? To watch him grow and change and define new ways of being a man? To watch him become fierce and strong, loving and open? What challenges would women face if men really changed?

The Mankind Project (MKP) and New Warrior Training Adventure is an international men’s networking group that offers men a unique opportunity to focus on deep self-examination with integrity, accountability and connection to feeling. The mission of the Mankind Project is to change the world one man at a time.

We asked New Warriors in the Asheville area and the women who love them to speak about the challenges and rewards of MKP. For the men: What led you to men’s work? Are you different as a man because of the work? How did changing as a man affect your relationships? For the women: What feelings have you had about MKP? What changes have you observed in your loved one? Have their changes as men challenged your notion of how to be a woman?

Background

The Mankind Project and New Warrior Training Adventure started in Milwaukee in the mid-eighties and grew directly out of the feminist movement. Jeffrey Goldwasser initiated the Asheville group in 1999. Having been active in a strong New Warrior community in New England for six years, Jeffrey felt a void when he moved to Asheville and found no MKP. It was after his brother died and he felt depleted and needing men that Jeffrey decided to reach out. He found three other New Warriors and together they started an Asheville MKP. The group has since grown into a vibrant and active community with over 30 men whose age ranges from the late twenties to early seventies.

Participation in MKP begins with the New Warrior Training Adventure, a weekend for men that draws upon Joseph Campbell’s cross cultural research regarding initiation rights of men in indigenous cultures. Using the stages of separation, descent, ordeal and welcoming back into a community, the New Warrior training focuses on deep self-examination, and asks the questions: What is it to be a man in today’s world? What is your mission in life? Do you live a life of integrity and accountability? Does your life work?

Veterans of war have eloquently described the powerful bonds that form between men as they fight together against a common enemy. However, bonding experiences that occur during such destruction are at the same time wounding and can cause “a man’s heart to close as soon as it opens.” By contrast, Steve - an Asheville Warrior of seven-years, states, “something different happens when a man’s heart is cracked open in a container like New Warriors Training that is just beautiful”. Claire remembers seeing her husband right after he completed the New Warrior’s weekend: “The minute I saw him, I knew how good it was for him. He looked like he was in love with himself.” This common initiation
experience founded both in challenge and healing helps men to form a bond that most often leads to continued growth and opening. The initiation is what attracts many men to MKP.

After a man completes the weekend he is welcomed back to the MKP community and invited to participate in an on-going men’s circle called an Integration Group. It is here that men can continue their inner work, be supported, support others and keep their hearts open. The MKP has initiated more than 27,000 men. What started out as a weekend in Milwaukee is now an international organization with centers in the U.S., Canada, London, Australia, South Africa and Germany.

Why New Warrior

There are common themes as to why each man who is now an Asheville New Warrior sought out “men’s work”: lack of close male friends, the opportunity to find new models of being a man and the desire to find a place where “fierceness is welcomed”. Men often feel isolated, knowing that their lives aren’t working and not knowing where to turn. For some men, MKP is the first self-help they have ever sought out other than a program like AA. For others, MKP was the next step in an ongoing process of personal and spiritual growth. Still others approached the work with a political consciousness as part of a broader world-centric healing.

The commitment to heal with other men is at the core of MKP’s strength and a large part of its draw. Not having to explain themselves and not having to censor strong displays of emotion are important aspects of a male-only healing space. Yet for men with abusive fathers, initially learning to be with men as equals is challenging. “I was scared to death of men,” says Jim, a New Warrior of eight years. Without exception, the New Warriors we spoke to highly value their strong and intimate connections with men. Christopher, a New Warrior of eight years, sums it up by saying that he “used to, in a time of stress or depression, reach out predominately to women. Now I reach out to men.”

While women may wish for men to go off and fix themselves, the reality may also be threatening. Initial concerns many women held in common centered on what their spouses would say about them in group meetings, the confidentiality of that information, and what the other men would think of them. In reality, all the women we spoke with agreed that the men of MKP have only treated them with the “utmost respect”. “The men’s group is pretty cool,” sums up one woman.

Changes

MKP emphasizes ‘shadow work’, a process that recognizes the parts of one’s self that are repressed or denied. New Warriors are encouraged to look deeper and to explore their truth without blame, judgment or shame. At the same time, each man is held accountable for his judgments and projections by a loving band of brothers, each having committed himself to becoming whole. “New Warriors is a path of commitment to change, serious but wonderful.”

Being responsible to knowing one’s truth and communicating that responsibly is a cornerstone of the principles of MKP. Learning to express anger cleanly and directly, becoming comfortable with setting boundaries and saying no when you mean no are important lessons. In weekly Integration groups, men learn to recognize behaviors that are controlling and critical, encouraging not the suppression of these parts but rather their
integration so men are free to make choices and to not act out in hurtful ways. David W.,
a New Warrior of almost three years, is clear now: “it’s not the other person’s
responsibility if I’m angry.”

Calm strength. Tender masculinity. “Owning my balls”. Responsible fierceness. New
Warrior. MKP helps each man to take responsibility for their personal power and become
the man he was meant to be had he not been wounded or indoctrinated by family and
society. “MKP enabled me to step into my power and to appreciate that vulnerability is
part of power.” “MKP has enabled me to show up more as a man and integrate traditional
male energies that I had previously rebelled against as destructive.”

The proof is in the pudding and there was remarkable consistency in the women’s
observations of the men’s stories. Everyone we interviewed said they had witnessed the
men they love open up emotionally and come from the heart more instead of the head.
Accountability and integrity? New Warriors appear to walk their talk. Jillian witnesses her
husband becoming more honest with himself. Tirell sees her husband become more able
to speak his truth vs. people pleasing. Claire continues to see her husband grow and
become more balanced with an open heart and integrity.

Relationships

Everyone, men and women alike, agree that becoming a New Warrior changes how men
relate to themselves and others both at home and in the world. Several men attribute
MKP to helping them to be ready for and to attract a new partner. The men already in
relationships—and their partners—agreed that while sometimes the changes have been
challenging, they also have served to ultimately strengthen the relationships. For a few,
the changes may have contributed to a shaky relationship ending.

David N., a Warrior of over three years, gained self-confidence and the clarity of what in
life was important to him; that in turn enabled him to attract his new wife. Barbara is clear
that part of her attraction to David was his involvement with a men’s group that examined
new ways of being a man.

Change is often messy. Couples in relationship agree that even positive growth brings its
challenges. Peeling off ‘nice’ patterns of relating can rock the boat. As much as women
may want their men to come more from the heart or to show up more as men, it can be
hard not to guide the process. “While there have been times the support he gets from the
men feels adversarial, they have also provided us an opportunity to push further and
reach even better understandings,” says Di, who also wishes she had a group of her own
that was so committed to change. Although not officially affiliated, Woman Within shares
a similar mission to the Mankind Project. (womanwithin.org) Couples may find they need
to learn new paradigms of relating and to trust where continued growth will take them.
Integrity and accountability enhance a relationship and allow each partner to live more
fully in the truth of who they are.

Some New Warriors have become separated and divorced. We asked two men and one
soon to be ex-wife what, if any, connections there were between the changes made
through MKP and the ending of the relationship. No one attributed the ending to MKP; in
fact all spoke positively of how MKP provided support and skills to cope with the loss.

Fathers
Without question, New Warriors become better fathers by being more willing and able to open the door to their children and listen without jumping to judgment or action. Mark, a New Warrior of one and one half years, asked his 15-year-old daughter what changes she had seen in him since MKP. She replied that there was more space now between incident and action. Her father was taking more time to think and reflect before jumping in to be the leader. Jim echoed themes from other men who were abused as children and now are parents when he says that he brings his wounds to MKP to re-parent himself versus acting out the abuse with his children.

Challenges for Women
On the whole, women feel very positive about MKP. Initially for some women, there had been fear that MKP would be disempowering for them as women or take too much time away from the family. There were a few rocky starts but these issues seemed to dissipate over time. Indeed, it appears that women appreciate men greatly as they change and become more open, more authentic and more accountable. “Women tend to come from more of an emotional heart space and as men change towards that direction, we have more in common to share.” One woman confided: “as I trust his maleness and how he expresses it, it enables me to be more feminine.”

We end with an interesting paradox. Is it possible that as New Warriors help to heal the world one man at a time, women too will be challenged? Imagine new paradigms where with integrity and accountability, men and women together can let go of righteous reactive emotions, old wounds and assumptions? Embrace and explore new ways of being a man and what that means? What it means to be a woman? And with abandon, shall femininity and masculinity finally learn to dance the divine?

Barbara Marlowe recently announced the opening of InbodyMe: Explorations on the Healing’s Edge. [ 828-298-6579 bmarlowe@atlascare.net ]

Jeffrey Goldwasser is a Chiropractor in Sylva. The Asheville Mankind Project is hosting open Men’s Groups in October. The next New Warriors Training is scheduled in December. For more information contact Jeffrey at 828-627-8494.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 11:38AM (-08:00)

**Dr. SETI's New Warrior Page**

**Tuesday, March 08, 2005**

Dr. H. Paul Shuch's experience on the NWTA.

I'm out.
"Like many men of the Alan Alda generation, I was an early feminist and ardent supporter of women's causes, who endeavored to nurture my own feminine side. I prided myself in becoming more compassionate, soft, caring and giving, and inevitably lost something of my own masculinity along the way. I had become what psychologist, author and lecturer Terrance Real (seen at left, addressing a men's retreat) calls a SNAG (Sensitive New-Age Guy). My wife said that if my feminine side were any more fully developed, I'd lactate.

In a sense that was good; I had excised the violent and aggressive instincts which I believed responsible for the worst our society has to offer. But something positive was missing as well: the drive to use my own masculine power for the good of the community. I, who had once worked alongside Martin Luther King, ridden the freedom buses to Montgomery and marched on Washington, who had fought a war in the far east and raced sports cars to glory, was becoming passive. In middle age I discovered I was no longer a doer, but a watcher.

I first became aware of the Men's Movement through Bill Moyers' 1989 PBS special 'A Gathering of Men.' That program emphasized the poetry of Robert Bly (seen here at a recent Men's Gathering), the mythopoetic literature of Joseph Campbell, Grimm's Iron John fairy tale and the exuberance of Native American drumming and dance. And the men's movement is indeed these, but far more. I learned how much more by surviving the New Warrior Training Adventure.

MORE>>>>>
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:56AM (-08:00)

Rites of Passage

Tuesday, March 08, 2005

Martin Brossman writes about initiation and the NWTA.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

MORE>>>>>
Rites of Passage: an excerpt from Martin Brossman's upcoming book, 'Finding Our Fire'

After reading Robert Bly's Iron John in the early '90's, I wondered if our American society contained any meaningful rite of passage from boyhood to manhood. I started my search at about the same time I began my career as a Personal Coach because I knew that if we could identify a meaningful rite of passage the results would surely be useful for my clients. I began to realize the lack of evidence of this “element” and to understand the trouble it was causing in the lives of male clients and their partners.

Finding natural and constructive rites of passage was as important to me then as it is now. I believe that men today would greatly benefit from reconnecting to the noble initiation into manhood that was once a natural stage of growth which is present in Native American and other cultures. Drawing upon the fairy tale that describes the archetypal issues of men, Bly says only older men in a society effectively initiate younger men into manhood, and that both the older and younger need this process for their own personal development. According to Bly, a father is too emotionally close to his son to do the job. The assistance of other men in the community is necessary.

Our society has accepted initiation by peers: whether into college fraternities, athletic teams, or the dangerous and destructive initiation into street gangs. These often cruel affairs are not true rites of passage. True rites of passage can occur only when “elders” interact appropriately with the young men who are to be brought into the mature association with older men. The little-known essence of the process is that the men who participate in an initiation enter into a kind of initiation themselves. When the older men bless the younger men, something grows as well within those who give the blessing. Initiation is also mentoring in a special way.

In my years in men’s work, I have learned that initiation takes many forms. Although there is no one right way or right time, only masculinity can grant masculinity. Too long we men have turned to women to initiate us into masculine maturity. In truth, it is really up to us as men. Meanwhile many women are tired of trying to do a job that should be that of a man—introducing a boy into manhood. One of my clients, a single mother of a teenage boy, told me she felt great relief when she admitted she could not effectively mentor her son by herself. She happily worked with me when I found responsible men in the community to provide the mentoring role missing in her son’s life.

MORE>>>>
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 10:21AM (-08:00)

Spiritual Men for the New Millennium

Friday, March 11, 2005
An telling article by Jay Harden, Knowing Hawk.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Spiritual Men for the New Millennium
by Jay Harden, Knowing Hawk

The gizmos of technology keep coming at us. These marvelous, magical toys engage our minds with the world, but not our hearts. We men, their creators, reason that these are safe ways of dealing with the unrelenting speed and stress of today. At the same time, our spirits search for another kind of tool, an inner one that we can carry always and use to balance our lives. How do we men, who make the machines, keep in touch with the spirit we drew upon to create them? How do we men stay in touch with each other on a human level in this intensive electronic age? New Warrior is one answer and it has, at last, arrived in Georgia.

I've always admired Henry David Thoreau (Walden), who longed for the simplicity of life. He proclaimed "Men have become the tools of their tools." That was in 1854! How could he have known about cell phones and the Internet?

I do love my toys with all their switches, buttons, sounds, and images, but they pull me toward the machinery of life instead of the living of it. I don't want to misuse them to escape and stay comfortably numb. I want balance for myself and for my children and grandchildren who look to me for guidance."

My toys helped me realize I wanted to change my life. I was seeking a life of passion, with no more regret. I wanted to grow spiritually, become stronger, and stop running from my fears. What I really wanted was a way to heal myself so I could live deliberately in the present as Thoreau apparently did and "not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived." I found all of this, plus the gift of brotherhood, in the men's movement known as New Warrior.

New Warrior is an order of men who reclaim the sacred masculine through integrity, accountability, feeling, and action in the world. We are a voice for men's spirits and the natural warrior energy repressed today by stress and its accomplices, like our gizmos.
Robert Bly got it right in 1982 when he said that men can only learn about true manhood from other men. The decline of male mentors in our society and the increasing number of boys raised exclusively by women threaten our families and our future.

New Warrior is an honest brotherhood where we can learn and teach each other the endangered ways of masculine growth, a brotherhood that is not elite, but all inclusive. New Warrior excludes no man and seeks diversity in faith, age, color, class, sexual orientation, ability, ethnicity, and nationality.

New Warrior is unique. We conduct a weekend initiation into sacred masculinity that we call the New Warrior Training Adventure (NWTA), then offer weekly meetings (I-Groups) to integrate what was learned.

The New Warrior initiation training is based on the hero's journey of mythology and Jungian archetypes. During the weekend, we also use rituals of manhood from the spiritual traditions of Native Americans. There are no required beliefs and no one is forced to do anything. It is a weekend of adventure, games, challenges, and growth. Bly's best advice was for men to go home and form their own groups. After the weekend, we create local I - Groups where we learn how to communicate, how to act in integrity, how to confront fear, how to be personally accountable, how to connect to our feelings, and how to create healthier choices in our lives.

Because of my New Warrior experience, I am more honest with myself and others. I know how to confront the fears I carry inside. Life is clearer to me. I am able to stand in my own power more than ever and safely reveal the real me, all of me, including my beauty, my shadows, my magical child, my wise sage, and, of course, my internal warrior. For me, it is a great personal victory.

Is New Warrior for you? Only you can decide. Yet, I do know what kind of man seeks us out. He is a man who is looking for something important and is ready to find it. He is there to find a better way of being a man. He is there for himself, not someone else.

Three men founded New Warrior in 1985, training eighteen initiates. Today, there are over 15,000 New Warriors and twenty - three training centers in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and other countries. Some New Warrior I - Groups have been meeting continuously for ten years.

Here is the best news of all. The first ever New Warrior Training Adventure in Georgia will be held the weekend of November 10 - 12, 2000 at Camp Allatoona, north of Atlanta. Enrollment is limited to thirty men for this historic weekend.

We men need to care for ourselves so we can care for the world. We need to be connected, balance our joy of toys, and love ourselves more. New Warrior does that, one man at a time. The time is now and the place is Georgia.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 10:45AM (-08:00)
A Different Journey

Thursday, March 31, 2005

OK, so part of my mission in bringing ManKind Project to the world is to grab bits from the Internet and comment or present them to you for your review. My intention is to share my view of the NWTA and MKP. I would not be complete if I did not address the things I find on the Internet that are simply not true about NWTA.

I found this in a description for a Yahoo Group:

ex-mkp
32 Members, Archives: Membership required
"This group is for help and support of men coming out of the ManKind Project and have gone through the NWTA New Warrior Training Adventure. MKP is a neo pagan group that actually performs WICCA witchcraft rituals among other things. Many men have been scared of their NWTA experience and afraid to leave MKP. This group is for their help."

I almost laughed when I read this. But then I got to what is real about this for me. These men did not get what I got from the NWTA. I got something these 32 men did not get. I got a place to be me, not the pretend me that I have shown to the world to be accepted. The real me, who honors others for their differing views. So, I honor that these men did not get what I got. To wish that they had would be to wish their journey was like mine. That would be selfish of me, and maybe a bit ignorant. I can't be the judge of what these men need in their journeys. I do believe that they got what they needed for their soul, in this time and place.

So, I must say, I can attest that there is no wicca witchcraft on the weekend. I can attest that MKP is not a neo-pagan group. MKP is not any one thing. 33,000 men have done the training; I don't see how one could label it as one entity. I see that each man in MKP is an individual working on his own soul and life in his own way. Just like the men in ex-mkp.

I was, at many times, on the weekend, "scared;" it wasn't from any witchcraft or wicca activity. It was from facing my truths about my life that I had not faced before.

One last thing, anyone can leave anytime they want. There's nothing to leave or stay in. Simple.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:42AM (-08:00)

Comments

- ArtZ May 13, 2005
Let me add that MKP supports spirituality in whatever manner each man defines it. MKP does not espouse any particular religion or belief system.

I did my NWTA ten years ago and have staffed another 15. I have attended dozens of other MKP events. Never have I found anything which conflicts with my own belief system. Never has anyone tried to impose his beliefs on me or to convince me to change my beliefs.

- food4thoth June 01, 2005
I signed on to this group for a while, and found that there was only one man who had not gotten what he came for. There was also a woman whose husband had left her after the training. Everyone else appeared to be MKP warriors trying to work with these people.

His belief system doesn't want to believe that anything but witchcraft happened to him on his adventure.

Victor

The Spiritual Warrior, An Interview with Grant Schnarr

Wednesday, April 20, 2005

Grant Schnarr is an initiated man interviewed here by initiated man Reid Baer. In this interview, Grant talks about his experiences in the NWTA and MKP. Read on, brother.

When you are done, can you sit with just hearing another man's experience without judgement? That is one of the ways we listen in iGroups. We try to hear a man for his experience, not our perceptions of his experience.

This kind of environment waits for you during and after the New Warrior Training Adventure. Willing to take the risk...?
I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:03PM (-07:00)

Getting to Know Stan Sherman

Wednesday, April 20, 2005

Stan Sherman is an initiated man interviewed here by initiated man Reid Baer. In this interview, Stan talks about his experiences in the NWTA and MKP and its leadership opportunites post-NWTA. Wanna learn about the King quadrant? Then, read on.

I would ask you, what would it take for you to step into true, honorable leadership?

How is your leadership working for you in your life? Got leadership?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:15PM (-07:00)

Comments

- LionHeart July 06, 2005

Stan Sherman is indeed a great man. His passion to bring healing to the planet by putting his energy into supporting men to attend the New Warrior Training so that they have the opportunity to see and feel the power and freedom of being a man and healing the wounds that may get in the way of that is amazing. Bless all men who are willing to put themselves out there for a greater way of being.

An Interview with Robert Moore

Thursday, April 21, 2005
Robert Moore is interviewed here by initiated man Reid Baer.

The interview starts:
"No writer was more influential to me immediately following my initiation into MKP in February of 1995 (Sunrise Ranch/San Diego) than Robert Moore. His book (with co-author Doug Gillette) King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine, published by Harper San Francisco, has been the primer for my subsequent studies of men's work. Moore also introduced me to the mastery of the great grandfather of psychology - C.G. Jung.

In his newest book, Facing The Dragon – Confronting Personal and Spiritual Grandiosity, published by Chiron Publications, Moore digs deeper through personal shadow and reveals more of the power that affects us from the archetypal dragon."

In this interview, Robert talks about his view of the archetypical Dragon. In my work within NWTA and MKP, I have found powerful growth in acknowledging my shadows that keep me from living my life in its fullness.

Wanna learn about the Dragon and shadow? Then, read on.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:28AM (-07:00)

Initiated Man Mark Gerzon on the NWTA
Thursday, April 21, 2005
"The MKP weekend is about profound transformations of darkness into light," he explained. "C.G. Jung wrote about the shadow. The training is about the shadow. The purpose of being in a body is to transform darkness into light. That transformation only happens if you dare to look at the dark. If we get together as men and pretend everything is alright and life is working great … if we start with that kind of illusion and never focus on the dark … then men will never transform themselves. Look at the world and the men who are leading us in America, Al Qaeda, Israel or Palestine. The planet is being shaped by these men who are unwilling to look at their own shadows."

Mark Gerzon

Are you willing to look into the eyes of your shadow and see what is there for you? I can assure you that the world will look different on the other side.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:48AM (-07:00)

Comments

- werwath  May 04, 2005
The new warrior training was the best $550 (it cost $550 in 1993) I ever spent in my life.

- Geoff  May 04, 2005
Thanks for starting the blog I underwent training at Sopley in the UK in 2004. I was profoundly sad for most of the weekend at the end I felt exhilarated and at the post weekend gathering I was able to stand up and speak in front of an audience, with confidence, for the first time ever. So yes I gained a lot. However, I'm still very uncomfortable with some of the rituals and mumbo jumbo talk that occurs so now very uncertain on how to proceed. Oh I did the I-group sessions as well. Loving Lion
Daddy, what did you do in the men's movement?

Thursday, June 23, 2005

My take on an article by Paul Zakrzewski as it appeared in the Boston Globe online on 6.19.2005 entitled “Daddy, what did you do in the men's movement?”

I have snipped out parts that I will comment on, but I suggest you read the entire article.

SNIP>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Today, however, the drums have largely fallen silent. While there are still weekend retreats - for example, the ManKind Project, which boasts more than two-dozen centers worldwide, conducts "New Warrior Training Adventures" for some 3,000 men every year - these are mostly affairs for the already initiated.

SNIP>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

There are 38 centers. As far as the statement about "these are mostly affairs for the already initiated," well this mistates what the NWTA is about. The NWTA is an initiatory weekend. You can only do it once. So, to say it is mostly for the already initiated is not correct.

SNIP>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Unlike the Promise Keepers, which held weekly check-in sessions, there was no follow-up work done once participants left their weekend retreats. "It was an event, a spectacle," says Michael Kimmel, professor of sociology at SUNY Stony Brook and the author of "Manhood in America," a 1997 cultural history of masculinity. "You were supposed to be changed by it and then go home."

SNIP>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

This is not true in regards to the ManKind Project. I judge you will be changed, and when you go home, in the very next next week you can start attending a follow-up, weekly, integration group. Not just for a while, either. As long as you need or want to. I am in my 3rd year in the second of two iGroups (the first, I spent 1 year in).

SNIP>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

What's more, the movement itself could never get beyond the fact that unlike the feminist movement - which itself had lost steam by the 1990s, as women achieved more economic and financial power - Bly and his followers never had any clear political agenda to drive them forward.
I have heard this before. It is true for me; the men's movement isn't about politics or an agenda. It's about being the man you were intended to be. Of course, the media had a field day with this, but it was no surprise.

Even if we're not likely to see maverick poets and Jungian therapists on television specials and magazine covers again any time soon, one thing is clear. The Bly-style men's movement highlighted a powerful urge for men to commune with each other that persists today, even among those who wouldn't be caught dead within miles of a drumming circle.

Yep, men need to be around other men. You got that right. I need to be around men who are honest with me and the other men around them. I need men to stand in their integrity and responsibilty. The men I find in MKP are working that model.

Are you ready to work that model?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 03:21PM (-07:00)

Shedding the legacy of patriarchy

Tuesday, June 28, 2005

Here's an informative article called from the Mountain Xpress in Asheville, NC.

I like it's take and it is fairly accurate.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Richard Tomaskovic doesn't seem like the kind of guy who'd bother with a support group. At 71, the former technical writer and engineer is a witty and engaging talker who seems more active than a lot of people half his age. The man positively radiates a sense of purpose and competence.

Yet every week for the past year-and-a-half, Tomaskovic and a dozen or so other area residents have gotten together to dig deeper into themselves and the challenges they face.

"We talk about our issues and feelings," he explains. "We support each other in looking into those areas of our lives where we want to change."

These men are members of The ManKind Project, a Malone, N.Y.-based nonprofit dedicated to helping every man become a better person. And if the mission sounds somewhat vague, participants swear by the group's methods (though the specifics are kept under wraps).

"What The ManKind Project does is provide a structure," says Tomaskovic, a kind of unofficial spokesman for the local group. "It is a forum to just hang out and talk about our real feelings, without being afraid of the pressure that we find in the rest of the world."

They aren't failures. They aren't crybabies. Many are highly successful in their professional lives, say group members. And for all the talking, there's a lot of listening, too.

"The male norm is macho," says Tomaskovic. "It's about presenting yourself as tough and unemotional. Everyone has to be competitive and in a pecking order." The problem with that view, he says, is that it's not realistic: Men aren't always tough. Men have emotions; men sometimes need help. But there aren't many places where they can learn how to recognize and process those emotions in a safe, supportive environment.

One key theme in their ongoing discussions is the need for personal responsibility. Other frequent topics include personal integrity and trust.

A rite of passage

There's more to joining The ManKind Project than simply showing up, however. Prospective members must first attend The New Warrior Training Adventure, a kind of emotional boot camp that the group says was inspired by a fusion of Jungian psychology and the initiation rites of many primitive cultures.

"It is challenging on many levels," says Tomaskovic. "But it's not an abusive situation, and there's no physical danger."

It also isn't cheap, costing anywhere from $600 to $800 for a three-day retreat, depending on the region and the number of participants. (Scholarships and payment plans are available through the local groups.)
Launched in Milwaukee in 1985, The ManKind Project now has 38 regional training centers and claims more than 30,000 members worldwide. The local groups are more or less independent and self-sustaining, though they make voluntary payments to help support the national organization, says Tomaskovic. His group, one of four in the Asheville area, has been meeting for at least seven years.

Seeking to boost enrollment, however, the national organization has been encouraging local groups to try something new: letting men who might be curious attend part of one of the weekly meetings. If they like what they see, the thinking goes, they might be more willing to shell out the money to take the New Warrior training.

"These men make commitments to change their lives," Tomaskovic explains. "They want to be better partners, more responsible, and to break old habits. We can't make people change their lives, but what we can do is point out to them when they aren't keeping their commitments."

Take Tomaskovic himself, for example. Before joining The ManKind Project, he says, he had trouble being assertive and always felt ill at ease with his own "peculiarities."

Today, however, Tomaskovic says he feels like a new man.

"People tell me that I'm different, even in ways that I don't see," he reports. "I've started to make changes in the relationships in my life. I'm more able to identify what I really want, and I'm more able to present myself as a complete person."

What kind of man does Tomaskovic think would be most helped by The ManKind Project? What kinds of problems does the training help to solve?

"It's not about having problems," he says. "It's just about men expressing who they really are. These men are no different than any other man. The only difference is that they are choosing to take a look at themselves and [try] to change their lives."

Testing the waters

In recent weeks, The ManKind Project has begun holding free, open meetings locally. Two more such gatherings are planned before the group's next initiation rite, The New Warrior Training Adventure (scheduled for Friday, May 20). The informal, men-only sessions will be held at the Unity Church of Asheville (130 Shelburne Road in West Asheville) April 27 and May 1. For more information, contact Richard Tomaskovic at 299-3924, or visit The ManKind Project's Web site (www.mkp.org).

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 11:15AM (-07:00)

**Men say training has made them better men**

**Tuesday, June 28, 2005**
Here’s a good article called Men say training has made them better men from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Photo caption: After sharing his feelings about the recent death of his mother, Bill Fleischman of St. Louis County is comforted by the touch of other members of his New Warriors group. (Anthony Souffle/P-D)

I find it very surprising that a group would allow a woman to sit in the circle. I appreciate the coverage, but it is very unusual and I actually have never heard it being done before. These are men’s circles. We keep them that way for many reasons.

All in all, a fair assessment of the iGroup experience.

I’m out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 11:36AM (-07:00)

Comments

- ArtZ

OFW,

I am one of the men who agreed to let this reporter (who coincidentally happened to be a woman) sit in on one of our i Group meetings. It was quite a stretch, to be sure! And I am very glad that we did it. It certainly proved that good work can happen even when a "stranger" sits in the circle.

The key factor was intention. Both the reporter and the photographer came with an intention to learn about and respect what we were doing.

-- Art Z.

Initiation, defined

Wednesday, June 29, 2005
Initiation

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

"Coming from the Latin, initiation implies a beginning. The related term, initiate, means to begin or start a particular action, event, circumstance, or happening. But it is also an ending as existence on one level drops away in an ascension to the next.

An initiation is also a ceremony by which a person is introduced into a society, or other organized body, especially the rite of admission into a secret society or order.

Normally an initiation rite would imply a shepherding process where those who are at a higher level guide the initiate through a process of greater exposure of knowledge. This may include the revelation of secrets, usually reserved for those at the higher level of understanding."

I think that last paragraph speaks to the New Warrior Training Adventure most directly. When I look at my experience in MKP, I see where my life has stepped up to another level. The secrets have been my own. They have been tough to place into the light; to see them for the damage I have done with them.

I think all men are ready for this process. It was a normal part of boy/men life up until just a very few decades ago. Why should we turn our backs on a process that has worked in our genetics for several thousand years?

Walk with me and the 30,000 other men in MKP. Walk with me and all the initiates through time.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:31AM (-07:00)
The year is 1984. Fate brings together three men with very distinct personalities: Ron Herring, Bill Kouth and Richard Tosi. The first, a psychotherapist and social activist for peaceful change, the second a teacher working with intensive retreat-style accelerated learning events, the third an executive and former Marine — a “man’s man.”

Their discussions focused on what they perceived as the crisis of male identity — contemporary men were losing a sense of personal mission, responsibility to community and their connection to the inner world of healthy emotion. Initially, the result of their discussions was a weekend retreat called “Wildman Weekend,” which later became known as “The New Warriors Training Adventure.” Men who experienced the retreats were reported to be so profoundly changed that follow-up seminars began to be scheduled and soon “The ManKind Project” (MKP) was born. MKP now has certified centers at 27 communities in the United States, Canada, England, and most recently, Germany. MKP participation is inclusive, non-political, and non-sectarian, and programs are designed to capture the essence of what it means to be male through discussion, bonding and mutual experience.

Today there are more than 100,000 people who have been directly involved with this group. There are several offshoots of MKP, including a women’s version, “Women Within,” which was founded by wives of MKP participants. Bosses have endorsed and even required the weekend for their employees. In at least one known case, a judge refers repeat offenders to the ManKind Project. Perhaps the most dramatic and ground-breaking spin-off is the “Inside Circle,” where correspondence between a Folsom Prison...
inmate and a friend on the outside who became involved with MKP, led to a Weekend Warrior-influenced program being conducted in the prison. The program reported a great deal of success and a similar program is now being used in prisons in Massachusetts and Kentucky.

The "New Warrior Training Adventure" (NWTA) is an initiation process that includes three parts: "The Descent," "The Ordeal" and "The Homecoming." Confidentiality is highly stressed in all MKP events. "The Descent" incorporates a radical departure from the man's normal life into a completely different realm. "The MKP Web site states, "Men are asked to ‘pull the plug’ on their mainframe computers (heads) when they reach the training. Everything that occurs takes place in a totally different realm. The man is challenged by a staff of 25 to 35 men to unshackle his belief system and step into something new."

For "The Ordeal" aspect of the training, the man must look closely at where he is in his life — whether he's holding his own or having a hard time — and look at what's working and what isn't. The "Wildman" metaphor of the original name for the training speaks to the major shift that participants are called upon to make. The "Wildman" aspect is loosely based on the "Iron John" story in Robert Bly's classic book of the same name.

Claude Winton, local Mankind Project veteran and director of Serendipity Group, a local counseling center, said, "In the 'Iron John' story a little boy cuts his finger on the lock that jails the Wildman. This is the wound that we use as a metaphor . . . the MKP Warrior’s Weekend is about finding parts of ourselves that get in the way of being who we really are. These issues come up as wounds. To be true to myself, I need to look at where I received those wounds and learn from them."

For "The Homecoming" a man is called upon to find and articulate a personal mission for his life. "The best analogy is in nature, where every plant that grows comes from a seed. In order for the seed to manifest a plant, whether that plant be for our consumption and nurturing, industry, or simply something beautiful to look at – that seed has to ‘burst’ open," according to the MKP Web site. The weekend retreat takes an inside-out approach to fostering positive social change. Optimally, each man will come back and positively affect the lives of each person with whom he comes in contact.

For Winton, MKP became an integral part of his personal mission. Winton believes his experience with the project has allowed him to affect others in a more positive manner on all levels of his life. What he has gained in his experiences with MKP, he is able to pass on to people in his support groups, clients, friends and family.

At the heart of The New Warrior Training Adventure is the "sacred masculine" model. Along with the "Iron John" story, other allegorical stories are used in the teachings, such as the mythic Green Man and Oak King. The "Sacred Masculine" model calls for men to create a vision of a world in which they would like to live. In "Integration Groups" conducted after the initial weekend training, men’s progress toward their vision is considered. "We are held accountable for our actions through the integration groups," Winton said. "There are other empowering seminars and weekend retreats that do the same kinds of things. It is the eight-week integration group, led by a trained facilitator, that sets MKP apart."

Both Winton and Ross Lucas of "Shepard Staff Counseling Services" in East Lansing are graduates of NWTA and active participants of MKP. Their varied backgrounds highlight
the diversity of backgrounds of the average MKP participant. Part of the MKP training is to accept individuals for who they are rather than considering their racial/ethnic/cultural background or sexual orientation. One of the main points of the weekend is that individuals can completely disagree on major issues and still respect and support each other.

Winton, a Detroit native, had been in and out of trouble for years. He found MKP through a member of a 12-step program he attended. Lucas holds several degrees, including a doctorate in philosophy, a master’s in divinity, a doctorate in psychology and accreditation as a pastoral counselor. He found out about MKP through his position as a counselor.

Despite feeling well-adjusted and in a good position in his life, Lucas said he joined MKP because he wanted closer and more meaningful relationships with other men. While attending the first “Warrior Weekend” ever given in Germany, he found himself in a profoundly meaningful experience with another man. He had gone to Germany with a team of MKP veterans and during a discussion with one German man, discovered that each of them had family members two generations before in opposing prisoner of war camps. Even today, the experience of being in that mutually supportive relationship with someone whom had once been considered an enemy gives him strength.

“The thing I value most . . . is being with men and being able to completely be myself and not be judged,” Lucas says. “The people sitting next to me may completely disagree with what I’m saying but they do not judge.”

Both Winton and Lucas are convinced that the Mankind Project is a successful vehicle for change and personal growth. In their experience with the project, they testify to seeing men who had been near suicide back away from that decision, men near divorce rescue their marriages, and men come to terms with their sexual orientation. Although they describe the weekend as emotionally strenuous, Lucas reports that only one in 1,000 or so men does not finish the training. There are only two types of people who aren’t good candidates for this program, Lucas said, “those who have not had enough life experience and those who do not yet have the emotional stability to take an honest look at themselves.”

Lucas also said that through MKP a man can become aware of his emotions and how the emotions manifest in the physical body as posture or as symptoms of illness. He warned, however, that despite the great benefits and dramatic changes MKP can make in a man’s life, it should not be a replacement for therapy with a trained counselor.

“At its core, this is about celebrating individuality,” Winton said. “It’s about sharing and growing together.”

 Whew-weee-ye-haaaaa! Good stuff. I about know about the 100,000 people statement, but the rest is pretty good.

I’m out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:04AM (-07:00)
This article speaks to a great deal of issues around this kind of men's work. The ManKind Project provides a rich environment for change. Read this article and see what fits for you.
Also, for those of you with female partners, check the last few paragraphs for their experiences with initiated men.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

From Natural Awakenings Magazine

The Mankind Project Transforms Men's Hearts

BY S. ALISON CHABONAIS

This year another 3,000 men will join a worldwide brotherhood of 30,000 adult males who are helping each other make the interior journey into manhood.

Transformation from a life of the head—"What I must do"—to a life of the heart—"What I must be"—takes commitment. It also requires a community of men.

The ManKind Project, started in the United States two decades ago, offers hundreds of such communities linked through a network of 32 independent educational training centers on four continents. Local groups of men regularly meet to mentor one another, express themselves and share experiences. Their candid heart-songs tell of changed lives, including the lives of everyone around them.

I remember the day I met one of the most admirable men I know," says Stan Sherman, a national sales manager from Philadelphia with a Barcelona-based textile company. "He asked, 'What is the most important thing in your life?'" Listening to the younger man's long list of masculine priorities, the elder bluntly interrupted, "You're wrong. The one thing you must do is learn to take better care of yourself. Then you'll be able to start taking care of what's on your list."

That pivotal moment set Sherman on a road to self-discovery that's improved every facet of his life. He now devotes hours each week helping to pass along such wisdom as enrollment coordinator for The Mankind Project, believed to be the oldest and largest group of its kind.

The Journey from Head to Heart

Group leaders liken each man's odyssey to that of being lost in a dark forest with no way out. In a New Warrior weekend initiation, 30 to 40 compassionate volunteers lead 32 newcomers out of the woods to a road that will take each one home to himself. At that point, a man has three choices. He can turn around and head back into the forest. He can sit by the roadside. Or he can start walking up the road.

Les Sinclair, a life coach and Mankind Project global support team coordinator from Los Angeles, explains the concept. "Society’s old definitions of a warrior meant life-long physical battles with external enemies," he says. "A new warrior enters spiritual battle with inner demons. He becomes a man who is awake, conscious, loving and fiercely alive." He also embarks on a self-defined mission that enables him to step into his life in a
totally different and more satisfying way.

The fruits of this new way of life may look like a higher sense of purpose, a better marriage, good fathering, fresh career direction and community volunteerism. Results show in less anger and more compassion. A new warrior has an inner smile. He listens and communicates better. From any measure, once he’s set on the road, “He’s not the same man,” says Jeffrey Goldwasser, a chiropractor in Asheville, North Carolina.

Benefits start with the first weekend of training. Personal growth continues through eight weeks of follow-up Integration Training, which later morph into local Integration Groups known as I-Groups.

Trust is a huge issue for men schooled on competition as the road to success. “Men need to feel safe with each other,” says Goldwasser, who serves as I-Groups chair for the Carolinas Center. “They need a place where they can freely express anything they need to, without having to explain or censor themselves.” In his own I-Group experience, several men have become close confidantes, a sort of surrogate family. He asks, “If we can’t get along with people at home, how can we hope to get along with people on the other side of the world?”

Paul Fiske, a real estate investment consultant and Enrollment Coordinator for The Mankind Project in Santa Fe, says that knowing how to look another man in the eye jumpstarts the journey. Having permission to open his heart to articulate hurts, hopes and dreams allows a man to bump up against what scares him. “When he feels a point of resistance, it’s a prompt to examine what’s inside that’s holding him back,” says Fiske.

Like a good therapist, fellow warriors provide a safe context for a man “to touch the deepest, most essential truth of who he is.” All understand that everyone’s a work in progress. Holding up a clear mirror and sounding board can be a veritable “spa for the soul.” “People can’t attack you when you speak from the heart,” says Sinclair. “I can now speak honestly rather than putting on some show.”

New Warrior Principles

Responsibility. Accountability. Personal truth. Living a life of integrity. These are among the themes that characterize the conversation of a new warrior.

Mankind Project co-leader Phillip Beverly, a Chicago college professor, asks weekend warriors a key question. “Is your life working for you?” Hard-won answers can open new realms of healing.

For most, it takes a personal crisis to smack a man into awareness of the need to radically change the way he lives his life. Inevitably, he runs up against unwanted consequences to his behaviors. By owning up to the good, bad and ugly parts of himself, he commits to being accountable for changing those behaviors and to stop hiding behind masks of anger, distrust, isolation or addictions. As he drops old habits for healthier choices, his whole being responds. As he comes to see himself as good and worthy, and good enough, he emerges from the shadows of old wounds to find a good man inside. Life finally feels good.

“Too many men’s bodies hide a lost little boy inside,” observes Fiske, “One that’s still finding his way, not yet grown into the rich fullness of the man he is meant to be.”
Soul-challenging discussions, exercises and activities in the new warrior’s training toolbox include team-building workshops, classes, coaching, journaling, light-hearted games, visualization and meditation. Trainers and support groups offer a banquet of suggestions and possibilities. Each man’s choices decide how he’ll embrace the essence of his own masculinity.

Men are thirsty for this work,” says Sherman. “It gives them permission to live from the inside out. And it empowers them to carry out a personal mission of service to the world. I’ve never seen anything like it.”

The Mankind Project crosses and connects cultures, economic and political boundaries, and spiritual practices. It attracts ordinary men of all ages from all walks of life who are tired of feeling demoralized, dispirited, depressed or aimless. It appeals to men who are tired of stuffing down the unacceptable worrying parts of themselves into the subconscious realm. For these men, the New Warrior movement supplies a clean invigorating tonic.

“The power these men emanate is a grounded centeredness,” says Frederick Whitmeyer, Mankind Project center director for the Carolinas. “They know their truth. They are calm, clear and confident in their speech. They have faith in their mission and their essential contribution to the world.” Often they are found sharing the redeeming power of men’s work in prisons, juvenile detention centers, residences for traumatized children and young men’s mentoring programs.

To join, all a man needs to do is sign up for a weekend. Many hear about it from a friend.

Through establishing local circles of men, The Mankind Project not only is expanding inner boundaries, it’s opening international borders. “Imagine,” says Beverley, “in countries here and abroad, men sitting in a circle opening their hearts to someone they may have had in their gun sights. It shows us that anything’s possible.”

What Women Say about New Warriors

It’s no secret that women respect men who love good and demonstrate responsibility. They love to live with a man who has the true shine of manhood upon him. The Mankind Project has a track record of delivering such men, and women are rejoicing. Here’s what they’re saying:

“I remember the fear, isolation and anger that I saw in my partner’s eyes when he left our house for his weekend. I also remember the look of grim determination I saw on his face. He said he wanted to change his life because whatever he had been doing was not working. I sat with my fear all weekend. A joyous man returned to our house Sunday evening. His eyes were bright and clear. His inner peace and excitement for life were visible. He had a gentleness in his spirit that he had revealed before only occasionally and guardedly. I was witnessing a transformation I could not even have imagined! And that was just the beginning…”~ Carmen Stallings Finn

“My husband hid behind work rather than being a complete partner in our family. He missed swim meets, Little League games…and I think his excuse (making money for them) was really an excuse to keep intimacy away. After he did the New Warrior weekend, a new man began to emerge, one who was still scared and scarred, but also
tender and no longer afraid to show his deep love for his family."~ Abby Lederman

"My man came in the front door and looked into my eyes and stayed there long enough to see my heart and soul. He'd never done this before in all the years we've been together."~ name withheld "My husband came home a new person. Now, what he says and what he does consistently 'line up.' The experience was such a gift to both of us. Thank you!"~ Deborah Saas

For more information on the nonprofit Mankind Project and a monthly schedule of regional New Warrior training weekends, visit mkp.org. Centers are located in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Europe. In the U.S., the weekend training typically costs $650 depending on accommodations.

Wives and girlfriends of Mankind Project members are welcome to attend new warrior graduation ceremonies. Some also pursue their own complementary path to a better life through weekend seminars sponsored by Woman Within. For information see WomanWithin.org.

S. Alison Chabonais writes for corporate marketing teams and publishes in national and regional magazines. She may be reached at 239-495-2112 or achabonais@earthlink.net

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:33PM (-07:00)

**Confessions of a New Warrior**

**Monday, July 18, 2005**

Here's a terrific article about a british man's journey to, and through, the NWTA. I enjoyed his deep sharing of his experience. I hope you do as well. Yeah, it's a long read, but is changing your life worth 15 minutes?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>
My mother and sister are suspicious. They think I’ve joined a cult. Their evidence is that I used to be a cynic with a healthy disdain for the New Age. Now I wear a talisman round my neck, beat a drum and spend long weekends at secret locations in the country where I have to pay for the privilege of sleeping on the floor with strangers.

Then there’s my personality. By turns moody and morose, I used to think nothing of interrupting people mid sentence. Now I hug men fondly and listen attentively even when I know the other person is talking claptrap.

They’re right of course: I have changed, but I believe it’s for the better.

It all began last year when I was invited by a friend to attend a meeting at my son’s primary school. The meeting was to be held in the evening – when the children were in bed – and was exclusively for men. He handed me a flyer:

“Are you living the life you dreamed of when you were a boy, where everything and anything was possible? Or have you compromised your dreams, your ideals, and your vision for what your life might look like some day? If so, you have lots of company, for most of us today are in just this situation. We have lost our vision and we have lost our mission, our deeper reason for being alive.”

On the reverse was a globe with a hopeful orange and yellow logo. It read: “The ManKind Project: Changing the world one man at a time.”

The emphasis on men set my journalistic antennae twitching. In the early 1990s I had interviewed some of the early pioneers of the men’s movement in the UK – men who liked to quote Robert Bly and get wild in the woods – and as I read the accompanying blurb it sounded suspiciously familiar. The Mankind Project was holding a ‘New Warrior Training Weekend’ at a secret location in the British countryside in June. The weekend was billed as an ‘intense adventure’ aimed at reconnecting men to their ‘healthy warrior energy’. By getting me to confront my ‘shadow’ self, MKP promised to put me in touch with my ‘inner masculine’ and return me to the state of grace I’d enjoyed as a boy so that I would be free to live my life ‘with integrity and without apology’.

When I read the small print, my cynicism deepened. Although I would be able to meet other men who had completed the training at my son’s school, they wouldn’t be able to discuss what had transpired on the weekend in any detail. Oh, and if I decided to sign up I’d have to come up with £500 and agree to bring enough food to feed myself and three other men!

I was incredulous. “Let me get this straight,” I asked my friend. “You want me to pay £500 but won’t tell me anything about the weekend, not even where we’ll be staying?”

“That’s right,” replied Matthew.

“How do I know it’s not a cult?”

Matthew shook his head and smiled a secret smile. “I guess you don’t but if you’re not
satisfied afterwards we’ll gladly give you your money back."

“All of it?”

“Yes – as long as you agree to stay through Saturday – all of it.”

Well, I’ve never been able to resist a challenge and when I attended the taster evening
my curiosity deepened. I was expecting a group of men in open-toed sandals reeking of
woodsmoke and patchouli oil. Instead, I was struck by how normal they looked, how like
the men I saw commuting to offices every day on the buses and tube. The only omission
was there were no black or Asian men.

As they began to speak about their lives and what they had got out of the weekend, my
sense of identification deepened. They’d done their fair share of one-night stands, booze
and hard drugs. They’d hitched a ride with Mammon on the juggernaut of conspicuous
consumption but had come up empty each time. One man, dressed casually in Levis and
a Zara zip-top said that before he’d gone on the weekend he didn’t consider that he had
“any particular problems”.

“I thought my life was sorted,” he said.

That was when I made my decision – what would turn out to be the first step in an
ongoing journey. After all, who was I to presume I was different?

It wasn’t the first time I’d taken a risk with my life. A few years before I’d embarked on a
series of expeditions to South America. Accompanied by a team of Indian porters, I’d
negotiated precipices, cataracts and sheer mud walls without any means of contacting
my wife or family should anything go wrong. What dangers could a mere 48 hours in the
English countryside hold?

The first hint that I might be entering unknown territory came with MKP’s welcome pack,
containing a lengthy medical questionnaire and an insurance waiver. Was I in good
health? Had I ever suffered from any form of mental illness? Did I understand the ‘risks’
that were involved in the training? According to the accompanying blurb, the weekend
would challenge me to the limit of my physical and emotional capabilities: “It means
putting oneself on the line… becoming vulnerable. It means confronting the fear within
that wants to keep us small and safe.” The pack also contained a map with directions to
the training centre and a confidentiality agreement. If I signed up for the weekend I would
have to undertake not to reveal what went on in the training or specific processes.

As the date of the weekend neared my anxiety levels shot up. My wife shared my alarm,
but for different reasons. Why, she wanted to know, were only men allowed to attend?
Did the ManKind Project have a problem with women and, if so, where would my search
for the inner masculine leave her?

A few days before I was due to depart I received a phone call from a man at MKP.
Identifying himself as my ‘mentor’ he asked whether I had all the information I needed. I
said I did.

“Are you ready?” he asked.

I wanted to reply “ready for what?” Instead, I shrugged inwardly and told him I was. I still
MKP is the brainchild of three men: Ron Hering, an American university professor (now deceased), Rich Tosi, a General Motors engineer and ex-Marine from Milwaukee, and Bill Kauth, a self-styled ‘feminist’ therapist from Wisconsin. The original impetus came from Kauth. Envious of the empowering and supportive networks he saw being created by women in feminist workshops in the early 1980s, Kauth started looking for ways to create something similar for men. Recruiting Tosi, whom he’d met at a couples’ seminar, they flew to California and enrolled on a weekend run by Justin Sterling, an early guru of men’s empowerment who modelled his training on Werner Erhard and ‘Est.’ Although there were many aspects of the weekend that Tosi and Kauth considered ‘unsafe’, Sterling’s central insight – that men needed a separate ‘container’ away from women in which to explore their emotions and grow – struck a chord. On their return to the mid-West, Kauth recruited Hering, whom he knew through Gestalt therapy, and together the concept of the ‘New Warrior Training Weekend’ was born.

The first happening, held in Milwaukee in January 1985, attracted 17 men. Today MKP boasts 30,000 members worldwide and the British chapter, which is about to celebrate its tenth anniversary, counts nearly 1,000 men on its rolls. One of its recent high-profile signings is the former Arsenal double winner and England right back, Lee Dixon.

“In 22 years as a professional footballer I reached some incredible emotional highs,” Dixon wrote in a recent MKP newsletter. “I thought I had experienced it all. I was wrong. Apart from the birth of my two children, the New Warrior Training Adventure was the most powerful, fantastic, inspiring experience of my life. I would urge every man to enrol. It will amaze you.”

Like many New Age groups, MKP’s literature highlighted the emptiness of Western consumer culture, the increase in stress-related illnesses and the spiralling divorce rate. It pointed to the breakdown of family values and the fact that one in three children was growing up fatherless. According to MKP, these social ills coupled with the pressure to pay the mortgage were so overwhelming that it was little surprise that many men chose to deny their emotions and retreat into their heads. But such a survival strategy came at a cost. “We think that it’s all happening to someone else, somewhere else… In the meantime, somewhere deep within us – in our hearts and souls and bodies – we have become comfortably numb.”

I had little quarrel with this analysis. Despite the ‘gazzafication’ of popular culture, a recent survey of male attitudes found that nearly a quarter of men claim to have never cried, and that 87 per cent of men versus 68 per cent of women have difficulty talking about their feelings with friends of the same sex. These figures should not come as a surprise. For most men – and I include myself in this statement – our careers are a shield. We embrace work and the pressures that come with it precisely because it gives us an excuse not to address the tougher emotional questions, concerning the ways in which our lives and relationships may, or may not be working for us. I recognised this pattern in my own life and I also recognised it in the lives of many of my friends – men who had succumbed to addiction or whose marriages had splintered when the pressures of work had become overwhelming. But where I took issue with MKP was over its emphasis on fathering and male empowerment. In his now classic primer on masculinity, Robert Bly takes the story of Iron John – the mythological ‘hairy man’ drawn from the Grimm brothers’ fables – and turns him into an archetype, a representation of the ‘wild man’ within all of us. The problem today, Bly argues, is that men have been neutered. They
have lost touch with that ancient warrior energy, with the ritual processes and tribal initiation ceremonies that used to mark a boy’s passage to manhood. Consequently, we have no means of connecting with the inner wildness we need in order to, as Bly puts it, ‘steal the key from under our mother’s pillow’.

Bly argues that all men are wounded in some way, typically by their fathers. It is only by acknowledging this wound and confronting our ‘shadow selves’ – the mark, if you like, that that hurt has left on our personality and behaviour – that we can grow psychologically and become men in a fuller and more rounded sense. Of necessity this process cannot be undertaken within the family but has to be initiated from outside, by male mentors. That is why when boys reached puberty in tribal societies the elders came for them and took them far from the village to teach them how to be warriors. This is the ancient wisdom that has been lost from our society, the process that MKP on its training weekend seeks to revive.

My problem was I didn’t feel I’d been wounded by either my father or my mother. I’d had a pretty idyllic childhood. Of course it wasn’t perfect – whose is? – but my suspicion was that at some point someone on the weekend would start digging and that they wouldn’t be satisfied until they found a fault. I also had deep reservations about a group whose starting point was that men had to separate themselves from female society in order to become better fathers, sons and lovers. Wasn’t there a danger that the opposite might happen, and that by tapping into my warrior energy I might become more tyrannical and intolerant of women than perhaps I had been before?

I couldn’t have been more wrong. Like Lee Dixon, what I saw at MKP blew me away. Unfortunately, the confidentiality agreement I signed forbids me from describing specific details or other men’s experiences. However, there is nothing to stop me talking about my own journey. As the deadline for the weekend approached, I told myself I was doing it because it was a challenge and I’d be a coward not to go through with it. But behind that story lay other, subconscious narratives. Like many British men, I enjoy football and the camaraderie of the pub. I’m lucky to have close male friends, many of whom stretch back to childhood. But I have always felt there was something missing in these friendships. We talk about sport, work and sometimes my children and marriage, but rarely about emotions. If they hurt me, I keep that disappointment hidden. And if I think they are spinning me a yarn, I don’t challenge them to be authentic.

The older I have become the wearier I’ve grown of these games. I crave depth, not shallowness – the sort of emotional honesty that I see my wife enjoying in her circle of women friends. But to initiate such a process in normal male society is a fraught undertaking. Men are wary, watchful. They mask their true feelings behind smart remarks. If I remove my own mask I become vulnerable and risk ridicule. And if I challenge my friends to remove theirs I take the risk of giving offence and being rejected.

At the taster evening I’d seen men being frank and honest with each other, and a group of strangers about the way they had failed their girlfriends, their children and ultimately themselves as men. I’d wanted to enter that circle and be a part of it. I wanted some of what they’d got.

There was also another reason why I signed up. Although I’d enjoyed a warm relationship with my father, part of me resented him for not showing me the leadership I craved when I faced life-determining decisions. These feelings had lain buried until I raised my own family and found myself slipping into patterns of behaviour I identified with him. Like my
father I had become a historian and spent long hours in the library uncertain of whether the wider world would value my efforts. Wracked with anxiety and self-doubt, I had become irritable and bad-tempered and was having trouble sleeping. On my worst days, I was unforgivably cruel. My behaviour was shameful and I wanted to break free of it.

To get men to face their shadows MKP employs a variety of techniques – poetry, visualisation, male-bonding games, group work and what can only be described as emotional aerobics. But MKP also employs a powerful Gestalt technique that challenges men to cross an emotional and psychological line that perhaps they have been resisting all their lives. It is this challenge that lies at the heart of the weekend. The object is to restore the connection between men’s rational and emotional brains, to reprogramme us so that we can begin to feel again. It is hard work, both physically and emotionally, and explains why MKP prefers to characterise its approach as ‘training’ rather than ‘therapy’.

In the course of the weekend I found myself experiencing emotions with a surprising rawness and freshness. Firstly I was angry and resentful – at my friend for persuading me to sign up and at myself for being stupid enough to agree. Then came resignation that now I was there I might as well go through with it, followed by relief and, eventually, enjoyment.

It was a relief to be part of a circle of men whom I could talk openly and frankly to, and who would support, rather than judge me. But the greatest relief came in owning up to some fundamental truths about myself. Although I loved my father I also had to acknowledge that a part of me was wounded. Emotions such as anger, shame, pity, deep care and love were all jumbled up inside and I could slip from one to another in a flash. MKP helped me separate out those feelings and figure out the ‘shadows’ which lay behind them.

MKP’s training is not for everyone and there were grumbles. The complaints ranged from dissatisfaction with the accommodation, to unease about the organisation, to disappointment with some of the processes. Some were justified. Having said that, out of the 42 men who signed up for the training only one left early and no one demanded their money back. Everyone I spoke to considered it money well spent. For some it was the most cathartic experience of their lives. For days afterwards tastes, sounds, people – everything was more vibrant, more vivid. I was no longer a spectator but an active participant in life and it felt good. In the middle of some mundane activity like washing the dishes I would have a startling revelation about a childhood event and a whole series of blocks would fall into place. It felt as if someone had switched on a Windows defragmentation programme in my head. I was reordering myself from the inside, restoring the connections between thoughts and feelings buried deep in my past. In this blissed-out state I made a whole series of resolutions – about how I would be a better father to my children, a better husband to my wife, and a better son to my father. I realised that I’d neglected my relationship with my father for too long. He was 77. I needed to involve him more in my and my children’s lives, so I invited him to come and play tennis with us. He did so and enjoyed himself so much that he told me he wanted to buy my son and daughter tennis lessons and make this a regular event. Two weeks later my mother called from the emergency room to say my father had been taken to intensive care.

I rushed to the hospital to find my father – eyes clenched tight against the daggers in his chest – already dying and in great pain. I held his hand and told him how much I loved him. Then I surprised myself by reminding him of a conversation we’d had when I was
eight, about the same age my own son is now. My father had told me then that if he
achieved anything in life he wished to be a better father to me than his own father had
been to him. I did not know what he meant by that then and I am not sure I know now. All
I know was that his sentiment was beautiful and heartfelt.

For years I’d locked that conversation away but I hadn’t forgotten it, and in the days that
followed the MKP weekend it had come bubbling back to the surface. That conversation
was one of the things I’d resolved to speak to my father about in the years I thought lay
ahead of us. I kept vigil at my father’s bedside all night and the next day as he slipped in
and out of consciousness, a morphine drip easing his slow descent. When at 7pm the
following evening he stopped breathing, I couldn’t let go. I stroked his brow and held him
in my arms. I wept bitterly, mourning for myself as much as for him. I may have found the
courage to tell him how much I loved him and to speak to him frankly from the heart
without the training but I don’t think I would have been as in touch with my emotions nor
given myself the same permission to grieve, and to love.

Now, as I go about the world, I see what happens when men don’t give themselves this
permission, ensuring their emotions sneak up from behind and ambush them. I see it in
the devastation visited on Iraq – a consequence of Bush’s puerile need to lash out and,
perhaps, prove himself a better man than his father. And I see it in the damage to the
BBC’s reputation – damage directly traceable to men like Alastair Campbell and Greg
Dyke and their ‘wounded’ egos.

So where am I now and where are my fellow warriors? The only honest answer is that we
are in many different places reflecting the shadows that pursue us. Some men never
knew their fathers because they left home when they were infants; other men knew their
fathers only too well and had to endure years of sexual abuse; others grew up with
alcoholic fathers, or mothers who entrusted them to the care of nanny and boarding
school when all they wanted was love and affection. But whatever the 'wound' and our
response to it we are all on the same path. MKP, like the Freemasons and other male
fraternities that have thrived at other times, creates a space in which man's imperfections
can be explored honestly and safely, where men can vent their feelings before they
cause real damage to themselves and to others.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 03:38PM (-07:00)

Comments

- Anonymous

Thanks for posting the article. I was a new man at that weekend too. So the article had
deep resonance for me.
Loving Lion

- Anonymous

Brilliant! I am an initiated ex-pat Brit who lives in the US. I will forward this as a link to
half a dozen of my old countrymen. Thank you for providing such a resource in English,
it will I'm sure help explain to my English friends what they regard as some west coast
cult I have joined.

- Anonymous

August 29, 2008
Thank you, Lance, for showing me what it looks like to give it all.

I ask you, the reader, what would it look like for you to give it all? What would it look like to conquer your personal demons, fears, frailties, and blockages? What would it look like to stand on the podium of your life, knowing you gave it all...leaving nothing on the table?

I think the first step to the top of the podium may be the New Warrior Training Adventure.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:47AM (-07:00)

See For Yourself

Tuesday, August 02, 2005

Today, is another day for change. How will you change your life, today? I change mine by gifting you the links below to a video about the NWTA.
The video is powerful, interesting, and I found it moving. The video is a section of a South African Broadcasting Corporation show called Free Spirit.

I offer it to you in the knowing that there are places in you that this will speak to. See for yourself...

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

What are you waiting for?

Tuesday, August 23, 2005

Well, what's the answer?

I was waiting for my "self" to get real and honest with myself. No one could tell me to change they way I was. I needed to be the one to do that.

I certainly can't make you try the ManKind Project NWTA. I can't make anyone change. I can offer to you that you will change. I can offer to you that I have yet to meet a man who wasn't profoundly changed in one way or another.

I want that for you. I want for you to have the life that you are capable of having. Are you ready to make the leap of faith into a new you; the real you; the real man who is conscious of his place and his life?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:21AM (-07:00)
Katrina and Love

Wednesday, September 07, 2005

I send my love, hope, and prayers to those men, women, and children who have suffered loss. I send my love to the animals that are effected; pets and wild. I send my love to those in charge who are trying to make the best possible decisions under extreme circumstances. I send love to those who work so hard to help, save, rescue, demolish, and rebuild. I send my love to those who stand by and do nothing; for maybe this will be the last time they do nothing.

Here are some Internet places you can help:

RedCross.org, UnicefUSA.org (send money, volunteer)
HurricaneHousing.org (help by providing shelter)
FamilyLinks.icrc.org/Katrina (search for your loved ones here)
CNN.com (huge list of place to help and give)

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:29PM (-07:00)

I Remember

Sunday, September 11, 2005
What do you remember?

Can you look back and see the time and place? Do you have the support of men who will listen to what you remember; without judgment?

The ManKind Project offers you a place to remember...or not. You decide.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 10:41AM (-07:00)

Finding the Spirit

Thursday, September 15, 2005

There are infinite dreams and thoughts to be had. I find that I am limited by what I was taught. Are you? How would you know if you were?

This article is by a man who found his poetry through reaching past the teachings. What do you have to give that is locked away? How dare you keep it from you...from me...from all of us. Let me see it. Open the door.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>
Finding the Spirit
By Mike Snider

I had often thought and felt that I needed to be writing something, yet I had no idea what to write. I often thought that I needed to write a book, but did not know where or how to start. About a year ago, I attended a men's retreat and it opened up a flow of creativity that I have found to be amazing. At times, the words come so fast I have difficulty writing them down. Often, I am unable to go to bed until I write. At other times, I find I am unable to write even when I want to.

The retreat was based on one of the four male archetypes identified by Carl Jung, Lover, Magician, Warrior and King. The Lover's archetype holds the energy of sensitivity, sensuality, sexuality and creativity. At the beginning of the Lover's Quarter, I was given a notebook, sent to a room where I was asked to quietly view a grouping of objects, and write about what I saw in the notebook. It is hard to say what was tapped or released, but I immediately felt as though there were some words in my head that needed to be written. Over the next 3 days, I worked on my first poem. As I said, writing was something I always felt pulled toward but had no idea what it would be.

However, I did NOT think it would be poetry, and if I ever did write poetry, I certainly would not have shared it with anyone. By the end of the weekend, I KNEW that I had to share what I had written with the other men who were there, which I did on Sunday morning. I was surprised at the reception it got, and by the number of men who came to me later and told me they were very moved by what I had written.

When I returned from the weekend, I felt as though I was an altered state in terms of my writing. For several days, words kept filling my mind at a rapid pace. If I was somewhere I could write, the words would flow like water down a stream. As soon as I wrote one line, the next line would already be formed in my mind. It eventually slowed, but didn’t stop completely. I have found that I cannot force the words to come to me. I must be spiritually centered and in touch with the truth of who I am before the words I am to write are given to me.

After I attended the Lover's Workshop, I attended a New Warrior Training Adventure, and also served as staff at a subsequent Warrior weekend. I have found that this creative force has gotten stronger and more insistent on being recognized. I wrote "Spirit" after staffing the last New Warrior weekend last month. When I get lost in the busyness of my schedule between work, teaching and going to school, the words do not come, but when I relax and re-connect with the Spirit within, the words begin to flow.

When I read some of the things that "I" have written, I am quite surprised and am very moved by what they say and feel blessed to have been a part of their creation.

Poem: Spirit

Beyond the veil of conscious knowing,
I feel the wind of spirit blowing.
It fills my sails and takes the helm,
my ego it does overwhelm.
I feel the power surge deep inside saying "No longer will I be denied!"
"The truth of love is all there is,
the meaning of eternal bliss."

The wave that moves along my spine
is sweeter than the ancient wine.
"Wake up and live," I hear it say,
"and walk along the truthful way!"

What is this light I see abound
each time I pause and look around?
The glow of life is everywhere,
this love inside I need to share!

We all are one, I know is true,
the me that's Me, the you that's You.
Far beyond the conscious veil
the truth is known and will not fail.

Into the light of each new day,
I must work to find the way
to show the world the truth within
so peace on earth can begin.

Now I know just who I am
and no longer give a damn
about what others think of me,
I strive, I learn, I grow to be.

Beyond the veil of conscious knowing
the truth of God's a constant glowing.
Look within and you will see
the truth of who you'll always be.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 03:01PM (-07:00)

Male Transformer

Thursday, September 15, 2005
The ManKind Project reaches out to men of all types, flavors, races, and biases. This interview asks a Canadian man some pointed questions about the New Warrior Training Adventure.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Mankind Project uses mysterious rituals to help heal wounded men
by Chris Barry

Name: David Cordes
Age: 40

Bio: When this fast-talking yet sincere Fabreville resident isn't selling men's clothes at his retail store in St-Laurent, he's busy sporting the "new masculinity" he's attained through his involvement with the Mankind Project, "an international men's group that provides training, support groups and places where men can fully connect with themselves at all levels: physically, mentally, and spiritually." David says the Mankind Project "is not a cult by definition" but rather "appeals to men with a sense of adventure who want to challenge themselves." He first became involved with the organization three years ago after recognizing that "there were parts of me that were wounded and needed to be healed. And I knew that [the healing process] involved working with men." He drives a 1994 Saturn SL.

How one goes about attaining one's "new masculinity":
By forking over between $550 and $750 to attend a New Warrior weekend where men go hang out in the woods with a bunch of other dudes for 48 hours. "Men are invited to participate in a variety of processes and highly experiential exercises that lead them to a place of safety. The weekend is, essentially, a male initiation ritual. All the noise of a man's life, like cell phones and radios, are removed so the man is separated from what
he is comfortable with. The man is given the opportunity to take a deep, dark look into himself with the support of the group, and ultimately steps through his fears of going to that place."

Is an introductory 50-man circle-jerk an important part of the initiation process? It could be. "One of the principles of male initiation throughout the world, for thousands of years, is that what we do during the initiation process and ceremony is not discussed."

Is that because people are too ashamed of what happened to them to be able to talk about it? Probably not.

Is sleep deprivation a big part of New Warrior weekend training? "Look, over 30,000 men around the world have done this training and I judge not a single one of them have ever divulged what goes on during the weekend. But I do probably sleep more at home than when I'm on a weekend."

What David says happens to people after attending a New Warrior weekend: "Men experience something absolutely transformational. And when they return to their lives post-weekend, they have a deeper sense of themselves, an awareness of their own accountability and deeper levels of integrity and personal responsibility. For me, it's just wonderful to be part of the transformation of a man opening up and starting to connect with himself."

Is there a Reverend Moon/Grand Poobah kind of character lurking somewhere making zillions off of the "new masculinity"? Apparently not.

Literary preferences: National Geographic.

Musical preferences: Led Zeppelin, Eminem, 50 Cent.

Television preferences: Trading Spaces, ER, Hockey Night in Canada.

Favourite film of all time: Schindler's List.

Favourite poet: Rumi.

Words of wisdom: "Hurt me with the truth but don't kill me with a lie."

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 03:21PM (-07:00)

**Comments**

- **Frodo**

  September 20, 2005

  Wow, I'm glad to find another person who went through New Warriors that is blogging too.

  This journal is more about my whole life but men's work is a big part of that...http://frodowarrior.blogspot.com/2005/09/fyi-on-comments-to-blog.html

  --Frodo
This piece is from a man who has recently been through the New Warrior Training Adventure. Every man has a different experience on the training. I offer this to you so that you can see what that looks like for this man.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

From: Generative Transformation

New Warrior Training Adventure

I've recently completed the ManKind Project's New Warrior Training Adventure. Whoa. It was incredible. Up there with CPM and Vipassana for truly transformative experiences. The reason it’s called New Warrior Training Adventure and not NWT Retreat or Weekend is because it is an adventure. Thus, if I told you everything that transpired during the weekend, it would no longer be an adventure. It’s not that it’s a secret, it’s about protecting what is sacred. The journey is about dealing with the unexpected, not knowing everything ahead of time. With this thinking in mind, I will only as they say, “describe the fruits of the tree, not the trunk”.

As I mentioned before the adventure, the main reason, amongst many other reasons, I attended this $650 adventure was to understand why I have difficulty communicating with women. I believe I got what I came for and much, much more. I thought this inability was due to some teenage heartbreak. While getting dumped on my ass by my first love certainly sucked, bad things happen all the time. It’s how I deal with them that matters. More specifically, it’s what frameworks, judgments and values I employ to absorb new information and behave.

This led me to examine my own judgments about women. I didn’t respect anything they said, and still catch myself discounting their assertions for no good reason. I am/was clearly a misogynist. Why? Women aren’t evil or mean. In fact, they’re quite nice. I actually like them a lot, but why then did I show such disregard for their thoughts and feelings? Where did this misogyny come from? As it turns out, several places.

A child needs love. Lots of it. My parents did the best they could to deliver it to me,
however, my Dad traveled a lot and at times was conditional with his praise. Thus, with
love from my Mother much more plentiful and secure than that from my Father, I did
whatever I could to please him. I played sports, got good grades, became a social
animal, etc. And I was praised.

When I was 11 my parents split. Without getting into too much detail as to why, let’s just
say my Mother is a strong woman and my Dad a strong man. After the split, my Dad
moved out and I was on the receiving end of even less love because of the distance.
Concurrently, my Dad also began a descent into some unhealthy misogyny of his own. It
had gotten to the point that my brother and I would listen to my Dad’s Andrew “Dice”
Clay and Sam Kinison comedy tapes, which along with his less controversial Carlin, Sarducci,
Dangerfield and Phillips tapes, we enjoyed frequently. For those of you who don’t know
Dice and Kinison, these are two of the most misogynist comedians. Young boys should
not be exposed to women-hating, especially by men they deeply respect and love.

As I entered highschool, I moved in with my Dad, who dated a lot. I began to see male-
female relationships modeled for me. Mind you, my Dad and I always have had a close,
open relationship, so talking about sex, crime, drugs, etc. was never off limits, however
I’m not necessarily sure that the way my father treated women in front of me and talked
about them when they weren’t around was healthy. He put up some big numbers while I
was in highschool and wasn’t afraid to tell me about the intimate details of the encounters
or the abrupt nature of their termination, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

In addition, I had a strong support network of other jocks, who also treated women like
shit in front of me. And there was plenty of NWA, Snoop and Dre to go around. Bitch this,
ho that. You get the picture. I was told often that the key to getting girls is to pretend like
you don’t even like them. And lo and behold, there were more than enough women
around to corroborate this hypothesis and cement this behavior. The more outrageous
and callous I was, the more sex I seemed to have. While my unhealthy behavior was
certainly heavily influenced and encouraged by men, it was equally validated and
enabled by women, who recognized and were attracted to this sort of behavior they’d
seen modeled for them by their own father, the media, what have you.

I’m not blaming, my father, my friends or Eazy E. I did those bad things to women.
However, a man is not store bought, he is cultivated by his own drive for growth and by
his environment. Whether or not I wanted to be a good guy (I didn’t) is not secondary, but
neither exclusive to the misogynist influences in my life.

This misogyny led me to think that women were worthless and that lying to them was
perfectly acceptable behavior to “get the skins”. “Jason, you don’t lie to me, you lie to
girls.” – Rodney Dangerfield, ‘Back To School’. Thus, I never respected women. I had
many errant judgments against the gender that derived from this lack of respect. Without
respect, there is no communication, no trust, no love. NO LOVE!

And there you have it. I was disabled from interacting genuinely with women, because
any time their actions deviated from my narrow bandwidth of acceptable behavior, I
accused them of being crazy, irrational, immature, childish, etc. I had an immediate
“power down” switch anytime a rational conversation turned otherwise. Time to go
drinking with the boys. Years of avoiding these conversations laden with emotion
retarded my ability to understand and appreciate women and the full spectrum of their
being. Most of the time, as I’m now figuring out, they just want to vent, to be held and
listened to.
Net, net, this weekend was by no means a cure-all for my fucked up history with women, however it did produce some amazing insights and most importantly frameworks and support for carrying this hard work forward. I'm beginning to understand and deal with my own emotions first; I'm learning to discard this "boys don't cry" bullshit and get real, really real with myself.

Men - if you're interested in developing yourself along the lines of Gandhi, MLK, etc., i.e. a more nurturing, sensitive and compassionate way of being and leadership, this is for you. Despite the apparent "softness" of this adventure, it is anything but. It will test you mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually and if you have an experience similar to mine, then you will also have a renewed sense of purpose and confidence to execute on your life's mission. An ancillary benefit of the training is the tremendous sense of brotherhood and great friends you make.

Moreover, it ain't over when it's over; once the adventure weekend concludes, you have the opportunity to join an Integration Group which meets once a week and helps you apply and integrate the spiritual/servant leadership principles, communication skills and emotional fluency into your daily life. This is intense and I highly recommend it to anyone serious about growth.

Additionally, if you have or are planning on having kids, this is a must. One of the major takeaways was the tremendous amount of emotional scarring that results when fathers administer tough love, are not connected with their emotions and have no emotional fluency. http://www.mkp.org/

Women - this is not just for men. Woman Within is the sister organization. I'm told they are similar, but obviously focus and much different issues. Check them out. http://www.womanwithin.org/about/index.htm

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 03:10PM (-07:00)

The Way of Transformation

Thursday, October 06, 2005

"The man who, being really on the Way, falls upon hard times in the world will not, as a consequence, turn to that friend who offers him refuge and comfort and encourages his old self to survive. Rather, he will seek out someone who will faithfully and inexorably help him to risk himself, so that he may endure the suffering and pass courageously
through it, thus making of it a "raft that leads to the far shore." Only to the extent that man exposes himself over and over again to annihilation, can that which is indestructible arise within him. In this lies the dignity of daring. Thus, the aim of practice is not to develop an attitude which allows a man to acquire a state of harmony and peace wherein nothing can ever trouble him.

On the contrary, practice should teach him to let himself be assaulted, perturbed, moved, insulted, broken and battered – that is to say, it should enable him to dare to let go his futile hankering after harmony, surcease from pain, and a comfortable life in order that he may discover, in doing battle with the forces that oppose him, that which awaits him beyond the world of opposites. The first necessity is that we should have the courage to face life, and to encounter all that is most perilous in the world. When this is possible, meditation itself becomes the means by which we accept and welcome the demons which arise from the unconscious – a process very different from the practice of concentration on some object as a protection against such forces.

Only if we venture repeatedly through zones of annihilation, can our contact with Divine Being, which is beyond annihilation, become firm and stable. The more a man learns whole-heartedly to confront the world that threatens him with isolation, the more are the depths of the Ground of Being revealed and the possibilities of new life and Becoming opened."

The Way of Transformation, by Karlfried Graf von Durckheim

This is a way to look at change and tumult. I ask you to look close at the way you keep yourself comfortable and safe. Is it working for you to stay in the safe zone of your life? Are you willing to risk it all? Are you willing to make a change so drastic as to change very cell in your body? Are you willing to spend a weekend in something you will never forget?

If so, click here.

I’m out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 11:47AM (-07:00)

The Sacred Masculine

Wednesday, October 12, 2005
I welcome you to the adventure.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

The Sacred Masculine

By Judith Person
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Not everyone thinks the "sensitive male" concept has been good for men. Some believe it has gone too far — and taken true manliness along with it. At least that is how the ManKind Project's founders see it.

Created in 1985 by Ron Hering, Bill Kauth and Rich Tosi, the ManKind Project is a men's network based on the idea that the absence of traditional masculine rites of passage — slaying a bear, for example — has created a void.

Jim Underwood, at-large member of the group's board of directors, fears the concept behind the ManKind Project — with 27 centers spread across the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand — may be difficult to explain.

He shies away from buzzwords such as "self-help" or "the men's movement" to describe the group because he doesn't want to resurrect what he refers to as late-night TV satire.
that portrays men's groups as "a bunch of silly guys sitting around in the woods and beating on drums and getting all, 'I love you, man,' " he said.

Drums or not, cultures worldwide have had rites of passage initiating boys into manhood. But the ManKind Project leaders said such traditions fell by the wayside, leaving each man to figure out manhood for himself.

The ManKind Project aims to help men "reclaim the 'sacred masculine' ... through initiation, training and action in the world," its mission statement says.

The "sacred masculine" includes qualities like leadership and wisdom — and remembering how to play.

In the 1950s, the ideal man was aggressive, liked sports, never cried and always provided, the group's leaders said. By the '90s, the "sensitive man" became popular. He is the ponytailed poet, the stay-at-home dad, the man who brags about being "in touch with his feminine side."

But the "sacred masculine" ought not change with the times, said Curtis Mitchell, chairman of the ManKind Project.

To properly integrate such qualities as strength and sensitivity, he said, each man requires a transformation process — one that will usher him from the psyche of a boy to one of a man.

Though many modern men manage this through:

• The "descent," in which a man is encouraged to face his fears and any mind-sets that hinder him from being honest with himself.
• The "ordeal." "It is impractical to make a man slay a bear or a lion," Mr. Rose said, so group members simulate the tribal ritual in which a man finds a sense of accomplishment after struggle.
• The "homecoming," a graduation ceremony where men stand before their loved ones to be "welcomed into the community" as their newly balanced selves.
• While members will discuss the philosophy behind initiation and the "sacred masculine," the specific events of the New Warrior Training Adventures are closely held secrets.

Whether any of this training is truly effective is anyone's guess. Glenn E. Good, associate professor of the educational school in counseling psychology at the University of Missouri-Columbia, is doubtful initiations like those in the ManKind Project are necessary for a man's psyche.

"I am in support of the idea that it is worthwhile for men to take a look at what it means to be a man and to be masculine," he said, adding that such traditions are "often culture-specific."

He sees value in initiation rites like the Jewish faith's bar mitzvah, but he is confident men will become adults without that.

"I am not sure the initiationism is crucial, but I do think that actively getting together and talking and sharing support is important," Mr. Good said.

Each weekend warrior develops a "personal mission of service" to clearly define his
mission in life, which in many cases leads him into community service, particularly in the area of mentoring.

Charlie Borden of the Minnesota ManKind Project works closely with Men to Boys, a network of men integrating the initiation process for adolescent boys.

Jim Hurley and Robert Terzian of the ManKind Project of Greater Washington work with prison inmates to help them find their own "sacred masculine" and missions in life. Others volunteer their time working with veterans in a program called the Bamboo Bridge.

"They treat it as an expression of the meaning of life," Mr. Mitchell said. "They are getting out of that rut that says that 'The only thing that matters in life is me.'"

New Warrior Training graduates are refocusing their childish sentiments into systems of sentiments that are appropriate for adults, Mr. Mitchell said.

"It has to do with community focus, taking care of elders and behaving in a mature way to focus on someone other than yourself."

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 02:24PM (-07:00)

Missions of Service

Tuesday, October 18, 2005

From: MKP Missions of Service

"The ManKind Project does not claim to solve the problems of our time, nor do we offer any broad solutions or ideology. We do take important steps in addressing these problems by inviting each man to clearly see his choices, to live with greater integrity, and to offer his gifts in service to the world. The ManKind Project challenges each man to find and develop his own life's mission, and to live that mission fully with the support of a powerful network of other men."

When I live my mission, I am clear that I am creating something bigger than myself. I
create a world of my choosing when I step into my mission and really work it. The MKP network of men support my work with honor and accountability.

What is your mission? Who do you serve? What is your focus? Where are you going?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 11:39AM (-07:00)

Comments

- Jim
The series of questions reminds me of the opening to the short-lived science fiction TV show "Crusade" (a spinoff/follow-on of "Babylon 5"). The questions were: "Who are you? What do you want? Where are you going? Who do you serve? And who do you trust?"

By the way, I've now created an RSS feed on LiveJournal so that users of that service can now read these posts without having to go to blogspot. The feed is called "nwta_mkp".

-Jim
Wolverine who walks with Dragon
Dayton, OH

- Old-faithfulWolf
Thank you for the feed link!

Model of Manhood

Friday, November 04, 2005
This post is nabbed from the The ManKind Project--South Africa Web site. Another man’s experience. How many men do you need to read about before you take the leap?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Paul Abramowitz takes a journey into Men's Work and discovers how we need to find fulfilment in our lives by finding our truth and living our dreams, rather than becoming trapped in the endless pursuit of what society deems as 'success'. Paul Abramowitz is a founding member The ManKind Project--South Africa.

Model of Manhood - The Sacred Masculine

My father would have loved this work; he was indeed a beautiful man. Like so many of his generation, he remained financially responsible to his family, and as a result, was over-worked -a product of the John Wayne generation. That particular model teaches that strength is found, above all, in a tough interior and exterior. I sensed that he struggled to connect emotionally with himself and so too with us, his family.

He had no place to outgrow his emotional negativity which he had lugged with him from a difficult childhood. Like so many of his generation and those men that followed, he remained somewhat aloof and disconnected. As I grew up I watched his life unfold in front of me and had a window into the often difficult lives of the husbands of his gynaecological patients. The picture that was formed was that society has placed great burdens on us as men. We often have to compromise our dreams for financial security, and that's just the way it is. Better to accept than fight; better to just knuckle down and 'achieve'.

My journey into manhood only confirmed my father's plight and the plight of those blank faces of the tired men that came anonymously to visit our dinner table.
So many men live with the quiet desperation of having sold out. Almost everything in our culture is geared toward the external, with the promise of happiness from yet another acquisition, or a better body. Pretty soon, too much attention to the external and surrounding chaos sees a slow dying of the soul, a little every day. We are encouraged, as men, to think with our heads and not to trust our feelings. Consequently, we tend to suffer from a deep loneliness, cut off from our own feelings, and, all too often, in fear of intimate relationships. We simply become numb. But life has a way of increasing the volume of the message it is giving until we hear it. So when the 'noise' of confusion and numbness becomes unbearable, it often is medicated to bearable limits through our addictions. We learn to modify the pain by drinking, drugging, eating too much and believing that the good things like lots of sex, can make the pain go away. Some who cannot quiet the scream inside their heads resort to violence which is mostly aimed at other men but, more shamefully, sometimes also at women and children.

It seemed to me that men and women start off on fairly equal footing as children, but that soon little boys experience what is called a 'diminishing in spirit', perhaps through the act of learning to endure physical and psychological pain without complaining. The result of which is a numbness and ambivalence found so commonly among teenage boys and adult men.

Sensing that this was happening to me too, I began longing to meet up with men who shared my vision of living another model of manhood. I wanted more; I didn't know exactly what but waited and trusted that the universe would provide.

In September 1998 I travelled, with five other South African men to Sopley, South London. There we took part in the ManKind Project's New Warrior Training Adventure weekend.

I have come to understand the process of that weekend's work a little more now after three and a half years involvement and see now why the men who have done this work for so many years refer to it as a masterpiece.

I felt invited to look at who I was, how I make choices, and how I live out behaviours that work or don't work for me. Through the magic of ritual, wisdom, myth and metaphor, I got to face myself and felt welcomed into a new paradigm, no matter which of my demons was waiting to meet me.

I had a felt sense that the 30 facilitators, who themselves had travelled the journey, had a powerfully authentic purpose about them. I sensed their deep respect and understanding for the process and their commitment to the healing work, which was immediate and consistent. I felt for the first time in my life, at the age of 36, the sheer transformational possibility of the power of non-judgement and love coming from 59 men -30 facilitators and 29 other initiates. How different from that place so often set for men in the outside world, that of compulsive competitiveness.

It was a weekend of insight, triumph and celebration. I got to meet a small part of the man I had begun to look for way back then, and had been looking for for most of my adult life. I knew too, and found great comfort in the fact, that I had finally found a body of men who so beautifully modelled real commitment to transformation in their own lives and the lives of people around them.
My continued involvement and development in the work with men in this community and our overseas brothers has taught me that each man takes something different from his weekend experience. If he stays on in the work and continues the journey inward, supported by his men’s group - usually between five and nine men meeting fortnightly - working towards his own truth and passion, he builds a platform to bring about real and sustained transformation. It is from the circle, a place of shared blessing, honour, respect and truthfulness, that I have witnessed myself and so many other men springboard to that place of positive change, a place so deeply desired.

As we drove back from my first men’s weekend on a cold rainy Sunday afternoon, I was beginning to get a small sense of how this work fosters brotherhood through self-understanding, something which I had supposed was one of the basic aspects of earthly plane existence. I have realised that, on a spiritual level, this work serves to offer me nothing less than the possibility for a healing of the masculine soul. What I could not have guessed when I began was the profound and deeply altering effect the work was to have, and continues to have, on my life. Indeed, my journey has allowed me to step into relationship more fully and discover the joy of intimacy more deeply. I have come to meet that part of myself that allows me to discover and speak my truth. I can more easily face my deepest fears which are no longer roadblocks on my journey. I have begun to experience a paradox of life my father could not have known; that in vulnerability there lies the strength I so desperately seek.

I have learned to trust my own feelings more and to live in that place of connection to others and myself. The journey to authenticity through my own learning of emotional literacy has brought with it a deep sense of joy and a renewed passion, which once seemed unattainable. Through learning clear communication, and with awareness of my own projections, I am better able to empower myself to stay accountable to others and to myself. The lesson of integrity and the knowing of when I am out of integrity with my own truth holds me closer to my path.

It has been through the sharing of experiences and the listening quietly to other men’s stories that I have learned of the power of mentorship in community. I know the value of having friendships with other men which are intimate, nurturing and trusting, and how these friendships create the bridges necessary to mark and make smoother the transitions we men have to make in our lives. I have, through these friendships, been encouraged to follow my own truth and passion and bring about a tighter congruency between what I speak and my actions in the world.

The old models of man did not allow for a place for shadow to be addressed. The powerful ritual of naming my ‘shadow’, and hearing other men name theirs, putting mine out in front of me, and sharing the darkness that it is, has given me a clear vision of how and why I prevent myself from reaching my fullest potential. Such is the model of the Sacred Masculine.

While acknowledging both my 'gold' and my shadow, I have come to understand the controlling nature of my unconscious, my unexpressed anger, shame and grief. This understanding has allowed me to feel more comfortable within myself, expressing instead of acting out or ‘spilling sad energy’, as Rumi described so succinctly.

This work I have done, not alone, but with the support, blessing, honesty and love offered to me by the men in my men’s group, my community here and communities overseas, and thanks to the teachings held in sacred space.
A circle of men is a mystical place indeed, where I have seen magic happen time and again, the likes of which all words fail to describe.

As change is facilitated in our lives as men, all things become possible, and so we become moved to look beyond ourselves, to be in service to our community. This is done in the spirit of blessing -that of the energy of the good king archetype. Our work strives to return men to society as better husbands, partners, fathers, sons and siblings. Therein lies the true proof of the success of such work.

There are gifts we were given by our mothers which our fathers couldn't have given. There are gifts we were given by our fathers which our mothers didn't know how to give. Even if we as men didn't receive those gifts from our fathers, perhaps because they knew not how to give them, or hadn't received them themselves, then we need not cheat ourselves of a fulfilled life.

There are men out there in this world who have helped me strengthen and deepen my connection to life itself — to passion and joy - and the hope and reality of a glorious life. I am constantly reminded how privileged and blessed I am to have found this.

My father would have loved this work; it would have made all the difference in his life. I know that because that is how it has been for me — and the thousands of men who are making this journey together.

From Odyssey Magazine, South Africa 6-2002
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:37AM (-08:00)

Shedding the Legacy of Patriarchy

Tuesday, November 08, 2005

Men have looked for strength in themselves for all eternity; whether it be as warriors, lovers, magicians, or kings. There are times we need to be in council, in circle, with other men to help us decide what or when or even if an action is needed; times we need to see if changing ourselves is the road to travel on. The ManKind Project offers you that place. I offer you that place. Come and sit in circle with me.

Read on....

I'm out.
Richard Tomaskovic doesn't seem like the kind of guy who'd bother with a support group. At 71, the former technical writer and engineer is a witty and engaging talker who seems more active than a lot of people half his age. The man positively radiates a sense of purpose and competence.

Yet every week for the past year-and-a-half, Tomaskovic and a dozen or so other area residents have gotten together to dig deeper into themselves and the challenges they face.

"We talk about our issues and feelings," he explains. "We support each other in looking into those areas of our lives where we want to change."

These men are members of The ManKind Project, a Malone, N.Y.-based nonprofit dedicated to helping every man become a better person. And if the mission sounds somewhat vague, participants swear by the group’s methods (though the specifics are kept under wraps).

"What The ManKind Project does is provide a structure," says Tomaskovic, a kind of unofficial spokesman for the local group. "It is a forum to just hang out and talk about our real feelings, without being afraid of the pressure that we find in the rest of the world."

They aren't failures. They aren't crybabies. Many are highly successful in their professional lives, say group members. And for all the talking, there's a lot of listening, too.

"The male norm is macho," says Tomaskovic. "It's about presenting yourself as tough and unemotional. Everyone has to be competitive and in a pecking order." The problem with that view, he says, is that it's not realistic: Men aren't always tough. Men have emotions; men sometimes need help. But there aren't many places where they can learn how to recognize and process those emotions in a safe, supportive environment. One key theme in their ongoing discussions is the need for personal responsibility. Other frequent topics include personal integrity and trust.

A rite of passage
There's more to joining The ManKind Project than simply showing up, however. Prospective members must first attend The New Warrior Training Adventure, a kind of emotional boot camp that the group says was inspired by a fusion of Jungian psychology and the initiation rites of many primitive cultures.

"It is challenging on many levels," says Tomaskovic. "But it's not an abusive situation, and there's no physical danger."

It also isn't cheap, costing anywhere from $600 to $800 for a three-day retreat, depending on the region and the number of participants. (Scholarships and payment plans are available through the local groups.)

Launched in Milwaukee in 1985, The ManKind Project now has 38 regional training centers and claims more than 30,000 members worldwide. The local groups are more or less independent and self-sustaining, though they make voluntary payments to help support the national organization, says Tomaskovic. His group, one of four in the Asheville area, has been meeting for at least seven years.

Seeking to boost enrollment, however, the national organization has been encouraging local groups to try something new: letting men who might be curious attend part of one of the weekly meetings. If they like what they see, the thinking goes, they might be more willing to shell out the money to take the New Warrior training.

"These men make commitments to change their lives," Tomaskovic explains. "They want to be better partners, more responsible, and to break old habits. We can't make people change their lives, but what we can do is point out to them when they aren't keeping their commitments."

Take Tomaskovic himself, for example. Before joining The ManKind Project, he says, he had trouble being assertive and always felt ill at ease with his own "peculiarities."

Today, however, Tomaskovic says he feels like a new man.

"People tell me that I'm different, even in ways that I don't see," he reports. "I've started to make changes in the relationships in my life. I'm more able to identify what I really want, and I'm more able to present myself as a complete person."

What kind of man does Tomaskovic think would be most helped by The ManKind Project? What kinds of problems does the training help to solve?

"It's not about having problems," he says. "It's just about men expressing who they really are. These men are no different than any other man. The only difference is that they are choosing to take a look at themselves and [try] to change their lives."

**Testing the waters**

In recent weeks, The ManKind Project has begun holding free, open meetings locally. Two more such gatherings are planned before the group’s next initiation rite, The New Warrior Training Adventure (scheduled for Friday, May 20). The informal, men-only sessions will be held at the Unity Church of Asheville (130 Shelburne Road in West Asheville) April 27 and May 1. For more information, contact Richard Tomaskovic at 299-3924, or visit The ManKind Project's Web site (http://www.mkp.org/).
Don Jones is a former Chairman of the Mankind Project International and an elder in the community of men. His leadership and love are greatly appreciated by this man.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

As published at MenStuff.org.

Anthropos Rising

by Don Jones

The Anthropos is rising!
The age-old, original man is coming to claim us from our shadow imitations of manhood!

Patriarchal Man is dying!
You know him well—the one who feeds on dominance over women and children—
The one who lords it over other men,
And who rapes even the earth itself in the godawful illusion that he owns even Her.
Macho Man is a zombie--
a walking dead man who tries to keep himself alive
by worshipping fire power.
He stalks the earth with grotesque bravado,
threatening the life of everything that breathes,
unable to connect with anything except out of his Killer.

Mercenary Man is a joke!
He has substituted money for the true riches of life,
and has lost any sense of mission other than the bottom line.
His days are numbered, and his feverish grip upon Things
will never save him.

The Anthropos is rising!
The gates of history are swinging wide to welcome
The New Man, The True Man, The Whole Man!
The man who loves woman, not in the tired, old seductive way,
but genuinely from the heart, and joins with her in the embrace of equality!
The one who loves and nurtures little children because
he sees in them the seeds of a new world in the making!
The one who blesses and does not curse other men because
they are the courageous brother warriors whose saving mission
is the same as his own!

The man who reverences the earth, and protects Her,
and helps Her become the majestic Mother Garden
she was intended to be from the beginning.

The Anthropos is rising! The Anthropos is rising!
I beg, I plead with you to welcome with me
the rising of the Anthropos--the Man who though long in coming
is striding through the gates even now!

Whatever happened to the men's movement?

Monday, November 21, 2005
Below is an older article with some valid points that speak about the importance of the men's movement.

How does this fit into the NWTA? Men are looking for ways to break out of the molds that they are experiencing. The NWTA is but one way to get that mold-breaking experience. What sets MKP apart is that it offers a place to continue your weekend experience for as long as you want. These places are called iGroups. See this link for more about iGroups.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Whatever happened to the men's movement?

Staff Photo By Corey Lowenstein
Members of the leadership council of the Men's Center of Raleigh and Wake County, from left: Gregory Blaine, Patrick Knox, Martin Brossman, Doug Lester, Doug Jenette and Dave Davenport.

Though critics dismiss and lampoon it, activists say they are making progress -- one man at a time.

By SARAH AVERY, Staff Writer

For a warrior such as Doug Lester, battling in the trenches of the men's movement, progress comes in increments that are difficult to plot on a map with red pushpins, as in here is where we started and here is where we are now.

Certainly, there has been some headway. In the 13 years Lester has been working to advance a movement that isn't so much about injustice as inertia, the Raleigh financial planner has seen the creation of a men's center in Raleigh, the establishment of a series of annual retreats, the rise of movement heroes such as Robert Bly, who will address a men's workshop this weekend.

And yet, for every win, there's a setback -- or at least a failure of progress. For all its promise, the men's movement remains, largely, a private, therapeutic phenomenon.

Despite a run in the national spotlight at the start of the decade, the men's movement is now largely in the shadows. Its members meet for candid discussions that are much along the lines of encounter sessions, where privacy is carefully guarded; their leaders note a skittishness among some participants over the prospect of being "outed."

It's odd language for heterosexual men, and yet it's not without reason. For one thing, the movement has been the butt of jokes about men beating drums and running naked through the woods, prompting some men to avoid the movement. Also, the men consider their work deeply personal, not political. What they hope to accomplish, in the end, is a level of intimacy with other men based on trust, not competition.

It's an uphill campaign: "There are one million people in the Triangle," said Lester, a founding member and part of the leadership council of the Men's Center of Raleigh and Wake County, "and we're touching, like, maybe 100."
A movement is born

By most counts, the men's movement began in 1982, during a conference of men in Mendocino, Calif., that had originally been part of a men's and women's retreat. But the men spun off on their own, acknowledging that they had separate and compelling issues to consider.

Before that epiphany of that conference, there had been a few books lamenting the state of manhood, prompted in part by the feminist movement's successes. After the conference, there were more books and more conferences.

But it remained a largely fringe movement until Bly came along in 1990 with his best selling book, "Iron John." Bly, who will be in Raleigh for a fund-raiser at the Men's Center today and Saturday, used the Grimms' fairy tale of Iron Hans to outline the problem facing men in the late 20th century.

That problem, he argued, is a profound disconnect between old expectations of manhood -- men as stoic hunter-protectors -- and modern ones that demand a greater emotional arsenal. As women have made strides toward equality, men have had to learn to share: Share the workplace, share power, share more family responsibilities -- share, even, their emotions. The silent tough-guy role suddenly fit like a pair of shrunken knickers. But what could fit?

"It's a terrible thing that has happened to men, and most don't even notice it," Bly said in a recent interview at the Men's Center. "There's an old joke about a man walking along and his guts are hanging out and someone asks him if he's OK, and he says he's fine. That comes from a long history. Men endure. That's the way it is."

For Bly and others, the better course of action is to acknowledge the emotional wounds, even study them, to learn how they got there.

To do that, Bly's particular branch of the men's movement, called the mythopoetic, relies on poetry and myths, fathers and heritage. By contemplating mythic, historic roles, men can better understand the true essence of what it is that makes them uniquely men -- even as they shed outdated models.

The message and method caught on, particularly among middle-aged white men who -- often moved by a personal crisis such as divorce or job layoff -- questioned the meaning of their lives and the emotional isolation they imposed on themselves.

Droves of them attended retreats and conferences and workshops, many of which called upon men to shed, literally and figuratively, their worldly clothes and get in touch with their bare souls.

Through 1991 and 1992, the men's movement was the rage. In the Triangle, 80 to 100 men each spring made the annual weekend retreats to commune with each other around campfires. And while the Men's Center had been in existence in Raleigh since 1986, it enjoyed record membership -- 160-some men in various discussion groups and workshops -- during the early 1990s.

Bly himself was featured on the cover of Newsweek and in a lengthy interview with television journalist Bill Moyers. And other factions sprang up, notably the Promise
Keepers, a religious movement that called on men to regain control of their lives by keeping their promises -- those they had made themselves and those that are simply implied by birthright -- as sons, husbands and fathers.

**Fodder for parody**

But the men's movement's limitations, and its own excesses, began to draw criticism.

As attendance to the retreats soared here and across the country, the sessions suddenly became fodder for parody, particularly in their liberal use of drums. It's still a touchy subject.

Lou Lipsitz, a Chapel Hill therapist who has been involved in the area's men's movement for 10 years, says the cartoon images severely damaged the movement: "That's a way of trivializing what is actually deep and meaningful work," he said.

For Bly, who used drums in his poetry readings and mythic presentations long before he became associated with the men's movement, the stereotype became a personal affront.

Some time ago, he said, he was in New York and noticed an advertisement for Dewar's Scotch whiskey painted on a public bus. It said, "You don't have to beat a drum or hug a tree to be a man."

"What does that mean?" Bly asked. "Does that mean the measure of being a man is by being an alcoholic like all the others in the past? That is hostile."

Bly said such ad campaigns scared men away from the movement. Participation dropped, seemingly overnight: "Men are very sensitive to being shamed."

Many of the men who weren't driven away became less open about their participation. The problem lingers today, said Martin Brossman, who has been leading a men's inquiry group from his Raleigh home for three years. "Absolutely there's a stigma."

**The movement that wasn't?**

Critics, however, contend that issues beyond image worked to slow the movement's momentum.

Strictly speaking, a movement, to be a movement, needs a political agenda -- a clarion call for some change in the collective cultural dynamic that soldiers in the trenches can fight for.

The feminist movement sought, among other things, economic parity for women; the civil rights movement sought, among other things, social parity for African-Americans.

Critics of the men's movement say it isn't a movement at all, because it lacks that key political element -- despite the successes it has had in getting many men to take their emotions seriously.

"As long as they think of these things as individual problems, instead of looking at who has power in our society and how the power is used, it isn't a movement, it's a therapeutic endeavor," said Michael Schwalbe, a sociologist at N.C. State University who spent three
years attending men's movement sessions for his book, "Unlocking the Iron Cage."

If white middle-class men feel powerless, Schwalbe said, it's incumbent upon them to figure out who, then, is in power and how that power is perpetuated and what cultural forces need to be changed to balance the power.

“That would be the most empowering thing the mythopoetic men could do,” Schwalbe said. “But they'll never do it.”

Instead, he said, they are content to keep discussions focused on personal feelings of emotional isolation, whether at small groups sessions or at the larger communal retreats, and they make no larger call to arms.

But to men such as Lester, that criticism ignores the grass-roots effect of change, one man at a time -- the very kind of progress that is difficult to notch with pushpins.

"We believe that as a result of being more whole men, we will change society," Lester said. "It's not a big cause, but if we can be better people individually, we will make a difference."

Bly said that the movement has had significant impact, and he pointed to progress among the baby boom generation of fathers who are more active and emotionally involved with their children than the fathers before them.

"The men's movement has had a powerful effect -- not on all men -- maybe 10 to 15 percent," Bly said. "But they, in turn, interact with others."

Men involved in the movement say they are proud of the work they've done and believe that their lives are significantly different as a result of their activism. Each meeting, they say, is a fulfilling experience in which they probe emotional depths that otherwise go unexplored.

"I experience a type of connection that I had only known in relationships with women, but it has nothing to do with sex," Brossman says. "It's a sense of intimacy and satisfaction."

Progress, Brossman says, is an incremental process, although there are hopes to expand the movement's presence in the Triangle. Lester says the Men's Center wants to hire a part-time administrator and begin more community programs for men in crisis -- if they can raise enough money at this weekend's fund-raiser. The Men's Center's new push for a higher profile comes at a good time: This fall the movement was again in the national spotlight with the publication of feminist author Susan Faludi's book "Stiffed," which takes a sympathetic look at some of the issues the movement is grappling with.

"The door has been open to where enough men have started to get in touch with what's missing in their lives," Brossman says. "It's still in a very infant stage. and I don't think there's anything wrong with that. Making major cultural changes doesn't happen overnight, and it shouldn't happen overnight."

Staff writer Sarah Avery can be reached at 829-4882 or savery@nando.com
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:03PM (-08:00)
Comments

- Martin Brossman  March 03, 2006

I just found this web site. Are you still working with it. I just created on for the "Finding Our Fire" book: http://www.blogger.com/toinquire

Nice blog! :)  
Martin Brossman

Keep Going

Tuesday, November 22, 2005

One of the blessings I get from my work in the ManKind Project is the constant reminder that my work is on-going. My striving for better, for honor, for integrity and accountability, for love and friendship are supported in this place called MKP.

Another is the blessing of elders. This work, this men's work, is open to any man of any age and any background. MKP supports a population of elder men who take on the special and honorable role with great care and vision. They are there for me to call on for wisdom, fathering, care, understanding, and challenging.

MKP offers me a place to stand among all men who are my Grandfathers, Brothers, and Sons.

I offer that there is richness and depth in MKP. I offer there is richness and depth for you. Will you take the challenge of getting what you need in your life?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Legend of the Warrior/Keep Going
Joseph Fire Crow and Joseph Marshall III
2001

The young Lakota asked his grandfather why life had to be so difficult sometimes. This was the old man's reply.

Grandfather says this:
In life, there is sadness as well as joy.
Losing as well as winning.
Falling as well as standing.
Hunger as well as plenty.
Bad as well as good.

Grandfather does not say this to make you despair,
but to teach you reality.
To teach you that life is a journey sometimes walked in light,
sometimes in shadow.

Grandfather says this: You did not ask to be born, but you are here.
You have weaknesses as well as strengths.
You have both because in life, there are two of everything.
Within you is the will to win, as well as the willingness to lose.
The heart to feel compassion, as well as the smallness to be arrogant.
Within you is the way to face life, as well as the fear to turn away from it.

Grandfather says this: Life can give you strength.
It can come from facing the storms of life,
from knowing loss, feeling sadness and heartache.
From falling into the depths of grief.
You must stand up in the storm
You must face the wind, and the cold, and the darkness.
When the storm blows hard, you must stand firm.
For it is not trying to knock you down,
it is really trying to teach you to be strong.

Grandfather says this: being strong means taking one more step
toward the top of the hill, no matter how weary you may be.
It means letting the tears flow through the grief.
It means to keep looking for the answer,
though the darkness of despair is all around you.
It means to cling to hope for one more heartbeat, for one more sunrise.
Each step, no matter how difficult, is one more step closer to the top of the hill.
To keep hope alive for one more heartbeat at a time
leads to the light of the next sunrise and the promise of a new day.

Grandfather says this: The weakest step toward the top of the hill,
toward the sunrise, toward hope,
is stronger than the fiercest storm.

Grandfather says this: Keep going.

Comments

- ScottDowner

Good stuff... I am an initiated man from the Toronto, Ontario community and feel the same way about the work that is done in this group. Glad that you have this blog... i will
be back.

Aho,

Scott

Guy Talk Gets Deep -- Integration Groups
Thursday, December 01, 2005

This post, from the New York Post, talks about a man's experience in an Integration Group.

Integration groups, or igroups for short, are men's circles comprised of men who have completed the NWTA, or have committed to doing so. You can usually visit one to get a feel for the group. Contact an MKP center near you for igroups in your area that you could attend.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

GUY TALK GETS DEEP
By TOM SYKES
April 04, 2004

Traditionally, men aren't much good at talking. If they've got something on their minds, the usual forum for discussion is the bar. Their telephone conversations tend to go like this: "Hello. See ya."

Now one organization is attempting to change all that. The ManKind Project (MKP) is trying to get men in touch with their "inner warrior" and encouraging them to bring their deepest fears, hopes and dreams out into the open.
The MKP was set up in 1984 in Milwaukee, and, according to its organizers, nearly 25,000 have enrolled. Programs involve spending a weekend at a retreat (at a cost of $650) and taking part in discussion groups.

To see what all the fuss was about, I attended one of the MKP's regular meetings in New York.

Seated in a circle, we began by "checking in" AA-style - saying who we were, then concluding with the phrase, "I'm in." There were 10 of us, ranging in age from 30 to 70.

Things started getting interesting when the group leader asked, "Does any man here need to 'clear' with any other man?" One guy - let's call him Dave - said he wanted to "clear" with another guy, who we'll call John.

The group leader asked for "the clearing stick," a 5-foot-long staff which Dave and John held onto while they faced each other. John began by reading an e-mail in which Dave had insulted him.

Then things got kind of scary. Holding the stick, John's voice got louder and louder, until he was bellowing, "I WILL NOT BE SILENCED BY YOU!"

The "clearing" session culminated with the leader asking John a series of questions aimed at getting John to acknowledge that his anger was not really at Dave, but rather an internal problem with himself.

Various other guys "cleared" with each other. Then we sat back in our circle, and each man in turn said, "If I was going to work on something today, it would be . . . ."

The comments were intensely personal - about as far from the average "guy chat" as it is possible to imagine.

People spoke about their divorces, their relationships with their parents, their womanizing, and, in my case, drinking habits. Having been extremely nervous earlier, I now felt comfortable talking to a group of complete strangers about my life. I guess it was because I knew they would take me seriously.

It was time for the last ritual of the evening. We stood in a circle and drummed on our legs. The group leader said he wanted one person to step into the circle and do some "work." I had to do it. I stepped into the circle. The drumming stopped. I was asked to name the things that I felt were holding me back in my life.

I went for alcohol, laziness, self-doubt and fear. I chose four guys to represent these elements, who locked arms around me and each chanted, "Alcohol!" "Laziness!" "Fear!" "Doubt!" Another guy represented what I wanted in my life, which I named as self-belief.

Then I had to try and break free from the repressive elements to reach self-belief. Naturally, given that there were four of them, I couldn't do it. I was told that I needed to go on the weekend retreat to learn the tools to overcome these things in my life, which felt a bit like a sales pitch.

Still, getting men to talk is a tough task. For all its mumbo-jumbo and psychodrama, the MKP at least does that.
MKP Men Facilitate Growth in a Maximum Security Prison

Monday, December 05, 2005

Is it possible that one weekend can change the world? Is it possible for one man to change the world? Hell, yes! This man has done the NWTA and this man has changed the world.

I sat with this man, Rob Albee, in my first iGroup, about six years ago. He is a very powerful and loving man. I honor his work and dedication to supporting all men, inside and out.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

MKP Men Facilitate Growth in a Maximum Security Prison

The goal of the Inside Circle Foundation (http://www.insidecircle.org/) is to create environments in which prisoners can explore the issues in their lives that have prevented them from living up to their full potential as human beings. It does this as a non-denominational, non-sectarian spiritual outreach under the auspices of Chaplain Dennis Merino at California State Prison, Sacramento. It conducts weekly circles, and occasional four-day intensives. Its facilitators are from the ManKind Project. This excerpt is from a December 13, 2002, report by Executive Director Robert Albee:

In the past we have pretty much operated under the radar screen of the administration's attention. We would disappear into the Chapel and come out four days later and as long as there were no custody problems, which there weren’t, they pretty much left us alone. That all changed in August 2002 when the prison administrator came in during the four-day training.

In our trainings we have told the prison administrators and staff that we create an environment where a man can experience any or all of his emotions in a new and safe
way. On the one or two occasions when someone has asked, "How do you handle anger and rage?" we have always responded, "Carefully." I could see them wince as they signed off on the training requests.

I have always seen that no one has had a problem with allowing these men to feel and experience emotions like sadness or fear or any of the other emotions, but with anger I could always sense the apprehension. But the truth is we have found safe ways to allow a man to go completely into his anger and rage and not hurt himself or anyone else. And sometimes it does include restraining a man. For most of these men it is almost always the first emotion that has to be dealt with, as it is anger that keeps all the other emotions bottled up inside the man in the first place.

I have always been apprehensive about what the administration would think and do if they truly knew and understood what we were doing in the groups and in the four-day trainings. We go as deep as a man needs to, to get to the core of his life, and I have been afraid that the administration might not trust us, as well as the man himself, going that deep.

So on the day when a prison administrator walked in, we were separated into four circles with approximately 15 men in each circle. In one circle there was a grief/death process going on with nearly everyone in tears. In another, men of every color were laughing and hugging each other. In the corner of the chapel one group had a man pinned as he raged on and on. The last circle was on break with everyone wandering in and out of the other processes or sharing one-on-one with each other, paying little or no attention to whatever was going on around them. One of the convicts, a huge 250 pound black man, assuming the administrator was a part of the team, came over to him and squeezed him in a giant body hug, just saying hello.

During a second visit on the final day, the convicts and the volunteers were doing a naming ceremony, honoring the work they had done and professing the gratitude everyone felt about being there. The irony was that during that very touching moment the administrator was called to deal with an inmate suicide that had taken place in 5 block. Such is prison.

Later, I was told that during the regular Monday morning staff meeting the administrator spoke for over half an hour about what he had witnessed during the training. He said that in the twenty some-odd years he had worked for the Department he had never witnessed anything so powerful and promising as the training we had provided. He said that if the Department was to seriously approach anything even remotely resembling rehabilitation that this was the way to do it. He spoke about making it available to every inmate inside CSP-Sac and how to make it available to other institutions around the state. In other words, he understands and supports the work we are doing 100% and the Warden does as well.

For more information contact: Inside Circle Foundation at info@insidecircle.org.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:50AM (-08:00)

**Out of the Womb, Into the Comfort Zone**

**Monday, December 12, 2005**
This post is from a Canadian e-zine called the Void. It details a man's experience visiting an Integration group (iGroup).

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Out of the Womb, Into the Comfort Zone

The Mankind Project Turns Men into Warriors
By Philippe Gohier

Very few men are comfortable with the possibility that they are failures at simply being men. Then again, very few men have answered the call of the Mankind Project on this grim Tuesday evening to seek out... apparently, to seek out each other.

Tormented by the dead ends and wrong turns on the road of manhood, and lured by the promise of an alternate path (one of integrity and responsibility), seven men have gathered in this church basement to share an existential crisis, to communalize their displeasure with the human condition.

Though each and every one is unmistakably male, their Y-chromosome is like a prison tattoo on Martha Stewart; it is entirely consistent with their experience and context (five of the seven are or have been husbands, fathers or both), and yet it is somehow completely irreconcilable with their broader identity. Theirs is isolation like no other: amongst the hordes of round holes, they stare down at a square peg. So, they shamefully reach out for the platonic comfort of one another. Failing that, they meet here for the certainty of being surrounded by other men who understand the grave realities of modern masculinity.

This evening, however, is not one of the group's regular circles. It is for the "uninitiated"-those men who have yet to emerge from the matriarchal cocoon and blossom into "New Warriors," those men the Mankind Project (MKP) seeks to transform one at a time, those men who have yet to undergo the New Warrior metamorphosis. This is the MKP's Warrior Light evening, a sort of primer for the two-day New Warrior Training Adventure.
The New Warrior Training events are kept entirely secret. Otherwise, "it would lose some of its meaning," says Robert, a handsome man in his mid- to late 40s and the leader of the Montreal centre. The promotional literature nonetheless promises that the weekend will "enable men to live lives of integrity, accountability and connection to feeling." (Though the meeting's participants are not anonymous, they are deeply private; their names have been changed because none of them want to be identified.)

"The New Warrior is a man who has achieved hard-won ownership of the highly focused, aggressive energy that empowers and shapes the inner masculine self," reads the MKP's Web site. "Sustained by this new energy, the New Warrior is at once tough and loving, wild and gentle, fierce and tolerant," it continues.

Isolation is a key component to the moulding of a New Warrior. Spiritually threatened by the norms and demands outside, the men here commit to the creation of an emotional comfort zone.

"As long as Robert and I are still standing, there will be a place in Montreal where men can feel safe," says Paul, a smallish man in his early 50s.

Seduced by this metaphysical space they would describe insistently throughout the evening as a "container," each man integrates it by "checking in," by vocalizing two of the feelings that have led them here to these cheap, tweed-upholstered couches and chairs. With the lone exception of Paul, everyone invariably checks in with fear, mitigated by some conditional happiness or frustration. Paul, on the other hand, checks in with a smug contentment.

"I'm a men's work junkie," he offers as a possible explanation for his delight, or maybe just his presence. "I'm going to three circles this week," he says.

As each man progresses through the extended check-in, the "place of introspection" where the men are expected to publicly reveal and discuss the nature of their emotions, Paul constantly interjects with the evening's creed: "I hear what you're saying." He and the others repeat this at the end of every revelation, their left hand resting on their chests and their right hand held up with the palm facing outwards. The gesture is reminiscent of an oath-taking, only the men have substituted themselves for a Bible.

"I'm afraid I'm not a good father," says one.

"I hear what you're saying."

"My fear of success drives me to failure," says another.

"I hear what you're saying."

"I'm without a circle and I wish I had one to sit in," says a third.

"I hear what you're saying."

The cycle of sympathy breaks only when one man gets up and heads towards the door.

"Where's the bathroom?" he asks.
"It's just on your right," Robert answers.

"I think I heard a woman outside," Paul warns the man, as he is about to leave the room. "You should probably use the [italicize]men's bathroom further down the hall on your left, then."

The break provides Paul and Robert a few moments to reminisce about prior powerful circles, since this particular evening had been spared the usual bridge between the initial and extended check-in rounds. With their existential wounds freshly exposed by the initial check-in, the men generally proceed with a "clearing." The clearing consists of role-play exercises in which the participants release their repressed frustration with other men, either inside or outside the circle. This process is necessary to rid the individual of the "aggressive competitiveness" inherent to the contemporary masculine identity, explains Robert. Men cannot function with each other in an angry state because "people are a mirror of my life, of me," continues another.

"We had a doozy of a clearing the other night," says Paul, smiling and nodding.

"Oh, I love those nights," says Robert.

The MKP belongs to a segment of the so-called men's movement that came to prominence in the early 1990s under the influence of Robert Bly, the high priest of the mythopoetic men's work groups. Heavily inspired by Bly's 1990 book, Iron Paul, which mythologizes a Brothers Grimm fairytale to provide lessons to men, the MKP blames the dysfunction of the male gender on a failure in conditioning.

"The Industrial Revolution has meant that the boy is not taught how to be a man by a man. Initiation is a natural need for a young man," explains Robert. "The transformation component of the New Warrior Training contains processes that may be found difficult," he continues.

Despite its noble intentions, a remedial initiation may not be sufficient. For the past 17 years, Lloyd MacKenzie has been working with men who the court orders to attend group therapy sessions. He points to the powerful influence of the corporate economic model on the home life, rather than any past transgression, as the source of male malaise.

"We don't have an inclusive sense of what we're supposed to be doing because everything is so commodified and put into categories," says MacKenzie, 39. "The traditional corporate model basically tells you not to take any responsibility for anything that you don't have to and doesn't lead to the bottom line, back to the shareholders. I think that men maybe want to, or need to, take more responsibility."

Though the presence of the men's movement in the public arena has waned, the MKP claims to have trained over 30,000 New Warriors at a cost of approximately $500 and operates 38 centres in eight countries.

In their exceptionally earnest attempt to "own their wounds," as the pseudo-poem written by one of the group's elders encourages them to do (the reading of which anchored the introduction to the MKP and their Warrior Light evening), the men confine their experiences to a strict paradigm: they are the prodigal sons who rise from epic descents, the heroes of their own redemptive parables, ennobled by the healing power of their
constructive feedback. This may, in fact, eliminate the need to relate the individual experience to a broader relationship with the external world. Manhood could just be a labyrinthine journey where experience is a continual diversion, and self-knowledge a comforting myopia.

"When I started doing men's work, my wife had told me that she had consulted a lawyer to start divorce proceedings," says Paul. "Seven years later, our marriage is better than ever." There may really be a few square holes after all.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:32PM (-08:00)

**Transformation and Stretching**

Friday, December 16, 2005

For me, the more I stretch the more I see I am capable; as a man, a father, a son, a brother. I see that stretching is everything in the ManKind Project.

Considering the training is a stretch. Doing the training is a stretch. Integrating the training is a stretch.

How far are you willing to stretch? Will you allow yourself to be open in the face of fear and the not-knowing? Come stretch.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

The Way of Transformation by Karlfried Gras von Durkheim (ASIN: 0042910145)

The man who, being really on the Way, falls upon hard times in the world will not, as a consequence, turn to that friend who offers him refuge and comfort and encourages his old self to survive. Rather, he will seek out someone who will faithfully and inexorably help him to risk himself, so that he may endure the suffering and pass courageously through it, thus making of it a "raft that leads to the far shore." Only to the extent that man exposes himself over and over again to annihilation, can that which is indestructible arise within him. In this lies the dignity of daring. Thus, the aim of (spiritual) practice is not to develop an attitude which allows a man to acquire a state of harmony and peace wherein nothing can ever trouble him.

On the contrary, practice should teach him to let himself be assaulted, perturbed, moved, insulted, broken and battered - that is to say, it should enable him to dare to let go his
futile hankering after harmony, surcease from pain, and a comfortable life in order that he may discover, in doing battle with the forces that oppose him, that which awaits him beyond the world of opposites.

The first necessity is that we should have the courage to face life, and to encounter all that is most perilous in the world. When this is possible, meditation itself becomes the means by which we accept and welcome the demons which arise from the unconscious, a process very different from the practice of concentration on some object as a protection against such forces.

Only if we venture repeatedly through zones of annihilation can our contact with Divine Being, which is beyond annihilation, become firm and stable. The more a man learns whole-heartedly to confront the world that threatens him with isolation, the more are the depths of the Ground of Being revealed and the possibilities of New Life and Becoming opened.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 02:06PM (-08:00)

Time

Tuesday, December 27, 2005

It's that time of year...the time I hear people say they will change their lives this next year. Have you ever said that to yourself? I have. Ever actually done it on a conscious level? I have.

It is time, ya know? Right now, it is time. You can feel it in your groin. You can feel the pull to change your life. Is this year the year you walk the talk? Is this the year you wake from the slumber and become the man you meant to be?

I can only speak for me. I think it’s time for you. It’s time for another man to step into his potentials and fears of potential. The time is now.

So, is it your time?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Warrior as Archetype
The Prince and the King, Michael Gurian

The Warrior is that part of ourselves that protects emotional boundaries and asserts our needs in the world. Where exactly it should stand to protect our boundaries depends on where the King tells it to stand. First a mentor initiates it, as a drill sergeant is the first initiator of the young soldier. But then the King initiates it, gives it a cause, a mission -- as a general gives the soldier his mission.
The Warrior serves the King and follows the King's instructions to the letter. Key words to describe the Warrior are duty, honor, loyalty, discipline, boundaries. The Warrior's tool is the sword (or any equivalent weapon of protection and assertion, including, in martial arts, the human body).

There is a dance to fencing or sword fighting that dramatizes the Warrior's role. You have danced it in your life without realizing it. We all carry a sword (or its equivalent) in a sheath at our belt, even if we never identify that that is what protects us. And we manifest that dance in many more ways than the physical. The dance is internal, hidden behind many of our interactions.

The Warrior, then, is that part of ourselves that guards our boundaries and asserts our needs. It is activated throughout childhood and especially in adolescence. If Kings and Magicians in our lives don't do a good job, our Warrior will be activated in its shadow aspect, falling easily to rages and bullying; or it will barely be activated at all.

The Prince and the King, Michael Gurian
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:19PM (-08:00)

**Shadow Work**

**Thursday, January 19, 2006**

This piece about shadow describes, in some ways, what it looks like to be in an MKP iGroup.

For me, shadow is my gold. It is my hardest...most glorious work. To work in the shadow means to bring my life to light.

With me?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>
Integrating the Shadow

By Dmitri Bilgere

Bob, a man in his mid-thirties who describes himself as "someone who never gets mad" is, at this moment, beating his father with a baseball bat. "I hate you!" he screams. The people looking on yell encouragement as he pounds on her father. "You abused me!" he yells. "You abused me and I hate you!"

What is going on here? Bob isn't participating in any criminal behavior, and his "father" is actually a pile of pillows on the floor. Bob is attending one of the many personal-growth workshops, now popular across the country, that encourage participants to "get into their shadows." Bob is expressing long-repressed anger at some behavior of his father. Because his father isn't actually present, Bob knows he can fully express his anger without actually hurting his father, whom he loves. Yet he is also angry, and he pounds and pounds the pillows.

The facilitator tells Bob that he is "in his shadow." What does this piece of new-age jargon mean? In A Little Book on the Human Shadow, Robert Bly says we are all born into the world with what he calls a "360° personality." As babies, we can honestly be however we are, and behave freely in any direction we choose. Through the course of being brought up, Bly says, we learn that some ways of being are okay, and that other ways of being are not. We learn that, in order to be good people, or in order to get love, we must repress parts of ourselves. The parts of us that we repress become our shadows.

For example, our ability to feel our feelings may go into shadow. When Bob was a little boy, and his angry father hurt him, he may have learned that anger is a bad, hurtful emotion. He may have decided that, in order to not be a hurtful person, he would never be angry. By deciding that anger was hurtful and deciding to not ever be angry, he put her anger into shadow.

Scott, another workshop participant, tells about how his feelings went into shadow. "I remember the day I decided that it was better to not feel at all. I was a little boy, in my room, and my parents were fighting downstairs. It just seemed better not to feel, so I decided not to."

While putting feelings into shadow might be a good survival strategy for a child, it doesn't work so well once we grow up. As an adult, Bob complains that he can't use his anger constructively. He can't defend himself, and can't set boundaries. Scott complains that, as an adult, he finds his life boring. "I don't feel anything," he says. "I just know I'm missing out."

Animal trainers have long known that the best way to control an unwanted behavior is to put that behavior on cue, then to never give the cue. For example, when confronted with
a dog who barks too much, they will teach the dog to bark only when signaled to do so. In this way they take control of the dog's barking, and can use that barking any way they wish.

This principle also applies to shadowed behaviors. When we can choose to do a behavior on purpose, we can also choose to not do it on purpose. At the seminar, Bob is able to choose, for the first time, to express his anger just the way it is. When Bob learns he can get into his anger on purpose, he begins to put his anger on cue. Once he can choose to be in his anger, he can also chose how he uses the power of that anger. He controls his anger, rather than it controlling him. He has "integrated his shadow" by owning his anger, and learning to control it.

Anything we think we aren't is in shadow for us. If I think I'm never mean, then my meanness goes into shadow. If I think I'm not attractive, then my attractiveness is in shadow. If I think I'm not loving, my loving nature goes into shadow. We integrate our shadows by playing pretend, like children do, with different behaviors. We do this in environments in which there are no real-world consequences. As we play safely with our shadows, we integrate their power.

As the sages say, we are actually all one anyway. In the greatest sense, anything in this universe we think is not part of us is part of our shadow. Integrating your shadows is an important step on the road of returning to the oneness of all life.

Dmitri Bilgere is a seminar leader who has lead workshops all over the US, in Canada, England, and South Africa. He is the author of Beyond the Blame Game: Creating Compassion and Ending the Sex War in Your Life.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:40AM (-08:00)

Comments

- DayvudD

January 20, 2006

Thank you for the gift of this article and thank you for linking me on your blog. It's always nice to meet a new brother. Aho!

You Are Welcome Here

Monday, January 23, 2006
When it comes to expressing my joy for this work, sometimes the words do not come. I do not have a prepared answer for how the NWTA, and in a larger scope ManKind Project, have touched my life.

It is clear I have a place to live my heart as it was intended, but beyond that it changes and is intangible at some times.

The piece below speaks to me in how the NWTA and ManKind Project open to men and their journeys. It speaks to me about acceptance.

I offer it to you.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

All Is Welcome Here
by Miten

Broken hearts and broken wings
Bring it all and everything
Bring the song you fear to sing
All is welcome here

And even if you've broke your vow
A thousand times
Come anyhow
We're stepping into the power of now
And all is welcome here

See the father and the son
Reunited here they come
Dancing to the sacred drum
They know they're welcome here
I see the shaman and the mighty priest
See the beauty and the beast
Singing I have been released
And I am welcome here

I stood alone at the gateless gate
Too drunk on love to hesitate
To the winds I cast my fate
And the remnants of my fear
I took a deep breath and I leapt
And I awoke as if I’d never slept
Tear of gratitude I wept
I was welcome here

So bring your laughter and bring your tears
Your busy lives and your careers
And bring the pain you’ve carried for years
All is welcome here
Freedom is not so far away
And there’s only one price we have to pay
Live our dreams till they fade away
And let them go

"The true purpose of our music is to awaken a longing in the heart for that which is omnipresent: the experience of silence and meditation. Osho once said something like, 'My whole effort here is to get you to slow down, to slow down so completely, that one day you simply stop.' And out of that moment of stillness ... of ‘no-mind’, comes the benediction. It is my hope that my songs bring with them a moment of peace and stillness to all those who listen."

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:03AM (-08:00)

Before the Men's Retreat

Monday, January 30, 2006
Men’s retreats, including the NWTA, have long been mis-associated with naked men running around drumming in the woods. Such misconceptions have hurt the validity of the message and the soulful work that gets done at many of these retreats.

The NWTA brings great spirited work to many men. Isn’t it time you looked past the rhetoric and to see what the NWTA is all about? For that matter, how about dropping the men’s movement preconception you may have and take a leap of faith into the pool that is men working to change the world.

I am one of those men and I invite you to continue your journey.

The piece below came to me as an unattributed e-mail. With respect to whoever wrote it, I post it here.

I’m out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Before the Men’s Retreat

She asks: "What is it?"

And I say: "100 men naked in the woods."

She wrinkles her nose and says: "No clothes?"

And I say: "Sometimes."

And she says: "What do you do?"

I say: "First we removed the coat of corporate soldier, of worker bee, of boss, of coach, of business owner. Then we pull off the jacket of marriage. Toss aside the shoes of parenthood. The umbrella of son. The backpack of friend. The helmet of hero, savior, tough guy. We pull from our pockets the mantle of lady’s man, lover, slayer of the weaker sex. We check in our charm and toss away the pants of romance. All the roles and expectations we carry about in our lives, we leave behind like a pile of clothes on the floor."

She says: "On the floor? That’s what I thought. Then you’re naked?"

Says I: "Not yet. We promise not to engage in physical violence, then we strip off unnecessary civilization. Toss it in the pile with all the rest."

She: "Then you’re naked."

I: "No. We still hold onto our tattered dysfunctions and threadbare beliefs like a 10 year old pair of bikini briefs. That’s the last thing, but we hold fast, because, you know, those stinking little lies and truths, that stained and shredded pair of underwear held our life together for 10, 20, 40 years. And only when we can toss that old thing away are we truly naked"

She blinks and says: "So it’s 100 men in the woods in tattered underwear."
I say: "Yes. But over the course of the week, it washes away in the realm of ritual. Blown away by the breath of spirit. Cracked open under the scrutiny and support of men. Pried off by the power of story."

She stares at me, silent, and then: "Why? ... Why do you do it?"

I say: "So we can see what's left. That's us. Naked. We can hardly recognize ourselves, but that's who we are. It's blinding. Dazzling. Beautiful. Very painful, but very real. We walk with it. Work with it. Sing songs to honor and protect it. Wounds are revealed, healed, become our strength and our shield. Internal lands are explored. Monsters are banished. And in the end, we bring some of all this back into life, even as we put our clothes back on."

She shifts and settles, ponders and pads about the room, then smiles and says: "Well, have a good time then."

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 03:13PM (-08:00)

The Golden Child, A Man's Journey Home

Thursday, February 02, 2006

This post is a man's story. We all have stories. This man's story includes the New Warrior Training Adventure.

Your story could include this adventure, as well. You just have to get up and go. Simple as that.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

The Golden Child, A Man's Journey Home

by Edgar Carter

Last night, lying in bed with my partner, I almost succeeded. After having spent the last three days living in my inner fearful child, I really connected with my pained child, and now I've almost gotten all the way back to claiming my Golden Child.

Who are all these "children"?
Let me explain. It's starts with my own story.

I came into this world as the third child to a teenage mother. The fourth was my brother, who was born when Mom was a mere twenty years of age. At twenty, Mom was not equipped to deal with four demanding, obnoxious brat kids under the age of six, and was even less equipped to give them the love and the nurturing they needed and deserved. So as time went on, Mom and Dad became alcoholics and abusive, and as a result, I took on a lot of pain, and created beliefs about myself that I know now aren't true. “I don't deserve to be loved”, “I'm better off alone,” and “I don't belong on this earth.” Somehow, even with these beliefs I survived. From the very beginning, I stumbled through life, acting out, and leaving a lot of damage in my wake.

In 1997, a good friend of mine in who was in recovery introduced me to the concept of “Men's Work.” He invited me to attend something called the “New Warrior Training Adventure.” The NWTA is an experiential Men's training weekend, designed to start a man on the journey to reclaim his own Golden Child. The training was created by three men, Rich Tosi, Ron Hering, and Bill Kauth. Bill was conducting men's circles before they were popular. In 1984 he went to a conference with his girlfriend who was president of the Wisconsin Feminist Therapists Association. As he noticed he was the only man at the conference and he began to ask himself, “Why isn't there anything inspiring for men? Women have all this support, and men - well, they don’t seem to have anything like it!” He asked this same question to Rich and Ron, and soon the three of them all gathered around Rich's kitchen table and planned a weekend just for men. So, the “New Warrior Training Adventure” was conceived and the first one was held in January 1985, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Since that time over 30,000 men worldwide have attended the NWTA. And now it has evolved into an International Men's Organization called, “The ManKind Project.”

In MKP, we often use a process called “Head, Heart and Soul” to describe the stages in a man's life. This process is designed to help men see how they may have been wounded and built walls within and around themselves. It brings clarity to how, as men our journey from childhood to manhood may have included disowning certain parts of ourselves so we would fit in, be accepted and loved. It starts with the Golden Child, that 360 degrees of pure, golden potential, complete in every way. As we move through the Pained Child, and the Fearing Child, we shut down parts of ourselves, especially those that don't work in our current environment. The acting out begins to really manifest as we move through the Immature Warrior, then as the Shielded Child we begin to hide who we really are. As the Rational Man we began to fully live in our heads, disconnect from our hearts, no longer able to see the Golden Child. Finally, the Bewildered Man looks around, and says, “I'm doing everything that is asked of me, why isn't it working, why am I not wondrously happy?” The process then goes on to describe how a man can turn around, look at those disowned parts of himself and began the journey of reclaiming them, and finally reconnecting with the Golden Child, the one who KNOWS how to be wondrously happy!

So, I attended the NWT in April 1997, and for me, this man began my own journey to reclaiming my “Golden Child.” At that training weekend I began to consciously let go of blaming my parents for my life. Sitting in a circle in Kentucky in 1998, I confronted how I had always ran away from those close to me. With the loving support of men in that circle I made the decision to do whatever it took to return to Georgia and get into a relationship with my family - my children, grandchildren, siblings, and parents. I had just reclaimed that part of me that is able to connect with those that I love.
And this led back to last night, with me laying in bed with the wonderful woman that I have finally been able to call to me. And as I lay in my pained child, crying I touched those early beliefs that no longer work for me. I made a conscious choice to now believe that, "I DO deserve to be loved" and "I DO belong on this earth." And as I laid there feeling the love. I could now embrace my Golden Child, and pull him into my heart.

Edgar Carter is a co-founder and center director of Mankind Project of Georgia. A community of men committed to living lives of Authenticity, Integrity, and Accountability. MKP of GA. facilitates several “New Warrior Training Adventures” each year. You can reach Ed at: HealingJoy@adelphia.net

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:32AM (-08:00)

Comments

- DayvudD

February 03, 2006

Thank you for sharing this article. I met Ed last month in Texas. He was on staff for our January weekend, as was I. I knew he was gifted in many ways. Thank you for reminding me. Peace and Love.

Taking the Journey

Wednesday, February 08, 2006

Today's post comes from the Joseph Campbell Foundation Forum. I choose this snippet because I think it clearly shows the way a man feels after attending the New Warrior Training Adventure. The second post in the long forum series is from the man who I quote below. As you read you can follow his questions, his leaving for the weekend, and his return. This is men talking about the training and how it relates to a man's life.

I enjoyed reading all the posts. Give yourself a good 45 minutes to read all of it. It's worth it. Then sign up.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

ScottNass

"I had all of the same concerns before my initiation. Trust the voice that is urging you to
go. The other one may be your shadow.

I can say that it worked for me beyond my wildest dreams. I have a clarity to my life right now that I have never had. You cannot know unless you do it. I was very dubious about it before I did it. People who know me see a major change in my persona to the point where they want some too.

Believe me. The ManKind project is a wholesome thing (something I was concerned about before I did it). It is utterly non-dogmatic. I believe in it so much that I would be willing to pay for the privilege of initiating other men.

As you said, there is a 'safety net'. At any time you can leave the weekend. You get out of things what you put into them. If you are willing to give yourself over completely and trust the process you will come back a different man. A man who acts in integrity at all times. I.e. your thoughts, feelings, words, and actions in alignment at all times.

Since my weekend I have experienced some amazing synchronicity events and heretofore I was about as 'rational' a guy as you could find. Heck I still am.

"Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 02:34PM (-08:00)

You Have Value, Come With Me

Thursday, February 09, 2006

Men

What is it that calls you to be better than you are? What is it that tells you that you can be more than you are? Do you listen to the voice or minimize it? Do you think yourself less worthy than me?

You have value, come with me. The time is now.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

There was a time when old men lived side by side with people of all ages, holding honored positions within the community; they were valued for their discretion and experience. In times of conflict, they balanced the young warrior's desire for adventure and physical challenge, offering sage discretion grown from having suffered the regrettable consequences of battle. Excluded from the rigors of war these old men were
often left to face the grief of those remaining at home, conscious of the painful costs incurred when young men go off to dominate their world, these old men understood the unspoken consequences of aggression.

They knew boys would find a way to be initiated into manhood even if they had to create hardship and suffering to test themselves. The old men were gatekeepers to maturity, able to recognize when the time was right for a boy to become a man, they watched for signs confirming the moment, and they often had a long tradition of ceremony to support their challenge of initiation. Identified by many names worldwide, vision quest, hero's journey, rite of passage, all initiations share a common theme. Separation, Descent, Ordeal, and a Welcoming back. These old men were schooled in the art of initiation.

Young men were separated from their families, challenged emotionally and physically in an effort to discover unique strengths and weaknesses, then welcomed into the world of adulthood charged with the responsibility of making their contribution to the tribe or village. They began leaving the narcissism of the child behind, taking their rightful place, maturing as an adult. A pivotal moment began this process; the old men faced an initiate and said, "I see value in you, now is the time to prove yourself, come with me, we are ready for you." Deep within our bones a hunger still lives to hear an admired man speak these words. No matter where we come from, or which culture has left its imprint on our soul, our hunger to be seen as valuable, then challenged to reach our potential are the words we yearn to hear. Regardless of our tribe or culture, we share a common desire for initiation without ever knowing why.

"You have value, come with me"

How long have you been waiting for an old man to seek you out and speak these words?

We have abandoned our old men, assigning them positions of powerlessness. They diminish the wisdom gained from years served, certain their life experience has little value, banishing themselves to Desert or Oceanside havens, living with isolation and regret as their constant companions in self-imposed exile. Today the world worships a youthful god of action in place of the aged god of discretion and wisdom. We still hunger for some challenge offered by a respected elder, ache for some affirmation of personal value convincing us of our inherent worth, yet we resist aging. We pray maturity will somehow eclipse this world of youth, but secretly dream it will leave us eighteen forever. The desire to be valued first felt as a youth mutates into resentment as years pass and our hunger grows, fueled by competition and jealousy administered in doses by those senior in years or authority. Endlessly waiting for the benevolent acknowledgement and worthy challenge offered by a true elder, we instead grow bitter and cynical. The art of initiation practiced in the past by wise men and women may well be lost. Those schooled in initiation have almost disappeared, lost to a time that no longer exists. The hunger to be tested once satisfied by the vision quest of old, replaced by a solitary journey where no welcome home is offered, unique contribution discouraged and individual value left to languish crumbling over time into regret and self absorbed introspection. We try desperately to initiate ourselves through these passages, but what good is virtue when no one else bears witness.

Today we are initiated in isolation; seldom clear on the lesson, rarely blessed for our action.

We find personal initiations today everywhere we look, opportunities to rise above our
previous limitations and challenge our fears or create new. Unlike days of old where the
challenge came from outside in the form of a fierce animal or harsh climate, today the
greater challenges are found within ourselves. A failed relationship, or business crises
brings us to our knees, forcing us across a threshold insisting we see ourselves in a new
way. Marriage certainly one of the most potent initiations takes limitless courage if for no
other reason than to deflect stories of broken promises trailing behind countless families.
The birth of a child, the grandest of all initiations into womanhood initiates the father as
well, propelling the new parents into a world of unfamiliar feelings and monumental
expectations; every one, an initiation that shapes us from inside.

Today's "Hero's Journey" grows within us, often unspoken or endured with stoicism we
are incapable of ignoring the call, life tests us insisting we discover our strengths. Few of
us approach these initiations consciously, swept up in reaction or emotion we pass
through life's challenges daring to risk an easy breath occasionally, yet also fearful of the
future. Deeper enduring values are learned in the crucible of initiation, modeled by older
wiser souls that know of the struggle, their vitality proof we will survive. They must refuse
us passage through the gates until they see us consider our values and reflect them from
our eyes for all to see. Only then do we become convinced of our value. When a
respected man or woman looks into our eyes and believes we are powerful and just, we
gladly live up
to their expectations. You are my best hope for the future; will my children be consumed
by the hunger we have all suffered at the hands of absent elders? Or will you be the first
to touch my daughter on the shoulder and say "Come with me, we are ready for you, I
see something great in you" Will you seek out my son and convince him of his worth,
challenge him to be great and fully capable of making his contribution?

Your "Hero's journey" awaits, will you put aside the playthings of youth, risk valuing your
life experience enough to become that wise man or woman convincing others of their
worth? Can you risk taking a stand against violence and oppression knowing the price?
Put down the burden of your past and refuse fear the freedom to run your life? Will you
touch my children with benevolence, while challenging them into true maturity?

"Most men live lives of quiet desperation" (Thoreau)

The desperation we experience is not one of inadequacy, we are all desperate to make a
unique contribution, be remembered fondly and leave a visible legacy. Desperate
because we know the time is running out.

We must not wait for the wise ones to appear, or lament their departure, we must become
them. Are you ready? I see something great in you.
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:23AM (-08:00)

Principles and Integrity

Friday, February 10, 2006
The symbol here is GI (Integrity) it means:

-- Be acutely honest throughout your dealings with all people
-- Believe in justice, not from other people, but from yourself
-- To the true warrior, all points of view are deeply considered regarding honesty, justice, and integrity.

These are strong and powerful words to articulate integrity.

In the ManKind Project, men are encouraged to live lives of integrity. A man is considered his own keeper or monitor. A man is considered to be open to the life outside integrity. For, we all go there. A man may be honorably called out and held open to being out of integrity with a statement, a choice, a word, a relationship, himself.

The ManKind Project has a set of principles that states:

-- I accept full responsibility for my actions
-- I maintain integrity in my relationships
-- I deal with disagreements directly
-- I treat others with dignity, respect their boundaries, and honor their confidences
-- I hold another accountable who I judge to be out of integrity

Are you willing to live your life in integrity with men around you that will hold a space for you to see where you do and don’t? Are you finally willing to set foot in your own integrity?

I will be there to walk with you, hear you, honor you, and reflect for you.

I'm out. Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:09PM (-08:00)

Comments
Thank you, Old Faithful Wolf, for your willingness to put yourself out there for all of us who try and live a life of integrity.

I'd just invite you to see my own blog -- http://stateofhealing.blogspot.com -- and see if it might be worth linking up with your blog.

I'll see you in the circle of men....

Grace and peace,

Brave Brown Horse

A Different Take

Monday, February 13, 2006

I like this post; for one reason. OK...two reasons.

First, Joe Perez is an initiated man in the ManKind Project. So, I am anxious to read what another Warrior has to say. Guess what? See second reason.

Second, his opinion is different than mine. I honor that we have a different take on this article which I wrote a short piece about here. He has his view and I have mine. I agree and disagree.

The fact is we are brothers in the ManKind Project. What does that mean to me? It means we share a common basis for seeing the world. We come from a basis of understanding and striving to be better on our own individual level. We don't have to agree. We can honor each other for our place and our views.

What would it be like for you to be seen as who your and honored for being just that, no matter who you are? Find out. Take the leap. Men will be there to catch you.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

How not to write about the men's movement

Here's an article by Paul Zakrzewski on the men's movement. As my longtime readers
know, this is a subject dear to my heart. I've participated in trainings and groups sponsored by The ManKind Project for several years. So bear this bias in mind when you hear my judgment that Zakrzewski's article, at least insofar as it discusses the mythopoetic side of the men's movement, not only flubs major facts, but misses the interesting stories entirely.

Most egregiously, Zakrzewski claims that the men's movement has been eclipsed ("today, however, the drums have largely fallen silent") and he claims that the ManKind Project "conducts New Warrior Training Adventures for some 3,000 men every year - these are mostly affairs for the already initiated..." Dead wrong. Simple fact checking would have pointed out that nobody can attend a MKP training--called the New Warrior Training Adventure--more than once. That's why they call them initiations, duh! Therefore, every man who attends a MKP NWTA is doing so for the first time. There are Integration Groups and advanced trainings for initiated men, but these are not really a big part of the organization. At this point in time, its entire culture is focused on putting on the NWTA and Integration Groups for uninitiated men.

I am flabbergasted that this article could see its way into print, frankly, because when you discount the reach of the only international men's organization, how can you write an article then claiming that the men's movement has fallen silent!

There's so much else that's poorly done about the way that Zakrzewski handles the mythopoetic men's movement, I'm not quite sure where to begin. For starters, let me say that this is just about the umpteenth piece I have read about the men's movement that rehashes all the idiotic caricatures that have been said about the movement in the popular culture (e.g., it's just foolish men beating drums with war paint and running naked through the woods). That seems to be all most journalists care to say about this movement: people love to make fun of it (yeah, they sure do, including the journalists who write about it). Plenty of people mock and belittle the women's movement, but you don't see that fact mentioned in 9 out of 10 articles written about feminism. Zakrzewski goes a bit beyond the negative pop culture stereotypes, but not very far. He never asks whether any of these caricatures were unfair, inaccurate, or if they represented the emotional insecurities of men who were threatened by the men's movement. He never asks why the men's movement provokes so much terror in some men that they must cover up their fear by mocking what it represents for them. Now if a writer started looking into "men who bash the men's movement," there could be a fascinating profile in shadow for the world to see (somehow I don't think Zakrzewski is the guy to write it).

In the conclusion, Zakrzewski actually quotes somebody who blames the men's movement itself for the negative stereotypes, saying that they took good ideas from Robert Bly and then something "got lost in translation." Well, that's one guy's point of view. Fine. But how about interviewing somebody in the men's movement who has a different opinion?

I really don't think Zakrzewski gets the mythopoetic side of the men's movement, and in this sadly he is like most men in our culture. He admits to being in a men's "discussion" group, so that should give him some insight, right? Well, no, sorry, buddy. When it comes to appreciating Robert Bly or the deep healing work of groups like MKP, a discussion group doesn't count. In fact, it's a strike against you (re-read what Bly had to say about the danger of "Ascension" in Iron John). The men's movement earns my respect in large part because its psychic healing and interpersonal integration modalities are some of the most powerful, effective, and dynamic tools in existence ... and those tools are, by and
large, in the hands of very capable facilitators. For many men this is Emotional Literacy 101, but I cannot tell you how many men came to do a NWTA or Integration Group thinking that they knew it all already only to be blown away. Discussion groups have a role to play, but they're nowhere close to the effectiveness of a NWTA or good MKP-style integration/shadow work group.

There are some great stories to be written about the men's movement. For any journalists who may be reading my blog, here are a few free ideas:

• Someone could write a great piece on the role of gay men in the men's movement. How are their experiences the same or different from straight men's? How is the men's movement being used (or misused) by ex-gay conversion programs? More broadly, how is the multicultural movement impacting the mythopoetic side of the movement? I'd be happy to point any journalists in the right direction for finding men to interview.

• Yes, the men's movement is in decline from its initial period, just as is the women's movement. How is the men's movement adapting? Is it going after the corporate leadership development market? Is it losing the spooky New Age rituals? Is the mythopoetic men's movement learning from the Promise Keepers?

• And from an integral perspective, how are groups like the MKP succeeding at providing transformational weekends for men from a diverse array of levels of consciousness? Is the men's movement moving beyond pluralistic "mythopoetic" to a more integral stance? Does the men's movement give us a gender-based model for transforming consciousness?

Zakrzewski concludes that the "Bly-style men's movement highlighted a powerful urge for men to commune with each other that persists today," which sounds fine until you realize the Zakrzewski also says that men are communing by grabbing a few drinks at the pub or watching football. Sigh. Is this what we have come to: writers who think that the mythopoetic men's movement is basically about little more than kicking down a few brewskies? There are good stories waiting to be written about the men's movement...Anyone?

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:51AM (-08:00)

Comments

- Joe February 15, 2006

As a writer and journalist myself, I see there are many different avenues to take with this topic.

As an initiated man, too, I can DEFINITELY say without any hesitation that having a "small men's group" weekly is veeerrryyy different than I-Group work or even an NWTA weekend. I have been in "small men's group" areas before. Some have been beneficial, some not. Yet my truth is I'd rather be in an I-Group where all my energies and gold and shadows are welcome.

Sure, it's always the popular thing to knock something or someone that is on the upswing. What's tougher is going against the grain ... when going downstream with the other fishies looks fun instead of heading upstream against that tide.

Well, at least I'm going upstream not all alone!
The article writer, I'm sure, will have his supporters who live in fear of all us "drum beaters and naked runaround-ers" (how's that for another way of putting it!!). Yet if these same people had a chance -- no, took a RISK -- to SEE that their perceptions are all skewed, then something could take place.

Who knows ... maybe one of those doubters could become an initiated man.

Grace and peace,

Brave Brown Horse

P.S. -- Thanks for the kind honor to my father.

Ho!

- Old-faithfulWolf February 15, 2006

BBH

You're singing to the choir, brother! There is a world of difference between a weekly men's group and an MKP I-Group. Each, certainly, has its place and I honor the work, however it gets done.

I think it's the accountability and integirty "basis" that makes the difference, here. Men in I-Groups know the basis; expect it of themselves and other men in the circle.

Old-faithful Wolf

- Ivy March 13, 2006

So why dont you disclose any of the bad press on this group!

- Old-faithfulWolf March 14, 2006

Ivy

Bad press is easy to find. Serach and ye shall find!

It is not my mission to "unpromote" what I find to be a valuable and wonderful organization. On the other hand, I have touched on this in other posts. If you read more of my blog you will see that.

I offer you peace in your journey.

Old-faithful Wolf

**Being in Love**

**Thursday, February 16, 2006**
This post is from an initiated man who shares his perspective on love.

Why is this related to the ManKind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure, you ask? Anytime I judge a man is speaking from the heart, I want to acknowledge that heart.

In my work in MKP, I realize that I create my own reality...how I respond to everything around me creates that reality. What is your reality?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Pat's Blog

For Valentine's Day: Being in love.

Think all phenomena are like dreams.

All of our reality is constructed by our perceptions, misperceptions, beliefs, truth, etc. I have been amazed at times that the proverb stated above, has been taken out of context to mean “Buddhists believe that this world is really a dream” – sorta like the plot of The Matrix – “yeah cool dude, like I’m really dreaming this is reality when I’m someplace else; like you know, asleep somewhere...” This proverb is really teaching, that we construct our reality and that we can construct it many different ways. My judgment that anything is good or bad, sad or happy, real or unreal... is my own construction. I believe certain conditions set the occasion for us to be more likely to fall to certain conclusions, ...like falling in love.

When I first meet someone under romantic circumstances and certain chemistry occurs; I may “fall in love.” (I won’t bore you with the details of what those conditions are for me, since we all know them well enough; having spent huge amounts of time and energy seeking these conditions!)

Then at some point in the course of a relationship, I allow other circumstances and chemistry to occur, so then I wonder “Am I in love?” This started to come up in my relationship with my partner of 4 years, Frances. But recently, as I have come to more fully understand that I create my reality, I have been looking at how I can create “Falling in Love” with my partner in every moment.

So recently with my “beloved” (was my partner), I have been telling her I love her, doing other little things to let her know this, etc. And we have been studying Tantra together (No, I won’t embarrass us all by discussing the details here!) The result is I have fallen in love again.
On a different topic, this understanding helps account for the psychotherapy phenomenon of transference and counter-transference. Often therapy creates very similar circumstances to those that would set the occasion for “falling in love” such as self-disclosure under unconditional acceptance. Is the transference real? My answer is that it is as real as any other phenomenon we create. Some realities I chose to foster and others I chose to let go of.

So for now, I have decided to “fall in love”, and I am very happy with the reality I have created.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:47PM (-08:00)

Mend My Life

Thursday, March 02, 2006

The Journey, by Mary Oliver

One day you finally knew what you had to do, and began, though the voices around you kept shouting their bad advice--though the whole house began to tremble and you felt the old tug at your ankles.

"Mend my life!" each voice cried.

But you didn’t stop. You knew what you had to do, though the wind pried with its stiff fingers at the very foundations, though their melancholy was terrible. It was already late enough, and a wild night, and the road full of fallen branches and stones.

But little by little, as you left their voices behind, the stars began to burn through the sheets of clouds, and there was a new voice which you slowly recognized as your own, that kept you company as you strode deeper and deeper into the world, determined to do the only thing you could do--determined to save the only life you could save.
There really is only one you that you can save from the paths that you have taken. The ManKind Project won't do it, nor the New Warrior Training Adventure. You will do it.

The ManKind Project is simply a place to be with other like-minded men who are seeking to change themselves, on an individual basis, for the greater good of them selves.

I am one of those men. I choose to write here to pass the story to you; for you to do with as you choose. I hope you here you voice calling you to, despite the "old tug at your ankles."

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

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What if the question is not...

Friday, March 10, 2006

"What if the question is not:

'Why am I so infrequently the person I really want to be',

but

'Why do I so infrequently want to be the person I really am?'"

Oriah Mountain Dreamer

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I suspect, like many of you, I was taught to conform to standards of good and bad that were not of my choosing. I was taught how to act, behave, conform, be accepted, etc. Sound familiar?
When I went looking for changes in my life, I found the ManKind Project and the NWTA. I needed answers for myself. I needed to learn to be me without all the past baggage and voices.

The NWTA didn’t give me answers to my life; the men that staff the training gave me space to find the answers for myself. I was fearful; sure, who wouldn’t be to some extent. What I found were men who cared not about who I projected outwardly, but about what was in my heart and soul and how they could be there to help me see it, too.

Coming to terms and understanding that I am a unique person didn’t happen because I attended an NWTA. It happened because I found a safe place in the NWTA and MKP to be open to different ideas of me.

I am now one of those men who I saw at the training weekend who stood with me and said, “go ahead, take the leap of faith, we’re here for you.” I am proud and honored to be a man among these men.

When was the last time someone stood with you when you took the leap?

Find it here. Find it with me.

I’m out.
Old-faithful Wolf
This man's journey into and out of the ManKind Project NWTA speaks for itself. I honor a man that shares his experiences, his story, with the world. I believe it enriches the world.

Read on.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

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ManKind Project New Warrior Training
By Mickey Elias
The Mankind Project - changing the world one man at a time

Three years ago, at the tender age of 38, it hit me that it was time for me to grow into a man. I'd outgrown who I used to be and I was not willing to continue with the blag.

With no real role models, my childhood wounds (un)comfortably tucked up in my shadow, coming from a nice Catholic family ruled by secrets, lies and what people will think, there was only one box left for me. Yup, it had brass handles on it. The only option was to play dead, as all good men 'should'. But compromising my own integrity, beliefs, values and potential was simply not an option. So I did my ironing.

With my hot sole calmly smoothing out all life's creases I blissfully, obsessively, compulsively got my outer world in order, leaving the inner secretly in tatters. But then, there's ironing - and there's ironing with a Dictaphone, allowing for other men and even for women to eavesdrop on conversations between two men as they purge their dark sides, eventually allowing the light to shine through. "MEN Speak the Unspeakable" was the result. Transcription of fourteen months of talking and taping between Edward Seeker
and myself as we slowly, painfully, hilariously and embarrassingly transformed from helpless boys in pain, to healthily men living in our power, with passion.

Am I thus insinuating that the modern rites of passage for a man involve doing the ironing and talking a book? Maybe the way forward for some men is the Mankind Project's 'New Warrior Training Adventure'. An incredibly well designed weekend set up to provide the experiences that will allow a man to get clear about who he is inside, who he shows on the outside and who is ready to emerge into the world.

I would love to spill the beans on the whole thing and gush about the set-up, the exercises, the processes the whole caboodle... but that would be theft! If you are a man, or want to be your own man, for your own good as well as the good of everyone in your life, do the training. You know what it's like when you witness something hilarious and try to share it with someone - and it doesn't quite come over? One of those 'you really had to be there' situations? Man... you really had to be there!

From beginning to end, the programme was slick, safe, professional, personal and an absolutely amazing place to transform as a man, amongst men. There's a different energy when men are amongst men; and having taken part in, marketed and reported on personal development programmes since the 1980's, all over the world, I can't say that MKP is 'better' than any of the others - I can actually, but that's another story! - but I can say that it's up there with the best of them and a 'must do' to claim the part of a man's self that simply can't be claimed in a mixed group. And that part doesn't have to be missing; but which man in his right mind would say 'no' to more?

On the whole, the men who attended were your typically middle class, middle aged, white Anglo-Saxon 'nice' guys - at least on the surface. A group that I don't fit in to, but it really wasn't a problem for me. There were gay men, straight men, stray men, great men. The rough, the smooth and even the soppy. The different parts of myself were adequately represented and all that was left for me to do was step aside, take part and trust.

Modern day madness can make trust a real and justifiable issue, there's no doubt about that. MKP grabbed the bull of mistrust by the horn(s) from the outset with in-depth questionnaires on everything from health to hopes, attitudes to aspirations, past, present and future. These were supported by volunteers - of which there were many. The number of volunteer staff actually outnumbered participants. An excellent guy telephoned me to support me in every way, before the training even started. (Poor guy, I really bit his ear off! Slowly chewed it off, actually...) It would be rare to find such a high quality of 'staff' in the commercial workplace, but then to find out that the staff actually paid to support us on our journeys brought yet another lump to my throat! Hats off to them all for their focus, selflessness and depth of heart. Hats off to them for achieving the ability to operate from such a high level in their lives.

Talking about money, MKP is a non-profit making organisation with accounts open for inspection. Integrity, purely for the good of mankind. The weekend costs £500 inclusive. For some, that's a lot of money. For others, it's a splash in the pan. For all, it comes with a money back guarantee, for those who have not gained anything from the weekend, if they stay until the end. If it's your time to do it, work something out, whether it's a payment plan, a discount, putting ten pounds aside a week, whatever. Don't hide behind money, or anything else as an excuse. Step aside from comfortable control of an outgrown life and step into the passionate, powerful man that you truly are.
My experience was, at times, intense, joyous, painful, peaceful, enlightening, fearful, fulfilling, loving, humbling; a gift that I deserved to make me a better man in my life, in my relationships, in the world and for the future of mankind. Sure it reminded me of ‘Lord Of The Flies’ at times; 1980’s Californian hippie-stuff, ‘It's A Knockout’, Druids & Indians, Iron John and the rest. But then I also had an Adam Ant medley running through my head for the first couple of days, so you’ve got to remember that every man’s experience - and tunes - will be different!

The good news is, unlike a lot of these transformational workshoppie things, there is what seems to be a magnificent, grounded follow up programme and community of which all graduates are welcome to take part. Brotherhood. For me, more important than that, good guys, honest blokes, men that I can look up to and want to be like. My book is priceless (£12.99 actually!) and made a man out of me. The Mankind Project has given me company. Mutual support and inspiration on our individual pathways, towards a better future for us all.

How strange, to write about something without actually letting on what that ‘something’ actually is. But then I wouldn't want to steal the fire from your belly, or take the beat from your drum.

Thirty six thousand men around the world can't be wrong. So my advice to you, or the man in your life, is don't think - just do it...

The Mankind Project runs New Warrior Training Adventures four times a year, with introductory evenings on a regular basis. Contact MKP at http://www.mkp.org.uk/ or call 0870 787 9784.

Michael Elias, co-author of "MEN Speak the Unspeakable" http://www.menspeak.co.uk/ Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 02:15PM (-08:00)

**Feelin' Focussed**

Friday, April 07, 2006

From a Warrior's blog and I have only one thing to add. Aho!
Well, for the dozenth time, I have been on the staff of a New Warrior Training Adventure weekend here in Cape Town. And once again it has been a profound, intense experience for me. It is so rare to be surrounded by extraordinary men who are willing to acknowledge and own both their own 'gold' and shadow. These are men who are willing to go to depth collectively. It is good to be able to interact with men in a powerful, substantial way that is so uncommon in day-to-day life.

The world would be a better, safer, cleaner and more compassionate place if men chose to be accountable in this way.

If you haven't already, check it out!

http://www.mkp.org/

Might change your life...

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:14PM (-07:00)

No Foolin' - The Shadow Fades

Monday, April 10, 2006

This post reflects a man's (Doug) experience in his I-Group (integration group).

I honor men who create a better self and therefore a better world.

Are you ready to create a better you?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
From:
Doug in Brookfield, Illinois, USA

Every Thursday evening I attend a men's group that's associated with The ManKind Project, sponsors of the New Warrior Training Adventure, a weekend re-initiation experience. My Integration Group (I-group) consists of ten men who form a support and accountability team for one another. When we participate in the various processes each week, we call it "doing our work." We are very fortunate to have one member who is quite knowledgeable about the principles of the Project and experienced in doing them himself as well as guiding others as they do them.

The past few weeks I've been doing some work around ways in which I relate unhealthily to other people. Having been trained as a pastor as well as having processed a lot of my own past through contact with various counselors and spiritual directors over the years, as well as my own devotional practices, I have tended to respond quickly, compassionately, and often effectively to people in need. This can and does often turn out well for the other people, and yet there is also what the group and I have identified as a "shadow piece" to much of what I do in this regard.

"Shadow" is a term that was developed by the great psychoanalyst Carl Jung to identify aspects of the human psyche that are often "out of sight" of the person him- or herself but that just as often are quite influential in the way the person lives his or her life. The "shadow" tends to get what is called a "payoff" from actions the person performs that end up not being healthy or helpful for the person and can often also hurt the people with whom the person is involved. One goal of the "work" we do in the group is to become aware of these "shadows" and how they are working and what kind of payoff they get from our behavior, and through that awareness to bring the harmful behaviors to an end and to allow what we call our "gold" to gain the upper hand in guiding our behavior.

My experience in group these few weeks has been very difficult. As we worked through the identification of my shadow behavior, I felt my defensiveness rise up in a powerful way. This, I knew, was my shadow, which had theretofore operated unchallenged, trying to assert and maintain its control over my behavior. It enlisted the aid of many parts of me, including The Theologian, who created an excellent justification for my doing what I was doing from the perspective of my service to Christ. (As we remember from the stories of Jesus' temptations by Satan after his 40 days in the wilderness, even the devil can quote the Bible!)

However, even as I knew I could defend myself against the challenges my warrior brothers were making against my shadow behavior, the part of me that was not under the influence of my shadow, which is not yet strong enough to counter the shadow by itself,
was determined not to give in to the tyranny of the shadow; and it held onto the truth that it was hearing, and even affirmed it by speaking it back to the group, until I felt some progress had been made in weakening the power of the shadow and opening the possibility of my ceasing the harmful relational patterns.

At this point I have taken some very difficult steps to make some healthy changes in the ways I relate to others. I know some of the things to look for in my relationships, such as whether I do things for others expecting something in return (a definite sign that my shadow is involved) or whether I do things at some sacrifice to myself and expecting nothing in return – and further accepting nothing in return (which would be signs that my shadow is not active, nor is it getting some kind of ego-stroking payoff in the deal).

This has been some of the hardest work I have ever done in such a short time, because it has gotten closer to the core of who I am and the root of how I have operated for, literally, decades, than much of what I have done in the past. Yet I know that the ultimate payoff for my "gold" is that I will be relating to people in healthy ways, which will benefit both me and them, and I will not be expecting them to stroke my ego as a "thank you" for whatever benefit I may bring to them. I will come to the point at which my having done what I have done is that which brings me joy and nothing else.

I still have a long way to go, and yet I am glad I have a group that takes my welfare seriously enough that they aren't willing to let me slide when they see me doing things that are going to bring harm to me and others with whom I'm in relationship. I wish everyone could have such relationships of support and accountability as I have with that group. If anyone reading this gets the chance, I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity when it is offered.

Blessings.
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:14AM (-07:00)

Questions About the ManKind Project New Warrior Training Adventure

Friday, April 14, 2006

This post is from a New Warrior Training Adventure brochure that I worked on for the Carolinas Center. Good reading.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Over the years, men have asked many questions about the New Warrior Training Adventure (NWTA). We have collected some of those questions and added responses to better explain who we are and what we do.

**What is the New Warrior Training Adventure?**

The NWTA is weekend training sponsored by the ManKind Project (MKP), an international, non-profit organization dedicated to helping men live meaningful lives. The purpose of the training is to take men on a journey to connect head and heart, examine their lives, and create deeper, more powerful, and more joyful ways of living. The training is an initiatory experience relevant to our times that honors the sacred masculine and empowers men to action in the world.

*Initiation*

Joseph Campbell described initiation as a transformational experience involving separation, descent, ordeal, and return. Many of us have experienced "pseudo initiation" through divorce, death of a loved one, puberty, induction into the military, or incarceration. These are often transformative experiences, but they are usually incomplete and wounding and do not connect us to our authentic selves or to healthy ways of living. The NWTA provides a complete and healthy initiation relevant to our times where a man is separated from his known world, taken into a descent to face his limitations, challenged to grapple with his destructive as well as generative aspects, and then welcomed into a new community of authentic men committed to service to the world.

*The Sacred Masculine*

In our culture, so called "masculine" traits have been viewed differently at different times. In earlier times, such traits as aggression, fighting, strategic maneuvering, conquering, and destroying were valued in the battlefield warrior who was called on to defend the tribe and conquer other tribes. Later, many of these same traits were valued in the athletic, corporate, and military arenas in service to team, company, and nation. These warrior traits became synonymous with what it meant to be a man. We assert that this definition of manhood is incomplete and no longer serves us, humankind, or the planet, well. We affirm the need for a "new warrior" energy channeled into service of the betterment of humankind and the planet. And we claim a "sacred masculine" energy that embraces all aspects of our nature and that we believe is essential to healing ourselves and our world.

*Action in the World*
The NWTA model calls for men to live lives of service guided by vision and action. “Integration Groups” are available around the world to help men integrate their learnings from the weekend experience. Called I-Groups, these ongoing gatherings provide a place for men to support and challenge each other in their ongoing growth and healing and in living lives of service. I-Groups often have their own external missions of service such as working with men who have been abusive, mentoring youth, or other work in their communities. Other trainings are available to help men continue to grow, heal, and reach their full potential as mature men.

My life is working fine, so why should I do this training?

The NWTA opens a window that will allow you to expand your life regardless of where you are right now. Men who take the training come from all walks of life and are succeeding at many levels. Regardless of where you are in life, you should do this training if you are ready to look deeply at your life and begin a journey with other men who will support and challenge you to claim your full potential.

Will this training help me with work, family, and other relationships?

Being more in touch with your gifts, focused on your purpose in life, able to access your deepest feelings, aware of your shadows, working on healing your wounds, and being supported by authentic men should help you in all areas of your life; work as well as family, relationships, and your communities.

Many men have been betrayed and hurt by other men. Why should I trust that this will be any different?

Many men have good reason to distrust and be angry at the men who have broken agreements with them, betrayed them, and sold them out for personal gain. The hard truth is that if we have been wounded by men, most often men will be required to be part of our healing. The NWTA places men in ritual time and space where profound transformation happens. This experience creates a common bond of identity and shared purpose. New Warrior men are not naïve—we see men as they are. We do not put them on pedestals nor do we demonize all men. We understand the shadow side of men, have developed effective ways of embracing the shadow, and are discerning about dealing with the destructive aspects of men.

How does New Warrior view women and women’s work?

We support all work aimed at healing people and the planet. We support women in their work to heal and reclaim the sacred feminine. We support Women Within, a women’s initiation designed and run by women for women. In the NWTA, you will have an opportunity to look at your reliance on women throughout your life, including the positives and negatives of how you relate to women. You will get to look at how both parents shaped your development and how your relationship with your mother when you were young may be impacting your relationships with women today.

Why don't you give more details about the training—like an outline or a syllabus?

The weekend is meant to be experiential and transforming. If you know lots of details, your mind will form lots of preconceptions about what might happen. You would miss a lot
of the mystery, beauty, and surprise of the weekend and it would be less transforming for you. We want you to have your own experience as it is happening.

**Can I get a cheaper version of the same kind of experience?**

The NWTA has been carefully developed and tested since 1986. It has been validated by more than 35,000 men. Over 30 men are involved in delivering each training. It is priced to cover expenses. The MKP is a non-profit organization. Scholarships are available for men who need financial help to attend. If paying the tuition is a problem, talk to the contact man at the end of this flyer.

**Are there age limitations for attending?**

You must be at least 18 to attend. The majority of men are between 30 and 50 but men older and younger attend and get great benefit.

**How do I know this training is right for me?**

Look at the web site at http://www.mkp.org/, read the material about the weekend, talk to men who have competed the training and joined an I-group, and attend an open house. Then ask yourself: "Does this feel right for me?" If you feel anxious about doing the weekend, or if issues arise, talk to someone who's been through the training. This training is not for everyone—men who are not ready to look deeply at and take responsibility for their lives should not attend.

**Can I do it later?**

You get to choose when and if you do this training. But ask yourself this: "Do I often put off things I need or want to do because of fear, procrastination, etc.? How has this pattern caused me to miss out on life?" A door is open to you right now while you're reading this. We encourage you to step through the door and claim a life that you may have only dreamed about.

**Comments**

- Joe

Thank you, Wolf, for honoring my blog on your blog. I choose to return the favor and have others view your work -- OUR work, I mean ;-) -- together.

I honor your continued "shadow" mission work. Mine is simple: "I create a fucked-up world through addictive-compulsive behaviors and negative self-talk." Yep...that will do it every time.

But I have gold, too: "As a man among men, I create a world of love, compassion and security through loving myself and others." That, too, it sweet.

A blessed Resurrection Sunday to you and all who read your blog ...

Grace and peace,
Brave Brown Horse

- **jrolandcole**    
  July 20, 2006

Can anyone tell me how to find information-sign up data re John Bradshaw's week-end for New Warrior Elders in Houston, Texas region? Thanks, jrolandcole@hotmail.com

- **Old-faithfulWolf**    
  July 21, 2006

E-mail the Center Director for MKP Houston at centerdirector@mkphouston.org. He can answer your questions.

Old- faithful Wolf

**Honorable Support**

**Monday, May 15, 2006**

"The time and place for a man to fight his battles, whatever those battles may be, is not in the home or with his family. The time and place is with other men - men who know how to hold the space for another man's battle. In that place a man may bring his anger and humiliation for transformation, so that he might return home the man he has always dreamed to be, the one that is capable of the deep love that his partner and family so hope to hear and feel."

*From Beyond the Blame Game: Creating Compassion and Ending the Sex War in Your Life* by Dmitri Bilgere

I believe holding space for a man, sacred space, is what allows a man to deal with all his emotions in a clean and clear way. Look, a man has anger, fear, rage, joy, love, sadness, and shame -- all of it. I think what makes it tough is that we as men have been taught we can have anger and rage and certainly shame (just don't show it); that's it. It's out of balance.

I was at a festival this weekend where MKP had an educational booth and were talking to men about the program. A man and woman came to the booth and a friend of mine engaged the man in a conversation about how men need a space with other men to have safety and time to deal with all that they feel. My friend got no further than it's a men organization and the man took several large steps back and almost ran from the booth. The women just stood there for a moment, stunned a bit, and then started to explain that the man believed that all groups should be inclusive.

To make a long story shorter, the man believed MKP was against inclusion and that no
organization that was just for men could be inclusive.

I am here to tell you I strongly disagree. Men who want to be inclusive need to learn it from their fathers and brothers in a clean way. They need to learn to honor the men and women and children in a space that allows them to be angry and rage and feel joy and sorrow in a honoring and safe space; so then they can have a clear heart to be inclusive.

Often men's anger and shame come out in aggressive and passive ways. If a man has no place to let it out and be who he is and feel what he feels, it will be damaging in some way. Men hold that space with the fierceness and trust needed for men to do that work. Men do that. Men in the ManKind Project do that for each other; week in, week out.

Are you ready to stand in a sacred place and be you? I will stand with you.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

What's Happening to Men's Work?

What's Happening to Men's Work?

"More 'Women Respond to the Men's Movement' than men. Our continued portrayal that any man in a men's group or doing personal work, runs around nude in the woods beating drums keeps men from risking. Let's find ways to get men out of their caves rather than pushing them further into it. Only people can give warmth to a cold, lost, angry heart. And, a challenge to those who criticism men's work: don't stand on the outside reading inaccurate information written primarily by men who are not willing to experience the work. Find out from the inside. Feel it first. Won't you take my hand. We'll help each other stand."

From Gordon Clay, Webmaster of Menstuff.org

I think it says it all. I will stand with you?
Below is an article I ran across that talks about the NWTA. I am posting here in case it disappears one day.

Oh and it gives me a chance to readdress the "secrecy" issue around the NWTA.

It isn't secret, so much as it is sacred. I believe that telling you what happens on the training will alter your path on the weekend. It will change your experience for me to tell even one detail. I want you to have the truest experience for you.

Here's what I will tell you; you get there...you will leave two days later...you will be different.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

So what is being a man all about anyway?

By Jocelyn Newmarch
Posted on IAfrica.com, September 16, 2002

You've probably heard this old joke. "Why can't I find a man who's loving, sensitive, affectionate and caring?" "Because, dear, those men already have boyfriends." If this hits home, there is hope.

It's a cliche that men are emotionally illiterate, that they're commitment phobic and unable to express their feelings. Several commentators — ardent feminist Germaine Greer among them — have noted a "crisis of masculinity" in recent years, and to address this, the men's movement has spearheaded attempts to redefine, or reaffirm masculinity in a
positive light. The ManKind Project began in 1985, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with 17 men. Since then, nearly 30,000 men, on four continents, have been initiated into the New Warrior programme. Integrity and accountability are core values of the movement.

Who am I, as a man? What am I doing here? What's my mission in life? Who do I serve? Men are challenged to ask these questions and begin to answer them on the weekend.

The ManKind Project's motto is “Changing the world, one man at a time,” and that's exactly what they set out to do with their New Warrior Training weekends, teaching South African men to get in touch with their feelings and embrace the warrior inside.

As one New Warrior, Michael Wetzler, explains, it's about “being a warrior in a new kind of way, facing up the shadows in your being. Men are wounded and we aren't fathered well enough, however much our fathers wanted to.”

The brochure proclaims that “the ManKind project offers men the opportunity to look deeper into their lives and make healthy choices about their future.”

Participants and their partners alike have nothing but praise for the program.

New Warrior Tefile, one of 33 who were recently initiated, said that he would definitely recommend the course to others. “Many men are walking around with empty spaces, they want to fill it up with things they don’t even know. Then you get to the course (the New Warrior Training), and you are walking around with a dragon in your body, and that scares you. So you need to pull out that dragon, then you find yourself and you have a new vision for the whole world.”

Andries du Toit, Centre Director for the ManKind Project in South Africa, says that when he was a little boy, he was taught that “a man is somebody who’s big and strong and tough and that means he doesn’t show his feelings — in fact he doesn’t have feelings.

“A man is someone who can take a beating and who can give one too, especially those who are smaller and younger. A man is someone who pushes women around.

“I don’t know about you,” he adds, “but those lessons weren’t very helpful to me, or to these 33 men (the initiates) who have pledged to do things differently.”

So what actually happens on this course? Well, the details are kept secret, but I can reveal that the program includes journaling, games, and guided imagery visualisations. Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:01PM (-07:00)

Comments

- TheTart
  June 02, 2006
  Sounds enlightening. To bad it must be kept a "secret". So what's the value in a secret ~ hmm, information is power ~ to those that "need" power.

  Just a thought,
  Jocelyn
Thank you for your thoughts, Jocelyn.

There is power in the sacredness of the training. The power is a magic that brings men to a place they will not see otherwise. The power is the love and honor with which this training is encased.

old-faithful wolf

Long Time

Wednesday, June 21, 2006

It's been nearly a month since my last post. I normally post while at work; during a break. I have been swamped at work and I have had to choose that this blog would have to wait for a while.

I hope to be regularly posting again in the next few weeks.

Until then, remember that you are the change you seek, you are the world, you are the universe, and you can make change in the world one man at a time.

Oh, and take the NWTA. It's good for you.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 10:48AM (-07:00)

The Four Agreements

Monday, July 03, 2006
From the book "The Four Agreements" by don Miguel Ruiz:

1. **Be Impeccable With Your Word**
   Speak with integrity. Say only what you mean. Avoid using the word to speak against yourself or to gossip about others. Use the power of your word in the direction of truth and love.

2. **Don't Take Anything Personally**
   Nothing others do is because of you. What others say and do is a projection of their own reality, their own dream. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won't be the victim of needless suffering.

3. **Don't Make Assumptions**
   Find the courage to ask questions and to express what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness and drama. With just this one agreement, you can completely transform your life.

4. **Always Do Your Best**
   Your best is going to change from moment to moment; it will be different when you are healthy as opposed to sick. Under any circumstance, simply do your best, and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse and regret.

This seems simple enough...four steps to a better life, right?

I have been reading this little book with great interest. I see it parallels my work in the ManKind Project in many ways.

Will change occur when you step into a place of responsibility and integrity? You bet your ass it can?

The question is do you want to change or stay in a place of "victim" or "I can't because...." or "I am too small to make a difference"?
Walk with me and the other men in the ManKind Project and see what it looks like to be in a place of responsibility and integrity.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:31AM (-07:00)

Comments

- TheWagerWitch          July 03, 2006
Those are excellent agreements. I like the one about don't take anything personally. I'll have to work on that one.

But I can see where it makes so much sense.

And the Assumptions... Uhm.. well. I'm kinda the assumption girl. LOL!

But this is a really nice blog - I'm surprised you don't have a lot more traffic on it. I like the concepts you're providing. Mankind needs a lot more help in my opinion. Becoming a better person is one way.

I popped through by hitting Next blog - but I also use traffic exchanges. If you want any info on them - lessee, my favorites are blogclicker and uhm... Blogsoldiers, those two work really well. Plus I kinda have fun visiting other blogs.

Well, it was nice to meet you - and I'll try and stop by again.

Wager Witch
http://wagerwitch.blogspot.com
Free No deposit casino bonuses, repeat deposit deals, Casino Promotions, Savvy Gambling advice and More!

The Living Years

Thursday, July 06, 2006
The Living Years, Mike and the Mechanics

Every generation
Blames the one before
And all of their frustrations
Come beating on your door

I know that I'm a prisoner
To all my father held so dear
I know that I'm a hostage
To all his hopes and fears
I just wish I could have told him in the living years

Crumpled bits of paper
Filled with imperfect thought
Stilted conversations
I'm afraid that's all we've got

You say you just don't see it
He says it's perfect sense
You just can't get agreement
In this present tense
We all talk a different language
Talking in defence

Say it loud, say it clear
You can listen as well as you hear
It's too late when we die
To admit we don't see eye to eye

So we open up a quarrel
Between the present and the past
We only sacrifice the future
It's the bitterness that lasts

So don't yield to the fortunes
You sometimes see as fate
It may have a new perspective
On a different day
And if you don't give up, and don't give in
You may just be O.K.

Say it loud, say it clear
You can listen as well as you hear
It's too late when we die
To admit we don't see eye to eye

I wasn't there that morning
When my father passed away
I didn't get to tell him
All the things I had to say

I think I caught his spirit
Later that same year
I'm sure I heard his echo
In my baby's new born tears
I just wish I could have told him in the living years

Say it loud, say it clear
You can listen as well as you hear
It's too late when we die
To admit we don't see eye to eye

Mike and The Mechanics, from The Living Years album (1988)
the past. I sacrificed the future for the pain of the past. I blamed the generation before.

Being present in the ManKind Project and my Integration Group (iGroup) gave me the space to sort what was mine to own and my Dad's to leave for him. It took two years to sort this stuff out. Such is the depth of a Dad's influence on his son.

A couple years back, I asked my Dad to sit in my igroup. He willingly sat with me and the other men, not knowing what was to come. I asked him to stand with me in the circle. I told him I loved him and wanted to know him, for I did not. I told him that I needed to know him. We cried and held each other. We had a place to start from again.

I worked the issues that were mine. That was my task to take on. To do so makes me a better Dad and husband. I am clearer where I come from and where I can go from here. I am clear that I am not the boy I was and he is not just a Dad, but a man with all his hopes and fears. I am clear that I have changed. My Dad may struggle to understand the differences between me as a boy and me as a man. But, that is his journey, not mine.

This work heals wounds and hearts. Are you willing to heal so that you can be here now and not be a prisoner to the past?

I love you, Dad!

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Men on a Mission

Thursday, August 17, 2006

The following article is reprinted here to avoid losing it to the cyberspace abyss.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

By Tyler Blue, July 6, 2006, From the Santa Barbara Independent

Inside the Mankind Project
We put a lot of pressure on ourselves as men; it’s easy to get caught up in society’s lofty expectations and lose sight of who we really are. We tend to isolate ourselves and process emotions alone, or not at all. But some things in life can’t be explained, they must be experienced. In the case of the Mankind Project (MKP), that means taking one weekend out of our busy lives to try a fresh approach to dealing with the issues we — as men — face. MKP is an international organization dedicated to male empowerment that offers a unique opportunity to reconnect with our core masculinity. Blending practical knowledge and sacred spirituality, the group gives men the tools to shape their lives based on an ideal vision.

The Mankind Project was developed in 1985 by Ron Hering, Bill Kauth, and Rich Tosi. According to its Web site (www.mkp.org), “The New Warrior is a man who has confronted his destructive ‘shadow’ and achieved hard-won ownership of the highly focused, aggressive energy that empowers and shapes the inner masculine self.” (Apparently, we all have a shadow acting as an opposing force to our goals, preventing us from achieving balance.) New Warrior Training Adventures are the focal point of the group’s work, with training weekends held throughout the year at 27 centers across the country, and others around the globe. Each weekend consists of approximately 30 initiates who go through a rite of passage along with 40 staffers. Nothing can be shared regarding the actual content in order not to create expectations for future initiates. Secrecy is so important that men are required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Interestingly, the content of each training weekend is identical — it’s the energy and camaraderie of the participants that provide a different flavor. Certainly no group-therapy powwow, everything about the New Warrior Training is experiential. In order to apply the knowledge drawn from the training, men are encouraged to participate in weekly “integration groups.” These groups, which meet at different locations around town, provide a supportive forum to confront personal issues head on.

The local MKP community has grown exponentially over the last several years, jumping from roughly 10 to 100 initiated men, and they got a big boost recently with the establishment of an official training site at Lake Cachuma. (Previously, the closest location was in San Bernardino; diehard Warriors often travel thousands of miles just to participate.) Something must be pretty special to keep these guys coming back again and again. The mystery surrounding what the heck goes on during these weekends is enough to make a curious fellow plunk down $650 and see what the fuss is all about.

The Warriors

I met with three members of Santa Barbara’s Mankind Project community who reflect the life-altering potential of the New Warrior Training. James Wapotich, 40, is a lone wolf who has staffed the weekend 14 times. Six months after his initiation, he drummed up the courage to leave a stagnant job without another one lined up. In the past he would have worried but this time he knew it would work out. “I’m having a lot more fun stepping into the unknown and really relishing it,” he said.

Every MKP initiate chooses a unique mission stating their purest intention in life. “I create a world of expanding wholeness by letting love flow through me,” said Wapotich of his mission, which reflects his desire to shape reality based on a willingness to share love.
and other emotions. The New Warrior Training has also instilled in him a strong sense of leadership by forcing him to transcend self-imposed limitations. "A lot of what you learn there can be applied to various forms of business," Wapotich said. "People seem to have more respect for me now."

Stefan Hermann has staffed the New Warrior Training 46 times and clearly embodies his leadership role. The 47-year-old German is a former tennis pro who played Wimbledon twice before a career-ending injury. Prior to the weekend, he was unaware that his competitive persona dominated every male relationship in his life. "I always had to be better than the other guy," he has since realized. MKP helped him establish a spiritual connection with himself and others. (Two of his four sons also participate in MKP.)

These days Hermann is not content to stand back and let things run their course. "I inspire the rewriting of the future by modeling, teaching, and coaching on the sacred path," he said of his mission. After four years looking within, he reached out and has since made a big impact on local youth, representing programs like Share the Word, which entails speaking in schools about dating-violence prevention, and MASK (Managing Anger with Skill and Knowledge), an outreach program that addresses the devastating effects of repressed anger. "Domestic violence is a male issue because we don’t find healthy ways of expressing our negative emotions," Hermann said. "Underneath the tough-guy layer is someone with lots of grief and anger. You can take that energy and use it in a healthy, constructive way."

One of the main things MKP addresses is the lack of initiation rituals in our society. In indigenous cultures, boys in their early teens are guided through an intense, primal experience ushering them into manhood. MKP feels the absence of this in present times is a major cause for male shortcomings. Boys to Men (boystomen.org) is an offshoot of MKP that takes boys through an initiation process and offers them mentorship. Hermann hopes to bring the program to Santa Barbara next year.

Anthony Johnson, 56, has "always been on some spiritual path or another." A firecracker of a guy, he has staffed 13 trainings over the last decade; he’s quick to clarify that "MKP is not some magic aspirin you’ re going to take and presto change-o, become something new." An African-American, Johnson was inclined to speak up during a training weekend about MKP’s lack of racial and ethnic balance. In typical fashion the group’s response was, “So what are you going to do about it?” Johnson’s answer was the Multi-Cultural Project, a movement he takes around the country offering weekends for warriors and their spouses. Through his mission he aspires to break down the barriers inhibiting deep human connection: "I co-create a world where all people experience profound relatedness."

To that end, Johnson is currently living and breathing Initiation, the screenplay he co-wrote based on the book Of Water and the Spirit by Malidoma Some. LeVar Burton (Roots) is expected to star and direct. The story shows what happens in an African initiation from boyhood to manhood. Johnson shares Some’s belief that lack of initiation, avoidance of grief, and disrespect for elders are the greatest troubles facing men in our society. “For thousands of years in all indigenous cultures, boys have been taken on an ordeal and faced their demons,” Johnson said. The fact that most men don’t experience those ordeals “is why men in this society are so screwed up. … They never learned what it means to be a man."
The Mankind Project hosts its First Annual Santa Barbara Men's Work Conference on October 14 at the UCSB Parish Hall, UCSB. Contact James Brown: 895-1828, james.brown@dotcoming.com, or visit www.mkp.org.
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:11AM (-07:00)

Intergration Group -- Four Stone Circle

Friday, September 01, 2006

The ManKind Project iGroup I sit in is called Four Stone Circle. We meet every Thursday night in a small Quaker chaple in Northern California.

I am blessed to have this in my world.

The group gives me the space to look at where my life works and doesn't work; a place to be seen as who I am not. I give myself that in my world

Maybe it's naive for me to think you get as much from this as I do. Maybe it's my dream and you will.

Four Stone Circle is my iGroup.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:53AM (-07:00)

Farewell, Andre!

Tuesday, September 05, 2006
"The pride I take in everything I've experienced has to do with what I've poured into it, not necessarily what that experience was. I mean, I think tennis is one vehicle. I think we can find excuses in life or we can find inspirations. I've always tried to find inspirations."

Andre Agassi, 9.4.2006

There was a time when I thought Andre Agassi was nothing more than a good tennis player. I had a whole bag full of crap to throw his way and was not shy about putting it out there.

In the work I do in the ManKind Project I have found that so much of what I think about anybody has nothing to do with them and everything to do with me.

I watched Andre's final match the other night. I was torn between the feeling of honor to watch a man do what his passion is and my feelings of shame that I put so much of my stuff on him. Such is the clarity in this work I do now.

I revelled in his honesty of emotion, his tribute to the fans he felt close to, and the clarity with which he walked away with his head held high.

Andre went out a King, as I see it. I saw him stand in his glory and feel the feeling of it.

Farewell, Andre!

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 11:40AM (-07:00)
Today, two men from my town are going into the New Warrior Training Adventure in Northern California.

I have come to know one man very well as he has sat in my iGroup, Four Stone Circle, since the middle of May. I have heard him speak of his fear and joy and anticipation of this weekend.

The other man I have a bit of time with as we have sat and talked and he came to Four Stone Circle last week.

Both these men are just like you; men in their lives looking for whatever they are looking for. They are very different men; they are very similar men. They are like you; they are men.

Men come to attend the New Warrior Training Adventure for an infinite variety of reasons. You will have yours, if you choose the winds of change. Really that is what this is about, change.

Is it time for your change; your particular, unique, honorable change?

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:03AM (-07:00)
I remember.

3057 and all their relatives and relations.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:37AM (-07:00)

My Mind’s Eye

Thursday, September 14, 2006

I wrote this piece about seven years ago. I find it is still strong in my heart. I was inspired to write it just after I went through my New Warrior Training Adventure some seven years ago.

I wonder what the training will inspire in you...

My Mind’s Eye
By Old-faithful Wolf

In my child mind’s eye
It’s always dark, cloudy, raining, black and white
Mud and noise
The sloshing of wet boots and canvas
Explosions, tears, popping sounds

In my child mind’s eye
I am not a listener in 4th grade math
Sliding smoothly the pencil on the surface, gray on blonde veneer
I mark the years on the desk
5,10,15 and 3 makes 18
Time to fight

In my child mind’s eye
Gi-joe comes incomplete
Fatigues, canteen, crew-cut, and beard
One too many legs
I tear one off at the knee
Now I can “play”

In my child mind’s eye
Always it’s those commies
Vietnam, China, Cambodia, Laos
Always the war
Always the TV news
Walter tells me the body count each day

In my teen mind’s eye
Always aware of the time
15,16,17,18
Time to fight the cold war
Ford, Carter, Reagan and Russian leaders I cannot pronounce
ICBMs, B52s, nuclear warheads
Always aware of the time

In my teen mind’s eye
I walk to the post office
I pick the form
I register to fight
I am now alone
And now I wait
19,20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27
I wait

In my young-adult mind’s eye
I turn away from the Falklands and Iran
I can’t bear the thought
My fear is an ally to pain
Struggling with terror to soothe the wounds
That hatred has festered

In my young-adult mind’s eye
I see the remnants of war
Battered souls, torn hearts
Veterans like my Gi-joe
Missing parts and sanity

In my adult mind’s eye
26, 27, no fighting
Desert Storm and I turn away
I can’t bear the thought
More body counts, more pain
Cluster bombs and stealth bombers
Oil fires that blacken the sky

In my adult mind’s eye
I hear the names
One by one
The tears fall from my heart
Rivers of pain held back by the dam of time
The torment of 35 years
Trampling the weak boy soul
Crushing the little boy soul to room the adult soul

In my adult mind’s eye
Bosnia and Yugoslavia
I cannot turn away
Ethnic cleansing and rape
It stares me in the face
With its evil eyes and hateful breath
People destroying people, land, homes, lives

In my adult mind’s eye
The losses are too great
I cannot bear to hear, one more time, the news of the fighting
But I cannot turn away
It is in my blood and flesh
The wars of my elder-fathers course through me

In my adult mind’s eye
It’s always dark, cloudy, raining, black and white
Mud and noise
The sloshing of wet boots and canvas
Explosions, tears, popping sounds

In my mind’s eye
My chin falls to my chest and
I cry.
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:51PM (-07:00)

Level of Commitment

Tuesday, September 19, 2006
From MKP Australia:

"A key truth of the training program is that you direct your own training through the responses and decisions you make along your journey. The staff serves as your guides and mentors, but you choose your own level of commitment, and the depth to which you will explore the inner terrain of your life."

Pretty simple; your call. When and what it will be is completely supported and up to you.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:15AM (-07:00)

Living Life

Thursday, September 21, 2006

"To enable men to live lives of integrity, accountability, and connection to feeling."

That is one of the purposes of the ManKind Project. I, as a man who participates in the ManKind Project, finds this to be a core issue with men.

I see men are trained to be disconnected to feeling; disconnected to being and living in integrity with their agreements and statements; and shown a million ways to not be accountable for one's behavior.

So what does that have to do with MKP?

I create a space in MKP for what I want, for who I am, and for guidance about my life. No man tells another who or what to be. We guide and help each other to see what does and doesn't work for us, as men.

Is what I say congruent with what I do? My MKP men reflect that to me.

Is what I want in my world possible with how it is setup right now? MKP men will guide
me to find my way of getting what I want.

Is this something you could use in your world?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:40AM (-07:00)

How MKP Works for One Man, After NWTA

Tuesday, September 26, 2006

Below is a snippet of a long interview. I cut out the part that pertains to this man and his experience with the NWTA.

I hope it's helpful to you to see how the ManKind Project works in a man's life.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Robert Powell: A Valuable Asset to Both SRA and the Mankind Project

Robert Powell's Managerial and Community Involvement is Shaped by His Work with Two Progressive Organizations

By Roy Barnes

Q: How did you get involved with MKP, and what was the first major career change, if any, that you undertook after completing your first ManKind Project (“The Weekend”)?

A: I did the NWTA in November 1992 at the suggestion of a fellow volunteer in a community mental health center where we facilitated group work for male batterers. The NWTA experience intensified my interest in personal work, which had originally led me to
volunteer at the center. I actually began moving toward a second career in counseling. I completed both my masters and postmasters training, with an emphasis in family and marriage therapy between 1993 and 1998. I had every intention of switch careers until events in my personal life made it financially impossible to make the switch.

Q: What distinguishes the New Warrior Training Adventure from other self-discovery retreats?

A: First of all, it's far more intensive and transformational than anything I've encountered. Therapists, for instance, frequently equate it with six to eighteen months of individual sessions. Second of all, it's not an end in itself, but only the beginning of a process of self-discovery and growth. Central to the MKP curriculum is the on-going Integration Groups (I-Groups) that most men join after "The Weekend". This is a facilitated ten-week program, but for the most part, the groups are self-led and men can go as deep as they wish. Some men stay for a year or two, [but] many have been in an I-Group for ten years or more. I've been in my I-Group since my "Weekend" in 1992.

Q: How does "The Weekend" change a lifetime of ineffective living and/or add more to someone who is pretty much, for lack of a better term, "all together"?

A: Each man's journey is his own path to discovery. Our goal is to activate his personal mission in life and to support him in pursuing it. Men who judge themselves to have been ineffectual before "The Weekend" often report a major change in their life after their New Warrior Training Adventure. Men who come to the training with awareness of their mission usually deepen their commitment and find their energies and drive magnified.

Q: Does MKP offer programs and retreats for corporations?

A: ManKind Project (MKP) has often discussed the possibility of bringing the training into the corporate setting. Nothing official has developed, though many individual NWTA graduates work in the Organizational Development (OD) and corporate training fields. The lessons taught in the NWTA have found their way into such programs. And, of course, as individuals, many men, including me, have incorporated its basic teachings of personal integrity and direct communications in our management practices.

Q: How does the corporate philosophy of SRA complement what you have done with MKP; that is, are you able to apply the things you've learned through MKP into the way you manage your staff and approach your projects?

A: SRA International has proven to be an ideal culture for what I've learned and teach in MKP. It is a company whose motto is "Honesty in Service" and whose corporate culture is built on the axiom that caring for its clients, its personnel, and (since going public) its shareholders are its core business, and that everything else will follow. Every new employee attends a half-day training on culture and ethics, and every performance evaluation includes explicit ratings on ethics and caring for others. While the terms of our contracts set the parameters for what we are expected to do and what we must and can do, there is an ethos that we do whatever it takes to support our clients and our staffs in their professional and relevant personal goals.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:19AM (-07:00)
Stark Light of Love
Friday, September 29, 2006

The piece below speaks to the way men work in an MKP Integration Group (the weekly group after the NWTA).

It is honest, forthright, unyielding in its love and support. We hold each other up to the light of loving scrutiny to see what does and doesn't work in our lives.

What would it take for you to really look at what works for you and what doesn't?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

"The Way of the Superior Man"
By David Deida

"About once a week, you should sit down with your closest men friends and discuss what you are doing in your life and what you are afraid of doing. The conversation should be short and simple. You should state where you are at. Then, your friends should give you a behavioral experiment, something you can do that will reveal something to you, or grant more freedom in your life."

Your close friends should be willing to challenge your mediocrity by suggesting a concrete action you can perform that will pop you out of your rut, one way or the other. And you must be willing to offer them your brutal honesty, in the same way, if you are all to grow. If you are at your edge, your men friends should respect that, but not let you off the hook. They should honor your fears, and, in love, continue to goad you beyond them, without pushing you.

If you merely want support from your friends without challenge, it
bespeaks an unresolved issue you may have with your father, whether he is alive or dead. The father force is the force of loving challenge and guidance. Without this masculine force in your life, your direction becomes unchecked, and you are liable to meander in the mush of your own ambiguity and indecision. Your closest friends can provide the stark light of love - uncompromised by a fearful Mr. Nice act - by which you can see the direction you really want to go.

Choose men friends who themselves are living at their edge, facing their fears and living just beyond them. Men of this kind can love you without protecting you from the necessary confrontation with reality that your life involves. You should be able to trust that these friends will tell you about your life as they see it, offer you a specific action which will shed light on your own position, and give you the support necessary to live in the freedom just beyond your edge, which is not always, or even usually, comfortable.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:59PM (-07:00)

Shadow in the Light

Monday, October 02, 2006

"The shadow is the greatest teacher for how to come to the light." Ram Dass

Looking at my shadow is one of my main pieces of work in my ManKind Project iGroup and in my life.

A shadow is a part of me I hide, repress, or deny. When I am in touch with those parts of me, my shadows, I no longer allow them to control me by being fully "in shadow."

My work is not yours, but it could look very similar.

What are you repressing or hiding that if you brought it forward you would live a better
I find this to be an excellent article on what New Warrior Training Adventure looks like from a female perspective. I have posted this before, but I think it's time to repost it.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

One Man at a Time
by Barbara Marlowe and Jeffrey Goldwasser

What woman hasn’t wished that men would just go off somewhere and fix themselves? Take care of their own business and learn how to feel? Become better husbands, fathers, brothers or lovers? Grow up and at long last, nurture that hurt little boy inside?

What would it be like to love such a man? To watch him grow and change and define new ways of being a man? To watch him become fierce and strong, loving and open?

What challenges would women face if men really changed?

The Mankind Project (MKP) and New Warrior Training Adventure is an international men’s networking group that offers men a unique opportunity to focus on deep self-examination with integrity, accountability and connection to feeling. The mission of the Mankind Project is to change the world one man at a time.

We asked New Warriors in the Asheville area and the women who love them to speak
about the challenges and rewards of MKP. For the men: What led you to men’s work? Are you different as a man because of the work? How did changing as a man affect your relationships? For the women: What feelings have you had about MKP? What changes have you observed in your loved one? Have their changes as men challenged your notion of how to be a woman?

Background

The Mankind Project and New Warrior Training Adventure started in Milwaukee in the mid-eighties and grew directly out of the feminist movement. Jeffrey Goldwasser initiated the Asheville group in 1999. Having been active in a strong New Warrior community in New England for six years, Jeffrey felt a void when he moved to Asheville and found no MKP. It was after his brother died and he felt depleted and needing men that Jeffrey decided to reach out. He found three other New Warriors and together they started an Asheville MKP. The group has since grown into a vibrant and active community with over 30 men whose age ranges from the late twenties to early seventies.

Participation in MKP begins with the New Warrior Training Adventure, a weekend for men that draws upon Joseph Campbell’s cross cultural research regarding initiation rights of men in indigenous cultures. Using the stages of separation, descent, ordeal and welcoming back into a community, the New Warrior training focuses on deep self examination, and asks the questions: What is it to be a man in today’s world? What is your mission in life? Do you live a life of integrity and accountability? Does your life work?

Veterans of war have eloquently described the powerful bonds that form between men as they fight together against a common enemy. However, bonding experiences that occur during such destruction are at the same time wounding and can cause “a man’s heart to close as soon as it opens.” By contrast, Steve - an Asheville Warrior of seven-years, states, “something different happens when a man’s heart is cracked open in a container like New Warriors Training that is just beautiful”. Claire remembers seeing her husband right after he completed the New Warrior’s weekend: “The minute I saw him, I knew how good it was for him. He looked like he was in love with himself.” This common initiation experience founded both in challenge and healing helps men to form a bond that most often leads to continued growth and opening. The initiation is what attracts many men to MKP.

After a man completes the weekend he is welcomed back to the MKP community and invited to participate in an on-going men’s circle called an Integration Group. It is here that men can continue their inner work, be supported, support others and keep their hearts open. The MKP has initiated more than 27,000 men. What started out as a weekend in Milwaukee is now an international organization with centers in the U.S., Canada, London, Australia, South Africa and Germany.

Why New Warrior

There are common themes as to why each man who is now an Asheville New Warrior sought out “men’s work”: lack of close male friends, the opportunity to find new models of being a man and the desire to find a place where “fierceness is welcomed”. Men often feel isolated, knowing that their lives aren’t working and not knowing where to turn. For some men, MKP is the first self-help they have ever sought out other than a program like AA. For others, MKP was the next step in an ongoing process of personal and spiritual growth. Still others approached the work with a political consciousness as part of a
broader world-centric healing.

The commitment to heal with other men is at the core of MKP’s strength and a large part of its draw. Not having to explain themselves and not having to censor strong displays of emotion are important aspects of a male-only healing space. Yet for men with abusive fathers, initially learning to be with men as equals is challenging. “I was scared to death of men,” says Jim, a New Warrior of eight years. Without exception, the New Warriors we spoke to highly value their strong and intimate connections with men. Christopher, a New Warrior of eight years, sums it up by saying that he “used to, in a time of stress or depression, reach out predominately to women. Now I reach out to men.”

While women may wish for men to go off and fix themselves, the reality may also be threatening. Initial concerns many women held in common centered on what their spouses would say about them in group meetings, the confidentiality of that information, and what the other men would think of them. In reality, all the women we spoke with agreed that the men of MKP have only treated them with the “utmost respect”. “The men’s group is pretty cool,” sums up one woman.

Changes

MKP emphasizes ‘shadow work’, a process that recognizes the parts of one’s self that are repressed or denied. New Warriors are encouraged to look deeper and to explore their truth without blame, judgment or shame. At the same time, each man is held accountable for his judgments and projections by a loving band of brothers, each having committed himself to becoming whole. “New Warriors is a path of commitment to change, serious but wonderful.”

Being responsible to knowing one’s truth and communicating that responsibly is a cornerstone of the principles of MKP. Learning to express anger cleanly and directly, becoming comfortable with setting boundaries and saying no when you mean no are important lessons. In weekly Integration groups, men learn to recognize behaviors that are controlling and critical, encouraging not the suppression of these parts but rather their integration so men are free to make choices and to not act out in hurtful ways. David W., a New Warrior of almost three years, is clear now: “it’s not the other person’s responsibility if I’m angry.”

Calm strength. Tender masculinity. “Owning my balls”. Responsible fierceness. New Warrior. MKP helps each man to take responsibility for their personal power and become the man he was meant to be had he not been wounded or indoctrinated by family and society. “MKP enabled me to step into my power and to appreciate that vulnerability is part of power.” “MKP has enabled me to show up more as a man and integrate traditional male energies that I had previously rebelled against as destructive.”

The proof is in the pudding and there was remarkable consistency in the women’s observations of the men’s stories. Everyone we interviewed said they had witnessed the men they love open up emotionally and come from the heart more instead of the head. Accountability and integrity? New Warriors appear to walk their talk. Jillian witnesses her husband becoming more honest with himself. Tirell sees her husband become more able to speak his truth vs. people pleasing. Claire continues to see her husband grow and become more balanced with an open heart and integrity.

Relationships
Everyone, men and women alike, agree that becoming a New Warrior changes how men relate to themselves and others both at home and in the world. Several men attribute MKP to helping them to be ready for and to attract a new partner. The men already in relationships—and their partners—agreed that while sometimes the changes have been challenging, they also have served to ultimately strengthen the relationships. For a few, the changes may have contributed to a shaky relationship ending.

David N., a Warrior of over three years, gained self-confidence and the clarity of what in life was important to him; that in turn enabled him to attract his new wife. Barbara is clear that part of her attraction to David was his involvement with a men’s group that examined new ways of being a man.

Change is often messy. Couples in relationship agree that even positive growth brings its challenges. Peeling off ‘nice’ patterns of relating can rock the boat. As much as women may want their men to come more from the heart or to show up more as men, it can be hard not to guide the process. “While there have been times the support he gets from the men feels adversarial, they have also provided us an opportunity to push further and reach even better understandings,” says Di, who also wishes she had a group of her own that was so committed to change. Although not officially affiliated, Woman Within shares a similar mission to the Mankind Project. (womanwithin.org) Couples may find they need to learn new paradigms of relating and to trust where continued growth will take them. Integrity and accountability enhance a relationship and allow each partner to live more fully in the truth of who they are.

Some New Warriors have become separated and divorced. We asked two men and one soon to be ex-wife what, if any, connections there were between the changes made through MKP and the ending of the relationship. No one attributed the ending to MKP; in fact all spoke positively of how MKP provided support and skills to cope with the loss.

Fathers

Without question, New Warriors become better fathers by being more willing and able to open the door to their children and listen without jumping to judgment or action. Mark, a New Warrior of one and one half years, asked his 15-year-old daughter what changes she had seen in him since MKP. She replied that there was more space now between incident and action. Her father was taking more time to think and reflect before jumping in to be the leader. Jim echoed themes from other men who were abused as children and now are parents when he says that he brings his wounds to MKP to re-parent himself versus acting out the abuse with his children.

Challenges for Women

On the whole, women feel very positive about MKP. Initially for some women, there had been fear that MKP would be disempowering for them as women or take too much time away from the family. There were a few rocky starts but these issues seemed to dissipate over time. Indeed, it appears that women appreciate men greatly as they change and become more open, more authentic and more accountable. “Women tend to come from more of an emotional heart space and as men change towards that direction, we have more in common to share.” One woman confided: “as I trust his maleness and how he expresses it, it enables me to be more feminine.”
We end with an interesting paradox. Is it possible that as New Warriors help to heal the
world one man at a time, women too will be challenged? Imagine new paradigms where
with integrity and accountability, men and women together can let go of righteous
reactive emotions, old wounds and assumptions? Embrace and explore new ways of
being a man and what that means? What it means to be a woman? And with abandon,
shall femininity and masculinity finally learn to dance the divine?

Barbara Marlowe recently announced the opening of InbodyMe: Explorations on the
Healing’s Edge. [ 828-298-6579 bmarlowe@atlascare.net ]

Jeffrey Goldwasser is a Chiropractor in Sylva. The Asheville Mankind Project is hosting
open Men’s Groups in October. The next New Warriors Training is scheduled in
December. For more information contact Jeffrey at 828-627-8494.

What is Men's Work?

Friday, October 06, 2006

"We don't need to sit around and tell each other 'We're fine the way we are.' Nor do we
need to beat ourselves up for our real and imagined shortcomings. What men's work
asks us to do is tell our real stories. It asks us to be honest about the source of the
pressures and anxieties so many of us feel and too few of us articulate. And once we've
laid the truth out on the table, men's work invites us to support each other in taking
positive action to change our lives and to change the world in which we live. But we can't
move directly to the action without first telling each other the truth. And at its core, the
goal of all men's work is to help men do just that."

Hugo Schwyzer

I find it somewhat difficult sometimes to explain to men what "men's work" is to me. This
quote pretty much sums it up. The ManKind Project is the place I can do my "men's work"
with other men who are working.
I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

 Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:56PM (-07:00)

Comments

- Rrramone October 09, 2006
Brother, I was reminded of yet another quote and thought I'd share it with you:

"The real accomplishment in life is the art of being a warrior, which is the only way to balance the terror of being a man with the wonder of being a man."

--Carlos Castaneda

Keep up the great work!

- Old-faithfulWolf October 09, 2006
Thank you...

o-f wolf

Seven Years On
Tuesday, October 10, 2006

10.10.1999

I attended my New Warrior Training Adventure seven years ago, today.

How has my life changed? More accurately; what changes have I made in my life? Just that simple correction somewhat tells the story. I am more able to take my life into my hands and take ownership of my choices.
Did the NWTA give me that? No, I did. But I found a space in ManKind Project to do the work to make those changes legitimate and long lasting.

I do men’s work, soul work, work of the heart, and healing work. This is work that changes me and could change you.

Are you ready? I will be there in spirit to stand with you. Take the leap!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

The Pain and What We are Capable Of

Friday, October 13, 2006

A bit different post today. A more personal note.

I work at a large university and there is a large concert hall on campus. I picked up the schedule thinking I might find something to go see.

One of the speakers that will be coming in the next year is Kim Phuc.

The name meant nothing to me...until I read down further and remembered the photo. Kim Phuc is the burned, naked, little girl running for her life when her village was napalmed in the Vietnam war (see story and link below).

Tears filled my eyes and I felt the pain of knowing what men are capable of doing. I felt the hurt and pain of seeing into that little girl’s eyes. I have three girls and I cannot imagine what it would be like to live in a town that was napalmed; to see my children running in terror for their lives.

Men are capable of so much. We build things. We create ideas and inventions. We create life with our women. We send people into outer space. We tell stories in all kinds of media.

We protect and love. We kill and mame.
I am asking you to look at your life and see where you can make change. Can it be that today you step up to make change in yourself? Are you the man to do that today?

I am different now than when I started writing this. The ManKind Project didn't make this happen for me. I did. But having MKP in my life, by my choice, has allowed me to see and feel and grow.

I offer that to you.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

From the Kim Foundation

"Phan Thi Kim Phuc was born and raised in the village of Trang Bang, 30 minutes north of Saigon. During the Vietnam War, the strategic Route 1 that runs through the village became the main supply road between Saigon and Phnom Penh. On June 8, 1972, an American military advisor coordinated the napalm bombing of Kim's village by the South Vietnamese. Nine-year-old Kim fled from a pagoda, where she and her family had been hiding. Two of her infant cousins did not survive the attack, and Kim was badly burned.

Kim was photographed running down the road, screaming from the burns to her skin. Nick Ut, the Associated Press photographer who was there to cover the siege, took the photograph of young Kim. Moved by her pain, he rushed her to a South Vietnamese hospital. She then spent 14 months recovering in Barsky Hospital, the American hospital in Saigon, where her care was paid for by a private Foundation. Ut's photograph of Kim remains one of the most unforgettable images of the Vietnam War.

Kim Phuc was not expected to live. Third degree burns covered half of her body, and she would require many operations and years of therapy. After two years, against all odds and with the help of doctors who were committed to her care, she was able to return to her village, where she and her family began to rebuild their lives."

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:00AM (-07:00)

What Jon Got From It

Wednesday, October 18, 2006
This is a blog post from Jon Patch. The training he speaks of has passed, but, I enjoy his piece on how the New Warrior Training Adventure is for him.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Training coming to Vancouver Island
Filed under: Recommendations/Reviews — jonpatch @ 1:19 pm

The New Warrior Training Adventure is coming again to Vancouver Island on March 31-April 2, 2006 weekend. I found this intense training for men to be transformative, and the follow-on trainings and groups excellent. Created by three men in the mid-80’s, something like 33,000 men have now gone through it. There’s more info at www.mkp.org/vancouver and a registration link at www.mkp.org/canwest.

What I got out of it:

- a mission/sense of purpose, and how to take action in the world
- the fundamental power of accountability (both modeling it and holding others accountable
- a better understanding of integrity and how to live in integrity
- how to balance compassion, action, mystery, leadership, self and beliefs

The training is recommended for men who are ready to let go of preconceptions and take a hard look at themselves, and push themselves to their limits. The number of staff exceeds the number of participants, so safety is paramount. The training is run by the ManKind Project, a not-for-profit organization. For men who are interested but can't make it to Vancouver Island, this training is held 125 times per year around the world. See www.mkp.org for local trainings.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:58AM (-07:00)
A man's share on staffing a New Warrior Training Adventure. Enjoy.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

From Richard J. Fairchild blog

The New Warriors Training Adventure at Rock Lake was simply awesome, exhausting, energizing, draining, and fulfilling. For four days the sun shone - each day brighter - as men came together and journeyed deeper into themselves and the world the creator has made. It was my first staffing and I have an appetite for others despite the low level anxiety that accompanied me through the weekend. I am hopeful that over the next few months that I will regain some of the energy, the confidence and the ability to concentrate and articulate my thoughts simply that I have lost over the last few years. One thing is sure, and that is that The Mankind Project has helped me to change me for the better in the midst of the troubles that have distinguished my emotional and mental health since March 2003.

I had a wonderful homecoming on Sunday night and managed to not take on the load of care dealt out to us both while I was at the NWTA. Monday and Tuesday however, proved to be days of hard work as we had to deal with a flurry of legal and emotional matters and prepare to depart for Golden early Wednesday morning..... in just a few hours actually. The work has been long and difficult indeed! But the fruit of doing the work is that there is always good fruit produced. Hashem is in charge. We can simply do what we believe we are called to do and leave the rest - be it joy or sorrow, gain or loss - in His hands and leave them there with confidence.

Be talking to you all soon I hope. We will not be able to return from Golden till Thursday evening. Your prayers for Ann and I, for Charlene and Jim, and most of all for Nikk, Dawson, and Felicia will be much appreciated.

Shalom, Richard
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 11:28AM (-07:00)
Wikipedia.org and the Mankind Project

Wednesday, November 01, 2006

I research around the Internet for ManKind Project related material. Rarely do I come across "bad press." When there are 40,000 men who have completed a process like the NWTA, there will be some who didn't get what I got; simple fact of life. But, it is pretty rare.

There's a Web site called Wikipedia.org that looks basically like an Internet encyclopedia. The difference is that anybody can publish to these pages. They have rules regarding verifiability, but it appears to me that anybody can post anything.

Wikipedia.org has about a bazillion pages of pseudo-reference material. One of those pages is on the ManKind Project. I have checked into it a few times and I am continually amazed at reading the parts that claim (with no verifiability) that MKP is somehow a cult or "Large Group Awareness Training" (LGAT) cult type group.

I have read what an LGAT is and MKP most definitely is not a commonly-defined LGAT. Why not? Because MKP supports the training with follow up groups, called Integration Groups. These groups are populated with men who have been through the New Warrior Training Adventure and are working on making changes in their own individual lives.

The interesting part is that, as a men's organization, MKP is about men finding their connection to heart and service in the world. From my seat, MKP is not about what commonly goes for an LGAT or a cult.

See here for my take on MKP as a cult.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:04PM (-08:00)

RSS_NWTA_Graphic

Tuesday, November 14, 2006
Over the last week I have been recovering from nasal surgery. It was very difficult and painful.

I struggle with physical pain in a way that many men do. I get close to and often pass out during medical procedures. I took a lot of heat for this as a child/boy/man. Little did I know that it is very common among men.

Dealing with these kind of struggles are some of the pieces of work I deal with in my iGroup each week. This is my space for looking at my world; holding it up to the light to see what is really there; like men often dealing with pain like I do.

I am blessed in this life’s journey to be loved and cared for by a wonderful women. I dedicate this post to her. She is my partner in all that I do. She is my support, my advocate, my friend and lover, my best friend, my challenger, my home "iGroup."

Thank you, Dancing Wolf, for being in my life!

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

So Long, Brother, for Now

Thursday, November 16, 2006
By brother, Scott Allan Maynard, passed back into Spiritworld on Saturday night. He was 45. His heart failed to support him any longer. His chosen spirituality was Buddhism.

(speaking quietly toward the stars; with reverence)
Scott Allan Maynard
Scott Allan Maynard
Scott Allan Maynard

So long, my brother. May you come back to more peace than I judge you experienced this time around.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Comments

- Dave  
November 17, 2006
May he be peaceful and may he be free
Aho

Only Men Can Help Other Men Learn How to be a Man

Tuesday, November 21, 2006

Got 2 1/2 minutes to hear about the ManKind Project? This is a video post from a New Warrior using YouTube.com to get his story out to the world.

Click here to see the video (if you can't see it above).

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 11:24 AM (-08:00)
Thanksgiving 2006

Wednesday, November 22, 2006

I am thankful for:

- My family; my three girls & my partner/wife
- Being a dad; something I cherish and highly recommend
- My home in a safe town
- My job
- My new hearing aid
- Breathing
- Time to make change
- My MKP New Warrior brothers who support me and grow with me
- Four Stone Circle iGroup on Thursday nights
- Being alive
- MKP men who give of their time and pay to staff NWTAs
- Men who choose to live in a conscious way
- Blogs
- Wolves

I hope you find time to sit with what you are thankful for. I hope you take the time to look at what you have that works, and what you have that doesn't. Maybe one day I will meet you at an NWTA or in an iGroup or at an MKP gathering of men. I look forward to that.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Weekly Circles of Men -- Integration Groups

Tuesday, November 28, 2006
"What goes on inside these circles is no great mystery and in some ways quite simple. Men are simply telling each other the truths in their lives. They are telling each other about their anger, how and who they love, what they fear and what they are ashamed of. They are telling each other what gives them joy and how they have been hurt. Put simply, they are building containers of trust where they feel safe enough to explore together how they feel. Many, perhaps for the first time in their lives are developing relationships with other men based not on competition, but in trust."

Extracted from The Inside Circle; the Inside Circle, in very basic terms, is a New Warrior Training Adventure-style training done behind prison walls. It was created and supported by men for men behind prison walls; ManKind Project men, paroled men, inside men, men.

The description above is the essence of ManKind Project Integration Groups (iGroups).

Read the description again, I couldn't say it any better.

Every night of the week, men meet to sit in iGroup circles to discover and reach the places of change that they decide is for them.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:43PM (-08:00)

I Can Only Imagine...This is the Love of a Father

Wednesday, November 29, 2006

I am stunned at what men are capable of. If you want to see what a father looks like; what a son looks like; what it looks like to give it all; in my eyes this is it.

Click here to see the video (if you can't see it above). Click here for the Dick and Rick Hoyt Web site.
The way I see it, I am open to this because of my work in the ManKind Project. I can see the beauty of these men and the passion of the love.

I am blessed this day to know there are fathers and sons, like the Hoyts, in this world.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 10:25AM (-08:00)

Comments

- InspiredMind
  November 29, 2006
  Brother, thank you for posting this very inspiring movie. It brought me to tears.
  With love from Green Dragon in New Zealand.

- WilliamNow
  November 30, 2006
  One of my sons just had his first child. Another son I momentarily felt like giving up on.

  In both cases, I have been searching for strong messages to send them about fathering.

  This video and the love of this man for his son carries that message home to ME. From this place, I can begin to give it back to my sons and my new grandson.

  Tears? You bet. And humble respect for the power of love and determination.

  May all fathers become the fathers they were meant to be--so that the earth and families and relationships--and the son in us may be healed.

  Peace and love from William Now, "son of god, trusting our loving"

- BlackBear
  December 01, 2006
  Thanks. This provided a great opportunity on this, my birthday, to reflect on my own relationship with my dad (to whom I e-mailed it) and my own son (with whom I watched it).

Burnt

Friday, December 01, 2006
The blog post below reflects a man's experience with the New Warrior Training Adventure and the ManKind Project.

I share it with you.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

From Burnt, by Joshua Bailes

I have been burnt. Not by flaming heat or electrical current, but by the presence of God in and among my life. Burnt by watching other men confront their shame and by confronting my own. Burnt by the struggle and adventure that comes with crossing into my own shadow and finding God there.

All of this has taken place within the context of the ManKind Project http://www.mkp.org. This is a group of men from all over the world who choose to take responsibility for their actions and emotions. Men who choose to feel. Men who choose to create their own reality rather than being battered at the mecry of the waves of others emotions and suffering. Men who choose to meet their shadow rather than being controlled by it. These are men.

It began in March 2006 at the New Warrior Training Adventure. There I faced my shame through role play, group visualizations, and reflection. I came away changed. Now, I weekly work in a small group to express my emotions and work through my shadow so that I might hold up the gold that is within.

I invite all men who read this to check out the organization. I invite all of you to come polish your gold and find out what life is like when shame is no longer a boundary to feeling and living. To find out what it is to be free and be man.

Below is my mission and my affirmation. Come and find yours too.
My mission is to create a world of love by accepting.

My shadow mission is to create a world of hate by rejecting and judging.

As a man among men I accept.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:57AM (-08:00)

**Journey to Manhood**

**Sunday, December 03, 2006**

From *A Journey to the Wilderness of the Soul*, by Larry Pesavento

"Manhood demands a journey. Manhood demands a test, not testosterone. Manhood does not come automatically, growing as the body grows. This journey of manhood is perilous and painful. The outcome cannot be planned or controlled, and is shrouded in paradox. The journey must be done with a man’s eyes open, consciously and continually choosing a path that leads away from the familiar and the secure.

The journey is a psychospiritual one that demands modern man's attention. Society's and the world's survival depends on men consciously taking up this mission toward inner wisdom and purpose. Men who do not take the journey are dangerous men. Burned out men are dangerous men."

Listen, the way I see it is that men are left behind to find their way from boyhood to manhood without a path. Well, no path that I wanted, anyway.

No woman, no TV show, no movie, and no book is going to take you down the path to manhood. Men help boys, young men, and other men to step cleanly into manhood; simple as that. It is not easy. It requires you look at where you are and it requires you to walk away from being a child.

There are men who are willing to lead men to manhood; they are ManKind Project men. They are men who see the value in you; in your future contribution or destruction to the planet; in your participation in society, or lack of; in your heart.

Is today the day your say to yourself "I need to be among men who will guide me, listen to me, honor me, care about me, challenge me and everything I have going"?
Step up, men are waiting.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 02:12PM (-08:00)

Focus

Monday, December 04, 2006

This post shares another man's view of the ManKind Project.

From bibbledy boggeldy:

"I was attracted to the ManKind Project because their motto is "saving the world one man at a time" which seems to me like a very good focus. I have found that the way to stay focused on this goal is to start each day looking down and begin by saving myself, which takes only nanoseconds at this point in my understanding, and then focus the love out through the eyes to the shining faces of everyone that crosses your view throughout the day. Those who catch the glance and return it are yours to love. Beware the dangers of enraged demonically possessed individuals, but by not overextending the desire to love, safety should be assured."

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:40PM (-08:00)

See Things Differently

Wednesday, December 13, 2006
This post is about a man's experience as a staff man at a New Warrior Training Adventure for the deaf/hearing impaired.

The post lives at Brian, Dancing Bull's blog.

The ManKind Project strives to be inclusive of all men; deaf, blind, not deaf, not blind, gay, straight, religious, agnostic, atheist, political, not political, etc.

Enjoy.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

From Brian-Dancing Bull

"See things differently" by John S., one of my warrior brothers.

There is something I would like to share with you guys about the Mankind Project weekend that I staffed over November 3-5, 2006. Here is the article "See Things Differently" written by John S., one of my warrior brothers as below:

"When I got home Sunday night after the November New Warrior Training Adventure, my wife asked me the usual question: "How was it?"

"Humbling" I told her.

Like all training weekends, there was magic happening everywhere at the training site. Among the staff, among the initiates, and around the circle.

But this weekend was different.

Among the 32 new initiates, 9 men were deaf or hard of hearing. Two staffers were deaf, and 4 were hearing men who served as interpreters.

Throughout the weekend, men who can hear saw a world of expressive communication most had never seen before. And the deaf and hard of hearing men experienced an acceptance — no, something more – an embracing love many had thought didn't exist.
It was humbling. But it took a while to find that feeling. Like most of the other staffers on the weekend, I checked in with fear at the first staff meeting.

Actually, that fear began back in September. When I learned the weekend would include deaf men.

You know how it is. The Voice kicks in. “Oh, that’s going to be weird. Maybe I shouldn’t do it. I don’t know sign language. Everything’s going to be different. I might feel uncomfortable.”

I held on to that burden for weeks. Every few days I’d consider stepping off the weekend. I struggled with the fear. Fear of the unknown. Fear that I’d make mistakes. Fear that I’d be left out.

But.

(You knew this was coming)

At the first staff meeting, I discovered I was wrong.

I cherish the mix of excitement and camaraderie that permeates NWTA staff meetings. Especially the first Monday meeting. When the men who have spent weeks getting the training organized come together for the first time. Men shift in their seats. Look around the circle. Clear their throats. Some laugh. Some hug. Men acknowledge others they know. And size up those they don’t.

This time, staff men talked about their uncertainty. Because of the deaf and hard of hearing men on the weekend, things would be different.

The weekend leaders shared their ideas about how the weekend might change. How would the deaf men get to the training site? How will music change during the weekend? How would we greet men as they arrived? How do we handle the communication in low light, or darkness?

It was clear there were a lot of unknowns. And that was good. There was an excitement among the staff that we’d be called on to improvise, be flexible, learn as we go. And that felt comfortable to me. As if it relieved the burden I’d carried about having to do everything right. If there were no rules, I couldn’t fail!

And then Greg G. kicked in. He introduced us to a deaf staff man, Brian D. I swear to the Universe, I felt a warm blanket of calm float over me as soon as Brian smiled and started signing to us. Man, what a presence he had. I was transfixed by his expressions, and the graceful choreography in his signing.

Greg and Brian led us into a process of beginning to understand the deaf and hard of hearing world. Each hearing staff man put in ear plugs and then we stood in the circle and tried to interact with each other without speaking. We fumbled, wandered, and waved our hands around trying to show an action or intention. It was a bit chaotic.

Afterwards, nearly every hearing man said he felt a lot of fear during the process. Some felt alone, some confused, and many felt angry.
I said I felt left out. Isolated. As though the deaf men knew more than I did. And Bob Beare expressed his feeling so well amid his tears when he said: “I knew I could take my earplugs out and stop my fear and confusion. These deaf and hard of hearing men can’t.”

I realized that feeling of isolation had floated around in my head in the weeks leading up to the training. Both for myself, and for the deaf men on the training. But as I let myself be in the moment more and more, I realized the dual nature if my expectation. I laughed at the irony. These guys had an extended communication that I could only vaguely touch. They talked with their hands, their faces, their entire bodies. My isolation quickly transformed into awe.

Communicating an idea between a speaking man, an interpreter, a signing man and back again takes much longer than communication between two speaking men, or two signing men. There was a lot of discussion among the leaders and interpreters about how to handle each step of the weekend with the deaf men.

The leaders embraced the idea of integrating all men in the group, rather than separating either deaf men or hearing men. As a staff member, I expected that integration might confuse people, but the opposite was true. I saw more emphasis on communication. And I realized how often we throw away words, or speak over each other so one man’s words are drowned by another’s. I became acutely aware of the limitations of spoken words, and the fluency of body language.

With both signing and speaking happening simultaneously, it seemed everyone paid more attention to meanings behind their words. The leaders were mindful of slowing down as they talked, looking at each man’s face, allowing their eye contact to linger a bit longer. It was a startling reminder of the power of non-verbal communication.

In fact, throughout the weekend, I often felt I learned more from watching the signing men than I did from listening to the speaking men. Many times I found myself staring in amazement as the interpreters worked. Or I’d be lost in a deaf man’s graceful, eloquent expression.

I know what a trip it is to close my eyes and let myself flow to the words and music during parts of the weekend. But I wanted to tell the hearing men to open their eyes and watch the interpreters instead!

I think what we all learned the most is that it wasn’t a weekend about deaf guys. It was a weekend that included deaf guys. We all learned new ways to stretch beyond our limitations, face our fears, embrace our strengths, and let go of the judgments we make about people we think we don’t understand.

I’ll be staffing an I-Group that includes signing men and speaking men. The I-Group leader told me one of his goals it to make it fun. I like that. I’m learning signs for all kinds of feelings and intentions. We’re brainstorming ideas for transforming what used to be spoken-word experiences into visual and sign-based experiences. It’s going to be a whole lot of fun, with plenty of imaginative learning for all of us.

And so, humbly, my journey continues.”

John S.
"Life has meaning only in the struggle. 
Triumph or defeat is in the hands of the Gods. 
So let us celebrate the struggle!"

Swahili Warrior Song

How many times have you looked at the world in terms of winning and losing? I know I do quite often.

Really, winning and losing is a point of view more than any reality. My win may be a loss for you or your loss may look like a win to me.

The world is filled with gray; while winning and losing is mostly black or white. A football team wins a game one day and losses one another. Pretty black and white.

The world of men is gray. We are not any one color; or two opposite colors. We are all colors and all ways of living and all ways of seeing.

In the ManKind Project, I have found that there is support for the grays in my world. I find men who challenge my grayness when it isn't serving me. I find men who support my grayness when it is serving me.

So come be gray with men who support you and whatever gray you may be.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
"The Wild Man is the protector of the Earth."

Robert Bly

As part of the preparation for the New Warrior Training Adventure a man is asked to read the first chapter of Robert Bly's book Iron John.

There is a line in the first chapter where a young man, a hunter in the story, arrives at a pond to look for the king's warriors who have been lost in the woods. The pond is where the wild man lives in the deep water.

"The young man and his dog wander about in the forest and they go past a pond. Suddenly a hand reaches up from the water, grabs the dog, and pulls it down. The young man doesn't respond by becoming hysterical. He merely says, "This must be the place."

This must be the place; I love that line. For me, it is a set of words that means it is time for action and a time for presence. Sometimes I use the line a bit sarcastically to offer up my view of the obvious in a situation.

But, always I am aware that the line signals that the time is present for action.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 02:29PM (-08:00)
The post below is from the ManKind Project Web site. I am reposting it here because it is pretty clear on what MKP is for many men.

Are you ready?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Accountability & Integrity

The New Warrior Training Adventure is about taking a look at our lives as men - how they work and how they don't work. Here a man learns how to be fully accountable for his actions and their consequences; how to begin integrating the dark and soulful qualities of his masculine nature; how to stand up and take full responsibility for his life. He learns to find courage in the face of his deepest fears, and to understand the he has the opportunity to live a life of integrity and congruence. He learns to transcend the momentum of toxic masculinity, finding within himself the sacred masculine energy that is capable of discernment and protection that seeds life with passion, zeal, and creativity. He learns to step forward as a man without apologizing for who he is, stewarding that energy with an open heart and compassionate mindfulness.

A mature man is one who knows himself well enough to understand why he is here and what he is committed to. A man spends his energy on what he values. We have been conditioned to value things outside us. Sooner or later, the material life gives way to the interior life, and we have only one place left to go to discover the real richness of our lives - inside our own hearts and souls. If you are a man ready to invest in his own heart, the NWTA may be for you.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:45PM (-08:00)
“The first peace, which is the most important, is that which comes from within the souls of men when they realize their relationship, their oneness, with the universe and all its powers, and when they realize that at the center of the universe dwells Wakan-Tanka, and that this center is really everywhere, it is within each of us. This is the real peace, and the others are but reflections of this.

The second peace is that which is made between two individuals, and the third is that which is made between two nations.

But above all you should understand that there can never be peace between nations until there is first known that true peace which is within the souls of men.”

Black Elk, 1863-1950

Today, I look out at a world that looks like men have lost their souls. Where have the compassionate men gone? Where are the men who take into account all the needs of the people not just the needs of them self or their small group? Where are the men who say "I draw the line here and I will not cross over it into the world of disrespect and pain?"

I see that the execution of Saddam Hussein is posted on the Internet. I feel great sadness. Why is this alright with people? Why is a man's death not given at least some respect. He was a perfect little boy once upon a time; just like you were. Could we not, at the very least, honor that in him? Wouldn't we feel better for doing that much?

In the ManKind Project, I sit in circles of men from varying cultures and experiences. I really only understand mine; but each week I go and listen and try.

Maybe tomorrow I will see some healing within the souls of men...maybe.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:22PM (-08:00)
So You Have a Vision

Friday, January 05, 2007

So you have a vision or some great idea. Maybe it's an invention, a way to make better swiss cheese, or write the novel that changes the world.

What is at risk for you to take the idea by the b*lls and do it? What is at risk for you to do nothing about it? What's at risk for you to take one step toward that direction? What if you have to do it all by yourself and no one gives you any encouraging words? What if you have to give up something to make it happen; like say watching TV, sleeping in, working overtime at work, spending time thinking about how you can't do it.

Stepping into the fear is the issue. What do you fear? What is in the fear that keeps you where you are?

For me, fear keeps me from risking failure and ridicule. That's my world. There's a fear in there for you, too. Any idea what it is?

What keeps you from attending a New Warrior Training Adventure? You think it's a cult? Too new-age? Too old-school? You'll do it someday but maybe not? That's your fear talking.

I and other good men are waiting to see what you have to offer. Bring it.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 03:12PM (-08:00)

Wielding a Sword

Monday, January 08, 2007

"A truly enlightened warrior realizes that his most powerful weapons are love and compassion."

Author Unknown
Being a New Warrior means wielding a sword of a different kind than the past has dictated. My sword is for healing and honor, not for random violence or attacking.

A warrior knows he must heed the call to duty. The call of duty in the ManKind Project is one of honoring each man's choices and honoring our failings and successes. We are men who have stepped into the light of responsibility and the courage of holding space for men to live lives of integrity and mission.

How a New Warrior wields his sword will look very different than you might expect. Are you a man who is willing to look at your life and hold an honorable space for other men to do that as well?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:43AM (-08:00)

Positive Life Change

Tuesday, January 09, 2007

In reference to the New Warrior Training Adventure:

"Men come back more honest and with a deeper understanding of personal integrity. They are able to see clearer the impact their family of origin has had on them – particularly the parenting they received from their fathers. On the weekend, many experience what it feels like to be loved and valued for the first time in their lives. They come back more whole, less defended, and more able to make positive life changes."

From Patti Henry

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Does this sound like a change you'd like in your world?

Change is always available; you make the step.
From Coming to terms; A short men's movement glossary

by Michael Jackman

Blessing: An affirmation of manhood that only men can bestow on other men.

Checking in: Becoming aware of your body and your feelings and being emotionally "present."

Father wound: Emotionally injury from a father’s abuse or neglect.

Father hunger: An emotional need for the blessing of other men.

King: An archetype expressing the part of a man that blesses or honors others.

Lover: An archetype expressing the part of a man that feels.

Magician: An archetype expressing the part of a man that transforms and facilitates.

Safe container: A safe environment where feelings are welcome.

Shadow bag: A metaphorical place to stuff feelings that are stunted or not permitted.

Warrior: An archetype expressing the part of a man that acts with precision and integrity.

Warrior work: Coming to terms with father wounds through facilitated activities with other men.

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Band of Brothers

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

This post is from the Detroit Metro Times. It is looooonnnnnnggg but very informative and well written.

Hang in; read it all. The information is terrific. And when you are done...maybe I will see you on the other side.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Band of brothers; The men's movement (still) want guys to open their hearts
by Michael Jackman

In a rented meeting space in a northern Detroit suburb, an "integration group" — or "I-group" — is meeting. Nine "warrior brothers" sit in a circle, surrounding a candleholder shaped like men locking arms in a huddle. Next to the candleholder sits a prayer fan. A symbol of power, the staff, sits nearby. This room is what these men call a "safe container," a place where male emotions are allowed. One by one, these men spend the evening talking about personal issues and feelings. When men want to echo the speaker's sentiments, they extend an arm to show sympathy. The "elders" identify their standing in the group by asserting when they "did their weekend." And one can talk with them all night without learning what car they drive, what they do for a living, what sports they enjoy watching. In a strange reversal of topics, these men don't talk about "things." They talk about loved ones and relationships instead.
Once a month, Mankind Project's weekly gathering of "warrior brothers" opens itself to interested outsiders, showing curious men what the group has to offer. Like the New Warrior Training Adventure, the details of the I-group are secret. What is said here stays there. Though the men's words cannot be repeated, what's memorable is how they say them. The evening progresses from archetype to archetype. During each "round," the men, one by one, participate, until everybody has spoken.

The "lover round" is a time to talk about feelings, to "check in" with the emotions — anger, sadness, joy, fear and shame — that are dominant at that time, challenging the idea that men must live up in their heads while their emotions remain shrouded in mystery.

The "warrior round" is a time to deal with integrity and accountability. The men discuss how well they are living up to their own personal standards, and may ask another man's help in holding them to their code.

The "king round" is a time to bestow blessings on each other, to give thanks and reward accomplishments.

Finally, the "magician round" is a time of transformation, with role-playing, facilitated discussion, and any necessary conflict resolution.

This particular I-group has been going for more than a decade. The all-white group is distinctly middle-class, but as the evening progresses, it becomes clear that several of the men are gay. Clearly, this is an accepting, gay-friendly environment.

The evening seems free of any agenda, and the sharing isn't always pretty. Some men vent their anger and frustration, and their outbursts are accepted, as the group prefers to have them released in a safe space. Like the meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, what is said here stays here. Frank talk is invited, and only gossip is frowned upon. It lasts for hours, and when it finally comes to a close, the group stands and gathers in a huddle, arms locked around each other's backs, giving final blessings before breaking up for the night.

Meet the men

Men's groups are nothing new — think of the Masons, Elks and Fred Flintstone's Loyal Order of Water Buffaloes — but in the last 25 years, we've seen mass movements of men searching for meaning in their lives. The Million Man March on Washington and the Promise Keepers grabbed headlines in the 1990s.

And every few years, it seems men are rediagnosed and renamed, whether it be "angry white males," NASCAR dads or metrosexuals.

But men's groups like Mankind Project originated far away from the angry men of talk radio and the pious men of the Promise Keepers. The men's movement as we know it grew out of — or was informed by — the women's movement of the 1970s. Rather than being rigid, religious or righteous, the men's movement draws on encounter groups, feminism, new age religion, Jungian therapy and comparative mythology. In the 1980s, some men began looking back at older archetypes and experimenting with initiation rituals, operating under the idea that only men can initiate men. It had a strong appeal for baby boomer men who had rejected their 1950s middle-class male archetypes —
emotionally unavailable good providers — but didn't want to be "soft" males, too attuned to their feminine side.

In the case of Mankind Project, it all started in the mid-'80s, with three men brainstorming about effective mentoring. Bill Kauth, a psychotherapist and seminar leader, Ron Hering, a university professor, and Rich Tosi, a Marine veteran and former General Motors engineer, who now lives in Fenton. Armed with a few ideas about male initiation rites, the three took a group of 17 men on what was originally called a "Wildman Weekend." Since that initial weekend in 1985, Mankind Project has become a national nonprofit, operating dozens of men's centers in the United States, Europe and Africa. It is estimated that more than 35,000 men have undergone the group's New Warrior Training Adventure.

Captain Bly

In his productive career as a poet, critic, educator, activist and translator, Robert Bly spent much of the 1970s "praising the feminine soul." Then came a surprising reversal. In 1981, at a commune in New Mexico he taught a group of men for the first time. He became a regular leader of men's gatherings, experiences that informed the provocative 1990 best-seller Iron John. The book proved to be the breakthrough moment for the men's movement and launched Bly as a pop celebrity.

The book is a heady blend of psychology, then-current events, literature and comparative mythology. Bly canvassed mythology and there found hairy, powerful men who mentor young boys into heroes, especially the Brothers Grimm's tale of "Iron Hans." It demands an indulgent reader, one willing to forgive the oracular tone and the occasional overreach of his prose. Still, every few pages Bly's comparative mythology will strike gold, much in the same way his idol Joseph Campbell consistently did.

Some critics found the book exciting. The New York Times Book Review wrote: "It is refreshing these days to read a book that does not lay the blame for America's collective ills on social injustice, the savings and loan scandal, Iraq or the National Endowment for the Arts, but — get this — on defective mythology." The reviewer, psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, hummed sympathetically that, "moon shots and genetic engineering notwithstanding, we are still befuddled creatures needing all the help we can get from the distilled experience of the ancients of the tribe."

But the note of critical approval was rare. The Times Literary Supplement hooted, "For the unconstructed, almost anything — drink, drugs, depression or matriarchal domination — will seem preferable to the prospect of joining one of Bly's cheery male support groups." In The Village Voice, Sally Eckhoff huffed, "Maybe women should be glad that the job of keeping everybody emotionally lubricated is off our shoulders for a while."

Bly's effort to envision masculinity as a positive force became more misunderstood than ever. Suddenly, quiet men's gatherings were caught between tree-hugging, drum-beating caricatures and people trying to turn a buck by hawking male vitality tea. And since Iron John, the currency of Bly's ideas has retreated, in many ways, to the encounter groups that first developed them.

And that's a shame. Or so says Jess Row, writing for Slate that we need "more books like Iron John." Remarking on contemporary writers, such as Caitlin Flanagan, who peddle canned gender roles, Row mourns that there aren't more books examining "contemporary
relationships and gender roles without panic, dread or shame." His unfortunate conclusion is that, in the age of ironists like David Sedaris, much of Iron John is simply too painfully earnest to strike a popular chord.

Row writes, "reading it today reveals how much American culture has changed over the last decade and a half. The 'men's movement' was briefly the subject of controversy among feminist and derision for conservatives, but what killed it, more than anything, was simply that it was too easy a target for satire," that "the fear of ridicule" has "made any serious discussion of men's emotional lives impossible."

Shaping a loving world

Peter Putnam has great speaking energy. Soft-spoken but intense, the 47-year-old community college writing teacher and author sits in Cass Cafe, telling how he got involved with Mankind Project several years ago.

"I was at a friend's party, and I met this guy. He told me all about Mankind Project and I was fascinated. I never saw him again or figured out who it was, but he gave me a card with the number on it.

"That number sat by the phone for months. I knew when I was ready — and then things happened quickly."

Putnam called the group and "did his weekend," going on a men's retreat known as the New Warrior Training Adventure. There, Putnam was able to deal with his repressed emotions, to empty his "shadow bag" of anger and sadness.

"You need to have a way to express those feelings. We're taught to stuff our feelings into our 'shadow bag.' You stuff away enough anger for a long enough time and it starts to get toxic. You need to let that out or it's going to hurt you." The group was a way for him to come to terms with his father, who died when Putnam was in his 30s. "When I was growing up, my archetype was the 1950s man, John Wayne, the 'old warrior' of my father's generation: hardworking, focused, determined. But it was too nationalistic. But, still, they were warriors. They got the job done."

But these good providers couldn't give what Putnam calls "the blessing," something he wants to be able to pass on to other men. As a husband and father he's thought about that a lot. That thinking led to The Song of Father-Son (iUniverse, $21.95, 270 pp.), which even sports a photo of Putnam cradling his child, Henry, in his arms. The Song is a series of meditations on manhood, fatherhood and "unblessed sons," with stories from his life and "warrior work." Some of the passages show how moving the journey of self-discovery can be. A reading from his book would be a fitting close to a men's movement meeting.

But what is it about the men's movement that this wiry, bookish Detroiter finds so compelling? Why isn't it good enough to be a good person?

"For much of my life, I was a good person. It wasn't enough. My 'warrior' had to be repressed. By being strong men, we can change the world more effectively by accessing those energies that have been repressed. We need to have access to that masculine energy that's untapped to shape a more loving world."

Putnam's enthusiasm for the men's movement's new age trappings is infectious and
charming. "When I did my weekend, part of it was to rename myself," he says. "The name that I found coming out of that weekend was Strong Bear. I think it's still a good name. I realize it may sound hokey to some people. I mean, sure, I'm not going to come into Cass Cafe and announce myself as Strong Bear. But it really is a powerful experience to give yourself a name that you choose."

Fishers of men

"Mind-body exhibitors. Free workshops. Free parking." So reads a flier for the Human Spirit Expo, which has taken over Holt High School on the outskirts of Lansing on this bright autumn afternoon. Vendors have turned the high school's concourse into a marketplace, hawking everything from "healthy chocolate" to new age crystals. Some lie prone on low tables while masseuses work them over. Every sort of psychic reading abounds here, not just tarot readings, but such unusual offerings as "Native American bone readings."

Mankind Project Vice Chair Kirk Tirakian seems a bit doubtful about the expo. "Do we attract any people because of this? I'm not sure. The Mind-Body-Spirit Expo is larger. That one's put on by phenomeNEWS, and we did get some people interested there."

Among the shiny crystals, dream-catchers and nutrition displays, offering men community seems an odd fit. But the theme of mentoring elders dovetails nicely with the presence of Dan Millman. The expo's keynote speaker, Millman is the author of Way of the Peaceful Warrior, which was made into film with a minor theatrical release. The book tells the story of a young athlete whose dreams turn to ashes until he finds an older man who mentors him back to health. The film has been screened twice today, and Millman is hanging around, speaking to fans before his speech this evening.

In a sparsely occupied corner of the expo, the Mankind Project men sit at a table beneath a banner that asks, "Are you the man you thought you'd become?" It's the ultimate low-pressure pitch, with type big enough to be read across the room. A few low stacks of literature sit on the table, and the project's integration group coordinator, Michael Erickson, sits with the patience of a seasoned fisherman. Despite the bustling business over at the psychic end of the expo, only perhaps a dozen men have expressed interest in the group today.

Erickson, middle age with a head of close-cropped white hair, has a disarmingly sincere manner. Asked what the group has given him, his eyes crinkle into a tender smile. "I found a home. I found somebody to call to give me a pat on the back," he says, adding with a laugh, "or a kick in the ass."

As Erickson tells it, the group is about "opening up," integrating one's psyche and integrating one's self with one's brothers. Pressed to go beyond buzzwords and jargon, Erickson echoes the writings of Bly and others, who believe that contemporary society offers men a merely provisional manhood, saps men of trust, and crushes their souls with judgment.

Speaking of a prehistoric past, Erickson argues that we've lost crucial initiation rituals that release "a huge amount of energy." He adds that for men who had difficult childhoods — as he takes a moment to hint at his own troubled upbringing — the group offers a way to heal those wounds and grow. The way his eyes glitter when he alludes to his childhood, one wonders if they are shining with insight or watery with bittersweetness.
Given all this openness and sincerity, it should be a tricky business to talk turkey. But when the time comes to put a price on the New Warrior Training Adventure weekend — $600 — Erickson doesn't blink. The money goes back into the organization. "There's no profit taken," he says, "and even our staffers pay to participate in it."

When asked why something deemed so vital to men should be out of reach to so many, Erickson responds disarmingly: "If the interest is there and the means aren't, there are ways to subsidize it. Let's put it this way: If somebody doesn't have enough money, there's always a way to make it work."

Reaching out

Though the men's movement does remain largely white and middle-class, some local men are trying to bridge that divide, with surprising results.

Pontiac resident Ron Gay, a 51-year-old carpenter, was until recently a multicultural coordinator for Mankind Project. Calm, self-possessed and quietly eloquent, Gay is a men's group veteran who first got involved in men's groups 14 years ago. As a "warrior" with Mankind Project, Gay seems a textbook example of the sort of healing men can accomplish together.

His father was no stranger to another era's men's groups, becoming a 33rd-degree Mason in Gay's native Alabama. Gay describes his relationship with his father as loving, but it came to a tragic end when his father was killed in a construction accident when Gay was 13 years old.

"That was a wound," Gay says, "but the greater wound was that the men in my life weren't equipped to help me." As Gay describes it, when he found that his uncles and other male elders lacked the skills to step in and help, it started a lifelong journey that caused him to ask: "How do men learn to be there for each other?"

In the mid-1990s, while working as a docent at a holocaust museum, Gay began looking through the museum's files, reading about how the Masons were persecuted by the Nazis. The persecution flew in the face of the all-white Masonic tradition he knew, and inspired him to question the value of groups that didn't reach out to others.

"I felt we didn't have Detroit. In many ways, it was a repetition of my father's lodge."

This April, Gay teamed up with fellow warrior Putnam to start a monthly meeting called Men's Forum. It's an effort to strip away some of the men's movement's trappings and find a middle ground that will attract interested men in the inner city. So far, the group has attracted a core of four or five men, and appears to be gathering strength.

Are low-income men or men of color even interested in this sort of thing? "I sense the desire is there," Gay says, "but the need for common ground makes it more important to be pragmatic, to discuss how to be a good father, how to deal with real problems.

"I don't need all the ceremony, but it doesn't scare me."

The group, which meets at the Unitarian-Universalist Church on Cass Avenue near Wayne State University, is still experimenting with the structure of the meetings.
"In Mankind Project, the men that are there already have life skills in place," Gay explains. "But it's really important to have food and shelter before you ask, 'How do I feel?' It's an important question, but it's one you ask later. In the Men's Forum, this is not small talk. It's DUls, debt, social issues and alimony. And it's personal stuff — a place to come share your experiences as a son, a father, a grandfather, a husband. We try to balance the two."

Gay understands the hazards of his undertaking, and takes pains to avoid any perceptions of "missionary work."

"It takes time and trust, building a rapport," he says. "Our message is that you don't have to do it on your own."

Enter the warriors

It's a sunny October day in Ferndale, in a basement meeting space at the Metropolitan Community Church of Detroit, where the Mankind Project is holding one of this year's graduation ceremonies. Light filters in through block glass windows as dozens of spectators — family members, spouses, partners and children — take steel chairs set on the shuffleboard floor. A few staffers are present, laughing, talking about yesterday's Human Spirit Expo and occasionally clasping their arms around each other in heartfelt embraces. On necklaces, they wear pendants of cloth that they call "talismans," stones and other items wrapped reverently by "elders" in fabric. On a table near a wall festooned with regalia from the space's regular Boy Scout meetings are before-and-after Polariods of today's graduates. The "before" photos are tense, unsmiling, grim. In the "after" photos, the men beam with pride and happiness.

The "new brothers" are meeting outside in the parking lot for a "debriefing" before the graduation ceremony. Inside, a burly but soft-spoken man, Mankind Project's regional representative Dave Tuscany, stands up to address the crowd, telling them what to expect today.

"We men tend to be cut off from here to here," he says, placing a forearm against his neck and then his belly. "The idea of the New Warrior Training Adventure is that we try to get in touch with feelings that would normally be cut off." Some in the crowd, notably women, nod in understanding. Tuscany goes on to explain how the "warrior weekend" reimagines ancient tribal efforts to rein in the worst excesses of masculinity, helping "warriors" to find the difference between the "macho" and the "masculine."

"Why are we here today? To support our loved ones." In a nod to the wives, children, parents and same-sex partners in the audience, he says, "It will be a lot easier if we just say that you're here to support your 'man' — your lover, husband or partner. We're here to support our men, to foster their continuing growth."

Shortly, the conversation turns to "mythopoetic" matters — Jungian "shadows," repressed parts of the self, empowerment circles and shifts in energy — and it becomes easy to get distracted. The mysterious terms do as much to explain as they do to obscure. But before the spectators can get too confused with the jargon, all is soon forgotten when the "new brothers" make their dramatic entry.

A gauntlet of staffers forms by the entrance, and at first glance they seem to be making
"jazz hands," fluttering their fingers in the air. This esoteric device, it is later explained, is American sign language for "applause," though some in the group prefer to call this affirmation "sprinkles." Deliberately, the dozens of graduates enter the room through this silent applause and take seats in front of the spectators. It is a few minutes before they are all seated. Though Mankind Project requires "new brothers" to be at least 18, and the group skews young, though it does include several older men.

One by one, graduates come forward to accept a group photo and a certificate. As they do, they are handed a tall staff to hold as they address the audience. The first warrior comes before the audience with a sly smile on his face, as though he has a secret.

He eyes the audience for a moment, then announces, "I am Courageous Sea Lion, and I welcome you."

One by one, they come forward and introduce themselves with their "animal names" before making a short speech about what motivated their decision to do "the weekend" and what they felt and learned. They introduce themselves with inventive "animal names," such as "Green Crocodile," "Strong Dolphin," "White Lion," "Old Grouper" and "Sky Panther."

Their speeches are short, but the atmosphere is charged as they speak. Some of them cry "Ho!" — a shout of joyous affirmation that's roared back by the group. Some of them burst into tears, letting their emotions wash over them. One warrior has decided that, from now on, he will use his full birth name. "I wasn't letting all the parts of me come forward," he announces, "and I've decided to claim my last name."

Twentysomething warrior Pristine Deer tells how his college classmates noticed his newfound positive energy, teasing him by asking, "Dude, are you high, man?"

Serene Hawk grabs the staff and soberly describes feeling detached: "I was going through life in a daze. But now I can accept who I am, what I am, and what I've gone through. I'm now ready to step into my real life and be present."

Timber Wolf, who says the weekend was "scarier than jumping out of an airplane," tells how he returned from the weekend and found himself weeping with his daughter.

Another graduate tells how the experience "helped me find my compassion and helped me find my strength. And I'm grateful for community."

White Lion comes forward to say, "I was a people-pleaser. Now I know that I come first."

This sentiment is echoed by another warrior, who, staff in hand, says, "I now have a stronger understanding of who I am, and I'm not letting others define it for me. It's called 'backbone.'"

In a wavering, nervous voice, Bald Eagle deliberately says, "As much as I said I didn't want to be here, for me the worst fear is to be disconnected with the rest of humanity. I don't want to do my life alone — there's so much fear of connecting. I want to get that connection again."

Another graduate's speech is short and to-the-point, marveling, "I have never spent time in the company of men where there was no shaming or humiliation."
Perhaps the most arresting speech that lasts only 20 or so seconds, filled with deliberate pauses. A tall young man beams as he takes the stick and announces, "I'm Beautiful Man."

He looks at the audience for several seconds before saying, "I feel comfortable standing in front of you."

He stands there for several discomfiting moments more before lobbing this line: "The thing on my face ... is a smile."

Glimpses of adventure

So what goes on during men's initiation retreats of various men's groups? A look at the literature of the men's movement does offer glimpses of what happens, and it's not all sweat lodges and drumming circles. A quick Internet search can yield anonymous postings arguing that the retreat is simply a way to fleece people by making them run screaming naked through the forest. Some are put off or made uncomfortable by the role-playing or "warrior work" that goes on. Indeed some of the actual descriptions of men's retreats that are available are surprising — and often harrowing.

In Iron John, Robert Bly describes a gathering in which more than 2,000 strips of red cloth were given to several hundred men. The men were asked to "fasten or tie a red strip over any part of his body that had been wounded in some way."

"Many men needed ten or more strips. For some men the entire right side of the body, head to ankle, was brilliant red; on others the red almost covered the head; for some, both arms and legs. When the exercise was over, the room was a sea of red."

Bly also describes men who purge their anger "in shouts of rage that can go on for 20 minutes." In their book Victories of the Heart: The Inside Story of a Pioneer Men's Group, Robert Mark and Buddy Portugal also describe men purging themselves of their emotions by shrieking for several minutes, leaving those watching turning pale and trembling. The book also recounts role-playing exercises attempting to re-create traumatic emotional scenes from participants' childhoods that involve screaming, crying and intense emotional responses.

In his book, Peter Putnam describes a men's retreat where he was "reborn" by traveling through a "birth canal" of men, emerging at the end and cutting a symbolic umbilical cord.

In some of these situations, the level of physical intimacy involved, men touching and holding each other, calls for new ways of defining what's proper. Mark and Portugal take care to discuss it frankly: "We are two men who love one another, who have developed a powerful bond in a nonsexual relationship. We do not intend to red-flag the nonsexual aspect, although it is important."

The fact that the men's movement is so friendly to gay men is likely to cause homophobes to break out in a cold sweat. As Mark and Portugal explain, "Gay men have the same needs as heterosexual men for connection with other men in a safe, respectful relationship that includes a sense of brotherhood and deep compassion for the welfare of the other person."
The middle ground

It's the last Monday of November, and in a parlor on the second floor of the Unitarian-Universalist church's McAdow House in Detroit, Gay and Putnam's Men's Forum is meeting. The chairs around a meeting table quickly fill up. On this night, the forum has drawn about 10 men, their biggest group yet. It's a genuinely diverse bunch, about half black and half white, with men anywhere from their 20s to their 50s. The forum is still finding its rhythm, and one gets the sense that it's being invented as it happens.

The meeting opens with each man briefly discussing what's going well in his life and what's not working. Though nobody "checks in" by ticking off feelings, the small speeches do offer snapshots of what the men's emotions are. It's a clever tactic, one evidently arrived at by trial and error since the group started meeting seven months ago.

The next hour is spent discussing something practical. On this evening, a participant has brought his camera and is discussing digital photography. It's an interesting dynamic: The men begin by discussing something personal, their statements careful, tentative, qualified. There is no weeping or shrieking, just a light loosening of the emotional restraints. But when the talk turns to photography, suddenly the table fills with life, everybody eager to discuss things, technology, action. It has a limbering effect, establishing a rapport that helps those unfamiliar with "checking in" and "shadow bags" to seize a sense of community.

After a short break, the men return to the table for a discussion of interracial relationships. After an hour of practical dialogue, the group is sufficiently lubricated to share personal stories. Everybody at the table has something to share, and a few disclosures evidently surprise and electrify some of the men at the table. The Men's Forum seems to be finding its groove.

As the two-and-a-half-hour meeting comes to a close, it seems as though it's been just a short visit. By the time the men are ponying up a few dollars each to pay for the space, everybody is on a first-name basis, and everybody has shared something personal, something practical and something emotional. And nobody talked about football once.

For more information about the Windsor-Detroit chapter of Mankind Project, visit mkp.org or call 248-981-3188.

The Men's Forum's next meeting is on the third Monday in January. For more information, see www.groups.yahoo.com/group.MensForumMD or call 313-720-1977.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 10:01AM (-08:00)

Footsteps of a Warrior

Wednesday, January 17, 2007
"Let every step that I take
Leave the footprints of a warrior
Along the spirit trail."

Dan Fogelberg; The Spirit Trail from The Wild Places; 1990,

Often I hear the footsteps of my past walking right along next to me.

I have made my share of ridiculous mistakes, blunders, close calls, and judgments based on the data I had at the time. One past positive decision that has stood the test of time was my choice to attend the New Warrior Training Adventure.

I attended the training in October 1999. I continue to do weekly work on my self and my life in my iGroup, Four Stone Circle. It is one of the most powerful places in my life; surely the one place that offers the support and challenge of other men who I trust to hold me to my word and intentions.

The ManKind Project offers that to you, as well. I wonder if one day I will meet up with you, in my iGroup, at a training, or wherever. I look forward to hearing your story.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 02:09AM (-08:00)

Mistakes

Friday, January 26, 2007
“The only man who never makes a mistake is the man who never does anything.”

Theodore Roosevelt, the 26th President of the United States (1858-1919)

It would be a mistake for me not continue to tell you about my experiences with the New Warrior Training Adventure and the ManKind Project.

So, keep coming back and I will keep digging around to find more info and continue to share my story with you.

I’m out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:34AM (-08:00)

Father to the Man

Tuesday, January 30, 2007

“The child is the father to the man.”

A sentiment that rings clear for me.

My experience as a child drives and compels my present and, if I am unconscious, my future.

In the ManKind Project, I hold space to look at how my past brings my present into focus and out of focus. The men in my iGroup help me with this, but ultimately I could just sit in iGroup and do nothing; although my mere presence in iGroup would be something.

I am asking you to take a look at how your past creeps into your present. Is it time to take a hold of the present while honoring the past? Do it now; sign up for the New Warrior Training Adventure and come to an iGroup. Maybe, I will see you there.
Men's Group Grows Closer

From Paul's LJ Pages

"My MKP I-Group is growing closer to me. I feel vulnerable and trusting almost all the time. These men may become my best friends ever. I believe in myself when I stand in their midst. I have shared some deeply personal history and all they do is invite me to open myself more completely. I love it when they do this."

A man's experience in iGroup; that's it.

Want some of this for you?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:24PM (-08:00)

Why the "New Warrior"?

Wednesday, January 31, 2007
This post talks about why we use the term New Warrior.

I hope it brings some clarity for you, but the name we use isn't important. What is important is the space we create to allow men to change their worlds.

Are you ready for change in your world?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

From the New Mexico MKP Web site:

Why the term "New Warrior"?

Men have been warriors for thousands of years and every man has his warrior side. But social forces pressure many to repress or distort this part of themselves. They unconsciously substitute a "shadow" for the healthy warrior energy so essential for sustaining individual, family and community balance.

The New Warrior is a man who has begun the confrontation with the destructive shadow and has reclaimed hard-won ownership of the highly focused, accountable energy that empowers and shapes the healthy masculine self.

Sustained by this energy, the New warrior is at once tough and loving, wild and gentle, fierce and tolerant. He lives passionately and compassionately, because he has learned to face his demons and to live his personal mission with integrity.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:30AM (-08:00)

Mirror

Tuesday, February 06, 2007
I have a very special mirror in my house. It was made by New Warrior man and it holds my New Warrior Training Adventure talisman when I am not wearing it. It is a circle of clay around a mirror of maybe eight inches. I can only see my face in it.

I look into that mirror when I take the talisman down. I am reminded of the words that are painted around it, "as a man among men," and I remember my place in the circle of men that is the ManKind Project.

So I want you to look in the mirror, the next time you do, and really take a look.

Look at the man you see there. Can you look at him with honor and compassion, love and trust?

Are you old enough to see your father's lines in your face; can you see them with eyes of knowing and empathy?

When will you be able to look at this man, yourself, and a honor him for his choices, good and bad, smart and dull, weak and strong?

In the ManKind Project, men are encouraged to look at what is working in their lives and not working in their lives. Men are asked to look at themselves and then they are guided to take hold of both and resolve them so that they can lead lives of integrity, compassion, and honor.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:02AM (-08:00)

Breathing

Wednesday, February 07, 2007
There is a space between each breath out and each breath in where I choose life. It is also the space where change is made. I can choose to breath in change or not. I can choose to breath in the same old way of thinking and being and doing, or not.

Same old, same old. Enough.

How about you. Ready for something new?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:07AM (-08:00)

A Warrior Passes

Friday, February 09, 2007

A brother in the ManKind Project has passed into the Spiritworld.

Michael Threadgill was initiated in December 2002 at Camp Krem (northern California) and sat in the South Sacramento iGroup for a short time and Davis Circle of Men iGroup from its founding until July 2005.
He blessed me with his presence in iGroup and in my life.

Michael Threadgill, Proud Lion
Michael Threadgill, Proud Lion
Michael Threadgill, Proud Lion

I miss you already, my Proud Lion brother.

Aho!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:05AM (-08:00)

Fools

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

"An Iraqi weeps as he stands amidst the rubble at the site where a car bomb exploded in central Baghdad. Devastating bomb attacks ripped through two popular central Baghdad markets, killing at least 79 people in a lethal response to the Iraqi government's latest security plan. 02.13.2007 (AFP/Ahmad al-Rubaye)"

"We're fools to make war
On our brothers in arms."

Dire Straits, Brothers in Arms, 1985

Feeling the deep sadness of this image. When will it end? When will we stop hurting each other and listen and learn and love?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:57AM (-08:00)
Stepping Into the Space

Wednesday, February 14, 2007

This post revolves around an interview with three ManKind Project men on the Kentucky NPR 89.3 WFPL radio show called State of Affairs.

The interview is an 8.8 MB, 50 minute, MP3 file located here.

I found it a truly great information piece that answers a great deal of questions about the New Warrior Training Adventure and ManKind Project. The interviewer talks to the MKP men and takes quite a few listener calls.

Take a hour and listen to the file. I think you'll find that this is a place for you.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:14PM (-08:00)

Welcome Jim Mitchell; New MKP Chairman

Thursday, February 15, 2007

I would like to take this post to welcome the ManKind Project's new Chairman, Jim...
Mitchell.

I welcome his heart and intention to this two-year post. I welcome his generosity and his soul.

Welcome, Jim!

Below, you can read a bit about Jim and a lot about the ManKind Project.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Click here to see the video (if you can't see it above).

Warrior Listening

An Interview with Jim Mitchell

By Reid Bear

Before I started, I couldn’t believe I would actually listen to a dozen hours of Jim Mitchell. Now, I don’t know how I’ve gone so many years without it.

The 7-CD collection I listened to is not only a study in the tools and technologies for I-Group facilitation, but it is the most comprehensive overview of our work in MKP that I’ve ever heard.

While serving as MKPI Integration Groups Chairman, Mitchell utilized his background in leadership, workshop creation, education and training to develop and guide the creation of a new Primary Integration Training (PIT) protocol. It replaces the current 8-week integration manual and provides I-Group attendees with a more consistent experience after their NWTA.

To augment the new PIT protocols and to help PIT facilitators to significantly elevate their skill set, Mitchell created an Integration Groups Leadership Training (IGLT) consisting of two 2-day modules: IGLT1-The Art of Leadership and IGLT2-Protocols Mastery. It's like following the NWTA leadership track, but for I-Group leaders.

After the successful rollout of the new PIT process and the IGLT’s, Mitchell, with the assistance of Phil Hart and Mark Schaeffer, recorded an expanded audio version of the IGLT workshop.

"We recognized what I had created with the IGLT was simply a powerful, very powerful, workshop on authentic personal leadership. PIT facilitation and leadership has to be built on personal leadership."

The audio tapes are available NOW.
“We don’t have stuff like this in MKP … a follow-on piece,” Mitchell continued. “When a man goes through an NWT, LT1 or LT2, it’s so experientially oriented that a man just goes through and that’s it. With the IGLT we wanted people to be able to come back to these lessons again and again.”

I like Mitchell because he’s one of the more animated talkers I know. I get a kick out of dynamic personalities, and he’s one. I imagine indigenous men communicated the way he does, with an authentic enchantment quality, around their fires after a day’s hunting trip. He instructs I-Group leaders how important the ability to “enchant” is for running a process, particularly during a visualization. Mitchell is a master at it.

“I do it from my DNA,” he said. “We use a lot of enchantment and storytelling all over the Project and it serves us to become better at it. It’s an important tool of ours. My underlying intention is to put men into relationship with themselves and each other.”

I staffed with Mitchell about a year ago and he had a specific message for the men on the leader track. He said that true leaders, effective leaders, checked the pulse of the container. He spoke of “Warrior Listening” – a skill that allowed leaders to truly pay attention to what’s happening.

“To be sure he or she is creating the impact they desire, a leader or facilitator has to be constantly reading the room to see what that impact is. It’s my own subjective take as I watch faces, eyes, body language, and comments for whatever is happening: interest, boredom, or inspiration. Or what’s in shadow … what’s not being said. Too many times leaders and facilitators are completely unaware of how they are ‘landing’ with the groups they lead or facilitate. So then they get an outcome or result they didn’t want, or see coming, and they are completely surprised by it.”

Mitchell referred to what we do in MKP as transformational work.

“As leaders and facilitators we want to be sure of the transformational hit, in other words, ‘what’s happening for the participants?’ I have to constantly be reading the man, the group, the room, and asking ‘what’s the impact I’m creating here?’ ‘What’s going on here at the surface level and underneath that?’ So, as a leader/facilitator I can then make adjustments. I can give attention to what is percolating … maybe there’s an energy present that doesn’t serve the group and that needs to be addressed. If I’m constantly aware of impact, I can then stop and pay attention to what’s going on inside – what’s in shadow.”

Throughout my NWTA with him I remember Mitchell frequently reminding men to breathe.

“Breathing is crucial. Deep diaphragmatic breathing helps men to get and stay centered in their bodies and keeps their human brain on line, which is about connection and compassion rather than their lizard brain which is more about flight or flight. It also helps me to slow down and become more aware in that moment of what’s going on around me, and them as well, as what’s going on inside of me and them.”

The PIT protocols have a new lexicon, created by Mitchell, to give us New Warriors a way to talk about our mysterious processes and how we do what we do with them.

“I wanted us to be able to talk about exactly how transformation processes work so we
can pass our craft on to the next man in a good way. Right now we pass our collective wisdom on by saying ‘watch me’ or ‘do it like I do it’ or something similar. We enroll men’s bodies in learning our work. I wanted a way to enroll their brains as well."

The language includes words like “lead in/lead out” of any given process. Or, the “under/over” aspects of a particular protocol. I’m especially fond of his expression “woojee wojjee.”

“I teach tools,” he instructed. “Too often in this work and all transformation work, it gets too wojjewojojew ... too mystical, new agey, if you will. And then we get these beliefs going that only certain men can access those mystical and magical transformational powers ... kind of a ‘some of us has it, some of us don’t.’”

Mitchell said he is sharing his new library of words and ideas to help facilitate a discussion and awareness of the many levels of transformational realities that we play with in this work - levels that are not usually defined or discussed.

“It’s like an iceberg ... like the Trust Most/Trust Least process ... or any of our other transformation processes - what’s happening above the water is more obvious. But there is a huge wealth of stuff happening underneath, inside the man, in his heart, his soul, his energy, his emotions. We tend not to pay attention to it, or acknowledge it, so the process ends up one tenth as big as it could be. The man gets a hit but we could have given him a much greater transformational hit if we had paid attention differently. Effective leaders and facilitations pay attention to what is ‘over’ or overt in the process and what’s ‘under’ or underneath the surface, underneath the obvious.”

Our NWTA is obviously focused on the Warrior archetype. How does the new IGLT help a man become grounded in the other core archetypal energies?

“Primary Integration Training Leaders (PIT Leaders) have to be balanced men. They can’t be just Warriors or Magicians. They have to know all four archetypal energies. They have to be ‘fluent’ in each archetype. In other words, even if they are mostly Warrior or Lover all the time, as a PIT or NWTA leader, a man needs to know how to fluently ‘speak’ the other archetypes with his body and his energy. And he needs to be ‘fluid.’ He needs to be able to easily move in and out of any of the archetypes based on what the situation or process requires in the moment. If there’s not enough sovereign energy, then who will make the decisions? Who will look after long term care and concerns of my kingdom? Who will hold the vision? Who will task the Warrior to do what’s necessary to ensure that the kingdom endures and thrives? So all are necessary and we must be fluent and fluid around all of them.”

Mitchell said he was not out to change the NTWA. He’s more interested in getting PIT facilitators trained to pass on this balance to the Next Man in I-Groups.

“We put on a weekend and give men a powerful peak experience and we will touch on certain things in their lives that will then leave them completely out of balance. I-Group is where they learn to re-balance themselves in a healthier way.”

So, who’s responsible for making sure men have a place to continue their work in I-Groups?

“MKPI has not fully owned the I-Group process over the years. It was left up to the
individual Centers around the Project to put on some kind of follow-up group. That’s not good enough. Or why are we getting so many I-Groups doing so much clearing? They’re not learning how to be good sovereigns, or magicians, or lovers - learning how to value appreciation and nurturing. In the early days of our organization we didn’t see the whole picture. It was good enough to get men to do a weekend and stop being ‘soft’ men. We thought if they just learned to be good Warriors, that was enough. Well it’s not.”

When Mitchell took over as I-Group chair three years ago he said there was a huge side of men that had men “under-addressed.”

“The I-Group process then was not about giving a man some tools that would help him lead his life in a more centered, grounded, and passionate way. We put him through a bunch of processes, taught him our rituals, and left him to figure out the rest. Men today are coming to us looking for real tools to help them in their challenging lives as men.”

Mitchell said he cringes when a man tells him he is constantly doing clearings with people in his life.

"I always ask him ‘why not have a real conversation with them instead?’ Save the ritual structure and form of clearings and accountability for Warrior circles. Have real conversations in plain English or whatever with the people we care about and love. The stiffness and stiltedness of a four quarter process is not necessary every time. So I said as I-Group Chair ‘let’s have more focus on real communications skills so we can have real conversations with each other.’ We now teach a process called Listening to Understand vs. Listening to be Right.”

Your humble correspondent has just stepped up as I-Group chair for the Greater Carolinas Community. So, this stuff has an impact on me.

I was listening to a conference call recently where I-Group representatives were talking about their struggling circles. I asked the question, “How many of you have taken John Miller’s Guts Facilitation Workshop?” (Miller is our local guts guru.) Guess how many. None. What says Mitchell about the importance of men having facilitation skills to keep an I-Group going?

“The art and craft of psychodrama is not easy,” he stated emphatically. “Guts facilitation is not easy. It’s hard to teach that to men in an 8-week process. Dealing with transformational realities requires a skill set. Guts work happens in a transformational space and that space demands our attention. Again, knowing how to read a man is important. We’ve left the task of developing these skills to the individual and the local centers. As an organization we’ve never owned that part of our responsibility to teach these skills to men. I for one am all for a consistent Project-based and Project-approved GUTs workshop available worldwide.”

How far have we evolved from the Us vs Them mentality?

“The organization is me,” Mitchell roared. “We knew we had to help men dig deep into that nasty old funky stuff in us if we were going to change lives. Now we have to have a regular place to practice the shadow work of looking for more of that stuff. We’ve not done a good job of helping men recognize it’s not about bowing down to the wound and hugging it again and again. The only reason to address a shadow piece is to experience those trapped feelings, get to the underneath belief system or myth, and then ask how to
reframe it - and leave it behind. We are much too eager most days to continue to bless men year after year for being trapped in their shame and sadness. We end up encouraging them to go there again and again. I'll say to a man, 'You've been in this group for 2 years complaining about that situation with your wife or whatever. When are you going to do something different?' Those are the same questions I have to rigorously ask myself to continue to grow and learn. We teach men to get all mad and huffy if someone won’t come on time to a meeting, but we'll sit there for years and let him wallow in this bullshit, worshipping his wound, without saying a word. When are we going to help him use Warrior and King energy to find a way to reframe that stuff that debilitates him so it won’t drag him down again and again? Then he can move forward in his life. When I see a man going into wound worshipping too readily, I jump on him right then and there sometimes. ‘Stop that! There you go with that ‘I'm not worthy stuff again.’ ‘How much longer are you going to bring that old tired bone up in here?’ Can you imagine the men hearing this big wild black guy saying ‘Stop it and find a way to do healing around it, and move through it?!”

Dear reader, you really must hear Mitchell in person ... or from his CD's. This stuff is exhilarating. Enchanting.

So Jim, with my past healed and my mission in focus, can I truly create the world I want?

“Bullshit.”

See what I mean?

“We don’t do a good job of understanding our missions. I say that knowing it might be my bullshit, but it's bullshit. It takes a lot of hard work to heal my past, let alone keep my mission in focus. Healing my past so I can be in mission is hard fucking work. What does healing the past really look like? How can we heal the past if we continue to condone wound-worshipping in our I-Groups? Or constant clearing processes that go on for hours - which is just some wound or shadow acting out again? Or, if we won’t challenge a man about his projections, he never gets it is about him and his past. Healing the past is finally getting that I don’t have to ‘project’ all the hurt of my past into my current life. For example, by doing my work around the stored and unresolved ‘stuff’ of my life and practicing Daniel Goleman's EQ skills(Emotional Quotient Intelligence) of Self Awareness and Self Regulation/Management, I haven’t had to do a clearing in I don’t know how long. If I have something up with you, I’ll have a conversation with you. And most of the time, I do the four quarter process internally first and get to what I am projecting here. Then I start talking only about that piece, the projection, and what part of my past it’s about, and my intention to withdraw the projection.”

On my weekend with Mitchell, he gave me personal feedback about how I showed up as “bad dad” frequently throughout the NWTA. He simply suggested I go back to my I-Group and work on it. How simple. Very profound. (I did the work.) What if we all really did our best work in I-Group?

What if I-Groups received as much attention, as much leadership, and had as much influence as our NWTA’s?

“I-Groups are vital. If you had left me to my own devices, to grow at my own pace, I would still be fucked. I wouldn’t have gone there alone. Men love to be challenged. Men respond to work. Men love to work. It’s hardwired in us. If we have to move these rocks,
we’ll take our shirts off and go at it. Men jump on work. It’s the same with I-Group. We need to get men excited about coming in every week and doing the hard work of growing the fuck up. Of learning what it means to be an adult. Of learning how to be more aware and how to self-manage with great efficiency. We need to help them do their deep ‘work’ so they can move their lives forward. Men want a challenge that says, ‘How do I tote that thing farther?’ Getting men to ‘work’ is how we’ll get them to stop wallowing in their old bullshit from now on. That’s how we’re going to get more men in mission.”

Mitchell says that getting men into relationship with each other also helps a man get in right relation with himself.

“It starts with the man knowing about all of the power that is at his fingertips all the time. It’s about showing him all of his archetypal energies and getting him familiar with them … intimately familiar with them. If not, he’ll be out in the world in a skewed way. He can have brilliant ideas, his King will have a vision, but no one to carry them out, no Warrior. Out of balance like that, a man and his life will not be full or complete.”

Mitchell appears to have his archetypal energies fairly regulated. He’s intuitive and he’s academic – and he’s got a wild-ass way of mixing the two together.

“Men say they see in me that I’m a pretty good ‘midbrain person’ (actually midway between the brain and the heart and soul). I have a well-developed intellect that can do the cognitive things really well and I can also bring all my passion and emotions fully on board in a moment’s notice. I wasn’t always like that.”

I asked Mitchell about the source of his passion.

“I believe in certain things passionately,” he said. “I’m willing to stand in them and for them, especially around this men’s work. I look at my own life and work and how much I’ve been blessed the last 15 years, how much I’ve gained sitting in containers with men. Magical things have happened all around me with men as they seek to transform themselves. I’m not a religious man, but each time I sit in a circle, I reaffirm a very powerful belief in me that there is something bigger than all of us. I like it when that something joins us in the circle and brings wonder, growth and learning to heal ourselves.”

Mitchell’s been doing his healing work for 15 years.

“I forget how unique my life is and how very few people around the world have had the opportunity to do, or participate in, or witness, this powerful kind of transformational work.”

Mitchell has done some 70 NWTA’s, the Underground Railroad Odyssey, worked with men in Folsom Prison, and in the Boys to Men program.

“It’s hard to witness all this work and not be truly inspired and in awe of what men can do to heal themselves, heal that damage that unhealthy adults have created in them. I stand in my desire to help in what I judge is a worthy cause.”

Mitchell said one of the messages he takes into the IGLT trainings is that for a man to truly do his work, he must break the internal shackles that imprison him.
"I have to discover my gold. As I break those shackles again and again, I feel that inspiration, I feel a bit more of that golden part each time. I feel the desire to explore myself at deeper and deeper levels. I like looking back on my life and knowing that I’m different now than I was two years ago and that two years from now I’ll be even more different around certain things that I’m working on today."

For the first 35 years of his life, Mitchell said he never believed he could actually change.

"I thought the noise, the chaos, the confusions and the low-grade depressions would slowly grind me down until I died. Let me tell you something ... it’s a wondrous thing to me that today I know I can break the shackles. And that all around me everyday are thousands of people who have never had a chance of sitting in a magical, transformational circle. I can introduce them to our circles and circles like ours...and help them to see ... to believe that there is something in them that can connect them powerfully to themselves and to others. That is the wonder of it all." - RB

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I purchased the Audio course and am listening to it. It has already given me material to take to my I-Group and has inspired me more to get involved in assisting PITs.

I recommend it! If you want to buy a copy but you don't know how and you're an initiated brother, contact me and I'll send you a link.

Shooting at Men's Work
Tuesday, February 20, 2007

"The media has tried to paint things differently. The most powerful enemies of men's openness are the corporate men. Three or four years ago there were hundreds of posters
in New York one spring saying, "You don't need to beat a drum or hug a tree to be a
man." At the bottom: "Dewar's Whiskey." The corporate world dares to say to young men,
knowing how much young men want to be men, that the only requirement for manhood is
to become an alcoholic. That's disgusting. It's a tiny indication of the ammunition aimed at
men who try to learn to talk or to feel."

Robert Bly, from An Interview with Robert Bly; Part 8; Men's Work

I cringe at this example of how corporate America would have us believe men should be.
Well, men should surely all be gym-buffed, hairless-bodied, beardless, desert island
surviving, drinking, screaming fools with no souls. Harsh? I don't think so.

Or maybe we should chart our own course and tell the men who would shoot us down for
it to get to the New Warrior Training Adventure weekend and find for themselves what it
is they are trying to annihilate; since it isn't us.

Men are all things in all ways, shapes, sizes, and ideas. We are all men to start with,
even the corporate men; that much I am sure of.

Men are waiting....

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:58PM (-08:00)

One and Many

Thursday, February 22, 2007

"Many faces, one heartbeat
They come together and join their hands
One voice, many nations
At the gathering they understand"
You make a difference  
With everything you do  
Everything is sacred  
Your faith will guide you through"

From Many Faces, Thayne Hake, 2000

Thayne is a wonderful musical artist from the Northern California coastal area. He sings of his native culture and how it is for him in this time and space.

I think what Thayne speaks of here is the connection we all have to each other. If I have faith that we are all sacred and related, then I will remember my place and my responsibility in it; my integrity in it.

In the ManKind Project, I see men working to find their connection to this time and space. For whatever reason, they and I, have need to reconnect with what is and isn’t in the world.

It is often said in the ManKind Project that we look at what does and doesn’t work in our lives. That, for me, is another way of saying, look at what your connection is to the world around you; how are you living in it; how are you hurting or healing it?

I want more men to look at this connection. The world would be a better place for it. Come to the New Warrior Training Adventure and see what it looks like to take a hard look at your life.

I’m out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:37AM (-08:00)

This is Why

Friday, February 23, 2007
Do you think that boy is learning something about the world? Kinda speaks for itself, doesn't it?

This is why little boys grow up to think fighting is a way to solve an issue. This is why boys get a bad wrap that they are always fighting. This is why men need to be aware of what they are teaching the boys in our world.

I feel the sadness of having been taught that fighting was the way to solve issues; that I got a bad wrap for always fighting; that the men in my world made sure that the cameraman got the shot.

This is one reason men attend the New Warrior Training Adventure; to get clear about what is real and what needs to change.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:16AM (-08:00)

Four Quick NWTA Questions -- 1; Reid Baer

Monday, March 05, 2007

Number 1 in a series of New Warrior Training Adventure interviews of men in the ManKind Project.

I am posting these interviews to show how men experience the New Warrior Training Adventure.

Thank you, Reid!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

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Four Quick NWTA Questions

When and where was your NWTA?

February 1995, Sunrise Ranch in San Diego, CA

What motivated you to attend the NWTA?

My older brother recommended it. I did it for him. Then somewhere during my I-Group PIT cycle I remember coming to an “ah ha” where I knew I needed to make a commitment – for myself – to do my own personal work for the rest of my life.

If a man asked you why he should attend, what would you tell him?

First, I would ask him what is working in his life and what is not working. Then I would tell him that there’s a place where he and other men share whatever is going on in their life. It’s an accountability group, and a support group. I’d tell him I’ve been involved with the organization for a dozen years, and I’ve never found a better place where I can find men to trust who will help me with my deepest personal work.

What keeps you in the ManKind Project?

I’ve stayed because of the skills I continue to develop … I keep learning everyday by being an initiated man. Also, I like this network that introduces me to strange and wonderful men – inside and outside the Project. I get to have a local community, and an international one. Finally, I get to bring my writing gifts to this Project, and be blessed to help facilitate the talents of others. I get to live my mission in The ManKind Project.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:21PM (-08:00)

Wild Men

Thursday, March 08, 2007

Good to hear your voice,
in the wind,
bellowing into the hollow woods, ---- calling me home....
To be there!!! longing for the
dark.........................................CAVE

that lives inside this deep and beautiful wild male,
holding the ancient spinning origin of masculinity

Purchased on the fulcrum of groin.......................Moving motion
into heart and mind, breath and lung, word and paradox, courage and sadness

the loss of all i know-----------------
every moment ....... witnessing birth and death in the changing of light
......

Dripping, Luscious and liberating ---- I come out seeking more mysterious truth

between the light and dark ..... 

on this outrageous human journey .......

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

This post just touched me with its power and grace.

Jump in!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:09AM (-08:00)

Mentoring Boys into Men

Friday, March 09, 2007
"As I point out in the Man-Making book, I'm of the opinion that until a man steps into the ancient role of mentor for a boy or boys, there is a hole in his mature masculinity. Something critical in him goes undeveloped. A man can pretend his life needs to be all about him, wearing a tie or serious expression, but until he accepts his responsibility to guide the next generation of boys into manhood, he's not fully "grown up." He's living in the land of "neverty."

The premise of the book, The Peter Pan Syndrome, by Dan Kiley is the same. Too many men are inhabiting a place where, consciously or not, they are refusing the obligations of manhood.

Showing up for boys is one of the ways men can begin to self-initiate themselves into a full and responsible manhood. Until they do, the men will remain stuck in "neverty," that place between boyhood and manhood. Both they and the boys who need them will remain lost on their mutual journey to manhood."

Earl Hipp; from Man-Making; Men Helping Boys on their Journey to Manhood

Leading boys into manhood is akin to leading men into manhood. It is absolutely mandated in our genetic makeup that a boy steps out of being a boy and into being men. Those boys and boy-men who were not initiated and mentored into manhood are left to wonder and flounder in an ever more complicated world filled with pitfalls.

Is it time for you to step into your manhood? The time is now.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:58AM (-08:00)

Manliness

Sunday, March 11, 2007

Today, I am posting a poem by a ManKind Project man from the northwest. I like his words so I pass them to you.

I'm out.
Manliness

By Steve Norcross; from Aho!

I used to think that

Manliness

Had to do with being mean

I used to think that

Manliness

Had to do with never being weak

Or

Sad

Or

Grieving

Or

In need.

I have a long way to go in being

Manly.

I still sometimes try to get my way by being

Special

Or by manipulating others by playing

Helpless

But I am learning, a little every day

That a man

Can be

Manly
By being honest, and clear
And knowing what he wants and needs
And
Courageously asking for that
And supporting other men
In what they want and need.
The world is desperate for
Manly
Men.
Let's, you and I,
Become
Just that.
Men
Who are becoming
manly

Flip Side

Tuesday, March 13, 2007
From The Bush Diaries, I repost this piece because the site is being abandoned and this post is too good to let disappear.

The author speaks of an elder gathering of men from the ManKind Project. His presentation is that of a letter to U.S. President Bush; the content is beautiful testimony to the lushness of men in the ManKind Project.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

The Flip Side

I would not wish to leave you thinking, Bush, that everything up there in Oregon, at our gathering, was doom and gloom. Far from it. The predominant feeling there was joy. What I was speaking about yesterday was only the head part, the intellectual content. It was more than balanced by the heart and soul parts, soaring like the eagle by day and the owl by night above the beautiful alpine valley where we met.

Above all else, I was awed by the quality of these fifty men, and their generous capacity to love and serve. Where else but in a gathering of men of the ManKind Project could I expect to be greeted, a stranger to all but a handful of them, with immediate, heartfelt acceptance and extraordinary warmth? To feel at home at the moment of my arrival? Where else could I feel so free to return that feeling without the least restraint or reservation? These fifty men, each one of them fifty years in age or more, going up to the mid-seventies, represented together more than three thousand years of lived experience. And each one had experienced at least the beautiful, intense, and archetypal drama of the Project’s initial training weekend.

Let me tell you, Bush, about the quality of just a few of these men—though without the need to name their names. In some cases—do you know this feeling, Bush?--I dare to know something of their solid hearts and souls without knowing the first thing about the detail of their lives. I think of the man who owned the property on which we met, who devotes his life to the stewardship of this spectacular spot on the Earth’s surface, to the conservation of its natural beauty and the wildlife with which it abounds, and to opening it up for the use of gatherings like ours where men and women explore their relationship to each other and the world.

I think of the man who served his country as a fighter pilot, who brought with him the experience of the true warrior, hardened by the experience of action, but armed within by the breadth of his own understanding and compassion. I think of the man who served his country as a sniper in the early days of the conflict in Vietnam, who brought his anger and his sense of shame for the lives he had taken on the orders of those who commanded him, along with his pride and his contrition.

I think of the man who has devoted his intellectual life to scientific inquiry, and who brought with him the results of his research into the effects of man’s activities on the planet. Of the healer. Of the two men who have brought their knowledge and skills to the service of philanthropy. Of the man who devotes his life to the study of eldership, and the need, in our society, for a healthy understanding of the values of wisdom, experience, ritual, and compassion that come with the accumulation of years. Of the man whose
special insight saw the need, twenty years ago, for a new understanding of masculinity and the role of men in the world today, and who—along with two other men of vision—pioneered the work that led to the ManKind Project, now an international organization some thirty-five thousand strong.

And of so many others, each with his own gift. The gathering was enriched by the grief of a few who brought the pain of recent losses in their lives, and who were there in part as the reminders of the shared knowledge that, as elders, we are each preparing for our own deaths even as we participate to the full in the richness of life. This was the deep and lasting bass line of the weekend’s music, the source—along with the majesty of the natural environment--of the sense of spiritual depth that pervaded it.

I believe that it is the work of men such as these, Bush, that can literally save the world. I wrote yesterday about the bleak prospects for a world in which acquisitiveness and greed predominate, a world governed by men with neither consciousness nor conscience, men all too ready to exploit the earth’s limited resources for their personal gain. I write today about the flip side of that coin, about men of dignity and wisdom, nobility and compassion who are ready to devote their energies to restoration and renewal, to the benefit of all the living beings with whom they share this planet and its natural resources.

And let’s not forget the element of joy and laughter. It was pervasive, Bush. We were up there somewhere in the treetops with the sheer joy of being there, beyond the foolishness of youth but still able to participate in it, at times possessed of the gamboling spirits of the little kid still alive in each of us.

What a blessing such men are to this country, Bush! I only wish I could see you surround yourself with them as your advisors. Their hearts and minds, both, would serve you well. To me, these elders represent the best hope for our future. I can embrace that lovely irony, Bush. Can you?

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:50AM (-07:00)

Time to Revel

Wednesday, March 14, 2007

Time to revel in the joy of this work!

Last week, a man e-mailed me that he had read this blog and was signed up to attend a New Warrior Training Adventure this last weekend.
I wished him well and wondered what the world would be like for him on Monday. I hoped to hear back from him. Monday came and went and I decided to let it roll. He would contact me if he felt the need.

He got back to me yesterday and these are his words reprinted here with permission:

Old-faithful Wolf-
I am back from the weekend.
I am a changed man.
As a man among men I am forgiveness.
It is such an incredible gift I have received.
A profound sense of peace and power I feel.
I am no longer alone and in pain.
-Michael (Desert Snake)

Ahhhhh, the joy of hearing a man get what I got from the New Warrior Training Adventure; the joy of knowing another man has stepped into change and into the present; the joy of changing me, men, and the world--one blog post at a time.

Jump in, my brothers. The time is now.

I’m out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:45PM (-07:00)

Comments

- Anonymous  April 03, 2007

God I love hearing stories like this. It still amazes me how universal the process is- it works for most everyone, everywhere. This man’s email brought tears to my eyes.

-Matt
Crow
Camp Tanadoona, MN Nov. 2000

Everything Else in an Adjective

Friday, March 16, 2007
This reprinted article talks about the connection that Jewish men have with the New Warrior Training Adventure.

The NWTA is for every man. Look, here's how I see it. When you say Jewish man or Catholic man or Business man, the thing that those all have in common is men. We are all men to start with. That's our common ground. I come from there to understand our other differences and diversities.

We are men, first; everything else in an adjective.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

From Forward; The Jewish Daily

In the Company of Men ManKind's 'New Warriors' Embrace Nature, Each Other, 'Sacred Masculinity'

By Nathaniel Popper | Fri. Jan 30, 2004

By the hearth of a crackling fireplace at the Deer Park Church Camp in rural Pennsylvania, Josh Shaneson was welcomed into a brotherhood of men, for the second time.

Shaneson, 19, had been inducted into manhood once before, as his yarmulke and ritual fringes indicated. But unlike his bar mitzvah, at this initiation he had plenty of company.

The 20 or so men flanking Shaneson — some with baseball caps and gold-cross necklaces, others with yarmulkes — had just emerged from a three-day New Warrior Training Adventure, a ritualistic weekend that aims to open up men to the “sacred masculine.”

Following a round of drumming and a blessing from one of the group’s “elders” at the “homecoming” ceremony, the men discussed the initiation experience while passing around a feathered staff. Between speakers, the men would simultaneously emit a guttural “Ogh!”

Since 1987, some 20,000 men from all religious backgrounds have gone through the New Warrior Training at 27 sites around the world. Though the organizers at The ManKind Project — the nonprofit organization that organizes the weekends — do not collect information on religion, past participants and leaders say they have been surprised by the number of Jewish men, like Shaneson, who have found their way to the training. The Deer Park weekend, with six Jewish participants, was not atypical; in fact, there often are more Jewish participants.

The apparent appeal of the training for Jewish men in particular, from all levels of observance, shines light on the complicated relationship so many Jewish men have with their masculinity.

“The ideal of the Jewish man is more the scholar than the athlete,” said Harry Brod, an
associate professor at the University of Northern Iowa, where he specializes in men's studies, and editor of the anthology "A Mensch Among Men: Explorations in Jewish Masculinity."

"Because standards of Jewish masculinity are different than in the dominant culture, there are already questions about masculinity in the minds of Jewish men," Brod said, "and the tendency toward sensitivity in Jewish men makes it okay to explore those questions."

Judging from attendance at New Warrior Training sessions, many of the men caught in this bind are observant Jews. On Shaneson's weekend, all six of the Jewish men were Orthodox. The weekends have grown so popular with Orthodox men that this winter, for the first time ever, a Washington-area training was rescheduled to begin after sundown on Saturday so that five Lubavitcher chasidim could take part.

But many of the Jewish men who came forward to talk about their Warrior Training experiences at the Pennsylvania homecoming had not been to a synagogue in years. Stan Sherman, one such man, who is the enrollment director of the national organization, said that on his first training weekend, in 1997, he turned to a friend and remarked on the incredible number of fellow secular Jews who independently had found the training.

"Yeah, think how much money we’re saving on therapy," his friend shot back.

The training does demand a bit more than the typical session on an analyst’s couch. While the exact activities are kept secret from nonparticipants, the leaders talk about a ritual hunt (though they are quick to add that no animal is actually killed) and intense emotional confrontations between the initiates and the leaders. Secrecy is an integral part of the weekends, about which information is spread solely by word-of-mouth.

The physical challenge promised by the weekend would naturally be attractive for many Jewish men, says Michael Kimmel, a sociology professor who researches masculinity at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

"Growing up in my own Jewish neighborhood in Brooklyn," said Kimmel, editor of "The Politics of Manhood," "there was a lot of shame to being a Jewish man…. I think this weekend, like a lot of contemporary Jewish politics, comes out of a similar impulse to never let anyone push us around again."

But the more emotionally in-touch Jewish man of lore does not get left behind in the training. Like a good bagel, the weekends promise that elusive combination of crunchy and chewy.

"It’s not like you go out and eat raw deer," said Andrew Epstein, 54, a graphic designer from Chicago who went to his first New Warrior Training in 2003. "You go into the woods and process," Epstein said, "and in the process I, for one, met a network of men who I’ve been able to rely on."

The ManKind Project is one group in the so-called “mythopoetic men’s movement,” which sprang up during the 1980s with inspiration from the writings of Robert Bly, author of the bestseller “Iron John.” The movement, mocked by its critics for its appropriation of Native American rituals and reliance on New Age self-help models, aims to get men in touch
with some sense of “primitive masculinity” by creating trusting relationships between small groups of men.

At the Deer Park graduation, all of the initiates talked about the love they felt for their new “brothers.” At the back of the room, men locked in silent, 30-second bear hugs.

The tribal resonances of such communal bonding are a neat fit for members of the Jewish tribe. Yet the tribal language used during the weekends takes its cue from Native American spiritual rituals, some of which create uncomfortable friction with Jewish tradition.

Group leaders strive to incorporate these rituals into an nonreligious context; at the Deer Park Church Camp, the ManKind Project banner had been draped to obscure a tiled replica of ‘The Last Supper.’

But many Jewish men said that some of the spiritual elements made them nervous, at least initially.

Rabbi Jeffrey Greenberg, 26, who helped lead the training session for Orthodox men near Washington, said that during that weekend he had supervised the kitchen for kosher restrictions and helped provide substitutes for the rituals that had made him uncomfortable during his own training.

Greenberg, a teacher at a Jewish day school in New York, said that many of the rituals were easily infused with a Jewish spirit. The ceremonial sweat lodge, for instance, had an easy precedent in the old-fashioned shvitz.

Such substitutions, though, are not usually made, and many Jewish men came to the weekend looking for a spirituality they felt was lacking in their Jewish experiences, most of all in their first initiation into manhood.

“My bar mitzvah was just a big party,” said Hal Klegman, a 56-year-old executive recruiter from Chicago who completed his first training in 1987. “Spirituality was not what my parents were looking for in a synagogue. Spirituality was the lacking component.”

For Shaneson — a regular Hillel attendee at the University of Pennsylvania, where he is a student — the weekend brought him to see a more intricate set of problems in his own Jewish education.

“We always read what we should be, and we don’t focus on what we are, and how to appreciate that, as the New Warrior Training teaches,” Shaneson said. “The ideal of Judaism can be limiting and restricting.”

For Shaneson, and many other Jewish participants, the weekend caused a re-evaluation of their Jewish connections. In the end, though, most of them talked about feeling closer to Judaism.

Kourosh Babaian, a 25-year-old clothing salesman from New York, said the Deer Park training weekend helped him to “feel more comfortable as a Jew doing everything” and “to experience my religion in a spiritual way.”

The pathways through which this happens have been criticized by a number of feminists,
who see the entire mythopoetic men’s movement as reestablishing the old gender hierarchies, a criticism Brod expanded upon.

“The idea that there is some essential manhood that lies in separation from women is a dangerous idea,” Brod said. “Where comes this idea that men can only learn nurturing and emotional support from other men?”

But most of the wives and mothers at the homecoming ceremony seemed thrilled with their new, improved husbands and sons. And the leaders were full of talk about all the old, artificial categories that are broken down by the experience.

“It allowed a bonding opportunity with other men and with the outside world that might not have been possible otherwise,” said Greenberg of the Lubavitcher men who went through the weekend. “They put aside those religious labels, and other externalities, and allowed their core person to come out.”

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:20AM (-07:00)

**Steps to My Present**

**Tuesday, March 20, 2007**

One of the lessons I have learned while being involved in the ManKind Project is that my past is the steps to my present.

When I was a young boy, I wanted more than anything to win the Formula One World Driving Championship. I watched every race I could find; I dreamed; I finally strapped myself into a race car cockpit when I was 19; almost immediately discovering that that I was years too late getting started to ever consider a chance at the big time.

I was good. I could lap quickly and had talent. What I lacked was support.

The reason I am telling you this is that for years I beat myself up as if somehow I was to blame. In my world now, I realize there was no one to blame. Also, I have come to embrace that time for the time it was. It was exciting and I learned a great deal; many of the lessons I apply to this day.

My dream has come and gone. Recently, I tried a 100cc kart at a local track. I loved it. I felt some pain over the past, but by staying in the present I was able to feel the joy and the speed and the excitement again.
Want to change your perspective on the world? Take the training.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:15AM (-07:00)

So, What Did You Do

Thursday, March 22, 2007

It's not easy telling you what the New Warrior Training Adventure is like. Of course the training is different for every man; but it goes beyond that. If you are willing it is life changing.

Try it.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

From "So, What Did You Do?" by Mark McElroy

I continue to process the events of the New Warrior weekend, and to determine their impact on me.

Today -- my first day back at work -- many people want to know about the experience. "What did you do? Did you run naked through the woods? Did you dance around a fire? Did you wear war paint? Did you fall backwards into people's arms to learn about trust?"

Other friends want to know what my "Indian name" is, or whether I brought them back a handmade wallet or a pair of moccasins.

Answering their questions without revealing confidential details of the weekend poses a challenge. Inspired by a comment made by one of the men I met this weekend, I finally say, "Going on the weekend is a lot like being on Survivor. You face physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional challenges, and you work as both an individual and a member of a team. But instead of bringing home a million bucks, the prize is learning something important about yourself."
The answer works. People nod. They picture me on a desert island, unshaven and sunburned, eating worms and winning races to achieve self-actualization.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:15AM (-07:00)

Passion

Tuesday, March 27, 2007

"It makes you think twice about what you are doing and why? You don't do it for the money, because there is no money that can buy your life; there's no money that can buy you a pair of legs. Do you do it to be famous? Well, you can go to Hollywood to be famous. You don't have to risk your life at 250 mph to be famous. Do you want to be brave? If you want to be brave you go to the army. People will recognize you as a lot braver there. Then you realize you do it because you have passion for it. That was the conclusion that I came to, because I really love what I do."

Tony Kanaan, Indy Racing League driver, June 2002, RACER Magazine

In the ManKind Project, men are encouraged to live their passion; that may be a father or a race car driver or a fire fighter or a poet. Whatever it is, men often find the support and courage to make these life changes while attending the New Warrior Training Adventure or sitting in their iGroup after the NWTA.

I became a better father and drew up the courage to get back behind the wheel of a racing kart. I screwed up the courage to be me and stand in who I am when things get tough in my world. I became a better me, which no one else can be.

Follow your passion, brother. If that means taking the NWTA, than so be it. If not, find it somehow. The world needs you to be passionate about being you.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Today, I am posting a fairly new article regarding the ManKind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure in Quebec, Canada.

Enjoy!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Making a Better Man

By Anthony Bonaparte, The Suburban, June 2006

The small group is barely five minutes into a three-hour meeting when in walks Jean-Louis. The middle-aged man smiles and casually sits in one of the chairs that form the circle. John, one of the group’s leaders, leans forward and asks, “So what did you do to prevent you from getting here on time?”

Jean-Louis faces a barrage of pointed questions until he finally admits he was delayed watching 20 extra minutes of a Seinfeld re-run. Those minutes of stolen time make him feel like he was doing something illicit and somehow, it gives him a feeling of control.

“Do you do this when you're meeting with your son?” asks John.

There are upwards of 30,000 men worldwide who are members of the Mankind Project (MKP), a progressive educational and training organization for men, with 38 interdependent centres located around the world. The aim of the organization is to help men release their emotions by learning how to better identify and communicate their
feelings. The group also strives to turn men into good role models, so they can become better fathers. By examining their restrained relationships with their own dads, group members work on not repeating the patterns with their sons.

Meetings like the one described above take place every second Tuesday evening at the Westmount YMCA where as many as 30 men gather regularly to challenge themselves and each other to take personal responsibility for their actions and their relationships.

“We’re really about creating a safe place for men to dump some stuff — here — so he doesn’t bring it back home,” says David Cordes, a 43-year-old father of three, and member of MKP.

Cordes, who has been married for 15 years, said before he joined MKP several years ago, he was always good at “being the party guy,” but when alone, felt sad and isolated. He learned about the group from a brochure. Eventually, he went on the training adventure weekend, an intense experience designed to help each man get in touch with his inner truth. Cordes says he came back in an altered state. The experience was like blowing the lid off a volcano.

“My wife said [when I got back] I was just thinking and taking deep breaths,” he says.

Cordes says he grew up with a lot of pent-up anger and hated his father for nearly 20 years. He credits the MKP for giving him the tools to reconcile with his father, and for him to become a better father.

The meetings, or circles, in Westmount are either open, or closed. The open circles are free of charge and welcomes newcomers who may eventually go on to enroll in MKP’s New Warrior Training Adventure. Men become full members of the MKP only after they have attended a New Warrior Training Adventure weekend.

“Usually, men who do the warrior weekend are part of these closed circles, in which they do work that sometimes can get quite intense,” says Jean-Louis. “This is an open circle in which people are invited just to come and see.”

But John Closs says, “I’m here because I really believe men need a circle.” In other cultures, men have been sitting in circles for ages and Closs believes it’s for good reasons — talking, sharing and communicating.

Closs is a 55-year-old computer technician with the LBPSB and has been attending regular meetings since 1997 when a business acquaintance introduced him to the MKP. That year, he attended Montreal’s first Warrior Weekend, held at the Old Brewery Mission’s Camp Chapleau in the Laurentians.

Before going on the trip, Closs spoke to his wife and she was very supportive. He shares with her what he has gained from the circles, but never reveals what he may have seen or heard from others. “My wife knows what I do,” says the father of two adult children.

Confidentiality plays a big part in circles. “What I see here and hear here stays here,” says Cordes. “It’s about creating a safe container for men to share and take a look at things that they may not be comfortable to do outside of this place, or here, without that commitment from the group.”
“There’s a belief that every decision and choice I make is not isolated to one situation, that patterns exist inside of me that show up in a whole bunch of different areas. So the accountability piece is one way for a man to peel back a layer of the onion and take a bigger look at his life,” says Cordes.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:21AM (-07:00)

Again

Thursday, April 19, 2007

I say the following with sadness in my voice; anger; tears welling in my heart and eyes; I say the words slowly, quietly, and drawn out:

So here we are again; another young man goes berserk and shoots up whatever he can.

Again
Again
Again
Again

When will we learn that teaching our children to belittle, hate, beat up, pick on, and abuse in any way another person is not acceptable. Of course we will have to stop showing them that it is alright to do it when we are adults, won’t we?

I do not see blame here; only another chance to correct what can be corrected.

It is time to reconsider teaching our children that it is alright to make up reasons to go to war; that it is alright to swear at someone for cutting us off in traffic; that it is alright to laugh at another’s misfortune; that we need guns to solve problems; that we need to fear another because they are different; that most everything is made into a competition; that we need to create media that teaches fear, anger, hate, violence, self doubt, and horror.

It is time to stand up for being fair and understanding; for walking in another’s shoes; for listening to the words unspoken; to hear the pain of another and not shy away.

The time is now.

Make the change now, before it is too late.

I’m out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:09PM (-07:00)
Comments

- Lisa  April 28, 2007

Hello,
I found your post quite by accident, and I'm glad I did. You inspired a post on my blog, a revisit to an old rant of mine that found new voice again.

With regard to VA Tech and Columbine, etc., all of us mothers and fathers have a vital responsibility for acknowledging feelings starting when our sons are wee babes.

Rather than repost here, here's the link to my post. Please feel free to delete this comment if the invitation is unwelcome.


MKP in Florida

Tuesday, April 24, 2007

In the ManKind Project, there are over 120 New Warrior Training Adventures in 2007. This is one of them, in Florida (USA).

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Third Annual New Warrior Training Adventure To Be Held In March at Orange Springs Retreat

From Fast Pitch Press

It's time for men to apply to participate in the New Warrior Training Adventure to be held
Men from all walks of life are invited to attend an experiential training weekend to be held in March here in Florida.

The New Warrior Training Adventure, sponsored by the ManKind Project of Florida, will be held Friday, Mar. 2 through Friday, Mar. 4, 2007 at the Orange Springs Retreat in western Putnam County. Cost for the weekend is $650; an initial deposit of $150 is required to register for the weekend.

"The New Warrior Training Adventure is a great way for men to look inside at what's working and what could be working better in their lives," said Dave Perez, community director of the ManKind Project of Florida. "If there are men out there who are searching for a new way to live life, a means of improving relationships with the people they love, and a whole new perspective on leadership, this training will challenge men to look inside at the things that may be holding them back from excellence."

The NWTA is offered regularly across the U.S. and in other countries, including Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany and South Africa. Since its inception in 1984 in Milwaukee, more than 35,000 men around the world have experienced the NWTA, a training designed as a modern equivalent of the initiation rites that traditional societies use to mark the transition into manhood.

The ManKind Project is a supportive network that encourages leadership, staying power, self-knowledge, comradeship, integrity, connection to feeling, and strong ties to family and community. Almost every weekend brings another training somewhere in the world, led by a small team of highly experienced men and a volunteer staff of local men.

NWTA graduates who want to continue the personal work that they began on the weekend are invited to join small Integration Groups, which meet weekly or biweekly. Some "I-Groups" have lasted for ten or twelve years or longer.

Many MKP members have gone beyond their personal work with service projects in their communities, therefore, bringing to life the Project’s slogan of “changing the world one man at a time.” Some of these service projects the ones in prisons, for example are very dramatic; projects that focus on youth groups or soup kitchens tend to be quieter, but no less significant.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:38AM (-07:00)

**Reuters News and Their Choices**

**Thursday, May 03, 2007**
When I went through my New Warrior Training Adventure, back in October 1999, my life changed dramatically. One of the changes was that I learned to fearlessly speak my piece when it was time to. This is one of those times. I don't very often comment on the outside world (mostly I keep it about me), but today I need to step up for something that just makes no sense to me.

An article was posted today on Reuters.com about a South African man who was kidnapped at gunpoint, forced to take the perpetrators to his home, was stripped of his clothes and super-glued to the seat of an exercise bicycle (along with his hands, feet, and mouth!) while his house was robbed. The man remained on the bike for three hours until help came!

Now, this saddens me to no end. Why do men torture and terrorize each other like this; to anyone?

What really got me though is the incredible insensitivity and shamelessness of Reuters' choice to use a photo to accompany the news piece that shows dozens of naked bicyclists cycling in Madrid.

Are you kidding me here? Can Reuters step any further into the abyss of poor choices. Reuters makes the case for truly lacking any clear vision of compassion and respectful journalism being the norm these days. Somewhere at Reuters a person sat and thought that that picture was the right one to go with this painful story.

I have tried to find a way to contact Reuters, but that is proving difficult. I will keep trying. I found the form to send my comment.

In the meantime, what do you say you step up when you need to.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:50AM (-07:00)

The Skeptic Returns

Tuesday, May 08, 2007
It is with great joy and honor that I publish this piece, today.

A man contacted me yesterday using the new meebo chat feature to tell me he has returned from his New Warrior Training Adventure.

He tells me of his gratitude for my blog and how his world has changed. So, I ask him if he would share this with you. He says yes and here it is.

Another man steps into the world of change and possibility. Are you the next man?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

By Keef Roberts; King Lion; May 2007; Camp Monroe, Greater Carolinas Center

I'm harsh and cold by nature. Very cat-like. And I'm salty (you, gentle reader, have been politely warned). I will not take garbage from anyone, unless I deserve it, and they can prove that I deserve it. I'm the one that happily risks home and security for a principle, rightly or wrongly. You mean I get the short end of the stick with the job and the compensation? Right. I'm out. Find another joker, I'm not your man, you don't deserve my sweat, you can't pay me enough to put up with that crap.

Please do not confuse this, gentle reader, with "my way or the highway." I actually really dislike people like that -- and that *is* a righteous hatred. I am rigid, but I will happily change my view if you can account for it. Otherwise, if you're not accountable, get the hell out of my face. And I have found our society never to be accountable.

Of course it comes as no surprise with that attitude that I'm perhaps the ultimate skeptic. I was invited to join MKP, so I read up on them, devouring any information that I could find, because, as with many groups, there is controversy outside of it, that I'm sure people considering the journey are aware of, if they're not thinking the same things themselves on their own. I'd read them all and regarded all information with the utmost suspicion, which I held as a virtue. I did not even sign up for the training until the very last moment possible, out of sheer suspicion.

Speaking in grand, sweeping generalizations, a dangerous game if there ever was one, I distrust all media and all marketing as biased, with an underlying "agenda" for lack of a
better word. I truly believe down to my toenails that it is a rare thing (if not impossible) that any information regarding any product or organization is 100% accurate -- simply factual, without a capitalist aim -- due to the connotations of the language required to disseminate the information. I am hard, snobby, and jaded in the extreme. Politically I might be far to the left of Noam Chomsky! I grow so frustrated at what I see as a lying, thieving, insane culture that I would drop out of it without blinking, if I thought it were possible. But the purest soul in that sense that I can think of is none other than Ted Kaczynski -- the Unabomber. I believe his saga is a perfect example of what happens when one attempts to drop out of society altogether and not to accept the paradox it is in at least some form or fashion. The isolation gets worse, and then one gets into some really bad shit.

Yet there's a hunger to make things better in my life, and in the lives of others who live in sync with me. My ideal world might not be yours, but there is room for a win-win situation (I hate to use the word compromise, because it implies the only solution is for opposing sides to both lose something, which often can be avoided). It's simply a given that we're going to fight a little bit about making it happen.

As I read and attempted to make a decision I thought, well, there's me, the pro men's group claptrap, and the anti men's group claptrap. Two of those are deceptive, if not three. I definitely qualify -- that's a given as well -- I'm ignorant, so any snap judgment I make is going to be biased. So which one is closest to truthful? My decision to attend was largely based on sheer distrust of both sides, thinking, well, I will have to experience it to make an intelligent decision whether this will work for me ultimately.

Is the verdict still out? Does my harsh generalization apply to MKP? We're off to an unbelievable start and I'm still drunk with joy that I attended, but I will have to wait through several months of post initiation work before I can answer that question with ultimate honesty, completely unhampered by personal desire or sentiment -- and I may never get there. I know which way I want it to go but I'm wise enough not to steer it. But I welcome the work involved in finding out the answer, and from the looks of things I already know it today. You'll note, by the way, that there are no plans to stop the journey.

So what got me to attend, holding such a pessimistic, despairing view of society, and not being likely to discard it? There were two basic ideas that got me to say yes.

First, I realize that one cannot receive without giving. If you do not push the boulder, it will not roll down the hill, as it were. If you do nothing, nothing will happen. Void begets void, but action begets reaction.

Second, Tom Waits once wrote about traveling that the pleasure was in the chase and not the apprehension. Or more succinctly, when on a journey, treasure that you're building your memory bank -- don't waste valuable energy moaning that they don't make the tea properly, or the food is too spicy or bland for your taste. Keep it interesting by keeping it changing -- relax and enjoy the ride.

Having what I needed to say yes, I gave it a fair chance. So I cheerfully stepped into the unknown, knowing that I would be challenged and it would not always be comfortable. It is healthy to do so with the bullshit detector firmly in place. It helps me to hone it even better than it is now, and to seek truth wherever I may find it.

I jumped in, with both feet, to find unbelievable joy and happiness. Know the outcome
was there all along. It is important. Without the start of my journey, I'd still be looking for
that outcome today.

One of the joys was finding out that my view was welcomed and discussed rather than
covered up. It was debated, not fought with marketing, considered a valid argument, and
no one bombarded me with well-rehearsed rhetoric. There was no sales pitch. No one
gave me "what I wanted to hear", or attempted to pacify my view in any fashion. Instead,
we engaged in a true argument (in the diplomatic sense), one in which all parties could
learn and take something from. This was "impressive" to say the least. My skepticism is
harsh, unflinching, and extremely cold. Yet it is welcomed as a manifestation of one facet
of human experience, and I got the message that it is not a negative trait of my
personality – it actually helps me to be a better man in the long run provided I know how
to use the energy with accountability.

So I'm hopeful that you, dear reader, have some background to understanding the power
I've experienced from MKP. It is from the heart, pure sentiment, pure soul, staring down
the face of my own neuroses. I seek truth. And truth is to be shared freely, never sold.
Sounds like so much rhetoric doesn't it? It's not. Words fail me, gentle reader, in
describing the rewards. Those will have to do.

Chris Squire of the rock group Yes once wrote a song that said "hear me when I say to
you it's really down to your heart; it's the beginning of a new love inside – could be an
ever opening flower ... Now without a trace of doubt I feel it in every hour." I've never
seen truer words. While I still remain healthily skeptical, I can honestly say this is the
direction I'm pointed in, and I'm drunk with happiness. More, please. All conciliation is
indeed possible.

 Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:45AM (-07:00)

Comments

- Dave May 08, 2007

Welcome Brother. Your words bring joy to my heart. I feel the loneliness lift some. I
want to hear more of you and would love to sit in a circle with you.

Dave---Sacramento

- Chris May 12, 2007

I could not get past the first several sentences. Too much negativity for me. I do see
someone read past the drudge. And he's happy you are here. So am I.

- Keef May 14, 2007

The "drudge"? Gee, thanks. (So much for my heart, I guess.) Without a cold hard look
at the negative you can't know how inherent the positive is, which is what the article is
about, largely. Thanks for your words though.
Number 2 in a series of New Warrior Training Adventure interviews of men in the ManKind Project.

I am posting these interviews to show how men experience the New Warrior Training Adventure.

Thank you, Agustin!

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Four Quick NWTA Questions

When and where was your NWTA?

March 2002, Camp Krem in Northern California

What motivated you to attend the NWTA?

While working on a men's retreat planning committee I witnessed a man on the committee who is a New Warrior. I admired his insight and demeanor. I wanted that for myself. I asked him where he got that. He invited me to the next NWTA.

If a man asked you why he should attend, what would you tell him?

You should attend if you want to transform your life to be the man you have always wanted to be. Attend if you want to take personal control of your own life NOW IN THE MOMENT instead of living based on your childhood coping mechanisms. Attend to experience what it is like to actually feel all your emotions.
What keeps you in the ManKind Project?

I keep attending my weekly meeting with my circle of other New Warriors because they mirror for me what I must do on a week to week basis if I am to be fully conscious, fully awake in my life.

I keep volunteering to staff NWTAs because of the sheer joy I get out of my own personal growth and the transformation that I see in the men attending each NWTA.

I am a blessing to other men as they bless me. That is why I stay.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:56AM (-07:00)

The Gift in Arizona

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Today we look at a great program in the Arizona Mankind Project Center where the New Warrior Training Adventure is attended for no fee.

Read on and stop putting off the training because you don't think you can afford it.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

From Warrior Space; MKP Arizona's Community Place

Imagine a time when the NWTA is available for ANY man to attend... Imagine a time when every MKP Center is filling weekends with 40+ men... Imagine a time when there is such a demand for the NWTA that centers worldwide are holding 10, 12, or even more trainings per year to accommodate the demand...

Imagine inviting a man to the next weekend and when he asks, "what is the registration cost" and you say, "you do not pay for your weekend, another man has paid for you already". Imagine what you can do without dealing with that money shadow!

This is my vision of what the power of the GIFT program that we are developing in AZ has. The GIFT program is simple. There is no cost to attend a Arizona NWTA (New
Warrior Training Adventure). Upon completion of the weekend, each man is asked to support the next man on the next NWTA. The support is based on what the man got out of the weekend and what he can give.

There have been three GIFT weekends in Arizona in 2006 and 2007. The next one is in April.

The GIFT committee is working to tweak and adjust the program a little more every weekend, to make it as successful as possible. The committee was formed prior to the January weekend on Mt. Lemmon, and we are very pleased with the results. Coming into our second GIFT weekend as a committee we are planning on another success!

This program is NOT just for the council and the GIFT committee, but for the Arizona community as a whole. We all need to be supporters of the program as we talk about the weekend and enroll the men in our lives. It will take the commitment of all of us to see this program grow into something that is sustainable.

I was thinking this morning as I was driving to the grocery store, what would happen if every man in our community gave just $10 a month to the GIFT program. I know I spend far more than $10 a month on needless stuff! Imagine how many men could be paid for with something so small... It's about thinking out of the box. It's about commitment to this work. It's about creating a world of men living in mission. Imagine... WOW!

I invite any man in the community or elsewhere to get involved in the GIFT program. There are many ways you can help! It's exciting, and it's building momentum! We have already been contacted by several centers to find out how we're doing it, and I've heard buzz from a few others. Change is happening!

In Service, Roger Webb
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:33AM (-07:00)

**Dreams His Dreams**

**Tuesday, May 22, 2007**

"To every man the mystery
Sings a different song
He fills his page of history
Dreams his dreams and is gone."
How will you fill your page before you are gone? Will you reach for your heights? Will you be a mentor of boys and other men? Will you walk in peace and peacefulness?

Time is passing to fill your page in history.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:59AM (-07:00)

Meeting in the Long House

Monday, June 04, 2007

“Since the dawn of time, men in every culture have met alone together to approach their gods and find their collective magic. Every young boy knows this instinctively - ‘No Girlz Allowed’. The women in our lives are now getting to appreciate, not be threatened by this. Because, all along, women have historically always gathered together on the most sensitive levels of Anima. Men have lost their true Male Spirit and have bought into substitutes - and are just now slowly regaining this sacred sanctuary. They come home to their families after men’s group as better spirited men.”

Aaron Kipnis, From Knights Without Armor, ISBN: 0-87477-704-6

When I sit in a circle of men, I come to know what I am and who I am.

What I am is a man and who I am is so multi-faceted that there is no room to begin to write it down. All men are this way; simple as that, really. We all carry the same luggage and we are all infinitely different; and yet we can sit in circle and support each other in our journeys.
What the ManKind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure bring to the table is a place for men to be who they are; not what they do or what their job is, just who they are.

There is no substitute for sitting in a circle of men; simple as that.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:19AM (-07:00)

Was It Fun?
Monday, June 04, 2007

This post comes from a fellow warrior, Edward Manning, who talks about his staffing of a New Warrior Training Adventure.

I offer it to you as a reference to what can be found at an NWTA.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Was It Fun?

I just staffed another New Warrior Training Adventure last weekend. Monday, one of my friends asked me, “Was it fun? Did you have a good time?” I think I grinned a loopy smile at him and offered a few token lines in response. Honestly, I wasn’t sure how to encapsulate an answer. What I really wanted to tell him was this:

• I met a bunch of new guys this past weekend. Some older, some younger. Some looked like me, some looked very different. Some straight, some gay. And within the roughly 48 hours of time we spent together, I got to know their hearts, their inner core so well - and they me - that I actually cried upon parting. I actually *miss* men that I didn’t even know a week ago today.
• I had a fierce confrontation with one of the weekend leaders. We really grilled each other pretty hard - we were both intense in our communication. I was angry and (in my opinion) he was too. And it was also respectful. We both managed to listen. He didn’t try to pull any “I’m the fucking leader” bullshit on me. He held himself
accountable to his words and actions.

We both had softening moments because there was trust that we weren’t trying to dick each other over or prove ourselves right. The confrontation evolved from fierce to empathetic, to compassionate, to invested in supporting each other. Isn’t that the goal of confrontation? To get to that place?

• An attendee (i.e. not-on-staff man) approached me on Sunday and told me that an activity I co-facilitated on Saturday morning would now change the way he interacted with his kids. He could barely speak to me he was so choked up with emotion. He kept saying things like, “I had no idea...I had no idea.” We walked together for a few moments, reveling in each other.

• A room full of staff men shared grief and sparkling anger about racial disharmony. And not the fucked-up state of the world ‘out there,’ but rather the disharmony within our own staff, our own inability to stand in the fire of differences. It was angry. Fierce. It was also immensely sad, and there were tears of pent-up grief and frustration. We didn’t generate the solution that brings about world peace. We did, however, get through the experience, stronger and more unified than before. We got through it with a few mens’ special grace leading the rest of us. We got through it with fear, anger, love, and sadness. We got through it with men willing to speak their hard and heartfelt truths and not backing down. And men loving each other beyond what is reasonable to expect. I left with much to ponder about my contributions to racial disharmony. What do I need to look at?

• There was also exhilerated, howling laughter. I cried from laughing so hard. Most of the jokes wouldn’t translate well in writing just because it’s a ‘had-to-be-there’ thing, but the thing that I loved about this kind of laughter is that the humor was not bitterly sarcastic, it didn’t shame anyone, it didn’t include mean observations about any individuals. Nope. It was goofy, playful, honoring. Teasing. Mildly self-deprecating without descending into viciousness.

• One afternoon, a leader I respect a great deal came up to me and, out of the blue, said, “Have I ever told you that I love you? Have I? I need to tell you that. I love you. I really love you.” He walked away, and I was dazed.

• I walked through fear. Actually, it’s probably more accurate to say, "I walked with fear."

The phrase ‘walking through fear’ suggests John Wayne fortitude or some sort of Braveheart massacre of fear. Nope. I had heart-pounding reservations about doing a specific task and by my volunteering to step up, forced myself to look at that fear, walk with it, discover where it emanated from, and what I would have to do to get over it.

I did not get through this fear alone. One man sacrificed his free time to listen to me and reflect back parts of my shadow. Some of those men I had just met looked me squarely in the eyes, saying, “I believe you can do this. I’ll follow you.” And wisdom from men with far more experienced than I was applied lovingly, gently. I was
mentored through this fear with the softness and fierceness of true mentoring, not impossible expectations and being set up to fail.

Was the weekend fun?

Nah.

It was so much better than fun.

It was joy and sadness and goofy pranks and fiery conflict and feeling fear and hardness melting, and did I mention heart-so-wide-open-that-doesn’t-the-sky-seem-bluer-today? flavor of joy.

It was about being so very, very alive.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:02AM (-07:00)

Sacred--Not Secret

Monday, June 11, 2007

Today, I sat with a man who completed the New Warrior Training Adventure over this last weekend. He attended a ManKind Project open house that I hosted a few weeks back and has sat in my iGroup twice since the open house.

It was joy to hear one thing in particular. He was very pleased that I had not told him anything about how the weekend would go. He went in with his own notions and not any of mine. He told me that he found this one thing to be very important. Had I told him what to expect or some of what happens, I would have polluted his experience; hence it would have been partially based on my experience.

The weekend processes and ways are not a secret; we don't hold them as secret. We do hold them as sacred, and that is very different. Sacred is, as define by Merriam Webster, highly valued and important. We hold that your weekend is yours and not for me or any other man to decide how it should go.

If you decide that the training is right for you, don't ask another man who has been through the training to tell you about what goes on there...he won't tell you.

And it should be that way.

I'm out.
A Significant Event

Wednesday, June 13, 2007

This post illustrates the difference between a boy-mind and man-mind.

The trouble is many men are not dwelling in a man-mind; they are still living the boy-mind.

The ManKind Project takes men who have not had this opportunity and brings them into man space using the New Warrior Training Adventure.

I feel hopeful that there are many of these boy-to-man type initiations. Maybe one day ManKind Project will no longer need to initiate boy-men into men.

Wouldn't that be wonderful.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

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From Pathways Foundation; a group in Australia initiating boys to men.

Difference between Boy and Man Psychology

Boy Psychology:
- I seek acknowledgment
- I want it all for me
- Power is for my benefit
- I am the centre of the universe
- I believe I am immortal
- I take no responsibility for my actions
- I want a mother

Healthy Man Psychology
- I seek that which I believe in
- I share with my community
- Power is for the good of all
- I am just part of the universe
- I know I am mortal
- I take full responsibility for my actions
- I want relationship with a woman

The shift from boy to man psychology is not one that occurs naturally. The difference in the two are so fundamental that a significant event is required for this to happen. It is the role of the elders within the community to create such an event or there is a risk that boy psychology will persist into adulthood.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:34PM (-07:00)

**Fallen Firefighters**

**Wednesday, June 20, 2007**

Thank you men, for your service and sacrifice.

Top row; L to R: Bradford 'Brad' Baity, 37, Capt. Mike Benke, 49, Melvin Champaign, 46. Middle row; L to R: James 'Earl' Drayton, 56, Michael French, 27, Capt. William 'Billy' Hutchinson, 48. Bottom row; L to R: Mark Kelsey, 40, Capt. Louis Mulkey, 34, Brandon Thompson, 27.

This touches a place in me that, had I not chosen to sit in a circle of men, I would not have access to. Their place as public protectors is an honorable occupation. I feel deeply saddened at the loss of these men.

One of the men that sits in my iGroup is a firefighter. I honor him, today, for his service to the community and me.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:52AM (-07:00)
Partnership

Friday, June 22, 2007

Sometimes, I am just in my joy. Today is one of those days.

My sweet partner supports my work in the ManKind Project. She helps me set up my week so that Thursday night I can make off to my iGroup. I hope she knows how grateful I am for that effort.

The fruits of that labor is the strong, compassionate, loving, courageous Warrior she gets to experience in her world.

Today, I am sitting in the joy of my partnership with my sweet women, Dancing Wolf.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:45AM (-07:00)

Two Wolves -- A Cherokee Tale

Monday, July 16, 2007

From the Minnesota MKP Center.

A Cherokee Grandfather, teaching Tribal ways and philosophies on life to his grandson, spoke:

A fight is going on inside me. It is a terrible fight between two wolves.

One wolf is evil. He is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false-pride, superiority and ego.

The other wolf is good. He is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith.
Looking straight into his grandson's eyes, the Old man continues:

This same fight is going on inside you and every person in the world.

His grandson thinking about this phenomenon for a moment, asks his wise old grandfather:

Which wolf will win?

The Cherokee grandfather replies:

The one you feed.

So I would ask you, which one will you feed? It's a choice.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:41AM (-07:00)

Radio Free Warrior

Tuesday, July 24, 2007

It takes a leap of faith to attend the ManKind Project's New Warrior Training Adventure (NWTA).

But, not much of one.

There is a ton of information on this and other Web sites that can tell you pretty much what to expect. I think the biggest thing you can't get very easily is first hand words from men who have attended the training.
I found this great radio piece from Contact Talk Radio in Bellevue, Washington where three men and the host, who have all attended the NWTA, share their experiences.

It's an hour long and you can download the 23 meg mp3 file here.

Enjoy...and take the leap.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:11AM (-07:00)

**Shark Warrior Speaks**

**Wednesday, August 01, 2007**

A man's experience in the New Warrior Training Adventure is a beautiful thing. I hear over and over again how it was transformational, enlightening, powerful, life changing, etc.

This post is from a man who took completed his NWTA just a few weeks ago. I asked him if he would write a piece about his experience, so here it is unedited.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

I was doing a lot of reading about our current society contrasted with older so-called "primitive" societies in regards to rites of initiation. These other cultures had a very ritualized and sacred process that clearly delineated boyhood from manhood.

It is clear to me that our world today is full of boy-men, chronologically aged men with the mindset of boys. How was that I could recognize this so easily? Let me just say that there is a saying in this community, "You spot, you got it."
When it came down to it, I really had no idea what it meant to be a man? Think about that for a while. What does it mean to be a man? Is there a certain age that you reach where you are deemed a man. Do you have to have children and be a father? Steady job? Owning a house? When I asked myself that question, I could not answer it. The more I thought about it, the more distressed I became. Was I still a boy trapped in a man's body? Although, I was 33 years old, I still felt confused and like I was missing something.

Serendipitously, I stumbled upon the Mankind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure. I was reading something on the computer and there was a reference to TMP. The name intrigued me and I googled it. That was exactly what I was looking for. I called the contact man and when he described the weekend and the work, I knew that it was exactly what I needed.

I can honestly say that the weekend was one of the best and most profound experiences of my life. It was completely transformational. It is one thing to read about these concepts and understand them intellectually, it is quite a different thing to actually experience them by taking a hard look at yourself on the journey to manhood.

Shark Warrior
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:38PM (-07:00)

**Teaching a Man**

Monday, August 20, 2007

“You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him discover it in himself.”

Galileo Galilei (1564-1642)

One thing I enjoy about the ManKind Project is that the organization prides itself on not telling a man what or how to do something; or how to do or be anything for a that matter.

The journey belongs to the man in the New Warrior Training Adventure and in the groups
and experiences that he may sit in afterward.

Yeah, there is some structure, but if you don't like it or it doesn't fit for you, you are welcome to speak to that and you will be listened to.

Can you think of a place in your world where everything about you is accepted and honored? I can; the ManKind Project and the 40,000 men who call it there's.

Jump in with me!

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:02AM (-07:00)

Active Men

Monday, August 27, 2007

Having a blog, I allow comments to be added. However, I don't allow them to be posted freely, but rather, I moderate them. There are a lot of reasons for this but the biggest is that this is my blog and I get to choose what gets posted.

I have a message to get across to you and that is that the ManKind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure are worthwhile male endeavors that create a better man and therefore a better world. If a comment is posted that I feel doesn't stay on topic, then I get to delete it. I try to post all comments, but occasionally someone decides to anonymously post a bunch of garbage that is either off topic or some kind of slam to what I am trying to accomplish here.

Recently, I got four such e-mails that were counter-productive to my message and they were anonymous. Rather than just blow them off I feel compelled to do them some justice as at least one had a thought worth addressing.

I state that over 40,000 men have taken the New Warrior Training Adventure weekend. That number climbs every weekend and if I had way to add a ticker to the exact count I would. The commenter stated to me that 40,000 men were not active in ManKind Project and that some other number was. Their number was ridiculously low and not worth even stating. However, it is worth looking at how many men are "active" in ManKind Project.

In my opinion...every single man is. The ManKind Project changes men's lives just by
attending the New Warrior Training Adventure. Some men choose to not "actively" participate in the ManKind Project after the New Warrior Training Adventure, but from my seat that is moot. Men are changed by the training weekend. Whether they continue to sit in an iGroup, or continue to attend other ManKind Project trainings and events, or not, is not important. These men have walked through a weekend they will never forget. It's that simple.

I do not have a number for how many men stay active in the ManKind Project after the New Warrior Training Adventure. I have no way to decide what active is except as I stated above.

I tell you this. The training is strong, challenging, and worth it.

To the commenter that sent me four anonymous comments last week, I will continue to post only what stays on topic and much of what you wrote (much of which I could not decipher the context or grammar) was not on topic.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:13AM (-07:00)

Comments

- RoryBowman

I'm certainly not an expert on this, but I seem to have seen someone's graduate paper on this which had tracked participation in MKP over several years. My recollection was that at the time only about half of folks who completed NWTA went on to an I-Group and of those who joined an I-Group about half were inactive after two years, which is apparently the right decision for those men.

I think that the 40,000 number for NWTA attendees is largely irrelevant, except to show that MKP has been around for a while and continues to be around. Not everyone who attends college will become a life-long learner, while for others "once a Marine, always a Marine," you know?

Presumably men attend NWTA because they are looking for something. They may leave if they find it or if they do not. I wouldn't worry too much about the number, except to wish them well and hope that they got at least some of what they were looking for, something that helps them to be better men.

Six Years On

Tuesday, September 11, 2007
I remember.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:28AM (-07:00)

Men and Community

Wednesday, September 19, 2007

What moves me today is the gratefulness I feel toward my community of men called the ManKind Project.

Outside of my weekly iGroup, I spend Monday lunch time with men who are either interested in the New Warrior Training Adventure or men in the ManKind Project community. I enjoy the time to connect with these men and to reconnect with my needs and wants as a man.

I need time to talk about just regular stuff and these lunches are great for that. I get to get caught up on other families and other men's lives. We talk about what our life is and where it's going.

A couple days ago we honored a man who had been through his New Warrior Training Adventure weekend the day before. We welcomed him back and heard his stories and
shared our stories about our New Warrior Training Adventure.

I feel grateful to have these men in my life.

I want you to know, as well, that the New Warrior Training Adventure is just a small part of what is available to a man in the MKP.

Come and sit with us; sit with men who care about an nurture community.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:44AM (-07:00)

**Stretching and Yoga**

**Wednesday, October 03, 2007**

In ManKind Project iGroups, men are encouraged to make stretches.

A stretch is a place or thing I have wanted to go, but something has held me back. Usually my unfounded fear! The beauty of the stretch process is that it makes no difference if I make the stretch or not. What matters is what it was like to try and what I experienced in making it or not. There is no shame in not making a stretch; just the chance to look at what came up and why.

So, a while back I was getting ready to attend an ManKind Project gathering/celebration of the 10th anniversary of the first Northern California New Warrior Training Adventure. I have wanted to try yoga for many years but my fear of doing it "right" and looking ridiculous stood in my way.

I made a stretch in my iGroup to attend the Saturday morning yoga class taught by another ManKind Project man. My fear was up pretty high when I made the stretch but subsided quite a bit just stepping into the idea of doing it.

To make a long story short, I went to that class and the one the next morning (taught by a
different ManKind Project man). I really enjoyed it. There was still some fear around doing it right and I was not able to do it like some of the men who do it all the time. But I stayed with it and really got a lot out of it.

Now, I am looking at adding yoga to my day. Maybe in the morning with my six-year-old girl and my fourteen month old girl.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:30AM (-07:00)

This is For Him

Monday, October 08, 2007

I did some grieving work around my brother's passing in my MKP iGroup last week.

I remembered that I wrote this piece for him after he passed last Oct 16th, 2006.

So this is for him.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

For my brother, Scott

It saddens me deeply to not be at the service today; to read these words in person; to see him spread to the ocean where he told me he loved to play.

I knew Scott most as a boy. I knew the pure Scott. I think I was closest to the pure Scott than any other person. My brother was my best buddy growing up. We were pretty much inseparable until Scott went off the junior high and I was in 6th grade, in a different school. We moved often as kids and we often had only each other to play with. No matter; we found plenty to do.

I knew the Scott who loved to:
• skateboard and BMX
• play baseball, football, hockey and ice skate
• build forts in the woods
• sit with me for hours and play with our toys
• throw snowballs and build snowmen
• fish for bluegills and small mouth bass with my grandpa Jess
• eat huge thanksgiving dinners with both our grandparents
• play with our hot wheels cars and pretend we are both race car drivers
• backpack and hike with me
• play in the Kelley’s barn

I knew the Scott that:
• feared heights and told almost no one
• hated his glasses and told anyone who would listen
• was afraid to tell my parents he was afraid
• fought with me over the things brothers fight over
• called me Randy Pandy with great joy in his voice, even though he knew it hurt my feelings and let me call him Scotty Potty, because I was littler than him
• I had to bite, and hard, to get him off me

I miss that pure Scott that I knew as a boy. I miss him so much.

And now as I live in this life, without him, I remember him. Our relationship was what it was. I feel deep sadness, yet, there is nothing to be done but accept the way it was.

In my spiritual beliefs, Scott has already returned to this time and space as another person; maybe this time a little girl in Iowa or a little boy New Zealand, or perhaps he is right here. Look around, he may be near. He has moved on to another journey filled with lessons to learn.

To honor him in my spiritual beliefs, I ask you face west, to lift your voices and three times speak his name as I knew him; toward the setting sun, to the oncoming night, to the magician, to the hibernating Bear that seeks within the darkness the gift of renewal:

Scott Allan Maynard
Scott Allan Maynard
Scott Allan Maynard

Aho!

I wish my brother love and peace in his next journey.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 03:18PM (-07:00)

Comments

- RoryBowman October 08, 2007
My condolences on the death of your brother. My own brother died by suicide over ten years ago and I am firmly convinced that the grieving is never over. It does get quieter, though, and easier to accept.

What is remembered lives. - R

- Rrramone October 14, 2007
Lost Art Of Manhood

Wednesday, October 17, 2007

I appreciate a good thought on men and by men. So, today I repost this thought for you.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

The Lost Art Of Manhood

by Rick Willey

I believe that the true sense of what it means to be a man has been lost or somehow forgotten.
So, While I make no claim as to being the perfect model of a "real" man, I'd like to share my idea of what being a man really is.

Strong enough to be gentle.

Mean enough to be kind.

Honest enough to be hated.

Think about those statements a moment.

Strong enough to be gentle-
What I mean here is that the true strength of a man is in his ability to be gentle when needed, without the macho attitude so many display because they are afraid to be labeled weak if they show emotion. I could also add here the ability to be strong enough to admit his weaknesses, which also falls under the last phrase of honest enough to be hated.
Mean enough to be kind-
Some call it tough love, but sometimes everyone needs a kick in the butt to get straightened out. A real man will be mean enough to tell you about it, strong enough to be gentle about it, and honest enough to make you hate him for it. (until you realize his gift!)

Honest enough to be hated-
The word here is Integrity! Something that I feel is far too scarce in today's fast paced world but I'll save that for another day. Suffice it to say that if you are honest enough that there are people that hate you because of it; You're on your way to being a very good Man!

I'd like to suggest some great books for Men who are interested in improving themselves and our gender as a whole.

• Fire in the Belly: On Being a Man: by Sam Keen.
• King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine: by Robert Moore,
• and Iron John: A Book About Men: By Robert Bly

Another great Mens resource is The Mankind Project http://www.mkp.org/. Men used to go through an initiation process that many youngsters seek out in vain by joining gangs or the Military. Both fall short of the mark. We need to once again mentor our young Boys (as well as some older men) to become REAL MEN!

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:15PM (-07:00)

Boys in Their Forties

Thursday, October 18, 2007

Today, I am posting a part of an article pertaining to the ManKind Project from The Republican in Springfield, Massachusetts. Go here to read the full text.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

A few good men; Young, bored and Springfield -- and the men who are trying to help

By Bill Peters

"But when I talked to Springfield resident Boysen Hodgson, the director of the New England Branch of the ManKind project, an internationally-known men's retreat group, it seemed noble, and right, to at least tinker with the code of of guyhood.
"We end up with guys who have been doing men's work for twenty-five years... and guys who are in complete crisis and have hit bottom, for whom this is their last-ditch effort," he says.

But despite differences in background, most men tend to be nervous about success, and fear being reduced by an opportunistic world. Hodgson says that most men "get stuck as adolescents. We end up being eighteen-year-old boys in our forties; we end up being eighteen-year-olds as parents."

Due to proprietary reasons, Hodgson wouldn't describe any activities of ManKind's retreats in detail, beyond "journaling, some physical challenges, and some emotionally challenging activities." But as a men's group, the Hemingway-meets-Yanni rhetoric is all there. The retreat is called the New Warrior Training Adventure. Mission statements contain passages like "The New Warrior is tough and loving, wild and gentle."

But does the very packaging of the ManKind Project risk alienating the men who most need the help? I asked Hodgson if the delicate way we talk about gender allowed any room for humor -- often a man's only raft in a lake of PC conversation.

"I'll answer with a joke: We're totally humorless," he deadpanned. But he went on with a smile: "But being aware of something doesn't mean that it's not funny anymore."

Sentimentality happens during the retreats, but ManKind's mission is anything but. Hodgson talks about self-ownership, admitting to failed ambition -- often the tender core of any man gone wrong. A ManKind bumper sticker says "Know Fear."

Oz

Monday, October 22, 2007

"But Oz never did give nothing to the Tin Man That he didn't, didn't already have"
Look, the ManKind Project can't give you anything you don't already have. You have the heart and soul you came here with.

The question is; what will you do with it?

How great are you willing to be? Are you willing to stand in your space and claim it for you?

I am willing to stand with you and support whatever you choose.

The New Warrior Training Adventure can't give you anything you don't already have. You have the heart and soul you came here with.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:11AM (-07:00)

Awakening the Numb

Friday, October 26, 2007

"When men who have spent their formative years in extroverted action first turn toward the unknown country of the soul, they soon reach a desert -- the vast nothingness. Before rebirth comes the painful awareness that we have long been dead. Before feeling comes the dreadful knowledge that we have been anesthetized and are numb."

Sam Keen

Ten years ago I noticed the numbness. It enveloped me like a dark blanket. I could fix
anything, create anything...but I had no clue who I was.

I walked into the New Warrior Training Adventure in October of 1999. I was afraid of what I might find in me, in other men, in the outside world. Fear is no place to lay your head. It ain't home. The ManKind Project offered me a place to awaken myself; to find a place to lay my head that wasn't cold, empty, and fear-based.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Truth and Trust

Wednesday, October 31, 2007

One day I was awakened to the fact that I did not trust men. It shook me, because I had to admit that I was lacking something I thought I had.

The way it was though was I had no real reason to trust men. Men had screwed me my whole life. I had been cheated to, lied to, been left out to dry alone, abandoned, shamed, and basically shafted by every man or boy I could think of.

The most common was being lied to. What I recalled was every man or boy I had known had lied to me in big ways, not just little, nothing lies, but big ones.

My neighbor cheated on his wife while extolling the virtues of manhood to me. My school friends had no grasp of truthfulness. My friend through my twenties turns out to be lying about his sexual preferences the entire time I knew him. My brother lied to me so many times it still makes my head spin. The list goes on and on....

When I went to my New Warrior Training Adventure, I stood in a space that was safe to say "I do not trust you simply because you are a man." I was able to get clear on who I did not trust. It was me. I had to come to terms with the fact that I was just like them. I had a laundry list of ways I had screwed other men and boys. I could recite a million ways I
had lied to them. Well, of course I couldn't trust males.

Nine years later, I feel very clear that I am trustworthy and that there are men who are, as well. I find most of those men in the ManKind Project. I am clear that if a man in the project lies to me, I can go to him and we can work it out. I can find support to deal with whatever comes my way.

Are you looking to get truthful about who and what you are? Are you willing to stand in a space and say what is true for you? Are you ready to be a man who has looked at his ways of living and whether they work or not?

Come on...I'll be there...you can trust me.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:39AM (-07:00)

Manhood

Monday, November 05, 2007

"A woman simply is, but a man must become. Masculinity is risky and elusive. It is achieved by a revolt from woman, and it is confirmed only by other men. Manhood coerced into sensitivity is no manhood at all."

Camille Paglia

Now, I can't speculate on what makes a women; that's for women to determine and it is none of my business. Though, I can agree with men must become men. It is a revolt against the energy that is mother; as that is our most intimate connection to the feminine.

Only men can accompany the boy to manhood. Men are boys who have made the transition into manhood. This is no task for the faint of heart. Boys are strong, courageous, and clever. Boys must be guided with love and fierceness into manhood.

There are many men out there in the world who are boys awaiting the transition to manhood. They struggle to stand in a place of man-strength that honors all and understands change and eldership. These boy-men often fight against their own aging and the aged; essentially becoming king killers without even knowing it.

Are you a man longing for an honorable transition into manhood? Are you ready to take the leap of faith that other men have the energy and focus to hold space for you to become a man?

The New Warrior Training Adventure waits for you. Men are waiting for you.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:35AM (-08:00)
A Process of Healing; Emotional Awareness

Tuesday, November 06, 2007

A Process of Healing One Man at a Time
from Journeyman; a MirrorMan Films documentary

"If we do not initiate the boys, they will burn the village down." African proverb

To achieve authentic manhood, men and boys must first learn nurture and validate themselves from the inside so that they can truly accept that they are good enough. But usually boys and men will need unconditional acceptance from the outside before they can incorporated that knowing into their core. The first step into this deeper world is learning and practicing emotional awareness. Men and boys need to know their own feelings and intuitions. Next comes a process of “uncovering” the soul from disabling family and cultural baggage. Here is where men and boys identify the masks they wear as well as the costs these masks have had. Now they have a chance to see themselves and their unique gifts in a deep way. With this clarity they can begin to get a more complex understanding of how the larger culture works, and how to integrate their gifts into the new world they see. This leaves them free and empowered to give services to society that spring naturally from honoring their own creative calls. They can balance this with a realistic understanding of limitations and responsibilities.

In the ManKind Project, men take up a space to learn these very tools, as stated above. This is not voodoo or magic; it's the way boys learn to be men.

Being emotionally aware means you stop and listen to your feelings, your heart, and your intention before you "burn down the village." It means you are accountable for your actions; not from the outside, but from within yourself. In yourself is where real accountability lies.

What are you waiting for?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:11PM (-08:00)
"In the middle of the night
I go walking in my sleep
From the mountains of faith
To the river so deep
I must be looking for something
Something sacred I lost
But the river is wide
And it's too hard to cross

And even though I know the river is wide
I walk down every evening and stand on the shore
I try to cross to the opposite side
So I can finally find what I've been looking for"

The River Of Dreams, Billy Joel, 1993

I gotta tell ya, being on the other side is so much better than where I was before.

For years I stood on the side of the river wondering what all the sadness and pain was about. I thought "is this it?" Is this all there is to life; puttering along with the status quo?

One night in October of 1999, I made the cross to the opposite side of the river.

Men, trustworthy men, were there to bless my journey and to say "I see you and your value." They stood with me while I challenged my life and my body to be better than I ever was.

These men, ManKind Project men, were men just like me that had made the crossing ahead of me.

Now, I am one of those men that has made the crossing ahead of you. Now, I hold the space for you to come and look at your life; to challenge yourself to be better than you could ever imagine.
I see you and you have value. Make the crossing. It's not too hard.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:32AM (-08:00)

What Has Gone Undiscovered

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

I am fascinated with the Mars Rover program that landed some 45 months ago on Mars.

Could it be that the rovers, that were supposed to last only three months, are simply indestructible. Not likely.

But, it is s very special to think that in the time that they have driven at a snail-like pace a combined 11.7 miles we have seen a great deal of life pass by here on Earth.

Forty-five months is a long time. In that time, my new baby girl was conceived and born, I changed jobs, I saw my oldest girl get married, my Marine son-in-law completed two tours in Iraq (and will return next week back home, in one piece), I reached ten wonderful married years with my sweet partner, I created a new iGroup in my town, and another three thousand men have gone through the New Warrior Training Adventure.

All the while, these two little machines are busy trundling around the Mars surface discovering what has since gone undiscovered.

In that time, I wonder what you discovered about you. Did you discover that you need the friendship of, mentorship of, and community of men you can trust?

Come with me and discover what has gone undiscovered.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
"It doesn't interest me who you know or how you came to be here. I want to know if you will stand in the centre of the fire with me and not shrink back."

From The Invitation, by Oriah Mountain Dreamer

What I want to know is if you will stand with me in the fire of change.

Will you stand with me and change the things in you that don't work; that hold you down; that you fear; that keep you small and safe from rejection. Will you stand with me while I do the same?

In the ManKind Project, men stand together in the fire of change; working and sweating and dragging change into today, kicking and screaming. Sometimes, it isn't pretty to see at the time. But in the light of discovery and reflection, men find lasting change that they can carry into tomorrow.

Will you stand, with me, in the fire of change?

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Evel

Wednesday, December 12, 2007
Today, I say good bye to a man that was a part of my childhood; Evel Knievel (1938-2007).

I grew up on the excitement of being a little boy watching a man jump a motorcycle over things. Hey, I can do that on my 20-inch, yellow-banana-seated Schwinn Stingray! I was inspired by the excitement.

Later, as I became a young man and then a man, I realized this was a wounded man. I can live with that. I am a wounded man. I think we all carry some wounds.

That he drank and got into trouble with the law, was sad for me. I wanted him to be bigger than the wounded man he was. I wanted him to be the parts of me I could not access.

So for now, I wish for him that he finds peace and what ever he was looking for.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 11:53AM (-08:00)

Men's Health -- Yours and Mine

Monday, December 17, 2007

Prologue posted 12.17.2007:

Dan Fogelberg passed into the Spiritworld, peacefully, at home in Maine with his wife Jean at his side on Sunday, Dec 16, 2007. Farewell, Dan; your voice and music will travel
with me the rest of my days.

This may seem unrelated to ManKind Project and NWTA, but it's a men's health issue, and that in and of itself relates back to my work in MKP.

I offer that men are mostly taught to tough it out. In some ways that is a trait to be proud of. But when it stands in the way of your health, then it is time to make some changes.

Through my men's work, I have found strength to stand for myself in ways I had not before. Now I take my health more seriously and take time to have a physical every other year.

A while back I found out that Dan Fogelberg had contracted advanced prostate cancer. It moved me to be tested. So maybe it will move you?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

From: Dan Fogelberg ~ News:

In May of 2004, Dan was diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer.

A personal letter from Dan Fogelberg
Dated: August 13, 2005

First, let me send everyone some very good news. In our first 14 months of treatment, we have succeeded in slowing the progression of my prostate cancer down to an almost negligible level. Jean and I are thrilled and incredibly relieved and finally feel like we can at last take a breath. While we understand that what we're dealing with is a long term condition that will have to be dealt with, monitored and treated for probably the rest of my life, we are terribly encouraged to have come so far, so fast. It has certainly been the most trying experience of our lives and yet has proven to be one of the most illuminating as well.

I cannot adequately express my gratitude to all of the thousands of wonderful people who have sent us such incredibly moving and supportive e-mails via the Living Legacy web site. I am quite certain that the love and prayers that have been directed to us from all over the world have had a tangible and potent healing effect. It is truly overwhelming and humbling to realize how many lives my music has touched so deeply all these years. Each one of you who have taken the time and effort to reach out to Jean and I have helped immeasurably to uplift our spirits and keep us looking strongly forward during some very rough moments. I thank you from the very depths of my heart.

I currently have no plans to return to the concert stage or the recording studio in the foreseeable future, but who knows? At least for now, I prefer to keep my options open.

Again my deepest thanks and love to all,

Dan
Now for the sermon.

To each and every man...
I cannot encourage you strongly enough to get a PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen) test and DRE (Digital Rectal Exam) EVERY YEAR.

The medical community suggests this for men over 50, but black men and men with a family history of prostate cancer should start getting tested at 40 - 45 years of age.

The PSA test is a simple blood test...it only takes a minute or two. The DRE, okay, every man squirms at the thought of this exam, but hey, it too takes only a minute or two, and IT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE.

Prostate cancer can be very slow growing or very aggressive, but detected early while it is still confined to the prostate gland, it can usually be treated and cured successfully.

Once it spreads beyond the prostate it is called Advanced Prostate Cancer (PCa). At this point it becomes imminently more life threatening and harder to treat. Do yourself and your loved ones a huge favor and GET CHECKED REGULARLY. I promise you, you DON'T want to go through what I'm going through if you can avoid it.

Education and awareness are key, I urge you to follow the link below to the Prostate Cancer Foundation web site and read up on how best to protect yourself and reduce your likelihood of contracting this terrible disease.

Prostate Cancer Foundation
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:50AM (-08:00)

Pouring Rain

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

I was riding my bike to work today.......in the pouring rain......wondering to myself.......what makes a man let go of what doesn't work for him and launch into the unknown.

For me, one reason was the need to see myself as I am; not as who I was pretending to be for everybody around me. I was pretty tired of keeping up the image I projected so that
I could keep others happy. It was pretty tiring trying to remember all the things I am supposed to be all the time; and pretty useless spending time doing that.

So, one day I woke up the fact that I was wasting a bunch of time and I really wasn't being me. Time to launch into the unknown...the world where I am who I am and you have no bearing on that.

In my weekly iGroup, I have come to learn that you have your own stuff around being who you are-and aren't-and that I have no bearing on that, either.

Now, the ManKind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure did not change me, nor did it ask me to change. I changed me. MKP is just the place that where I am supported in the work I want to accomplish; where I change me. Men sit with me and we work on our "stuff;" mine and there's; we are there for each other and ourselves.

So, I would ask you...what would it take for you to let go of what doesn't work for you and launch into the unknown?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:21AM (-08:00)

This Year?
Wednesday, January 02, 2008

Is this the year you step into yourself? The year you take the New Warrior Training Adventure and spend time becoming the man you wanted be; should be; need to be?

The New Warrior Training Adventure is about change and reflection. Can you reflect on your life with honesty and courage and make some solid changes to be that man you want to be?

Do it this year.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:28AM (-08:00)
One of the defining characteristics of a ManKind Project man is his mission of service to the world. On any given day, MKP men are out using the skills and heart they have to change the world. For a look at a few of these men and their honored missions, see Missions of Service.

My mission is to create world of love by being loving. What is yours?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:04PM (-08:00)
I live in Northern California and we just rode out a big storm.

Life is better for the trees now; all trimmed and pruned of old dead and weak branches.

It reminds me of the work I do in my ManKind Project iGroup.

I look at the dead branches that no longer serve me...prune them off... make room for new growth.

Sounds easy, right? Not so much. I have to own my dead branches and really look at how they have served me. Did they? Well, of course in some fashion they did; good or bad. Pruning them can be pretty hard work. Some are big, thick, gnarly-ass branches that I just can't seem to cut through. Others appear thick, but are really weak and ready for pruning. Sometimes the thin ones are really tough, too.

In the end I am a better, stronger, more flexible tree. I can lean into the wind and weather the next storm.

This is men's work. Are you ready? Step up; I will be there.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:47AM (-08:00)

**Meebo and Me**

**Tuesday, January 08, 2008**

Some of my regular readers (and you, too) may have noticed I have a Meebo chat window on this blog. The Meebo chat has been a really great tool for answering questions and hearing from men who are considering the ManKind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure or are already involved in some way.

This morning, I logged into my IMs in Meebo to find the following message left for me:
At first, I was just going to delete it and let it go. But, then I got to thinking about this for a minute. This is what MKP is all about...honoring your journey as a man and listening to you.

To the person who left this message let me say I honor your journey as person; may you be male or female.

I hear that you (actually you say "we," so I guess an angry Christian mob is coming my way) are going destroy me for running this foolish thing and that the Lord and Jesus are going to judge me. The Lord and Jesus are going to judge me? Bring 'em on. I am a good, loving, strong, honorable man with a heart as big as an ocean. They can judge me all they want...it's their stuff anyway.

What I judge is that you are angry and fearful. If you knew me and MKP, you would probably feel more at ease and be able to take your anger and fear and point it at some other innocent person or entity.

It is no secret who the high ranking demon is. I am not sure he is much of a runner, though. You should have no trouble catching him, as I imagine he is on his knees at this very moment hoping and praying that Jesus "may" save his soul. Of course, it is my understanding that if you want to have Jesus "save your soul," all you had to do was ask; no "may" about it. Jesus being a non-judgmental, all-loving, all-caring being, he would certainly save the souls of the high ranking demon and me.

And thanks for the prayers. I highly believe in prayer and its powers and I can use all the help I can get.

To you my friend, I wish you a safe and calm journey...and when the Lord and Jesus ask you why you were so angry and fearful, I hope you have an answer.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:14AM (-08:00)

What's After NWTA? (Integration Groups)
Thursday, January 10, 2008
Life is what is after New Warrior Training Adventure!

OK, that's not very specific, but it is true for me. NWTA and MKP opened up so many avenues for me to see a world full of possibilities and challenges.

After the training, men may seat themselves in a circle of men known as Integration Groups, called iGroups for short. These groups serve the purpose of integrating what a man learns or starts learning at the training into his life. This can take many forms, and it does. Each man's "work," as we refer to it, is different from another man's work.

The groups are confidential and led by senior members. You may get a chance to sit in one of these circle. In my iGroup, we have guest nights that offer a man a chance to sit in our group to see if it works for him. In most iGroups, the man must complete the training to remain in the circle.

iGroups are local. In my center there are 42 iGroups. They may seat as many as 20 men, but the usual is 8-10 men per group.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 11:03AM (-08:00)

Comments

- Anonymous February 18, 2008
For most centers, you've skipped a "what comes next" step: Primary Integration Training. It's a 8-10 evening training, once per week, that helps a man anchor what he's learned on the weekend into his "outside" life. It has additional exercises like those in the weekend and it teaches a man skills and logistics needed to be a productive member of an I-Group.

- Old-faithfulWolf February 19, 2008
Thanks, Anonymous....you're right; this is a very important piece that most centers have. I completed this part and was really amazed at the depths that it took me.
Four Quick NWTA Questions -- 3; Matt Seitzler

Monday, January 14, 2008

Number 3 in a series of New Warrior Training Adventure interviews of men in the ManKind Project.

I am posting these interviews to show how men experience the New Warrior Training Adventure.

Thank you, Matt!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Four Quick NWTA Questions

When and where was your NWTA?

September 10-12, 2006, at Camp Augusta, Nevada City, CA

What motivated you to attend the NWTA?

First, I wanted to have a moving experience to both celebrate the attainment of my Bachelor's degree and continue my path of spirituality and self-awareness. Second, I wanted to learn more about the techniques the men in my I-Group were using to process their own issues as well as assist other men in the circle.

If a man asked you why he should attend, what would you tell him?

I would tell him to attend if he needed a new starting point in his life to begin living life in a way that tended toward balance or at least a more conscious awareness to the state of his own balance. Most importantly, I would say that a man should attend the NWTA if he feels it in his heart.

What keeps you in the ManKind Project?

These things, for me, are: the unique and powerful connection to a conscious and
heartfelt community of men; a place to look at myself with the aid of other men; a place to express my spiritual connection with the earth; and an organization that supports me to challenge my vision of myself and to learn and grow. Other than those things I stay in the Mankind Project because I have always dreamed of something like this so I am living my dream by doing it.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:28AM (-08:00)

**Cannot**

*Friday, January 18, 2008*

![Hawking Flies Weightless Aboard Jet](image)

Cannot...my butt.

I am amazed at the greatness of the human spirit and the ways we still arrange ourselves to limit our greatness.

Professor Stephen W. Hawking has ALS and has for some forty years. Does he say cannot? It doesn't look like it to me.

Can you take a weekend to change your world and maybe erase a few "cannots" of your own?

Men are waiting!

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

**Hawking Flies Weightless Aboard Jet**

*April 26, 2007; By MIKE SCHNEIDER, Associated Press*

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. - Free of his wheelchair and tethered only to heart rate and blood pressure monitors, astrophysicist Stephen Hawking on Thursday fulfilled a dream of floating weightless on a zero-gravity jet, a step he hopes leads to further space adventures.

The modified jet carrying Hawking, a handful of his physicians and nurses, and dozens of others first flew up to 24,000 feet over the Atlantic Ocean off Florida. Nurses lifted Hawking and carried him to the front of the jet, where they placed him on his back atop a special foam pillow.
The jet then climbed to around 32,000 feet and made a parabolic dive back to 24,000 feet, allowing Hawking and the other passengers to experience weightlessness for about 25 seconds.

Hawking, a mathematics professor at the University of Cambridge who has done groundbreaking work on black holes and the origins of the universe, has the paralyzing disease ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

"As you can imagine, I'm very excited," Hawking told reporters before the flight. "I have been wheelchair bound for almost four decades. The chance to float free in zero-g will be wonderful."

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:42AM (-08:00)

Celebration of Men

Friday, January 25, 2008

After every NWTA, the NWTA staff and other area men and families get together to welcome the newly initiated men into the ManKind Project community of men. It is an celebration that never fails to bring joyful tears to those that attend.

Want to see what men look like after a training? Want to see the joy and wonder for yourself? Contact a local ManKind Project center and ask when the next celebration is. They will guide you.

See the post below for an article from a man who has not attended the training, but attended a post NWTA celebration.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
By Francesca Cassini
Mankind Project Celebration on 28 September 2005

The Columbia Hotel, central London. A wet and windy Wednesday night. A group of over 30 men had just completed the New Warrior Training Adventure with the Mankind Project (MKP) and this was their celebration. I'd read a review by a journalist, spoken with Steve Cooper at MKP and even though I knew nothing about the actual events which took place on the Adventure, I had a deep sense that each man had undergone a profound experience.

As they chose to stand and address the audience (made up mainly of friends and family) their words came from their boots. They said they felt whole; rounded manhood; able to face the future with strength; confident they could care for the family; inspired to bring more love and peace into their community. One of the older participants hugged his son, 'Now I've learned to talk about myself, you won't be able to shut me up,' he laughed.

The wives and girlfriends were encouraged to comment. One wife, babe in arms, smiled 'I can be myself now without feeling judged; I can speak freely without worrying if my words are right or wrong'. Another young woman stroked her husbands face. She said she knew few real men in her life and now her beautiful husband was a man. Another said this is a gift to women - the gift of a man who knows and trusts in himself; willing to take responsibility for his actions; one who has accepted his strength - a man who has pulled down the barriers and now communicates from the heart.

These men looked like ordinary men. They also gave the impression they were trustworthy, they made me feel safe. I felt they had all become more than they believed they'd been. I had witnessed something important.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:30AM (-08:00)

Sustained By This Energy

Tuesday, February 05, 2008

From MKP New Mexico

"Men have been warriors for thousands of years and every man has his warrior side. But social forces pressure many to repress or distort this part of themselves. They unconsciously substitute a "shadow" for the healthy warrior energy so essential for sustaining individual, family and community balance.

The New Warrior is a man who has begun the confrontation with the destructive shadow
and has reclaimed hard-won ownership of the highly focused, accountable energy that empowers and shapes the healthy masculine self.

Sustained by this energy, the New Warrior is at once tough and loving, wild and gentle, fierce and tolerant. He lives passionately and compassionately, because he has learned to face his demons and to live his personal mission with integrity."

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Do you know any men like this? Do you sit and talk and learn from men like this? Does it speak to you to be this kind of man? Not a metro-, ubber-, hetero-, homo- or other-sexual man; a man, a warrior of spirit, centered-energy, and vision.

I sit in a circle with these men every week. They are my friends, supporters, challengers, questioners, mentors, leaders, listeners, learners, heroes, failures, lights, and darkness.

Are you willing to open your life to the possibilities?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:17AM (-08:00)

Owing the Basket

Tuesday, February 12, 2008

In my ManKind Project weekly iGroup, I work on owning my actions and intentions, and then looking at how they played out; did it work for me or not. I look at the shadow intention behind what I did or didn't do; what was at work that I was not conscious of at the time...and how that played out. In that light, I have a story to tell.

Over the last three years, I have biked to work all but a handful of days. I ride about three miles one-way. I have a basket attached to the bike rack on the back so that I can carry my bag or lunch or whatever. The basket hangs off the left side of the bike rack.
Over this entire time, the basket has moved forward about a half-inch and sometime hits the heel of my left foot when I peddle by. Now this is a bit annoying at times, so I kick it back and I say to myself "I really need to fix that dang basket." For three years I have been saying this to myself.

Last week, my wife borrowed my bike to ride to her ballet class. Now she knows that the basket hits her foot sometimes; she knows how to give it "the kick." So she gets on and rides off at a pretty good clip; she loves her ballet and rides fast as a general rule. About a block away her shoe starts clipping the basket...she looks down to see that the basket needs "the kick"...so she kicks it...looks down and kicks a couple more times...and is pitched off the bike onto her left side.

She lands with all her weight collected on her left shoulder and side, down her left hip and thigh, and slammed her helmeted head on the ground. She lays there for a moment and a women jogs up and helps her by running back to my house to get me.

To make a long story shorter, we spend the next four hours in the ER...broken left elbow, deep thigh and hip bruise, broken upper left rib; no head injury (if you think you can ride without a helmet, IMJ, you are an selfish statistic waiting to happen).

So for the next week, I am mostly home during the busiest time of my job taking care of her and my two girls.

I feel sadness and shame that I did not take care of this. I own that I put this off because "I don't have the time right now." The shadow is that I don't take care of myself, first. If I had, I would have moved the basket further back and secured it better three years ago; my best friend would not have been hurt (and still hurting). I own that the basket is a reminder of how I let other things get in front of taking care of me.

I hope you never have to run down a bike path and see your best-friend, your dream-come-true, your wife, your children's mother, crumbled up on a bike path, crying and really hurt. I hope you take care of "the basket."

The sadness is deep and painful. My actions have consequences...pain is powerful one. I feel sorry that my actions hurt my best friend.

I am sorry, dear friend.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:23AM (-08:00)

Warrrior & the Sacred Masculine

Friday, February 29, 2008
Today, I wanted to share this post by laughingwolf. He talks about how he sees warrior and the scared masculine in this time and space.

Thank you, laughingwolf!

I’m out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Embracing the “Sacred Masculine”

Bulletin By Warrior, Dreamer, Shaman ~John B.~

Centuries ago, and in many cultures, it is fair to say violence was a part of everyday existence.

It was a matter of life or death, and in many ways it may have been one of the most needed survival skills of all.

In the early times of man, violence was necessary for gathering food.

It was necessary for protecting oneself, and community, from animal attacks, and from enemy attacks.

It was a way of life in primitive cultures.

A means of survival.

However, there were some tribes and cultures that did very well at avoiding violence.

Nonetheless, it was a survival skill.

In the most primitive of forms of the word ‘Warrior’, long before the word Warrior was even coined or spoken, the definition of this archetypal man was:
"One who protects women, children, and community.
"One who places the safety of others in front of his own."

So, at one time, there was a certain noble aspect of being a warrior, it was a calling to service.

It was a thing of honor, duty, respect, and service to be a warrior.

In my belief system, there is no higher calling than to be of service to the community.

I believe the warrior served that role, brilliantly.

Unfortunately, as technology, religion, politics, and the ego self developed, warriors became soldiers... dominating and destroying in the service of tyrant kings, rulers, and dictators.

The word 'Warrior' then came to represent those who needed to dominate and destroy, in order to feel superior.

This was a cultural step backwards, and one that has continued on its path of wavering into and out of the darkness.

Our understanding of the word 'Warrior' is often given to the images of barbarianism, such as the great Vikings, and other cultures of fearless fighters.

However, in these cultures, the lacking element was of balance.

They were often the aggressors, and went into unprovoked battle.

Driven by the greed and power authorized to them by their rulers, many of these era of warriors raped and pillaged smaller, defenseless communities.

Thus, it became known being a 'Warrior' was not quite a noble position, but a power position.

The word 'Warrior' became synonymous with the word 'Barbarian'.

Make no mistake, this is far from the truth, and the true definition of the word 'Warrior' is one of honor and respect for all life.

The word 'Warrior' is truly in alignment with the "Sacred Masculine".

So, what is the sacred masculine, anyway?

I like the definition given below, by the Mankind project of L.A., from their website, as it refers to the sacred masculine for our times.

THE SACRED MASCULINE: In our culture, every era had its popular male traits.

The '50s man was aggressive, liked sports, never cried, and always provided for the
In the '90s, the "sensitive" man became popular, one who shared child care, was devoid of gender bias, and was in touch with his feminine side.

These popular visions of manhood, however, lose sight of both the life giving and protecting characteristics of men, and the destructive facets of manhood.

The "sacred masculine" acknowledges both aspects of a man's character.

It provides a model for men to generate, and maintain, their lives in such a way as to include, and yet rise above, life's issues and struggles, for the betterment of his life, his family, and his work, and thereby make the world a better place to live in.

Because we have had so little experience with this type of thinking, this can be a scary step into the unknown.

We live in a culture where violence and aggression are often glamorized by television, movies and other media.

We live in a culture where depicting women as only objects of sex is socially acceptable.

We live in a culture that often teaches us it is more important to "win" than to be true to yourself.

We live in a culture that enforces that stepping on the backs of others, along your road to the top, is a good thing.

We live in a culture where we are allowing our youth to be taught that being pimps, gangsters, thugs, drug dealers, and thieves, are not only acceptable, but allows a certain level of social status.

These are all the wrong messages for manhood, and yet, we as a culture, haven't quite figured out how to teach a better way.

Moving into a place of accepting your sacred masculine, and modeling that in the way you live, is a start in the right direction.

The industrial revolution really did a good job of removing fathers from a nurturing role.

In this shift, boys have lost their way, and fathers have lost their way, and the results are a society with the highest levels of incarceration ever known.

If we were to accept and teach our role as the sacred masculine, might we actually be teaching a sense of responsibility, duty, and honor?

Might we actually be teaching a way of life that enforces, we as men, have an actual "Mission in life"?

One of the common theories on why we struggle as a culture is, we men lack a sense of mission.
That we see our role as breadwinners, but it is so unfulfilling and shallow, we seek out other ways to find our sense of self... who we are.

Seeking to be seen as important and viable, we often seek unhealthy paths, because they seem so much more attainable than the healthy ones.

The sacred masculine is a step towards embracing all that you are, as a man:

Father, teacher, mentor, protector, and listener.

It is not about besting everyone who enters your vision, but about helping all that seek.

It is not about how many women you can bed, but about how deeply and beautifully you can love the woman you have chosen.

It is not about being weak, it is about allowing yourself to be vulnerable in order to access your true strength.

It is not about shaming others, it is about encouraging them to shine.

It is not about being violent, it is about knowing where to draw the line, as a protector, and when to step back, and allow words to be words.

It is about teaching strength, from the depth of your raw and unharnessed truth, and expressing all that you are with passion.

It is about HONORING... the beauty of the feminine, and not abusing it.

It is about recognizing your true role in society from a primitive standpoint, in our advanced culture.

Respecting all that is natural, and making the bold statement that:

"In this world, I am first just a man, and that is good enough."

~Warrior, Dreamer, Shaman...~John B.~

There are many paths into the sacred masculine, seek and you shall find one that fits.

There are many paths home to the truth of your heart, and all are correct.

Being a true "Warrior", in today's culture, means being a "Warrior of Peace".

It means teaching love and strength.

It means learning and teaching boundaries... and respect.

It means being of service to a higher sense of humanity, and doing the small things that matter.

Especially when nobody is watching.

(And someone is always watching...lol)
"The standards you set today, will long be remembered... in the hearts of those you have touched." Warrior, Dreamer, Shaman...~John B.~

Peace To All
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:05AM (-08:00)

Comments

- Anonymous

I find a lot of wisdom in older texts, and one of the ones that really helps me in trying to live as a man is Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics with its emphasis on a "golden mean" and the cardinal virtues of courage, wisdom, justice, temperance, liberality, friendship and so on. Trying to live those virtues in my daily life keeps me honest, and helps me to balance the wonder and terror of being a man (to borrow Castaneda's phrase).

Another wonderful insight that helps me is Matt Larsen's assertion that "the characteristic of a warrior is a willingness to engage the enemy," whether that enemy is greed, ignorance or arrogance.

How can we as men be more courageous: physically, emotionally and morally. That is the greater war, and the difference between being a mature person and a warrior rather than a mere cog, minion or pawn soldier.

Testimonials

Monday, March 03, 2008

Here’s a great page that has recently been posted by the ManKind Project. It's a collection of testimonials about ManKind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure.

Enjoy!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:56AM (-08:00)
Feed the Good Wolf

Wednesday, March 05, 2008

I am always scouring the Web for articles that echo my experience in the ManKind Project. Today's post is an article reprint from the Northfield News.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

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Changing the world, one man at a time

From Northfield News of Northfield, MN; 1/1/2008
By John Owens; Guest Columnist

A Cherokee grandfather, teaching tribal ways and philosophies of life to his grandson, spoke, "A fight is going on inside me. It is a terrible fight between two wolves. One wolf is evil. He is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false-pride, superiority and ego. The other wolf is good. He is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith." Looking straight into his grandson's eyes, the old man continued: "This same fight is going on inside you and every person in the world." His grandson, thinking about this phenomenon for a moment, asked his wise old grandfather, "Which wolf will win?" The Cherokee grandfather replied, "The one you feed."

In this day and age, many see a great confusion of our values and purpose. I call this the "Age of Gotcha!" It is a time where men are living in their heads, not their hearts, a time where getting ahead and staying ahead, accumulating 'stuff,' seems to be our purpose in life. And everywhere we see evidence that males are not doing well: drugged in youth for ADHD, repressed in our emotions, worked excessively, addicted to drugs, alcohol, sex or something else, sent to war and physically or mentally traumatized (or killed), jailed for crimes or mistreated in a thousand ways. Men as a whole are not doing well. We die younger and in poorer health than women. Many of our boys look at what it takes to be a
man in today's society and want no part of it. This is not true for every male. But take a
look around, and you are likely to see boys and men that are deeply disconnected from
their emotions and from their authentic selves.

When you come to the ManZone event this Feb. 1 at the Community Bank, you are likely
to be greeted by a New Warrior, a man who has had the opportunity to see clearly the
two wolves inside himself and who has made a decision to feed the good wolf. New
Warriors are members of the Mankind Project, an international order of men, some
35,000 men strong, who are dedicated to reclaiming the sacred masculine for our time,
through initiation, training and by living personal missions of service to others through
action in the world. New Warriors have each experienced the Weekend, also known as
the New Warrior Training Adventure, or NWTA. The NWTA is an intense inward journey
that, for nearly all men who have experienced it, is a life-changing (and life-giving for
many) weekend journey. The NWTA weekend provides an amazingly safe "container"
where a man can consciously look at the essence of what it is for him to be a man in this
world, what is working for him and what is working against him. Through deep
exploration, each man creates his personal Mission of Service, and ongoing support
though small groups, called Integration Groups, gives him the encouragement and
support he needs to live his mission more fully each day. Northfield has two such groups,
also known as I-Groups, meeting on Tuesdays and Wednesdays each week.

So when that man approaches you on Friday, Feb. 1 at the ManZone Event, take a
moment to look into his eyes and see what is there. Is it the "gotcha!" look of a man in his
head, trying to sell you something, or is that look of a man who has touched his heart, his
core, and offers you a solid, authentic connection from that place of being? Men, are you
looking for something more real, more authentic in your life? Are you still looking for
something you can passionately dedicate yourself to? Are you looking for relationships
inside and outside your family that are trusting, healthy and close? Do you want to live a
life of integrity, connection to feeling and connection to community? Mankind Project is
changing the world, one man at a time. We are non-denominational, non-religious, non-
sectarian. All beliefs and non-beliefs are welcome, as we sometimes say.

If you are interested in visiting one of our weekly Circles of men, contact John Owens or
Mark Mueller-Dahl to make arrangements to welcome you without a sales pitch or
obligation.

-John Owens is a member of the Mankind Project.
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:01AM (-08:00)

Little Crow; Taoyateduta

Saturday, March 08, 2008
I spent a good part of the weekend thinking about a man I knew and loved. His name was Little Crow and he has touched my life very deeply. To this day, his hands and heart guide me.

I met Little Crow shortly before my marriage in 1997. My best friend and I were looking for a spiritual person to marry us. One thing led to another and we found ourselves at the American Indian Church in Garden Grove, CA.

I was immediately touched by Little Crow’s honesty and reverence for all things. In the weeks to come he taught me about love, heart, honesty, reverence, hope, sacredness, connectedness, spirit, the four directions, elders, place, and time.

Little Crow has many writings that leave behind his passion and faith in his beliefs. You can find his Red Book here, and his Blue Book here.

Shortly before he died, he left the American Indian Church to move back to his native lands in Minnesota. I am glad he died there, among the land and air his ancestors walked and breathed.

His most enduring message to me was that with every breath I have a chance for change. Every time I breathe, I can take that moment and choose a way that is good and integral and loving, and make a difference with every thing I do.

A wonderful man, Thane Hake, wrote some beautiful songs about the American Indian Church and Little Crow. You can buy and hear Secrets of the Shaman and Many Faces here.

Little Crow…I remember you every day…with every breath. You live in my breath, my heart, my wife, my children, my very soul. You brought and bring joy to my world every day, with every breath.

Thank you for blessing me in this journey.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Imagine a Circle of Men

Thursday, March 13, 2008

Imagine a circle of men where every one listens, not only to what you say, but to also what's behind that. Everyone is in tune with your voice, your emotion, your energy -- everyone is intent on receiving everything you communicate; where everyone listens to hear the very best in you, even when you can't hear it in yourself.

Imagine a circle which will remind you of your commitments so you can hold yourself accountable and keep you moving forward toward your dreams and goals.

Imagine a circle of men which is totally curious about your dreams and aspirations, about what it is that makes you tick, what you value, what you are most passionate about in your life; a circle that will help clarify your goals and provide tools for action and learning that lead you to the life you want.

Imagine a circle of men who would absolutely tell you the whole truth about where you are strong, where you sell yourself short, and where someone knows you can handle it and knows that's what you want.

Imagine an experience where you finally break free of those limiting beliefs that sabotage and they are noticed for what they are and the powerful part of you is called forth with a new set of beliefs. Imagine a circle where you can experience and develop a new leader within you. A place that is safe to be who you really want to be.

This is how a ManKind Project iGroup works. Are you ready for this kind of relationship?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:44AM (-07:00)
"We all leave childhood with wounds. In time, we may transform our liabilities into gifts. The faults that pockmark the psyche may become the source of a man's beauty. The injuries we have suffered invite us to assume the most human of all vocations - to heal ourselves and others."

Sam Keen

The "pockmarks" that are the "source of our beauty" is what makes us men.

Men have their own special needs in this society.

One of those needs is that of men in the tribe or community or family taking interest in us as a young man and guiding us to manhood. That has sadly gone missing in the industrial age we live in now.

The older men are working all day or gone from the house. The community is scattered and we may hardly, or not at all, know our neighbors. The activities we partake in as young men may only be populated with our peers who know as little as we do about how to be a man. We cannot learn to be men from other boys/young men or from girls/young women.

Can you remember a time when a man took an interest in you and your life? When a man guided you with honor and compassion and wisdom.

When you attend the New Warrior Training Adventure, you will be surrounded with men who are interested in your journey. You will see what it looks like to have men of community who want you to have the world you want. You will see what it looks like to have other men stand with you to give a place for you to get what you need.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:30AM (-07:00)
Finding My Place in a Circle of Men

Tuesday, March 25, 2008

One man's experience in the New Warrior Training Adventure from peoplecanchange.com.

"It was clear from the moment I arrived at the New Warrior Training Adventure in a mountain camp east of Los Angeles that this was no recreational retreat. The volunteer staffers who met me at the gate of the camp that Friday afternoon in August 1998 created, from the very moment of my arrival, an environment that invited deep inner reflection. And more than a little trepidation.

Never had I thrown myself into the hands of strangers -- and certainly not straight men -- so completely, trusting blindly that this weekend experience would somehow offer me inner healing. Or, at least cause no further wounding at the hands of men.

I'd learned about New Warriors from the reparative therapist I'd been working with for more than a year. When, early in my therapy, he first raised the possibility of my attending an experiential "men's initiation" weekend, I was mildly curious but skeptical. Hadn't I seen these kinds of men's-movement retreats mocked in the national news magazines as a silly, male-angst response to the feminist movement?

Besides, it was far too afield of my comfort zone, a restricted and generally superficial zone that allowed room only for wife and children, church, work -- and, until I started therapy, the promiscuous gay underground. At that time, I was just beginning to allow my therapist inside the defensive fortress I'd built around me. But to put myself in a situation to blindly trust male strangers with my emotional core? No. Men were not to be trusted. They would never accept me, and certainly never understand me.

My resistance to New Warriors fell abruptly a few months later when I saw another man from my therapy group leave for the New Warrior weekend in a near panic over the unknown, only to return the following week visibly calmer, exhilarated and empowered. I resolved immediately to go.
I sent for information and poured over it. I found the brochure frustratingly minimalist and cryptic -- deliberately, I would learn, to preserve the "magic" or mystery of the weekend for "initiates." But the "identity statement" exhilarated me: "We are an order of men called to reclaim the sacred masculine for our time, through initiation, training and action in the world."

"The sacred masculine"? I'd somehow learned growing up that masculinity was, at best, something to be trivialized and mocked and, at worst, a villainy responsible for most of the world's corruption. Clearly, New Warriors could be a safe place to heal my lifelong, love-hate struggle with maleness. Especially when I read this mission statement from The Mankind Project, the non-profit sponsor of the New Warrior Training Adventure: "Healing the world, one man at a time."

I learned, too, that the three men who co-founded New Warriors in the early 1980s believed that modern men were emotionally handicapped by never having been fully initiated into an honorable and healthy masculinity and never having been mentored by other men. The weekend training was their answer to the contemporary loss of tribal community and masculine mentoring that had anchored our grandfathers for millennia.

Suddenly, the weekend training couldn't arrive soon enough.

Once there, I experienced the most powerful weekend of my life. I had been to countless religious services and conferences before. I'd been in a Twelve Step program for sex addicts. I'd been in individual and group therapy. All had helped immeasurably. But none had so quickly and deeply cut me to the emotional core and opened my heart to the brotherhood of men and to my own masculine identity and sense of masculine power.

For two full days and two evenings, working late into the night, 35 volunteer staff led me and 30 fellow "initiates" through a series of individual, one-on-one and group processes that invited deep introspection, total honesty, and a new, breakthrough-level of trust in other men. The focus was on learning to live lives of personal integrity, mission, personal power, deliberate intention, masculine identity and emotional healing. It was on getting in touch with our emotional lives -- living more from our hearts than our heads.

For me, the most powerful experience of the weekend came from seeing 30 other men share their deepest emotions and fears as they touched long-buried feelings about childhood hurts, bad marriages, death, addiction, even the suicide of a parent 20 years before. I felt like I was gazing for the first time in my life through a window into the souls of men -- whom I'd always viewed as so mysterious, closed off and unknowable. I drank in this awesome realization: men DO feel, men DO fear, men DO care. I saw at last that I was like other men, after all, or they were like me. I belonged.

In this "safe container," this place of remarkable authenticity, I entered a new level of trust. When my turn came, I dared to step out and enlist the support of these men in working through the two darkest "shadows" of my life -- my budding recovery from a 20-year homosexual sex addiction and double life, and the still-echoing taunts of adolescent bullies 20 years earlier. Pragmatically, I reassured myself, "If this turns out badly, I never have to see these men again!" But my fears were unfounded. Not only did they not reject me, these men honored me for stepping out into my fear and trusting them.

One of the simplest yet stunning experiences for me was quietly observing the interactions of the staff as they went about the business of the weekend. All of them had
gone through the same initiation themselves and were returning for the first or tenth or fiftieth time to re-create their own weekend experience for new initiates. I was amazed at how comfortably these men expressed affection for each other, embracing and touching as openly and naturally as young boys on the playground. These simple manifestations of true brotherhood touched a deep longing of the still-wounded little boy inside me who pined for his father's caress. Clearly, there was a brotherhood here that could provide profound healing.

I drove down from the mountain late Sunday afternoon a changed man. My whole body fairly shouted with powerful new feelings of love, peace, masculine power, inner strength, connection to God and to my brothers. In tears of joy, I thanked God for leading me to this healing place.

How could I prevent this experience from evaporating into a pleasant but impotent memory? Returning home, I was welcomed by Warrior brothers in my local community into an "integration group" - a small group of initiated men who meet weekly to continue the work they started on the mountain during their own weekend training adventures.

These men know my "shadows." They know my "gold." They help me stay accountable. They help keep me in integrity. They are my brothers. My community.

Today, at last, I am a man among men."

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:25AM (-07:00)

A New Masculinity

Tuesday, April 01, 2008

Susan Williams writes about a discussion with Marty Pentz about masculinity, archetypes, and NWTA.

A New Masculinity
By Susan Williams
Moving away from archetypes to a 'more inclusive societal framework'

As life changed dramatically for women during the late 1900s, it also changed for men. So, on the heels of "feminism" comes "new masculinity."

Marty Pentz, an assistant professor of social work at Indiana University East, researches men's issues, among other topics.

What is "new masculinity?"

"It is basically an attempt to leave dominant patriarchy and move to a more inclusive societal framework," said Pentz. He refers to Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette's book, King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine, in discussing archetypes, new masculinity and the mature male, but emphasizes there are other archetypal patterns as well.

"An archetype, according to Webster's, is an original pattern or model from which other things of the same kind are made," said Pentz. "In individual people, the archetypes are derived from the experience of the human race and are present in the unconscious of the individual.

"The mature male is one who has integrated Moore and Gillette's four archetypes--the king, warrior, magician, lover--and continues to confront the destructive shadow side of each. The mature masculine of each archetype is toward the center of two opposite and destructive poles, one active and one passive," Pentz explained.

"For example, the mature king energy integrates the tyrant and the weakling and the mature warrior integrates the sadist and the masochist."

Pentz has researched and participated in the New Warrior Network, now called the ManKind Project Network (MKPN). The program features an introductory workshop--New Warrior Training Adventure (NWTA)--which refers to these four archetypes.

"The New Warriors grew out of a discussion of three men over ten years ago--Ron Herring, a therapist; Bill Kauth, a therapist and member of the mythopoetic men's movement; and Rich Tosi, a former Marine captain. They believed that men needed more masculine ways of dealing with feelings and that they needed to do this together."

According to Pentz, New Warriors attempts to help participants integrate the archetypal polar extremes by using techniques such as Jungian psychology, visualizations and aspects of gestalt therapy during the introductory weekend and in an ongoing training group. The weekend also uses rituals and rites of passage. "The rite of passage has been historically an important cultural and individual developmental milestone and is mostly absent in modern culture," said Pentz. "Rites of passage provide recognized paths across the boundary separating childhood and adulthood, and when completed, the participant is recognized as an adult by his or her culture.

"The confirmation in the Christian religion, and the bar and bat mitzvahs of Judaism are currently active rites of passage," he continued. "They are done in the early teens, however, an age that is not recognized as adult in our society.
"The discontinuation of rites of passage results in a lack of connection between our youth and the rest of society."

In The Power of Myth, the late Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers discussed this issue, writing about "the news of the day, including destructive and violent acts by young people who don't know how to behave in a civilized society." They go on to write, said Pentz, that often inner city youth "have their own gangs and their own initiations and their own morality, and they're doing the best they can. But they're dangerous because their own laws are not those of the city."

"This reflects an issue social workers see on a daily basis--men who have no connection to an ethic or morality other than 'what I want is right' and an ethic that says, 'I can get what I want any way I want it,'" said Pentz, who believes there are social policy and practical implications to be found in programs such as New Warriors.

"We need to study the possibility of programs to initiate young men into a 'mature masculinity' that is nurturing and loving and encompasses Smurl's five aspects of ethics and morality theory--self-cultivation, truth telling, promise keeping, beneficence or love and justice."

Why Didn’t You Invite Me?

Friday, April 04, 2008

Today, I wanted to share a really great post about men coming to the ManKind Project and how that can happen; about how a ManKind Project man sees and processes the world around him; about the value of the ManKind Project.

The post is from a ManKind Project man who shares his thoughts at edmondmanning.com.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Why Didn’t You Invite Me?

By Edmond Manning, March 11th, 2008
A week ago or so, I met an interesting gent online.

We started an email discussion and immediately the conversation went to the richest places: gilded insights, masculine archetypes, and personal growth. One of those fascinating, cool connections with a wonderful someone in a far away place. He’s retired, mentor and advocate for teenagers’ rights, and he takes night walks to speak with owls and skunks.

After discussing fiction, I sent him a link from my website and he returned an email or two later with the news that he poked around, read everything, and was now planning to attend a NWTA.

The question he posed to me was, “Why didn’t you invite me?”

I froze.

Sitting at the computer, staring at the email from a man I had not known a week ago Tuesday, and…his gentle curiosity pierced a rusted dimple in my heart armor. Something stuck me deep and my outside body froze solid while inside I melted memories into sticky little judgments.

Why didn’t I invite him?

After all, New Warriors has been a focal part of my life the past four years. (Five?) It’s the most powerful mens’ movement I’ve witnessed. Flawed? Absolutely. It only works with each man committed to his own personal integrity. And we’re men, so we’re all fucked with all the ego armor each of us has already accrued.

And yet I’ve watched New Warrior energy bulldoze shitty lives and leave behind strong green growth. I’ve witnessed victims shed that skin, bullies melt with vulnerability, cowards command courage, and poor of spirit men elevated to instant kingship.

Men reach out to transform their own and their brothers’ lives in subtle, really big, and massive ways. I remember during the last moments of a 2006 staffing, a twenty-something man tried to tell me what I had done for him personally, how he thought I transformed his relationship with his children. But he couldn’t speak. He just stood there with his hand clenched on my shoulder and these streamlined tears stealing down his cheeks as his eyes burned into me with unflinching love.

I understand this man now reads to his sons almost every night.

Massive.

So why wouldn’t I invite this new friend - a man already a warrior in a hundred ways in his life?

Shadow.

Yeah, shadow. Projections, acquired ego or armor to protect from shitty stuff that happens in the world. That which we hide, repress, or deny.

I talk about Shadow a lot on this blog because it’s like March’s salty brine, that slosh
accumulating on the windshield that messes up my view of the world. Instead of Spring, I am still staring at grimy residue of childhood wounds, accumulated mental garbage, miscellaneous eight-legged emotional shit that buzzed and crashed, smearing its guts in my view.

No wonder why it sometimes seems like winter in June.

I didn’t invite this man because…

The first obvious layer of shadow is my craptastic history with religion. And despite the amazing nudge New Warriors gives my life, inviting a guy to the NWTA feels like saying, “Come to my church.” (Words that make me cringe as I type.)

One of the reasons I love New Warriors is because they don’t order me what to think, how to believe, who to love. (Uh...like that would ever work with me.)

My first I-group got together weekly for three-years after the NWTA. We had a conservative Christian and a Ganesha-worshipping body worker, an IT guru and a cab driver. And me, corporate guy/artist soul. And we managed to love each other pretty damn well. So not only is diversity of background respected, it’s actually celebrated.

And yet I still resisted inviting this new friend because I was afraid of secreting the smell of church. Huh. I had better look at that again. I know there are plenty of decent churches out there, so this must just be my crud.

Anything else?

(That’s the thing with shadow. There’s often another layer.)

**Shadow:** If I invite a guy to the weekend and he doesn’t love it, it’s my fault.

**Reality:** I don’t control everything. If he has a crappy time, that’s his experience. We can still be friends.

**Shadow:** If I invite a guy to the weekend, I’ll look like a dork.

**Reality:** Holy crap, I wallpapered my bathroom with comic books and there’s a Mageneto sticker on the front door glass threatening would-be burglars. I’m already a huge dork!

**Shadow:** If I invite a guy to the weekend he’ll assume I’m totally gay for him.

**Reality:** Oh please. If that happens, that’s his projection. I don’t have to carry that possible scenario like a wool sweater on a hot day.

Enough swipes with the wiper fluid and the shadowy windshield smears start becoming translucent. Turns out it’s not so impossible, so measly gray out there. Could even be the sun’s out and I never knew it.

This new friend’s question gave me a bit to ponder.

And ponder doesn’t mean twist my hands over who wronged me most, nor does it mean purchasing an action planner for 2009 goals. It’s right now in this moment, this breath, this strange and wonderful place: present tense. What if I breathed a little bit and let go?

Beyond this cleaner windshield the world sparkles with billowing green trees and
silver/red dragonflies zing by. I didn’t realize the sky was quite that richly blue. I ponder how I’ll handle the opportunity when it comes up again and I express some dragonfly gratitude for the gift this new friend inspired by just asking his question.

Have I changed? Am I a better man?

Maybe.

But I’m not measuring my life using inches anymore.

I’m measuring by miles.

Inside, I have this deep seated spark of confidence that next time I’ll be more willing to say something like, "Hey bud. You may be interested in checking out this amazing mens’ weekend. It could change your life. Add more richly blue."

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:12AM (-07:00)

Unrecognizable

Tuesday, April 15, 2008

"Every man who completes the New Warrior Training Adventure weekend remembers what he did on that particular weekend of that particular year...for the rest of his life."

This quote used to appear on the Louisville ManKind Project Center's Web site. Because it doesn't anymore, I choose to publish it here; I think it has merit.

I remember so many things about my weekend, almost nine years ago. I remember my fear and my commitment to change.

I remember thinking that if every man took that NWTA on the same weekend, Monday morning the world would be unrecognizable. The change would be at once both fantastic and peaceful and powerful.

I challenge you to be one of these men; to step up; to change the way you see you and the world; to make the world different on Monday morning and every Monday morning after.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:14AM (-07:00)

NWTA Los Angeles Men Speak

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

This is an awesome video by the Los Angeles ManKind Project center!

I am so impressed and proud of these men!

Click here for the video.

Are you ready?

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:42AM (-07:00)

Once in a Life

Tuesday, April 29, 2008
“Once in a life, you can find a time to see,
And you get to turn it down, turn around, temporary sanity
And then the mountain disappears without a trace,
All it took, was a sudden leap of faith.”

Kenny Loggins, Leap of Faith

I had this time in my life; where I had to gather my courage and make the leap.

The leap was gigantic. I had to summons up all my courage to dive into a men's organization that didn't make the rules for me. The ManKind Project doesn't tell me the rules for my life, I have to make them for myself. There are men to support my decisions; but none to tell me what to do.

I made the leap and now I am grateful to the men who held out their arms to catch me, stand me up, and say "now do it for yourself."

Will you leap? There are over 43,000 men there to catch you, me included.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Meet the ManKind Project Men

Wednesday, May 07, 2008

Every year, at the University of California, Davis, the campus has a wonderful event called the Whole Earth Festival. This year is the 39th year UC Davis has held the festival.

I support the ManKind Project by getting a booth together so that we can connect with other men and talk to them about the project. I expect about 20 MKP men to be at the booth over the weekend.

If you're in the neighborhood, stop by booth 465 to meet some of the men of the ManKind Project.

The festival is free and maybe you'll get to meet me, Old-faithful Wolf. I'd get a kick out of hearing about you reading my blog! Ask for me, I am around most the weekend.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:34AM (-07:00)
Risks

Monday, May 12, 2008

"What is at risk for you to give the people you know in your life sincere empowering feedback (being assertive) rather than remaining silent (being passive) or tearing them down (being aggressive)."

Steve Solomon, Passionate Cheetah; Warrior in the ManKind Project

What's at risk for you to be real with someone you know? That's the question.

Is it the fear of looking dumb; the fear of being vulnerable or being rejected?
Is it the fear of getting closer; building a more meaningful relationship?
Is it that you don't want to be honest or you are afraid of honesty?
Is it that you don't want to hurt feelings or you are afraid to hurt feelings?
Is it that honesty has hurt you in the past?

What would it look like to really step into being a man who speaks to another person with clarity and honesty at the risk of all of the above?

For me it would look scary and risky. So what. Fear and risk are in the mind, not in the action.

My honesty to you is that you can't be honest with another until you can get some honesty with yourself. Find some honesty at the New Warrior Training Adventure.

See you there...living in my honesty.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:08AM (-07:00)
"He wanted love
With no involvement
So he chased the wind
That's all his silly life required
And the days of vanity
Went on forever
And he saw his days burn up
Like paper in fire"

John Mellencamp; from Paper in Fire off The Lonesome Jubilee (1987)

In this blog I ask you "are you the man you thought you would become."

What does that mean to me? Well, it means that there must have been a time when you had dreams of being someone or something. Maybe a great father, an renowned explorer, a preacher, a tycoon, maybe the president. Nobody dreams of being a homeless man or a drug addict or an alcoholic. Did you dream big dreams?

I did...and I let many of them go...like paper in fire.

I had to let go of being a Formula 1 driver. That was a tough one.

I had to let go of being the brother to my brother that I wanted to be. I couldn't do that dance alone.

I watched many dreams be just that, dreams. I didn't know where to go to nurture them.

Am I the man I thought I would become? Yes and no. I am more in many ways. I am more of a father and friend than I ever thought or imagined. I am a mentor to many and that never crossed my mind.

In my ManKind Project work, I stretch past my perceived limitations to find new dreams. I went back a couple years ago and tried karting to see if there was anything there for me. I tried to patch the wounds of my brother.
It’s a journey...that’s all. I invite you to take it with me. I wonder what kind of man you thought you would become.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:59AM (-07:00)

Testimonials

Tuesday, June 03, 2008

I am, by nature, somewhat skeptical, for whatever reason. For me, word of mouth and personal experience are very powerful and tends to overcome my skeptical side.

When I came around to doing my New Warrior Training Adventure, it was because I knew a man who had done the training. After his NWTA, I could see how he held himself differently, how purposeful he had become, and how much more of "him" I could see.

A ManKind Project man has put together a set of testimonials from men in the project. You can read them at http://mkptestimonials.blogspot.com/.

And can you guess which testimonial is mine?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:05AM (-07:00)

Open the Gate

Thursday, June 12, 2008
"We dance in the heat of our heart's desire.
Open the gate.
The key is within to our heart's desire."

From Circle Round and Sing by Anne Hill

What is it that your heart desires? What is that you are aching to do or be? What is it that you shut up behind the gate when you were little because someone said you couldn't or shouldn't?

In the ManKind Project, we encourage ourselves and support other men in finding what is behind the "gate." We allow a space for men to look for the key and find out why they are keeping the gate closed; what stands between the gate opening and staying shut; is it fear or anger or shame or...?

Are you ready to open the gate?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:34AM (-07:00)

2008 ManKind Project Davis, CA Open House

Monday, June 16, 2008
For men in and around the northern California area:

In support of men changing themselves, and the world, one man at a time, join us at:

The 2008 ManKind Project Davis, CA Open House

Thursday, June 19, 2008; 7.00 pm sharp — 10.00 pm

All men welcome

Learn more about the ManKind Project, New Warrior Training Adventure, and Integration Groups from men in the ManKind Project

Bring your open mind and heart

For more information, contact DavisWarrior for the location.

RSVP appreciated

For more information about the ManKind Project, see mkp.org
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:18AM (-07:00)

What a Men’s Group Is For

Friday, June 20, 2008
What is Men’s Work?

Reprinted with permission; By Boysen Hodgson

I have had several men ask me - what this is all about … what do you do?

We sit in a circle on chairs. We talk to each other about ourselves. We listen intently. We do not shame or criticize. We do not spend time giving advice. We use processes to ‘dig in’ to those parts of ourselves that we find confusing, upsetting and STUCK. We resolve conflicts, both internal and external, by taking responsibility for ourselves.

A men’s group is a place to figure out what you want in your life, take steps to making it happen and continually look at what is getting in the way of you being fully alive and empowered.

Do you want better relationships?
Do you want to learn how to better handle situations that stump you over and over?
Do you want to break out of a rut that you have been living in for years?
Do you want to sit with men actively working to make the world a better place?

Here’s an even harder question … do you instinctively NOT trust men (or women or yourself)? You learned this somewhere. Not only is it bad for your physical health, but it is probably preventing you from living fully.

WE ALL HAVE FEELINGS. As men, we all share a lot of common understandings, feelings and experiences that we rarely share.

About 90% of what is happening in our daily interactions is UNCONSCIOUS. Our bodies are constantly feeding us a stream of information that we may or may not have thoughts about. Many of the reactions we experience with people on a day to day basis have little or nothing to do with the present, and everything to do with the psychological patterns that started being created in our brains from the earliest days of our lives.

As Men, it is culturally acceptable to deny, repress and shut down the emotions. But the interesting thing is - those emotions that we shut down tend to pop up in other ways and other places, many of them counter-productive to what we actually want in our lives. Addiction, violence, depression, lack of close relationships, anger, uncontrollable sadness, apathy, lack of motivation, chronic fear, chronic shame, anxiety, feelings of powerlessness. These are all related to repressed emotional states. Learning to connect
to these emotions opens a huge array of new possibilities - for your family, your work and the world.

What choices do you need to make? What skills do you need to build? What boundaries do you need to set? And WHO is going to be there to support you and offer you an honest look at who you are?

Many of us rely heavily on the women and intimate partners in our lives to meet our emotional needs. And that is great, but it is not their job - and they have probably let you know that. Many of the blocks you experience in your relationship are probably related to over-dependence. You can learn new ways of relating.

It is up to us to deal with our own internal landscape, to clean up our messes and to create the world that we want to leave behind for the next seven generations.

THAT is what a Men’s Group is for.

In order to show up, you will have to take a risk. You will have to show up at a place you’ve never been. This may feel scary. That's good. It means you are open to learning.

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Comments

- FreeEagle June 20, 2008

Hi Old Faithful Wolf:
   It feels good to connect with Brother Warriors worldwide through blogs. You've got an interesting site here. I'll add you up on my blogroll if it's okay with you. You might also recommend to me Brothers' blogs i can visit.

Sending my peace,
Al "FreeEagle" Mozol
Apr '04 Land of My Grandfathers
Houston

Elgin NWTA

Monday, July 07, 2008

I just love this picture from www.erikari.info/blog! I love it so much I didn't compress it like
I normally would for a post! Click on it to see the larger version and really get a sense of the photo.

Men in their joy! I love the diversity and the flavor!

I occasionally get e-mails asking me if the New Warrior Training Adventure is worth the money, worth spending 48 hours with a bunch of other men, worth the risk, etc.

Look at these men. What do you see? I see men living. And that is what ManKind Project is all about.

Bring it on, I say!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 02:52AM (-07:00)

How the ManKind Project Survived the End of the Men’s Movement

Tuesday, July 08, 2008

So, today, I just wanted to share a ManKind Project-related blog post that I found very interesting in its perspective. I hope you do, too.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

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How the ManKind Project Survived the End of “the Men’s Movement”

From Men on the Moon; A Blog for Men’s Studies

Historians, if they remember the mythopoetic men’s movement at all, place it roughly
between 1990 and 1993. Everyone seemed to be talking about men. Robert Bly’s Iron John and Sam Keen’s Fire in the Belly were each bestsellers. And then off the media radar. The men’s movement was dead. Or was it? One organization survived, even thrived, through it all: the New Warrior Network (NWN), later renamed ManKind Project (MKP).

The New Warrior Network had benefited from the boom years of the movement, certainly, but it also saw uninterrupted growth through the 1990s. Where five regional centers existed in 1991 and nine in 1992, a full 23 cities had Training Adventure weekends established by 1996. Some 10,000 men had been initiated by summer of the following year; by summer 2006, 32,000 had been through the weekend training. The NWN renamed itself “ManKind Project” in 1996 for publicity purposes, but the mission remained relatively steady. Despite high costs for new initiates ($500-$600 for a weekend) and demanding schedules for the volunteers, the organization has expanded well beyond its initial scope.

How has the ManKind Project (MKP) sustained itself? At first glance, it may have seemed the least likely to survive. New Warrior weekends received some of the most disparaging media coverage. The organization had even caught flack from Bly himself, calling it a quick-fix and a caricature of the warrior archetype. In a devastating turn of events, Ron Hering, one of the founders, was murdered in 1993. How did it manage to press on, even thrive? Four things appear to have set it apart: 1) simplification of principles, 2) an outline for progress, 3) federated centralization, and 4) an evangelistic temperament. These factors made it possible to outlast the boom.

First, MKP managed to boil its beliefs down to a minimum. Other expressions in the movement were so open-ended as to appear either muddled or dismissed as “New Agey.” The New Warrior Training Adventure weekends were able to focus on several key issues: getting men comfortable with each other, affirmation of male worth, grappling with family wounds, and formulation of a life mission. A modest set of wisdom could be imparted over the three-day event, enough to feel like true initiation had occurred. This initiation was understood to be a starting point, an entrance into male maturity. Moreover, the ManKind Project felt no need to multiply endless archetypes. Stories and images could be helpful, but the important thing was having a workable theory. This fell into place for them with Robert Moore’s work on the four-fold king, warrior, magician, lover. Moore became the unofficial theorist of the masculine soul, speaking at MKP conferences and expositing his anthropology in print. The organization also loosely appropriated Joseph Campbell’s stages of the hero journey as a paradigm for men’s lives. It was a manageable system in which to work.

Secondly, MKP offered a blueprint for masculine progress. After the initiation, having been introduced to the male mysteries, a man is given the next step. The microcosm of the “I-groups” allows men to process the weekend, bond with each other, and work on personal issues. Starting shortly after the weekend experience, these groups might last anywhere from eight weeks to several years, two to three hours a session. From there participants are encouraged to oversee other initiation weekends, or perhaps seek further training, as in Bill Kauth’s “Warrior Monk” program. Men have responded well to having some manner of structure, instead of having to invent their own way forward. Where other mythopoetic strands preferred a laissez faire model, the ManKind Project provides a plan for masculine growth. In the same vein, MKP’s activities have appealed to a spirit of “manly” proactivity that has usually already been inculcated in its participants. In my own experience, the most frequently used phrase in MKP is “Good work, men.”
training materials and suggested readings reinforce this approach, emphasizing self-determination, while giving practical steps to make that happen.

Third, naturally, MKP’s growth was made possible by centralization of the organization. From the outset its founders desired to maximize the program. Kauth was clearly the most important presence within MKP, but he believed strongly that the programs would only grow if managed under local leadership. While he, Tosi, and Hering had disproportionate control in the early years, they found ways to flatten the hierarchy as the organization expanded. What resulted was a presbyterian polity, something analogous to the United States government’s balance of powers. In 1991 the organization established a board consisting of one voting representative from each center. In 1993 an “executive training director” was appointed to ease the burden on local leaders, and after that numerous “chairs” were added as an executive branch. Certification of leaders was established, as was the writing of the “Governance and Council” guidelines. As one leader of the movement conceded, “To become bureaucratic is inevitable.” By creating a federation that governed both locally and nationally, the MKP adopted polity that had shown itself viable in America.

Finally, ManKind Project was evangelistic. By this one should not hear “Evangelical,” “doctrinaire,” or even “proselytizing.” Spirituality, being attached only to humanistic principles, allowed the organization to claim, “[W]e don’t invest any of the rituals we use with religious significance.” MKP, nonetheless, was built on a fairly aggressive word-of-mouth network. They understood themselves as having a mission to redeem men, and this mission meant initiating and training others. In language reminiscent of Christian revivalism, Robert Moore once said at rally, “The ManKind Project, I believe, represents a sincere effort to try and create for the first time in the history of our species a vessel of masculine initiation that strives truly to be inclusive . . . . This is a new thing on this planet – a grandiose undertaking, but a worthy undertaking that we have decided to work on.” He finished by saying, “These are the words I want to leave with you – Keep love alive, keep love alive! And if we keep love alive, my personal judgment is, nothing is going to stop us.” In such a way, the MKP retained the belief that men, if truly initiated and transformed, could become the impetus to heal the world. This gospel was used to recruit men for weekends and plug them into the leadership structures. Unlike individualistic men’s groups, MKP anchored men within the fraternal system, actively generating a network of “warrior brothers.”

ManKind Project presses on today. It faces new organizational struggles, but the content of the programs and the charisma of the participants remain. In all likelihood MKP will not initiate a new public phase of a men’s movement – but if it stays the course it should damn well survive the next.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:13AM (-07:00)

Take a Look for Yourself

Wednesday, July 09, 2008

I love this video by Monadnock Men’s Resource Center. It features two ManKind Project men and their experiences in MKP.

I have also provided an audio-only link, in the right sidebar under Informational FAQ Posts; in case you want to download and listen later.
Cult or Not to Cult?
Friday, July 11, 2008

So, as usual I was doing research for this blog and again came across this Web site by someone named Rick Ross. Normally I pass it up, but men ask if we are a cult and this piece gives me the chance to address the issues here from my point of view. These are my opinions and I stick by them.

The text below is By Rick Ross, "Expert Consultant and Intervention Specialist." I am not familiar with Rick Ross and the The Ross Institute, but these seem like good, sensible questions to test up against ManKind Project and cult activity.

So here we go. My responses are in blue text.

I'm out.  
Old-faithful Wolf

Ten warning signs of a potentially unsafe group/leader.

1. Absolute authoritarianism without meaningful accountability.  
MKP is all about accountability; not a problem here.

2. No tolerance for questions or critical inquiry.  
MKP men tolerate and encourage both; not a problem here.
3. No meaningful financial disclosure regarding budget, expenses such as an independently audited financial statement. MKP's books are open and not-for-profit; not a problem here.

4. Unreasonable fear about the outside world, such as impending catastrophe, evil conspiracies and persecutions. MKP men do not preach anything, let alone impending doom such as the end of the world; not a problem here.

5. There is no legitimate reason to leave, former followers are always wrong in leaving, negative or even evil. MKP men encourage men to take responsibility for their actions, wanna leave...go ahead; not a problem here.

6. Former members often relate the same stories of abuse and reflect a similar pattern of grievances. Men who leave have their reasons and, as I stated above, are encouraged to take care of themselves. If a man feels abused in any place in his life then I hope he will get away from it; not a problem here.

7. There are records, books, news articles, or television programs that document the abuses of the group/leader. I have seen very little of this, and I look for it; not a problem here.

8. Followers feel they can never be "good enough". Men are encouraged to find their strength and self in a world full of the opposite. If a man feels he is not good enough, he surely has a space with MKP men to work with that feeling; not a problem here.

9. The group/leader is always right. MKP men are often the first to admit they are wrong or not in integrity with their words; not a problem here.

10. The group/leader is the exclusive means of knowing "truth" or receiving validation, no other process of discovery is really acceptable or credible. MKP simply doesn't teach or support this idea; not a problem here.

Ten warning signs regarding people involved in/with a potentially unsafe group/leader.

1. Extreme obsessiveness regarding the group/leader resulting in the exclusion of almost every practical consideration. MKP men have their issues they bring with them. There are men who could be judged as obsessive and others not. Certainly this is not a feature of MKP men; not a problem here.

2. Individual identity, the group, the leader and/or God as distinct and separate categories of existence become increasingly blurred. Instead, in the follower's mind these identities become substantially and increasingly fused--as that person's involvement with the group/leader continues and deepens. Again, MKP men have their issues they bring with them. There are men who could be judged as obsessive and others not. Certainly this is not the predominant feature of MKP
men; not a problem here.

3. Whenever the group/leader is criticized or questioned it is characterized as "persecution".
I know hundreds of MKP men and not one has ever said they felt persecuted because someone had something bad to say about MKP, I know I never have; not a problem here.

4. Uncharacteristically stilted and seemingly programmed conversation and mannerisms, cloning of the group/leader in personal behavior.
I don't see this in MKP men; not a problem here.

5. Dependency upon the group/leader for problem solving, solutions, and definitions without meaningful reflective thought. A seeming inability to think independently or analyze situations without group/leader involvement.
I don't see this in MKP men; not a problem here.

6. Hyperactivity centered on the group/leader agenda, which seems to supercede any personal goals or individual interests.
I don't see this in MKP men, however, like any activity, some will get more into it than others; not a problem here.

7. A dramatic loss of spontaneity and sense of humor.
Quite the opposite; MKP men are increasingly more spontaneous and joyful. It comes from lifting off all the garbage we carry as men; not a problem here.

8. Increasing isolation from family and old friends unless they demonstrate an interest in the group/leader.
Quite the opposite; MKP men are increasingly more connected. This also comes from lifting off all the garbage we carry as men; not a problem here.

9. Anything the group/leader does can be justified no matter how harsh or harmful.
MKP has its ways and not all of them are for every man; not a problem here.

10. Former followers are at best-considered negative or worse evil and under bad influences. They can not be trusted and personal contact is avoided.
I honor any man who walks from something that doesn't work for him, it's my experience that this is the common thinking in MKP men; not a problem here.

Ten signs of a safe group/leader.

1. A safe group/leader will answer your questions without becoming judgmental and punitive.
This is common in MKP; not a problem here.

2. A safe group/leader will disclose information such as finances and often offer an independently audited financial statement regarding budget and expenses. Safe groups and leaders will tell you more than you want to know.
This is common in MKP; not a problem here.

3. A safe group/leader is often democratic, sharing decision making and encouraging accountability and oversight.
This is common in MKP; not a problem here.
4. A safe group/leader may have disgruntled former followers, but will not vilify, excommunicate and forbid others from associating with them. This is common in MKP and men are honored for their choice to leave; not a problem here.

5. A safe group/leader will not have a paper trail of overwhelmingly negative records, books, articles and statements about them. This is common in MKP; not a problem here.

6. A safe group/leader will encourage family communication, community interaction and existing friendships and not feel threatened. This is common in MKP; not a problem here.

7. A safe group/leader will recognize reasonable boundaries and limitations when dealing with others. This is common in MKP, in fact, MKP encourages reestablishing boundaries where they are missing; not a problem here.

8. A safe group/leader will encourage critical thinking, individual autonomy and feelings of self-esteem. This is common in MKP; not a problem here.

9. A safe group/leader will admit failings and mistakes and accept constructive criticism and advice. This is so common in MKP that it makes me smile to know these men; not a problem here.

10. A safe group/leader will not be the only source of knowledge and learning excluding everyone else, but value dialogue and the free exchange of ideas. This is common in MKP. MKP strives to be inclusive and cutting edge in developing programs for all men; not a problem here.

Don't be naïve, develop a good BS Detector.

You can protect yourself from unsafe groups and leaders by developing a good BS detector. Check things out, know the facts and examine the evidence. A safe group will be patient with your decision making process. If a group or leader grows angry and anxious just because you want to make an informed and careful decision before joining; beware. This is great advise. MKP men want you to do what is best for you, check it out, go to an iGroup before you do the NWTA, keep in touch with your BS detector; not a problem here.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:22PM (-07:00)

Comments

- Lawrence January 25, 2007

That is a particularly good posting. Great work!
I have seen this "discussion" as well and tried to take part before being banned by the proprietor as a flaming "troll." Since then I have watched as a variety of men have logged on to discuss their own lives and experiences with MKP, most to be insulted, ridiculed or ignored in a fairly predictable pattern. Having read through scores (if not hundreds) of posts on that thread a clear pattern emerges.

1. "Hurtgirl" complains about MKP, asks a question about group or her husband/boyfriend
2. "MKPguy" tries to answer, explains own experience.
3. MKPguy or partial material is mocked by someone with no direct experience.
4. "MKPguy" tries to answer again, explaining own experience
5. "RRModerator" labels MKPguy as "apologist," reposts earlier allegations as established fact
6. MKPguy gives up or is banned by RRModerator
7. New Hurtgirl complains about MKP, asks question.

Having watched it happen over and over, I am convinced that this web site is about drumming up web hits and potential business for the man who runs it: self-aggrandizement, not meaningful answers.

There are two main sources of these allegations, both of them self-published and prone to banning anyone who points out flaws in their logic


Since the Houston Press article on the death of Michael Scinto (who had a drug and alcohol relapse after attending an NWTA in Houston) they have been slightly more active, but not more persuasive.

I think that the answers you provide on this post are correct, but perhaps a little too glib. One very interesting article you pointed out to me on the "distributed federalism" of MKP seems very much worth considering and is at odds with many of the criticisms (http://mensstudies.wordpress.com/2008/07/05/mkp-survived)

The decentralization and near autonomy of individual centers and of I-Groups within centers would argue strongly against some secret master plan, and many MKP participants probably have about as much to do with leadership discussions and decisions as a Catholic parishioner does with the College of Cardinals.

People perceive that men involved in MKP may have changed, and if one does not like that change, it only makes sense to blame it all on the evil and satanic organization. No, sirree, there was nothing imperfect before. Post hoc ergo propter hoc and so on.
To encourage more general and open discussion of these criticisms, there is also a general Yahoo group to combine positive, negative and ambivalent views on MKP

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mkp-general/

I would be very careful to use Rick Ross as a reference in this post. In addition to being an admitted convicted felon and lacking any credentials beyond a high school diploma, he has gotten a vote of no confidence from many of the other (professionally trained) people in his field. He has a reputation for self promotion and questions linger about the impact his un-invited input had on the outcome of the Waco-Branch Davidian Tragedy.

See- http://www.usdoj.gov/05publications/waco/wacofour.html

The Tension of the Opposites

Monday, July 21, 2008

“The real accomplishment in life is the art of being a warrior, which is the only way to balance the terror of being a man with the wonder of being a man.” -- Carlos Castaneda

A simple statement, right?

Think about where you are in your life...are you who you present to the world? Are you able to live in both worlds; the terror and the wonder? Are you able to live in the tension of these opposites? Where are you?

I am here; here to support your terror and your wonder; here, with more than 43,000 other men. Here.

I’m out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:28AM (-07:00)
"Men are inherently gentle, intimate, responsible, enthusiastic, sensual, tolerant, courageous, honest, vulnerable, affectionate, proud, spiritual, committed, wild, nurturing, peaceful, helpful, intense, compassionate, happy and to fully and safely express all emotions. When will we stop training him to be otherwise?"

From Gordon Clay, Webmaster of Menstuff.org

Men are so many things. But first we are men. In my mind everything else is from this basis. It makes no difference to me if you are not the color I am nor the sexual orientation I am nor the politics that that I lean toward nor the spiritual beliefs I believe.

It only matters that you are a man. That much we have in common. Our lives are in that basis.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

The Vast Grayness

Friday, August 08, 2008
This article touched something in me...maybe my sadness that men are struggling to feel anything. Or maybe that many people...males and females...struggle to feel anything.

So, I am asking you to reach out and take a risk. Take the New Warrior Training Adventure. It's a step in the right direction...to feeling your feelings, knowing them, and living in them.

I think that's a good thing.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Mad, Sad, Glad, Fear, Shame
11/29/2006
By Peter Putnam

I had read thousands of books. I had written a novel, a screenplay, hundreds of poems, a master's thesis on Melville.

But I was emotionally illiterate.

"What are you feeling?"

When I was asked that, usually by a woman, words, usually my best friends in the world, would flee. A great abyss of silence would open up. Vast grayness.

"I don't know. OK, I guess."

Then, at 42, I went on the Mankind Project's New Warrior Training Adventure weekend.

"What are you feeling?" asked this guy wearing sweats and built like a linebacker.
Looking at him, I would have expected a different kind of question — maybe, "How much can you bench press?"

"I don't know. I'm feeling good."

"'Good' isn't a feeling," he said. "Mad, sad, glad, fear or shame?" he asked, ticking each one off on a thick finger. "Pick one."

I couldn't, at first. It took me a minute. I ran through each one on my own fingers — mad, sad, glad, fear, shame — trying them out. I was getting a little frustrated — was "frustrated" a feeling? I looked at the guy, expecting him to be showing signs of one of the many impatient coaches I had played for, the impatient father I had grown up with: Will you hurry up already, for chrissake? Men who didn't have time for feelings. But he was just standing there calmly, arms behind his back, giving me the time to get out of my head and feel whatever it was I was feeling. I ticked them off on my fingers again, slowly this time: mad? sad? glad? fear? shame?

"Sad," I finally said. "I'm feeling sad." And I suddenly felt the tears forming in my eyes, my body telling me I had picked correctly.

"Good," he said. "Your sadness is welcome here."

Hearing that for the first time in my life — your sadness is welcome here — released the tears. I felt them rush down my face without feeling a drop of shame.

—From The Song of Father-Son
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:51AM (-07:00)

Comments

- rorybowman August 08, 2008
I was first introduced to "the four feelings" from Bill Kauth's terrific 1992 book "A Circle of Men: The Original Manual for Men's Support Groups."

Having discussed this dozens of times with three times as many men, I have come to believe that "guilt" and "shame" are not feelings but rather identities based on beliefs about what one has done (guilt) or who one is (shame).

Your mileage may, of course, vary.

I Invite...You!

Wednesday, August 13, 2008

I love this video. Men...ManKind Project men...reaching out to invite you!

I love it. I invite you! Listen for 3 minutes and see if this speaks to you.

Come on...take the risk.

I'm out.
Four Stone Circle Man

Tuesday, August 19, 2008

A man asked me what the graphic at left was all about. So here goes.

I am in an I-Group in a California small town. A couple years back, when the group was created, I needed a graphic to sort of launch the group.

In the ManKind Project, we use the four male archetypes of the Lover, Warrior, Magician, and King as part of our processes. So I started there.

The IGroup is called the Four Stone Circle and that gave me a point of reference. I created the stones of the archetype initials from a round stone graphic I found on the Internet. From there I used a stick-figure drawing I created in Photoshop. The graphic just started to have a life of its own.

The gold coloring is the gold we men all have in us. The circle represents the circle of men that meet every Thursday night in my small town and the greater circle of all men. The lettered stones are the four archetypes. He wears a talisman from his New Warrior Training Adventure weekend. The petroglyph-like man carries an object. It is up to you to interpret its meaning. I have found men really get involved in what the object is and what it means. I'd love to hear what you think.

Also, I must confess that the man is not wearing a loin cloth, except on this blog. More for you to ponder.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Post by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:35PM (-07:00)
Men in a Sacred Men's Circle

Thursday, September 04, 2008

A men's circle is a magical place where change happens in small places inside our souls; sometimes without our awareness until a later time went the light clicks on and we realize the change. Other times the shift is gigantic and we are blown from our seats with such force as to alter the entire room's energy.

I see these changes happen every week in my ManKind Project men's circle.

I hope one day you will join me there.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

What is a Sacred Men's Circle?
By Jack Clarke

It's men taking conscious responsibility for their own lives, not blaming others for their problems.

It's men who deliberately decide to learn and grow.

It's men that don't have to be right, except for themselves.

It's men seeing problems as lessons, perhaps in a long series of lives and lessons.

It's men who believe we are what we think we are, and can change ourselves by changing our thinking.

It's men that feel they can change the world by changing themselves, not by trying to change others.

It's men who search for strength from the universe by going inside themselves.

It's men that recognize love doesn't have to have conditions attached.

It's men loving and knowing themselves in order to better know and love others.

It's men who see others as not better than nor less than, but rather different than themselves, yet part of the same whole.

It's men that choose their own path rather than follow dogma.

It's men honoring your right to your own path, not theirs.
It’s men who realize that now is all we have, since yesterday is just a thought and so is tomorrow.

It’s men interested in owning themselves rather than things.

It’s men who see joy in life rather than pain, having experienced enough pain already.

It’s men curious about extra sensory perception and all it implies.

It’s men in all walks of life, from business persons to flower essence healers, psychologists to UFO investigators.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:48AM (-07:00)

Never Giving Up

Wednesday, September 17, 2008

"Being a warrior has nothing to do with waging war. Being a warrior means you have the courage to know who you are. Warriors never give up on anyone, including themselves."


Being an initiated New Warrior (a man who has completed the NWTA) means nothing if I don't live my life in service to my mission. A warrior knows his mission and knows what needs to be done to stay on task with that mission.

Do you have a mission? Maybe MKP can help you with that...maybe it can't...that's up to you to step into.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 02:48AM (-07:00)
"Standing at the crossroads, trying to read the signs
To tell me which way I should go to find the answer,
And all the time I know,
Plant your love and let it grow."

From Let It Grow, by Eric Clapton, off the Crossroads CD, 1998

I am pretty sure there comes a time in every man's life when he stands at the crossroad and wonders what may be ahead. He must stand and face his fears and anxious heart; either let go to the fear of the unknown or stay rooted in the past where the known exists.

This is the thing, though. You will have to stand there again another time. Maybe not tomorrow or even next week. But you will stand again at the crossroad. You will face that same fear over and over until you get in there and find the love.

The ManKind Project does not tell you which road to take. But when you decide to take the crossroad of the unknown, me and other ManKind Project men will be there to walk next to you and hold a space for you.

We have walked the into the unknown; taken the unknown crossroad.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:42PM (-07:00)
When you look in the mirror, really look hard, do you see the man you really want to be?

This is a question we ask ourselves in the ManKind Project.

So I am asking you...are you satisfied with what you see? How does it feel to look into your own eyes and hold the gaze. What is there? What is not there?

I'll tell you from my experience, many men cannot and do not look at themselves in the mirror. Oh they may give themselves a glance here or there, but to stand with intention to look into your own eyes is pretty tough for most men.

Gonna try it? Look in the mirror and see what is there.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:41AM (-07:00)

Comments

- Dfish October 08, 2008
Brother, can i post this one on my blog?

Freeeagle
Land of my Grandfathers
Apr '04

- Old-faithfulWolf October 09, 2008
Yes, dfish, please do, with attribution. Thanks.

o-f wolf
"You'll never find
Peace of mind
Till you listen to your heart"

From Kissing a Fool, by George Michael off the Faith CD, 1987

I am not going to find piece of mind until I listen to my heart. Will you?

What does your heart say to you when you look at where you are in you life?
When I listen to mine, it is longing to tell you that men in the ManKind Project are just
men looking to listen to their hearts. Do they always listen...no...but they continue to work
the idea.

I am asking you to listen to your heart. Is it longing for a change, for a different beat, for
what?

Come do the New Warrior Training Adventure and see if you can hear your heart after
that. I bet you can.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:56AM (-07:00)
I am often asked, "how much does it cost"?

The New Warrior Training Adventure costs about $650.00 US dollars and 48 hours. I would ask you to look at how much it costs you to live your life like it is now?

Will you get your money's worth from the New Warrior Training Adventure? I offer no guarantees. Yet, I have never had a man mention the money after the training, except to say, somewhat in passing, it was worth "a lot more than what I paid."

In case you care where the money goes, the Arizona MKP community shows a breakdown here.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:22AM (-07:00)

Comments

- Anonymous
  May 04, 2005
  It's a hell of a lot cheaper than a couple months of therapy. AND it's the gift that keeps on giving.

- RoryBowman
  October 21, 2008
  It is a point of pride to me that (to the best of my knowledge) no man in the past several years has been denied the opportunity to attend an NWTA or the following PIT because of financial inability to pay. Some centers (Kentucky?) include the cost of the PIT with the training and some do not. I believe that Arizona even offers a special Gift It Forward Training (GIFT) specifically for this.

  If a man wants to get the most out of MKP I strongly suggest that they budget for both the NWTA and the follow-up PIT, and contact their local center if this is a financial hardship. My first five years in MKP cost a grand total of less than $1000, and dramatically improved my quality of life.

  It is my judgement that rarely is the inability to pay the real reason that men delay their work, so I encourage folks to consider that. A lot of men have a lot of shame and anxiety around money. I encourage those without it to ask for what they need and those with it to consider how best it can be used. As an organization, MKP can do much more to make the issue of cost irrelevant.
First Hawaii NWTA

Thursday, October 23, 2008

Today I wanted to share an e-mail from a ManKind Project man who recently staffed a New Warrior Training Adventure. What makes these words special for me is that the training was the first to take place in Hawaii; further stretching MKP to new areas. So, I hope you can get a sense of the honor and joy that men feel when staffing a training for the men who step up for it.

Will you be one of those men who takes the risk?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

I've just returned from Hawaii, where eleven of us NorCal Warriors staffed (and MOS-ed) the state's first-ever NWTA at Camp Honokaia, a boy scout camp in the northern end of the Big Island.

It was one of the best weekends of my life. Thursday afternoon before we started, two native kahus (spiritual men) arrived to bless the land and welcome the elements of water, sun, land, and wind, singing traditional songs and braiding a long rope of ti leaves energized by each staff man.

Since this was the first MKP Hawaii training ever, the local brothers had done a HUGE amount of site prep assembling the training. We set up the rest of the greeting, and by Friday afternoon we were ready.

I can tell you that not a single initiate was late! They all arrived by 5:20, something I've never seen before. The first man arrived almost two hours early. These men were eager!

Without revealing anything confidential, the staff and leaders were thrown a number of curves throughout the weekend, some of which were the result of a first NWTA on a new
site, and some due to the initiates' particular needs and challenges. Our leaders were brilliant, however, improvising and going with the flow, with everyone on staff generally trusting that even if it was off the map, what was happening needed to happen. It was beautiful to behold.

One of my favorite moments was a ceremony held outside. The moon was out, and the air was warm, and I felt like a part of something thousands of years old.

Besides a few mosquito bites, the main thing I took away from this first Island training was the absolute commitment of the Hawaiian men. Many of us have met Hawaiian brothers when they've come to NorCal to staff or attend PITs, but to see them in their element -- building their community, serving selflessly, supporting not only the initiates but each other through the weekend -- was absolutely inspiring. These are some of the hardest-working men I've met in a long time. Many of them have only staffed once or twice, but you'd have never known that from their dedication and skills. I was in awe.

For me, there is nothing like an NWTA to remind me that I am doing the work I want to do and making a difference in the world. To witness one in a new community with as much juice as Hawaii had was very powerful. I judge that the New Brothers I met on the way out were changed forever. Some of them got out of their cars to hug me. Some were crying. All were blown open by the experience, and I was too.

Kudos to the Hawaiian men for the job they did; kudos to us for supporting and fostering a strong new arm to our organization. Aloha and mahalo!

In service,

Colin Berry
Silver Wolf
Camp Augusta, September 04
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 09:53AM (-07:00)

Comments

- Dfish October 24, 2008

Congratulations Brothers, and more power...

Al "FreeEagle" Mozol
LOMG, Houston Apr 04

Shaping Your NWTA

Tuesday, October 28, 2008
A ManKind Project man talks about his NTWA here.

I am often taken back by other men's experiences with the NWTA. Each man gets something only he can get. That's part of the magic of the ManKind Project. Each man shows up to the training with his own world of experiences that shapes his NWTA.

You can get that, too. You can get an experience that is unique to you. Sign up and take the risk of getting your own experience.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:40AM (-07:00)

Comments

- SleeplessTyrant  
November 17, 2008
Thanks for the link, Old-faithful Wolf. NWTA continues to enrich my life here in the Philly community. I hope my experience can help other men become better.

The Only Task Worthy

Wednesday, October 29, 2008
So this post is dedicated to my brothers in the ManKind Project...and for me...to remind me of a what I choose.

If it speaks to you, maybe the ManKind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure will, too.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

From The Teachings of Don Juan, by Carlos Castaneda, 1999

A man goes to knowledge as he goes to war: wide-awake, with fear, with respect, and with absolute assurance. Going to knowledge or going to war in any other manner is a mistake, and whoever makes it might never live to regret it.

A warrior chooses a path with heart, any path with heart, and follows it; and then he rejoices and laughs. He knows because he sees that his life will be over altogether too soon. He sees that nothing is more important than anything else.

A warrior is a hunter. He calculates everything. That’s control. Once his calculations are over, he acts. He lets go. That’s abandon. A warrior is not a leaf at the mercy of the wind. No one can push him; no one can make him do things against himself or against his better judgment. A warrior is tuned to survive, and he survives in the best of all possible fashions.

A warrior must cultivate the feeling that he has everything needed for the extravagant journey that is his life. What counts for a warrior is being alive. Life in itself is sufficient, self-explanatory and complete. Therefore, one may say without being presumptuous that the experience of experiences is being alive.

A warrior lives by acting, not by thinking about acting, nor by thinking about what he will think when he has finished acting.
A warrior must learn to make every act count, since he is going to be here in this world for only a short while, in fact, too short for witnessing all the marvels of it.

Anything is one of a million paths. Therefore, a warrior must always keep in mind that a path is only a path; if he feels that he should not follow it, he must not stay with it under any conditions. His decision to keep on that path or to leave it must be free of fear or ambition. He must look at every path closely and deliberately. There is a question that a warrior has to ask, mandatorily: ‘Does this path have a heart?’

Feeling important makes one heavy, clumsy and vain. To be a warrior one needs to be light and fluid.

If a warrior is to succeed at anything, the success must come gently, with a great deal of effort but with no stress or obsession.

Intent is not a thought, or an object, or a wish. Intent is what can make a man succeed when his thoughts tell him that he is defeated. It operates in spite of the warrior’s indulgence. Intent is what makes him invulnerable. Intent is what sends a shaman through a wall, through space, to infinity.

Only as a warrior can one withstand the path of knowledge. A warrior cannot complain or regret anything. His life is an endless challenge, and challenges cannot possibly be good or bad. Challenges are simply challenges. The basic difference between an ordinary man and a warrior is that a warrior takes everything as a challenge, while an ordinary man takes everything as a blessing or a curse.

The humbleness of a warrior is not the humbleness of the beggar. The warrior lowers his head to no one, but at the same time, he doesn’t permit anyone to lower his head to him. The beggar, on the other hand, falls to his knees at the drop of a hat and scrapes the floor to anyone he deems to be higher; but at the same time, he demands that someone lower than him scrape the floor for him.

The most effective way to live is as a warrior. A warrior may worry and think before making any decision, but once he makes it, he goes his way, free from worries or thoughts; there will be a million other decisions still awaiting him. That’s the warrior’s way.

All paths are the same: they lead nowhere. However, a path without a heart is never enjoyable. On the other hand, a path with heart is easy—it does not make a warrior work at liking it; it makes for a joyful journey; as long as a man follows it, he is one with it.

Whenever a warrior decides to do something, he must go all the way, but he must take responsibility for what he does. No matter what he does, he must know first why he is doing it, and then he must proceed with his actions without having doubts or remorse about them.

An average man is too concerned with liking people or with being liked himself. A warrior likes, that’s all. He likes whatever or whomever he wants, for the hell of it.

The self-confidence of the warrior is not the self-confidence of the average man. The average man seeks certainty in the eyes of the onlooker and calls that self-confidence. The warrior seeks impeccability in his own eyes and calls that humbleness.
The warrior: silent in his struggle, undetainable because he has nothing to lose, functional and efficacious because he has everything to gain.

Warriors do not win victories by beating their heads against walls, but by overtaking the walls. Warriors jump over walls; they don't demolish them.

If his spirit is distorted he should simply fix it—purge it, make it perfect — because there is no other task in our entire lives which is more worthwhile… To seek the perfection of the warrior's spirit is the only task worthy of our temporariness, our manhood.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:37AM (-07:00)

MKP Man Ed Fell Interviewed on The New Man

Friday, October 31, 2008

From Tripp Lanier and the New Man podcast web site:

"Introducing the New Man. Beyond the Macho Jerk and the New Age Wimp. The New Man lives a life where his actions in the world line up with his deepest values and convictions. He's aware that there's more to life than just earning a living, having six pack abs and finding someone with whom to spend the night. In other words, The New Man lives a life of meaning, finds integrity in every moment and always looks for his truest expression. Listen in as we have fun, entertaining discussions with extraordinary men and women exploring what it means to be a New Man."

Click here to listen a no advertisement MP3 format file of the latest podcast featuring Ed Fell of the ManKind Project. Here's the teaser for the podcast:

"Episode 35: Ed Fell: The ManKind Project

How much bullshit are you tolerating?

Are there things you wish you could do before you die, but are not getting around to them? Are you tolerating a life that you never thought you would have, feeling that there
is no way to change things?

Ed Fell wants to help us out. As a longtime member of The ManKind Project, Ed points to the fact that men have no initiation ceremonies in American culture and often drift through life, unsure of themselves as a result.

We have heard several times on the New Man about the importance of initiation ceremony. The ManKind Project is dedicated to giving men a healthy initiation to manhood and giving us an experience of who we truly are and what it feels like to be our authentic selves. From that experience of initiation, The ManKind Project offers a close network of support and challenge, to help men live their lives to the fullest.

The last item on that "bucket list" might just be the journey inward, to really get to know ourselves.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:30AM (-07:00)

Transcend Your Limitations

Tuesday, November 04, 2008

From SoaringEagle at GrownUps New Zealand.

This is a post that describes the ManKind Project pretty well. Read on and sign up for the New Warrior Training Adventure.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
When you look in the mirror, really look hard, do you see the man you really want to be?
-- Feel stuck, trapped, jammed up?
-- Want to improve your relationship with your wife or your children?
-- Feel like you need support with what's going on in your life, but don't know where to find it?
-- Plenty of opportunities for beer with the boys, but trouble making real friends?
-- Looking for opportunities to take on leadership?
-- Life on an upswing and looking for a way to "give back"?

I invite you to the 'New Warrior Training' (NWTA) - take a good, hard look at your life – transcend your limitations -start a journey towards becoming more empowered and centered in your family, work and community.

Be welcomed into a community of men governed by honesty, integrity and a level of trust that most men never know.
Our values are:

Accountability & Integrity: A warrior
* Is fully accountable for his actions and their consequences
* stands up and takes full responsibility for his life
* steps forward as a man without apologizing for who he is
* has an open heart and compassionate mindfulness

Connection To Feelings: A warrior
* connects with his feelings with his feet on the ground
* can clarify his feelings and express those feelings directly and authentically
* balances the depth of his heart with the wisdom of his mind
* is authentic

Leadership: A warrior
* steps up to lead or mentor
* puts himself on the line and takes risks, with the courage to be vulnerable
* is fully alive and present
* gives his gifts to the world with a sense of purpose and clarity, with neither apology nor arrogance
* steps into his relationships fully - he is
-- able to commit
-- able to be intimate
-- able to listen with his heart
-- able to speak his deepest truth
-- The Blessing of Elders

Elder men are
* valued as repositories of wisdom, strength and unconditional love.
* honored for the "grandfather energy" that only an elder can provide.

Elder men
* bless, counsel and gift younger men with the experience and learning they have gathered though the years.

Interested?
MKP (the organization behind the New Warrior Training Adventure) is a non-profit organization promoting men's support groups. MKP is in 9 countries worldwide. We have trained more than 40,000 men. It's all about helping men find purpose and directions in their lives.

The Wellington NWTA is September 26-28, at Camp Wainui, Coast Road, Wainuiomata. Here is some reference material about the weekend, about MKP, the non-profit organization behind the NWTA, and what other men have to say about the weekend:

About the training weekend:
Some writing and some videos from men that have been to the training:
http://nwtamkp.blogspot.com/
About MKP NZ, and our community
http://www.mkp.org.nz/about.php
We are all over the world:
http://www.mkp.org/centers.htm

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:51AM (-08:00)

Comments

- Dfish

November 11, 2008

OFW, thanks again for the permission to post "man in a mirror." I've just posted it on my blog.

An e-hug to you Brother

FreeEagle

The Dance You Do

Friday, November 14, 2008

This is a great piece. Sort of an FAQ for NWTA.

Enjoy...and then sign up and stop dancin'!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
OK, now let's be honest about what happens next. Getting to one of the trainings is actually fairly easy. They're offered all over the U. S. and in many other countries-United Kingdom, Germany, South Africa, Australia. You can find out the dates online and begin the registration process in about 30 seconds. But what usually happens in the process of getting there is The Dance. One step forward, two back. You know you're dancing when you have one of these thoughts:

- "I'm too different (old, young, gay, straight, fat, thin, poor, rich, black, white) to go." There's no excuse that's too trivial to be used as the reason I can't change.
- "That's way too much money. I'd rather buy toys or pay the rent." That's right—it does cost some money-averaging $600. However, so that money is not the major obstacle, the New England Men's Network has an innovative co-creative payment policy which allows the amount to slide, based on how much a man can afford & how much they get from it.
- "Wouldn't it be possible to read a book or magazine article and get to the same place?" No, actually the training is an experience, not a set of ideas. Sorry, you'll need to show up, and not just with your brain. You should pack your body, your passion, and your soul, too.
- "I'll do that someday-next year, next millennium. Only now I'm not quite ready. I need to... (return some library books, mow the lawn, de-fragment my hard drive)." One of the most common things men say after they go through the training is, "What was I doing for the last twenty years?" The best time to do the training adventure? Right now.
- "I'm in therapy, so I don't really need this." Or "I'm not in therapy, so I'm not prepared for this." Nice try, both of you.
- "All right-this is some sort of pyramid scam with a lot of people getting rich, right?" The Mankind Project is a non-profit organization. The vast majority of those who staff a training pay money themselves for the privilege of staffing, and devote huge chunks of time and energy to make the training happen. The training leaders get paid, but not much. If people get rich from the trainings, the enrichment has nothing to do with money.
- "I know how these workshops go: You get a little insight, a little warm-and-fuzzy bonding, then you go back to your life and do business as usual. Pretty soon you ask, remind me-what exactly did I get out of that?" Actually, that's probably right, if the training were the only thing a man did. The heart of the Mankind Project is the I-Groups which start after the training, composed of those who have finished a weekend. These usually meet weekly, and (here's the good news) after 6-8 weeks of learning the ropes with a facilitator, they run on their own with no cost to the
members.

• "This is a bunch of navel-gazing. Men who have a good experience together, gain some insight into themselves, then resume destroying the planet and terrorizing their families without making a real difference." A key part of MKP is action in the world-men define themselves as men of service. There are many areas of possible service-working with kids, building a more compassionate company, saving the planet, working in prisons. Even being present with your family is a kind of service.

• "Hold it—this sounds like some sort of religious cult. I already have a religion, thank you." Or "I can't stand religion, so count me out." Men from all major religions are currently active in the MKP—Jesuits, orthodox Jews, Muslims, and Protestant Christians. Also, many are involved who see themselves as non-religious.

The point I'm trying to make about The Dance is that it's normal, maybe even necessary. A man shouldn't enter the change process lightly. When we approach change of any kind, one part of us says optimistically, "Maybe I'll change," and another part freezes and says, "Oh, oh... Maybe I'll change." This is true whether it is a job change, moving in with a domestic partner, or buying a house. Change is serious business. If you're doing The Dance, this means that you're taking the process seriously. It means that all parts of you have their eyes wide open.

Entering the weekend is jumping into the unknown. You don't know what's going to happen. There's no syllabus, no schedule circulated in advance. So the dance you do when you're deciding about going to a weekend is the same dance you do when you're entering the dark future of any change in your life. You may or may not know a man who has gone through the weekend. If you do, he may be enthusiastic, but is generally vague about what happens. One thing I guarantee, though. You will be challenged—physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually, and personally. (Yeah, ok, a lot of adverbs). So another unknown is this: how will you respond to the challenges? Will you isolate? Lie to yourself and everyone else? Blow up? Freeze up? Screw up? Open up?

Doing the weekend is an adventure. No, you haven't done this before. After you're done dancing, if you decide to do it, you may have a hard time explaining to the significant people in your life what you're doing and why. You may have a hard time explaining it to yourself, like Edmund Hillary did when he made that feeble statement about Everest: "because it's there." But you know, as you stand at the foot of the mountain in your life, that there is something which demands that it be climbed—that there is something about that one peak that will orient things and won't let you rest. No, the weekend won't climb the mountain for you. That's your life and your job. But it may help you name the mountain, it may help you begin to hear its insistent whispering.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:10AM (-08:00)

Change Starts With Me

Wednesday, November 19, 2008
"You must be the change you wish to see in the world."
Gandhi

This is my wish for change...

Men will wake up and see their true power and strengths.
Men will see that they are responsible for everything around them.
Men will be accountable for what they do; how they do it; why they do it; the consequences of doing or not doing it.
Men will see the gifts they bring to the world.
Men will live in the now; stay present.
Men will answer, with integrity, the tough questions of their lives.
Men will be generous with the wonderful gifts they have to give.

In my MKP iGroup this is called projecting. I am projecting what I want onto other men. I am giving away my power to change by wishing it on other men.

I would be challenged by the men in my iGroup to restate this in simple I statements.

I sound like this...

I will wake up and see my true power and strengths.
I will see that I am responsible for everything around me.
I will be accountable for what I do; how I do it; why I do it; the consequences of doing or not doing it.
I will see the gifts I bring to the world.
I will live in the now; stay present.
I will answer, with integrity, the tough questions of my life.
I will be generous with the wonderful gifts I have to give.

In MKP, I am supported in making change in my life. Men (I) hold a space for me to change and look at what that change would mean to me and those around me. Men (I) support my struggles, my fears, my pain, my joy, my ambivalence, my mistrust.

I create the change I want to see in the world.
Will you take the steps toward change? Will you challenge yourself to speak for yourself and stand in it? Will you walk with me while I change me?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:49AM (-08:00)

Wilderness

Monday, November 24, 2008

The Carl Sandburg passage, below, is just where I am at today.

Jump in and sign up for the New Warrior Training Adventure. Just jump in.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Wilderness
by Carl Sandburg

There is a wolf in me...fangs pointed for tearing gashes...a red tongue for raw meat...and the hot lapping of blood--I keep this wolf because the wilderness gave it to me and the wilderness will not let it go.

There is a fox in me...a silver-gray fox...I sniff and guess...I pick things out of the wind and air...I nose in the dark night and take sleepers and eat them and hide the feathers...I circle and loop and double-cross.

There is a hog in me...a snout and a belly...a machinery for eating and grunting...a machinery for sleeping satisfied in the sun--I got this too from the wilderness and the wilderness will not let it go.

There is a fish in me...I know I came from saltblue water-gates...I scurried with shoals of herring...I blew waterspouts with porpoises...before land was...before the water went
There is a baboon in me...clambering-clawed...dog-faced...yawping a galoot's hunger...hairy under the armpits...here are the hawk-eyed hankering men...here are the blond and blue-eyed women...here they hide curled asleep waiting...ready to snarl and kill...ready to sing and give milk...waiting--I keep the baboon because the wilderness says so.

There is an eagle in me and a mockingbird...and the eagle flies among the Rocky Mountains of my dreams and fights among the Sierra crags of what I want...and the mockingbird warbles in the early forenoon before the dew is gone, warbles in the underbrush of my Chattanoogas of hope, gushes over the blue Ozark foothills of my wishes--And I got the eagle and the mockingbird from the wilderness.

O, I got a zoo, I got a menagerie, inside my ribs, under my bony head, under my red-valve heart--and I got something else: it is a man-child heart, a woman-child heart: it is a father and mother and lover: it came from God-Knows-Where: it is going to God-Knows-Where--For I am the keeper of the zoo: I say yes and no: I sing and kill and work: I am a pal of the world: I came from the wilderness.

In this post, a ManKind Project man from the Pacific Northwest center shares his first time staffing experience at a New Warrior Training Adventure. He tells his story of serving the men who come to complete the New Warrior Training Adventure.

Is this what you want for you?

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

I Will Never Be the Same

Monday, December 01, 2008

In this post, a ManKind Project man from the Pacific Northwest center shares his first time staffing experience at a New Warrior Training Adventure. He tells his story of serving the men who come to complete the New Warrior Training Adventure.

Is this what you want for you?

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf
I Will Never Be the Same
By Bobby Bakshi

I believe that we are all one with our creator. I believe that life is a playground for us to live out the lessons we are to learn from and evolve. It is a chapter in our soul’s journey. The ManKind Project represents the closest I have felt to heaven on earth. For me, a community thrives thanks to the founders’ deliberate design of embracing our light and our shadow. That was the belief I stepped in with when I arrived on Thursday September 4, 2008 to begin the journey of my rookie staffing experience. This is an account of what I gave and took away during this magical NWTA weekend.

The theme of the weekend was impermanence, change and forgiveness. I believe it was thanks to this intention and a strong container built over two months that this NWTA was deemed to be among the most successful and flawless, according to Les Sinclair our leader. Let me begin to describe my experience with a few words about Les, from my perspective. Yes, the man is a legend. He is the embodiment of “servant leader” – part of his mission statement. He models the sovereign’s humility, the lover’s joy, the warrior’s strength and the magician’s intuition for me. He witnessed and blessed my dream and I am so grateful for the universe aligning for him to lead my rookie experience. There are many men I desire to mention by name but I will speak to my experience of those men without naming them for the rest of this sharing.

My personal theme for the weekend emerged in the form of one of my favorite songs/prayers: “I’ll never be the same.” Here’s a quote from Ester Nicholson’s song (click on the link if you choose):

“Been through the fire
been through the flood
Wouldn’t change a single thing
Not even if I could.
I’m so grateful
For all the changes I’ve been through
Made me reach a little higher
Draws me nearer to you
I’ll never be the same.”

This song fit well in my holding space with the weekend’s theme. The impermanence of my life – while I am blessed with a healthy body, I was full of the emotional scars I dragged around before. I believe my initiation a year ago was my final cleansing into my wholeness, into my truth, after years of living a lie. Four years ago, I started the journey of speaking my truth and recognizing that I cannot make the changes in my life I needed on my own. I stepped into Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous recovery that I give full credit for saving my marriage. Impermanence shows up in many forms for me and “I’ll never be the same” is such a blessing as I know I can change my reality for better or worse. I am at choice. Thanks to my doing my work and having a wide circle of men to support me, today I can face the fears of change with open eyes. I believe I do not deny myself those paralyzing feelings when change is difficult and uncomfortable. I also move forward much faster, recognizing that I know longer strive for perfection – instead I embrace the lessons every step I take has to offer. As an aside, I highly recommend taking LT-1 with Jim Mitchell where I learnt this concept that we all have four quadrants we constantly live from: brilliance, average, developmental and “oh boy, did I f— it up!” Thanks to this
concept, I am able to live the “courage” in my mission more fully. I do not shy from taking chances. This rookie experience was exactly about that. When I saw an opportunity to serve, I dove in. When I saw an opportunity to be served, I asked for what I wanted.

The theme of forgiveness for this NWTA was also constantly present for me. Up until my initiation a year ago, I lived in fear of my shadow and only knew to ask for forgiveness of those I had harmed. I was at the ninth step in recovery and made amends to my wife. I am so blessed to have a powerful woman by my side for the past eighteen years. She has witnessed and been the victim of my shadow. My work at my initiation was about forgiving myself, the doorway to my feeling whole and alive. I am not fully there yet but thanks to my brothers in MKP and my continuously doing my work – I am dancing with my shadow with joy and strength that I did not have before. Thanks to being given an opportunity to bless during my initiation I am living a continuous blessing for myself and those I touch.

For those who have not heard, Les stated that this was the most flawless NWTA he has experienced in his 150+ trainings around the world. As a rookie, this sets a high bar for my future staffing experiences but more importantly it affirms what amazing things are possible when the container is strong and also nimble. Who would have thought that success possible in the midst of a potential crisis (all the toilets flooded in the both the staff and initiates dorms – no indoor showers and very few toilets all weekend)? I believe the toilet flooding was a big contributor to strengthening our container. Now do not get me wrong. It was not as if every moment was a song of harmony and oneness. There were certainly moments when men were angry and sad at how things were transpiring. What made the difference, in my opinion, was the real-time clearing and forgiveness work that I witnessed men doing. By the way, another first according to many senior brothers – no clearings at the opening circle for the staff.

The food was another “best ever” according to many senior brothers and leaders. I am so blessed to have enjoyed the amazing grub offered by the Men of Service. Let me add that if asked “something I don’t want you to know about me” is that I have great fear about doing MOS someday AND I know that I will step into it. I believe it is the foundation of support for the weekend and enables staff men to offer the initiates the best.

The initiates: where do I begin to relate the magic right from the start? These 40 men showed up ready to work. Yes, I am speaking in general about them as a group, as that was my experience. They opened up to sharing their truth. They did the exercises being present and open to the experiences offered. I witnessed no severe battles with how the initial processes are done which can cause many to crack. As a rookie, it was such an honor to do many things that one only gets to do as a rookie. Again, for confidentiality I will not name the processes but suffice it to say – my rookie experience Rocked!

Let me “call out” one set of new brothers – my brothers from my recovery program. Not only was this my rookie experience but I believe it was the first NWTA in our region with a large representation from my recovery community. We had 6 men initiate plus I had a dear friend who is in another recovery program go through as well (also an elder). Watching these men do their work, from a distance was magical. Not interacting with them till the very end was very important and I am glad that they recognized that as well. We had moments of exchanging eye contact but that was the extent to which I crossed paths with them – being very aware that this was their weekend, for them to create and own.
I am so blessed to have all these recovery brothers confirm what a gift their experience was to them. I now look forward to how they will live their mission and to supporting them as best I can in achieving their dreams.

Finally, but probably most important – I want to send a cosmic POW blast of love to my rookie brothers. We rocked 100%! We got to know each other quickly. We supported each other all the way. It felt like this constant dance of infinity between serving and receiving among us, with our senior brothers/leaders and with the initiates. We laughed a lot together and we shared deep truths that I will hold as sacred. I know that I will stay connected with them, even though we are physically apart. I am so blessed and honored to have served along-side my rookie brothers, and elders. I now go deeper in creating the life I want and it starts at home with my lovely wife and three children. Blessings and I’m out, for now!

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:15AM (-08:00)

Out of Bounds

Wednesday, December 03, 2008

S M A L L; s m a l l

I used to live small.

I have recently started up a conversation with a man I knew in my teens and in to my late twenties. It has reminded me of where I have come from.

First off, I pretended to be much bigger than I felt. Not an uncommon thing for anyone to do, really. If I could be funny or a bit crazy or maybe a bit abrasive and sarcastic, maybe I could keep you away from how I really felt. Certainly it kept me away from how I really felt. I was constantly in motion. Slowing down would mean feeling the pain inside me. I was always joking and being sarcastic. That kept me away from any meaningful conversation.

Why was I living so small? Well, there's surely many reasons.

I hated the chance I might fail at something. If I live small, certainly the risk of failure is lower. In my world, failing was not an option. So I went after things I could obtain, never really reaching beyond the "obtainable."

I appeared to those around me to be pretty adventurous and bold, but I played strictly in
So what does this have to do with the ManKind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure? I have made changes in my life that I believe I could not and would not have made if I had not decided to completely jump "out of bounds" to take my New Warrior Training Adventure weekend. The ball has been rolling toward living bigger and stronger and bolder, ever since.

I used to live small. Real small. I tried to be "out of the way" and stay "in bounds." I wasted a lot of time choosing that.

Are you willing to take the risk and see what it looks like to live out of bounds?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:46AM (-08:00)

Starfish
Friday, December 05, 2008

Today, I post a repost of a MKP man Gregory Meyer's blog post about his experience in MKP.

Are you the starfish I will throw in the ocean, today?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

The Starfish Story

I am making the world a better place, one man at a time. I'm part of an international organization called The ManKind Project. More locally, I'm an active member in ManKind
Project New England. We held a New Warrior Training Adventure (NWTA) this weekend. We initiated men.

What does this mean? We create a safe place for men to be themselves (maybe for the first time) and to work with some of the “stuff” that doesn’t truly work in their lives. We give men an opportunity to live from a place of integrity and accountability. We give men an opportunity to become empowered in their lives.

Simply stated, we all (men and women) have baggage. Some have more than others. Often and many times, this baggage gets in our way in our lives. Going through a NWTA weekend gives men the opportunity to look at this baggage in a new light. Whatever a man brings, it is welcome here.

Many men haven’t acknowledged a feeling for a very long time. We help them see this and offer them some skills to work with those feelings. Again, this can be a first for men. It’s wonderful to watch men peel back the layers, tear down the walls and get to the true beauty that lies within each of them.

This is the short course on what happens at an NWTA weekend. There’s much more to it. It’s beautiful and brilliant and transformative. I am passionate about this work. It makes a difference. I make a difference.

Most everyone has heard the story about a young man on a beach throwing starfish back into the ocean. If he doesn’t throw the starfish back in the ocean, the starfish will die. An older man tells the young man that he can’t possibly make a difference when there are miles and miles of beach with starfish all along it. In response, the young man throws another starfish in the ocean and says, “I made a difference to that one.”

I initiate men. I sit in a circle of men every Thursday night. I share my feelings. I model vulnerability. I model leadership. I help men see their blind spots. I help men see their shadows. I help men see their gold. I help men transcend their old beliefs to be more effective in their lives. I help men. I can’t reach all of them, but I can and do make a difference “to that one.”

With inspiration, humility and great love,
Gregory
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:06AM (-08:00)

What Spirit Is, Man Can Be

Sunday, December 07, 2008
I love when I find good info on the Web about the ManKind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure.

Today, I found a great news/informational video from the United Kingdom MKP center and it speaks to how the NWTA works within the context of the ManKind Project.

Watch the piece here.

I hope you will take a short seven minutes to change your world.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:37AM (-08:00)

*Integrity With Your Word?*

**Monday, December 08, 2008**

What does it mean to you to be in integrity with your word?

I asked this question in my reader survey over the last week. Here’s some unedited responses:
For me, to be in integrity with my word means to keep, and be true to the intent of, my commitments and agreements with others and with myself.

I do what I say I'm going to do, or I consciously choose to re-negotiate my agreement. The consequence of this is that others see me as reliable and trustworthy, and can count on me to model consistency and congruity.

I can live with myself.

It means I do what I say...or I come back to you and change what I need before I can't make my commitment.

I follow through with what I say I will do. And I renegotiate when necessary.

Integrity, for me, means that my actions align with what I say I am going to do. To be in integrity with myself, the men in my circle, and everyone else in the rest of my world, means that I have done what I said or agreed to do.

The ManKind Project is not here to police your integrity. The ManKind Project is about men taking notice of where they live their lives out of integrity. Other men may help you see where that is, if you aren't seeing it yourself.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:40AM (-08:00)

I Just Stand

Tuesday, December 09, 2008

"After you've done all you can
After you've gone through the hurt
After you've gone through the pain
After you've gone through the storm
After you've gone through the rain
Prayed and cried, you've prayed and cried
Prayed and cried, prayed and cried
After you've done all you can, you just stand."

From Donnie McClurkin, Stand, 1996

"After you've done all you can
After you've gone through the hurt
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After you've done all you can, you just stand."

From Donnie McClurkin, Stand, 1996
There are times in my day when I stand in my pain. I just stand because there is nothing else. I choose to stand in it.

There was a time, before my New Warrior Training Adventure initiation, that I would try every means possible to run from my pain. I would work or talk or watch way too much TV or eat.

Now, I stand in it. It is part of my past. It is part of my cells. It is what brought me here, in this place and time.

Come stand in it with me and the other men who wait to see you in your truth.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:05AM (-08:00)

A Man & I-Group

Tuesday, December 16, 2008

ManKind Project man Mark Payne takes the risk to share personal experiences from his I-Group. If you can't see the video below, click here.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

calling you now

Thursday, December 18, 2008

Find more videos like this on Passion For Psychological Poetry
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 03:34PM (-08:00)
"You had the calling and died wondering—who is it that calls. We were all calling. Down from the centuries beseeching you to release from stone unparalleled beauty and in doing so chipping away the stone encasing hearts.
...you were called...
you remembered us – the future...
We were calling you and I am calling you now."


>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

When I am conscious and steady into my present, not being dragged down by the past, I am clear that the work I do in my ManKind Project iGroup settles my soul.

I can't make a promise to you that you will get what you come for in the New Warrior Training Adventure, only you would know that. I can say that I have gotten what I came for and each week I continue to get that from the men in my circle, from myself, from remaining in my present.

I am calling you to your future. Are you ready to see what it looks like?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:05AM (-08:00)

Men Will Come

Friday, December 19, 2008
ManKind Project man Bill Stech talks about his first experience staffing MKP's New Warrior Training Adventure. If you can't see the video below, click here.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Find more videos like this on Passion For Psychological Poetry
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:22AM (-08:00)

Be of Service

Tuesday, December 23, 2008

For almost four years, I have been posting about mine and other men's experiences in the ManKind Project. It has been a blast to be of service in this way.

Next year, I hope you will take the time to look at where you can be of service; to you,
The New Warrior Training Adventure will change your life and it will change how you see yourself in the world. That alone would be a great place to be of service to yourself and others.

Hope to see you next year and maybe one day you and I can meet.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Readers: This post provides real men's experiences for you to read. I gain these contributions by asking fellow MKP men to contribute. Depending on how you get here you may need to click on the comments link below to see the contributions.

ManKind Project Men: The intention here is for MKP men to share with this blog's readers their experiences with the ManKind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure; share the changes, the journey, the insights, whatever moves in you. I would like to see every initiated man post his experience with NWTA. A man can dream, can't he? Since it's easiest to post as anonymous (no Blogger account needed), please sign the end of your post with your animal name, NWTA location, and date. Click on the comments link, below, to leave your piece.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
I completed my training in October 1999 at Camp Krem outside of Santa Cruz, CA.

The training was a dynamic, tangible change in my life.

I walked in fearing and not trusting men. I had no real men friends; no men friends to turn to be real and “me” with. I walked out looking at the world in a new way. I had faced many of my fears and survived. I found a space to trust men.

The NWTA and my further involvement in MKP, in my iGroup, staffing two trainings, sharing my journey with other men, have opened doors I never dreamed were available.

There is not one place that the NWTA has not touched in my life. It gave me tools to be a better me: a better listener; a stronger, confident Father; a compassionate, strong, loving husband; a friend to other men; a man willing to risk; a man standing in his power and grace; a man among men.

The journey continues… changing the world one man at a time.

Old-faithful Wolf
Camp Krem, CA
October 1999

Cool blog, I for one was very suspicious of MKP going into the weekend training. I saw it as cultish or as new agey play-acting. What I got was exposure to authentic men who wanted me to be the best I could be. I have taken my experience and run with it, staffed for the first time a few weeks ago and generally been very active in my community. I have been in other self-help/awareness groups and activities and never have had the mind blowing experience I get now. For the first time I know what I want in the world, how I can improve the world around me and be secure in how I show up in everything I do. The day I started in MKP was the day I stopped giving my power and identity away to other people.

Racoon
Camp Butterfly, St. Louis
October 2004
I did my NWTA in April 2001. By that time I'd spent 31 years in corporate IT and consulting work. I was 51 years old and getting tired of the daily office grind, dictatorial bosses, and the repeated cycle of work my ass off, then get laid off, then go into depression while looking for the next job. I had been divorced twice.

I'd already started a spiritual journey when MKP found me. I had no expectations about the weekend; I'd gone because a man I trusted said I should go.

On that weekend I discovered my life's purpose -- a mission of service to the world that was bigger than my own selfish needs and wants.

In the iGroups I became a part of after the weekend, I found men who were willing and able to take me to the deepest depths of my soul and back. They helped me reclaim those parts of myself that were golden. And find those parts of me that I really didn't want to see, but were running my life.

They helped me find the power and determination I needed to become very successfully self employed in a new field. Along the way I've met men from around the world with the same passion and purpose for life that I feel every day. Four years later, I choose sitting in a circle of New Warriors every week as an anchor in my life. It keeps me grounded and conscious. It keeps me challenged to be purposeful about my life.

I'm happy about the man I've become since my initiation. When I asked the man who invited me how I could ever return the favor, he said "Give the gift to other men". And I do, every chance I get.

Perfect Storm
Camp Wathana, Holly, MI
April 2001

I wrote about my NWTA experience in my weblog back in October 2002. Here's that entry.

What I didn't mention in the original article is that I found a piece of Spirit within me that weekend, and touched on that divine spark.

Wolverine who walks with Dragon
Bedford, IN
October 1997

Going to an all-boy's HS & College, I never thought I'd do anything all-men ever again, much less a men's training.

My big issue was TRUST (I couldn't really trust you, myself, God or anyone), so my transformation didn't fully happen on the Weekend itself, but as a result of persistence -- staying with my I-group (even when uncomfortable), then stepping up to take on volunteer jobs, etc., despite often being discouraged ("You're so in your head: you're not really cut out to do this 'heart' work, are you?")).
Yet, it's because of doing that Weekend, then staying with this work, that now I DO trust -- other men, God, myself and women (probably came in that order, too). After living in my own castle with no doors, windows or drawbridge, surrounded by an alligator-infested moat, I finally figured out how to chisel out a hole and at least throw out a rope ladder.

After being the ultimate "flying boy," I finally married at age 55 -- and 9 months later this only son of an only son got a son of his own (who'll be needing college tuition when I'm 77, sigh!). My wife also has trouble trusting (imagine that!), yet I KNOW (not hope, expect, or even believe, but KNOW) that this marriage will only die when one of us does.

What changed in me? I finally could tell my inner critic (the one that said no woman was good enough or safe enough) to go take a hike -- not just once, but every day for weeks -- that I knew what I was doing! And I had the courage because I finally saw miracles unfolding before my eyes, realized miracles had often happened before in my life (and even my atheist father's life, too), but it took trusting "the universe" to finally SEE them, and lots of persistence to stay with this new way of thinking for 7 years before I finally felt the results inside (an inner shift).

I've known many men with different issues who "got it" immediately on the weekend itself; but for me, who once trusted nobody, it took a lot longer, but now, seeing my joyful life, all I can say is, "Wow!"

At age 50, I was sure I would die alone. Now I have 2 new families: my in-laws, and my Warrior Brothers. I also now know it's MY CHOICE as to how I choose to view things: if I believe I'm alone, then I will be; if instead I believe that I'm connected to everyone else on the planet and to the Divine, then that's how I will be!

Blessing Owl with Balls
Haimowoods, WI
May, 1991
(Now living in New England)

--- Anonymous ---

My NWTA weekend was held in the Adirondacks, about an hour north of Albany. It snowed every day there, just flurries and an occasional passing squall that would add a layer to the snow on the ground. Spring hadn't arrived there yet, which was an adjustment coming from DC. But the crystal pure air and coldness gave the weekend a purity and privation that added to the experience, IMHO. And by Sunday I was so blase about the weather that when we went out for the closing picture I didn't even bring my jacket, although it was 31 degrees F out. A flannel shirt and jeans was fine while standing in the sun, and I brought my ice cream from dinner :) The other major difference that I could see from a recent DC course whose graduation I attended was the ethnic mix - or lack thereof - in Albany. In DC there were all types there - Albany was very white, with one man of hispanic origin. But as the weekend went on I realized that it was a different ethnic mix - there were several French-Canadians, a couple of Germans, a Norwegian and a Frenchman in the group. In both places there were a few gay men in the group, which basically went unremarked upon except as in a fairly matter-of-fact way.

The people who staff the weekends amaze me. Almost all of them pay their own way to do it, and they are very good at what they do. Through focus groups, guided visualizations and other exercises they help the participants focus on their own lives. Although some people do consider it their life's work, it's not a cult - cults tend to tell you how you lead your life (insert parallel to organized religion here, if you like) where the
goal of the MKP is to help you find your mission and live it. There were more staff there than people taking the course, and that's by design. Everyone takes the journey. For me, I ended up not even focusing on the things that I thought I'd be focusing on - feelings of self-doubt/worth, becoming comfortable with being angry, being able to receive love. The staff helped me realize that there was a common thread under all those issues, a feeling of not being special. This grows out of many, many things from growing up as a twin to distracted/distant family to a father who would occasionally tell my brother or myself "we have a spare, you know" when we were acting up. Reclaiming that sense of being comfortable being unique, and not feeling as much of a need to rebel against not being considered unique, is a good thing for me. I have no illusions that all the problems in my life are solved - life isn't that simple *grin*. I am interested in doing some follow-up work with the local groups, so I expect that the MKP will become a regular part of my life.

Serene Lion
Albany, NY
March 2006

- Anonymous
August 09, 2006
My weekend was part of my journey - and a part that was key. I learned about courage, community and living with purpose and I truly loved every minute of the challenge. I encourage other men to go and to join a community of men who are involved in every walk of life, in many countries>

ApeChild,
Camp Wathana, Holly MI, 2005

- Rrramone
October 09, 2006
My weekend was almost 6 years ago, and it still ranks as the most powerful weekend of my life. I've become passionate about the work, and I credit my circle of men with helping me through some major events of my life, including my mother's death and the sale of my company. This work is so powerful. I've since staffed 19 weekends, and am writing this in an airport as I prepare to leave for South Africa to staff one there. Blessings for your blog and your passion.

Willie Baronet
Glorious Cheetah
December 2000
Land of my Grandfathers

- Anonymous
November 27, 2006

ah o old faithful wolf.

thanks for maintaining this blog in the public space of the internet.

i used this blog as a "bogusity check" when i was considering enrolling for my weekend. your blog was useful.

i am affiliated with the nw center. since initiation in 02/06 i've returned to staff twice. my most recent staffing was at a deaf/hh staffing in the houston center.

this is powerful work. i have never felt so challenged and supported as a man. i find that
many of my own preconceived limitations are vanishing.

one interesting objection about the nwta by those who question the validity is the cost. cost is a funny thing. what am i worth as a man? who determines that? how is that determined?

those are nice abstract questions. but, one thing tangible thing i will stand by is that if i tallied up the cost of training and compared it to the costs of liquor i would have consumed in the intervening year, and the costs of bank overdraft charges and late fees for credit payments, i have ended up a richer man. i'm more accountable, i pay bills on time. i'd like to hear others experiences.

i'm out- well no i'm in- oh hell, you know what i mean ;>)

jim, dreaming bear
I co-create masculine healing ceremony by honoring my vision and intuition.

- Bill January 29, 2007
I am fresh my weekend NWTA here in Tucson, and an adventure it was!
How wonderfully encouraging it is to stumble upon your blog; thank you.

Beautiful Horse
Whispering Pines, Mt. Lemmon, Tucson, AZ
1/26-28, 2007

- Anonymous March 08, 2007
I've been subscribing to this blog for a few months via RSS, and this post just appeared.

Well, like many men, I was invited by a friend repeatedly over the course of two years before I said Yes. As it turned out, six of the staff members were friends of mine.

It was, as others have said, a step in a journey. It was a step that helped me, a man in my mid-40s, reconnect in a positive way with my dad, providing new positive energy for my relationship with my own teenage son.

A Warrior staffing my weekend invited me to staff the Vets Journey Home weekend, and I've done so twice. I'd recommend it to anyone who has wounds (physical or other) from combat experiences.

Black Bear
Land of My Grandfathers, 12/05

- Anonymous November 29, 2007
I went into my training clueless as to how to juggle my different roles as a man. I was a tough male business owner in the corporate world, a loving husband and father at home, a caring son to my parents and an understanding brother to my siblings. I was supposed to be strong and tender at the same time. I needed to understand and express my emotions but felt that society did not allow me to do that. I was lost and confused with all the different male hats I had to wear.
My training opened my heart to a new way of being a man on this planet. It provided me the tools to understand my different roles. I saw other men dealing with the same issues as me and that gave me comfort to know that I am not alone in my struggles. My work is not over, but yet I am so much further along in my journey of manhood than I was before I did my training that I am eternally greatful to the man who encouraged me to take the training.

Powerful Dog, Santa Fe NM 2003

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Dogfer  
November 30, 2007

Thank you for maintaining this blog as a public testament to MKP. I get so tired of the various whiners and haters who go on about MKP being a cult and other nonsense. They are a band of armchair quarterbacks, like chickenhawks criticizing our military as unpatriotic. Step up or shut up, I say. Clueless ankle-biters!

I did my weekend in 2001 and except for iGroup have had relatively little involvement with MKP. I don't staff, I don't donate money, and my job is such that I cannot publicly affiliate myself with many groups.

I am a pretty manly man, and there are few folks who have ever dared to say otherwise to my face. I did the sports thing, I did the military thing, I had my share of many things I've wanted, and the NWTA and iGroup have still helped me to trust other men and have clarity in my own life. Having a group of men whom I know and trust to work through various emotional issues related to being a man has been a godsend to me, and improved my life.

I don't talk about it much, but I have been at iGroup twice a month for many, many years, and it has made me a better man. I am more honest, more compassionate and appreciably less angry than I was before NWTA, and the first relationship I got into after NWTA is still going strong.

Men of color, straights and gays, religious and atheists, liberal or conservative: all are welcome in a circle of men and free to be who they really are. To be seen in this way is a very great gift, and one that enriches my life daily.

I'm out.

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Anonymous  
September 02, 2008

I completed my training Embercombe, May 2008. This was an amazing journey for me and it gave me the initiation into the community of men that I had felt disconnected from for too long in my life. I had many wounds from my childhood and the blessing and initiation from other men; their authenticity and acceptance was amazingly powerful. I belong to other men's circles in Northern Ireland and my NWTA experience has enriched those circles too.

Journey well men.

Brother Wolf  
Embercome, UK May 2008

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Anonymous  
April 03, 2009
The training was all I thought it would be. I attended after sitting in an igroup for few months. Those men had such compassion and honor and love for each man getting to what was and wasn't working for them; I knew this was a safe place to be honest about things I had never let others hear before. In the weekend, I was gifted a place to see how and what my world was. I was lovingly guided, not directed, to where I wanted to go. EVERY man can use this work and the NWTA!

- Anonymous

The best part of the NWTA was not knowing what was going to happen....man that rocked my world. I know I could have looked around and found out, but I chose not to and man it was the right thing to do!

Gettign the piece of clarity I got was huge. And the fee was nothing compared to what I got out of the weekend.

Big Panther

Splitting Hairs

Monday, January 05, 2009

"Michael Phelps," my seven-year-old says, "there's that man, again" as we pass a box with his likeness printed on it in the local Safeway.

I watched this swim when it happened and was blown away. Not because he is simply an amazing swimmer, but, because he is simply the most determined to win.

He looked solidly defeated when the race appeared over...and yet he was still crankin' away.

So I had to ask myself, where do I give my all and where do I give up three feet from the end. I am not out to win a gold medal, but I do want to be the best man, papa, husband, and friend I can be.

That's the work I do in the ManKind Project. It's not gold-medal producing, yet it does allow me the space to be better than I ever thought I could be.

Are you ready to be better than you thought you could be?
This piece from Very Happy Phil (gotta love this man's blog title) tells how he encounters the ManKind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

7 Happy Gems! New Warrior Training!
from Very Happy Phil

Here are a few of the things which happy people have been proven to have;
1) Meaningful purpose
2) Goals
3) Supportive unconditionally loving friend(s)
4) Awareness of feelings
5) Acceptance of all feelings/emotion (positive and non positive)
6) Self love
7) Learn knowledge to increase happiness

I found all of these seven happy gems by doing New Warrior Training!

In particular this is what I got from the Mankind Project’s New Warrior weekend training and the optional weekly meetings;

a) The weekend helped me refine and develop my mission and purpose in life
b) The weekend helped me to love myself more.
c) Discuss my mission, goals and feelings on a weekly basis with wise, loving, friends
d) Make new friends and feel as close to them after 3 meetings as people I have known for years
e) Spent time every week with people where all emotional are welcome; mad, sad, bad, glad, shame etc
f) Learn new knowledge to help increase my happiness and live a joyful and meaningful life
g) Opportunity to help others increase their love and happiness and volunteer my time to create a happy loving world
h) I feel the weekly meetings are one of the best uses on my time one night a week.
i) I feel this is one of the best things I have done to benefit me and ultimately others
j) I like the love, support and hugs I get every week from other warriors
k) I enjoy the weekly meetings one night a week and no alcohol in sight!

Here are a few of my favourite quotes which inspire me;

“In 22 years as a professional footballer I reached some incredible emotional highs. I thought I had experienced it all. I was wrong. Apart from the birth of my two children, the New Warrior Training Adventure was the most powerful, fantastic, inspiring experience of my life. I would urge every man to enrol. It will amaze you”
-Lee Dixon, Double League Winner, Former Arsenal & England Team Football Player

“Most people try to “control” their feelings and the way they do this is usually to move through the four R’s and resist, resent, reject and repress. Repressing your feelings does not eliminate them. Feelings never die. It takes a tremendous amount of emotional and physical energy to hold down your emotions.”
-Dr John Gray 'What you feel you can heal'

“What we resist persists. The more we resist, the more stuck we become. And what we refuse to feel never goes away. When we summon the courage to release that resistance, we find joy.”
–Raphael Cushnir, author, ‘Unconditional Bliss: Finding happiness in the face of hardship’

“Beautiful people do not just happen.”
-Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

Clinical Psychologist Dr Sophie Henshaw recently recommended MKP course to one of her clients.

“Today I spoke to a friend I had not spoken to for some time. We chatted about some development work he had done which was a great way for me to get around to telling him about MKP(Mankind Project).

I explained that in modern society we have perhaps lost male initiation. I described how the elders of tribes would take the young boys from their mothers and take them into the wild and initiate them. This would allow them the knowledge that there are greater forces than themselves and install into them the sacred wisdom of their tribe and society, thus making them warriors and of use as men. Without this the tribe would not be able to survive.

I then went onto explain how during the Victorian times women were put down. Now men are humble and scared and shamed to stand and express their anger, their primal urges
and be the warriors we know we are inside.

The NWTA hits this square in the face and supports a global community of New Warriors who work from love and clear intention allowing us to continue the work into our lives and communities on a continual basis.

All of this is in my judgement.”
-Will McIntosh

If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem

If you are happy, I think new warrior training will boost your happiness!
If you are unhappy, I think new warrior training will help!

It is my mission to create a world of love and happiness which is why I shared this information with you. If you are a man or woman I recommend this course. If you know a man or woman, I recommend sending them information about this course! Any questions, feel free to email me.

Some info;
 a) MKP is a non profit organization!
 b) I make no money from you doing the course!
 c) If you do the full weekend training and want your money back you can!
 d) Weekly meetings are free if you host them in someones house!

If interested in the New Warrior Training for men click here; http://www.mkp.org/ (USA)
http://uk.mkp.org/ (UK)

If interested in the New Warrior Training for women click here; http://www.womanwithin.org/

Have a HAPPY NEW WARRIOR 7 GEMS day!

Keep positive!

Love & hug,

Very Happy Phil McNally, Author of ‘Winning Mentality’, Training; Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (Dr Russ Harris MD), Happier (Tal Ben-Shahar Ph.D.), Authentic Happiness (Prof Martin Seligman), Art of Happiness (Dr Howard Cutler MD), Happiness NOW (Dr Robert Holden PhD.), Happiness (Monk Mattiew Riccard) and New Warrior.

Remember,"Happy people have purpose, goals, self love, awareness and acceptance of emotions, happiness knowledge and supportive loving friends!"
– Very Happy Phil McNally

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:32AM (-08:00)

Comments
Old faithful wolf!

thanks for the positive vibes!

sending hugs to you from bonnie scotland

with love from your warrior brother,

Phil
Loving Courageous Dolphin

Passion & Joy

Monday, January 19, 2009

Let's start with, I am not a football fan. It's not my game.

But in the ManKind Project, I have learned that every man's journey is sacred...even when it has no apparent comparison to mine.

Football is this man's game, obviously. I see the passion and joy he is feeling and I can see the release he is feeling in getting, with his teammates, to the 2009 NFL Super Bowl game.

I know nothing else about this man and his journey, but I can honor his path in that I can see his joy. And joy is what is often missing in a man's life.

Come to the New Warrior Training Adventure, find your passion, your joy. Maybe it's waiting there.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:22PM (-08:00)
Mr. Obama Goes to Washington

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

"On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord.

On this day, we come to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false promises, the recriminations and worn out dogmas, that for far too long have strangled our politics.

We remain a young nation, but in the words of Scripture, the time has come to set aside childish things. The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea, passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness."

United States President Barack Obama, Inaugural Address, 01.20.2009

President Obama,

May you stand tall and remember who you serve.

May you learn to hear all those around you.

May you be at peace and see the peaceful way.

May you know in your heart that you are a scared creature just as I am and every other person is.

May you know that change for change’s sake is not all we need.

May you know deep compassion for all around you.
May you wield your sword with extreme and measured caution.

May you remember that others will cast their fears, anger, shame, hope, sadness, judgments, and joy upon you without your permission.

May you know that even as you are a historic figure, you are first a man.

May you know that as a ManKind Project man, I honor your path and I hold you to the same standards I hold myself.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:45AM (-08:00)

Comments

- Dfish November 24, 2008
Lovely, manly blessing, OFW!

- BarryF January 21, 2009
Thank you for putting that up. During the ceremony yesterday I was imagining Mr. President at an NWTA and as a warrior brother. My judgment is that he'd fit right in.

Aho...

Take a Good Hard Look in the Mirror

Monday, January 26, 2009

Today, I am reposting an informative piece from Glenn Andert of New Zealand. His blog post speaks to why men take the New Warrior Training Adventure; and why he thinks you should.
I like it, so here ya go.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Wellington Training Asks Kiwi Men to Take a Good Hard Look in the Mirror.

Why This is Newsworthy?

We've been changing the world, one man at a time, for about 20 years now. At last count, about 40,000 men worldwide. So, it’s boring, really. Well, unless you think the world needs more men with accountability and integrity. You know, a man that

- is fully accountable for his actions and their consequences,
- stands up and takes full responsibility for his life,
- steps forward as a man without apologizing for who he is,
- and has an open heart and compassionate mindfulness.

Who is behind this?


What is this all about?

This is a training by men for men, and about being a man:

- A man has a connection to his feelings - he
  - connects with his feelings with his feet on the ground,
  - can clarify his feelings and express those feelings directly and authentically,
  - balances the depth of his heart with the wisdom of his mind,
  - and is authentic.
- A man is a leader - he
  - steps up to lead or mentor,
  - puts himself on the line and takes risks, with the courage to be vulnerable,
  - is fully alive and present,
  - gives his gifts to the world with a sense of purpose and clarity, with neither apology nor arrogance.
- A man steps into his relationships fully - he is able to
  - commit
  - be intimate
  - listen with his heart
  - speak his deepest truth

And it’s about being welcomed into a community of men governed by honesty, integrity and a level of trust that most men never know.

If that’s too kinky for you, go ahead stay a neanderthal.

Who the Hell Cares About This #$%* Anyway?

Let’s see, Mr Neanderthal’s partner seems to really “get this”. In fact, her response is “duh, it’s about time”. Then there are the folks that have to work with Mr. Neanderthal.
And did I mention Mr. Neanderthal’s poor kids?

Does Anybody Say Good Things About This?

There are some awesome video testimonials at the MKP website.

Here are some text testimonials from men that have attended the training:

“I went through my weekend in 1997. Its the most life altering experience I’ve had. Over the years the empowerment has spread to every part of my life. I am very, very happy with the life I have created.” - Burt W.

“The New Warrior Training Adventure was a turning point in my life. I really noticed how I felt different crossing the threshold of my home Sunday night. I felt a depth of gratitude, responsibility, and love for myself, my family, job, and friends well up within me. I could see more clearly how I needed to live in the world around me. My confusion, emptiness, and aloneness had cleared. I began to trust in a deeper part of myself that I always sensed, but couldn’t act upon in my day to day living. It was truly wonderful to make the journey with others, and receive the support from so many men. I had never experienced this much trust and love from men in the past.” - Sean Niland

Some text testimonials from the partners of men that have attended:

“I wish more money went into things like New Warrior instead of prison growth. If the court sentenced men to a weekend, the world would become a different place. The Mankind Project saved our marriage & I believe it saved Scott’s life. I am a true believer! This works. I hope more men make the decision to give themselves the gift. That’s what it is, a gift.” - Camille Darkes

“My husband came in the front door and looked into my eyes and stayed there long enough to see my heart and soul. He’s never done this in our 18 years of marriage. This makes me feel so close and loved by him. Our 6-year-old daughter told me that daddy feels soft and more cuddly. I really appreciate the staff for giving me back my husband.” - a wife at an NWTA graduation

There are more testimonials and newspaper articles here and here.

Where is this?

I wish I could say that it is at our new 5-star resort for the new man. Sorry. Toughen up blokes - it’s at Camp Wainui in Wainuiomata, east of Wellington and Hutt Cities.

When is it?

The weekend of September 26-28. A whole weekend? Hey, it takes time to thaw out your average Neanderthal.

Does this Service Cost Money?

We have to pay for a place for you to sleep, the food you are going to eat, etc, etc. So, yes, there is a fee. That said, we won’t turn away a man that wants to come but can’t afford it.
More Information?

The ManKind Project is a not-for-profit, non-religious organisation. Call free 0800 MANKIND (0800 626 5463) or go to the website www.mkp.org.nz.

For further information contact Glenn Andert (Wellington), 027.354.4950.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:23AM (-08:00)

Watch the Donut, Not the Hole

Monday, February 09, 2009

"When you walk the streets you'll have no cares
If you walk the lines and not the squares
As you go through life make this your goal
Watch the donut, not the hole."

B. Merrill

My littlest daughter has started listening to a great Burl Ives CD of childrens songs. She especially likes the Little White Duck.

I am partial to the Donut Song. What I like about it is that it reminds me to stay present...something we men work on in the ManKind Project. Staying present allows me to be with my daughter while she is rockin' out to Little White Duck when I could be thinking about the other three thousand things I need to think about.

So to B. Merrill and Burl Ives, thank you for helping me be present in my busy world.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf
It is amazing how many people use "cult" and "ManKind Project" in the same Internet search. It happens all the time. Maybe thirty percent of the hits this blog gets are from searches using cult and MKP together.

So what comes up for me is that men are somehow getting the message that ManKind Project may be a cult.

Well, that's just a bunch of crap. I can't imagine a more non-cult organization.

MKP fosters:
• Men to follow their path and not someone else's
• Living in integrity with word and mission
• Opening a man's space to seeing the world around him; quite opposite to many men's view
• Listening to the man to hear him and help him reach his desires and goals
• Community service by way of a man's mission in the world
• Relationship healing by giving men a place to explore what keeps them separate and how to heal that separation
• An environment of learning, healing, and honoring through brotherhood

Cult, my butt. MKP is not a cult. Period.

To those who say that MKP is a cult and that I would only defend it because I can't see that it is -- I am willing to bet you don't have first hand experience with a cult (so you wouldn't know one if you saw it) and I am willing to bet you only believe what someone has told you (not your first-hand knowledge; probably not theirs either).

Give yourself permission to get past the fear and jump into being the man you dream of being.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:12AM (-08:00)
The main person who wants to associate MKP’s with cults is Rick Ross, a self-educated "cult expert" whose "Cult Information Database" contains data on such groups as Promise Keepers and the Burning Man arts festival in Nevada.

Without a large supply of cults to lecture on and protect people from, Rick Ross is just another high-school graduate from New Jersey.

I don't think anyone of much consequence takes him seriously.

A writer I have a lot of respect for, Issac Bonewits, developed the Advanced Bonewits' Cult Danger Evaluation Frame as a guideline to determine if groups are cults, based on 18 factors.

Another author that has a good determination criteria is Steven Hassan, who has a list of 12 criteria on his website.

Interesting... I didn't think anything of the sort initially but have read articles to that effect...

Knowledge is power, so I am happy to have all this information! '

thanks!

PS I will have a peek around your blog to see what other info I can get. =]
a new warrior is better placed to create a stronger man in this day and age.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

What is the New Warrior?

The Old Warrior competed with the elements, other animals, and other males, through force where necessary, for the ancient prize of survival. Our histories are filled with tales of combat and competition, male against male, tribe against tribe, nation against nation, for territory, food, women, and more. And competition and domination worked, we survived, when many did not. The memories of the struggle of the Old Warrior haunt our bones, and live and breathe in each of us today.

The New Warrior has looked at his Old Warrior in the eye. He has learned to spot the shadow of his Old Warrior, and to make new, healthy choices in his life. The New Warrior commits himself to living a life of passion, energy, and feeling beyond survival, to harnessing and openly directing his warrior energy into a personal Mission of Service in the world.

The New Warrior is a man for today's world, ready for full, vibrant, equal partnership with other men and women. For most of us, the struggle for physical survival is over. The New Warrior has put down the sword, picked up his own heart, and placed it in service to himself and others.

What are the Characteristics of a New Warrior?

A man who has been taken the journey of the New Warrior Training Adventure is offered the opportunity to take on the characteristics of a New Warrior and take his place in the world carrying those traits with him into his family, his work, and his community. It is these traits and his choice to do his own personal growth that enables him to face the struggles of life, to attain his personal successes, and to forge ahead in his life’s journey with clarity and intention. These characteristics become the fundamental values of the New Warrior, by reshaping and redefining a man’s awareness of his world, his choices, and his feelings. These values include:

* Responsibility — A New Warrior is responsible for his life, his feelings, his choices, and his actions. He chooses his reactions.
* Integrity — A New Warrior’s choices and actions are consistent with his intentions, mission and commitments. He keeps his promises.
* Congruency — A New Warrior’s actions equal his thoughts and words. He does what he says he will do. He "walks the talk".
* Self-awareness — A New Warrior examines his thoughts, feelings and behaviors. He is aware of his "shadows", patterns, and limiting beliefs that compromise his integrity with these principles.
* Accountability — A New Warrior "owns" to another man when he is out of integrity. He acknowledges and owns the consequences of his actions, and the choices and intentions behind them.
* Clarity — A New Warrior discerns and articulates his feelings and judgments. He seeks understanding. He knows what he wants. He knows who he is. He knows the choices he wants to make.
* Mission — A New Warrior seeks to discover his true Mission of Service and to live in integrity with it.
* Commitment — A New Warrior clearly articulates his pledge or promise to do something. His intentions are clear and he follows through.
* Action — A New Warrior takes action to live his mission and fulfill his commitments. He asks for help when he needs it. He asks for what he wants. He moves through his fear. He takes risks.
* Service — A New Warrior offers himself through acts and deeds without expectation.
* Authenticity — A New Warrior is sincere and honest in all of his dealings. He is aware of and owns his feelings. He speaks his truth. He comes from his heart. He is genuine and real.
* Directness — A New Warrior speaks clearly to another man of his perceptions, feelings and judgments towards him. He neither practices nor tolerates sideways comments or “gossip”.

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What it Means to be a New Warrior

Wednesday, February 25, 2009

This article speaks about a man and his vision of what a New Warrior is.

I like it. That's why I am posting it, again.

I hope you get something from it.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Becoming Warriors for the Environment and Our Health

From Remineralize the Earth, Peter J. Sullivan

This morning I had an opportunity to revisit the archives and other articles that have been recently posted on the web page here. It is heartening to think that we are picking up the baton of remineralizing the earth from the articles that were written about 10 years ago. The need was critical then but is so much more critical now. One article was: "Where Do We Go From Here?"
I want to articulate the energy of being an advocate for the environment and what we are all trying to do through this Forum and web site. I have recently participated and been initiated into the Mankind Project. The web site is: www.mkp.org I was introduced into this by David Yarrow and would like to offer an article about putting it in the context of our becoming "new warriors". I am also talking about "building health from the ground up", to grow food that has all the minerals and energy in it that will best sustain us in the challenges we face. The dominant culture we live in does not recognize the life sustaining focus of natural healing and the message of "Let food by thy medicine!" May we take inspiration from our united efforts here and continue to "fight the good fight".

What is a "Warrior"?

In some times and places, being a "warrior" has been associated with physical war, and the warrior is the one who fights in war. Historically, we have thought of the "warrior" as this physical type of warrior, fighting in wars and protecting the women, children and property closer to home. The negative side of this role is the warrior who wants to be superior and dominant over others, to serve himself or his own tribe at the expense of all others.

The world can no longer tolerate the dominant warrior. Our weapons are too destructive. There's too much at stake.

There is another kind of warrior: one who knows that the toughest battle isn't with the "enemy" out there, but knows that the essential battles to be fought take place in our own hearts. This warrior takes responsibility for his own heart, mind and action, and acts to make a difference in the lives of his family, friends and community.

Even though this other type of warrior has been around for centuries, we call him the "new warrior" to differentiate him from the old, destructive ways, and because he's new to us; we're still rediscovering him. We have seen some models of the new warrior, in men like Ghandi or Martin Luther King or Nelson Mandela. Perhaps you know some warriors in your own life, men of extraordinary courage, who have made a conscious choice to live their truths, and who hold a vision of what men could do, and be. Men like these are creating a global change in our consciousness. Sometimes this puts them at risk--a vision ahead of its time can be unpopular, even dangerous. The New Warrior lives on the cutting edge of risk and change to manifest his vision into the universe.

The way of the New Warrior is to wake up. To live a life of integrity, of conscious choice. Integrity is an unswerving love of the truth and a willingness to live it. Conscious choice means being awake, moment to moment, with the intention to live my mission here, now, today.

The New Warrior takes time for contemplation, is curious, has a flexible mind and generous heart, and works to practice and cultivate these qualities. Many times, we limit ourselves and act unconsciously, perpetuating our bad habits, when we deny the truth about our own suffering and vulnerability. This weekend initiates men into having the courage to be more truthful about themselves.

If we deny our ugliness, we lessen our beauty. If we deny our fear, we minimize our courage. If we deny our greed, we reduce our generosity. Our work is about owning our shadows in order to bring forth our light. We do this primarily by accepting personal
responsibility for our choices, connecting in our own way to the mystery at the core, opening our hearts to healing and living a sacred mission of service through action in the world.

Our full potential is more than most of us can ever imagine.

We are naive if we expect a charismatic leader to come solve our problems or heal the dysfunction in our world. The warrior doesn't blame others for his problems, nor leave it to others to solve them. It is now up to us, one man at a time, to create a safe and compassionate world for ourselves and our loved ones--and the generations to come.

Do you get what it means to be a warrior?

The New Warrior believes that each man has the potential to make a profound difference in our world.

Are you the one? Are you that man?

Sincerely,

Peter J. Sullivan

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:19AM (-08:00)

Comments

- Anonymous June 16, 2009

owning up to your weaknesses gives you the power to show your strengths and gives courage not to just yourself but all around you to bring the truth of man to its true potential, serenity.

Livin' Live on the Radio

Friday, February 27, 2009

"Don't try to figure out what other people want to hear from you; figure out what you have to say. It's the one & only thing you have to offer." Barbara Kingsolver
Update: So it went well...you can hear it here.

This week, on Feb 27, 2009 at noon PST, I will be having a live radio conversation about my experiences in the ManKind Project, my New Warrior Training Adventure, and in my weekly integration group.

I invite you to listen in live to KDRT 95.7 FM at http://davismediaaccess.org:8000/kdrt.m3u or catch a rebroadcast on Sunday, Mar 1 at 3 pm or Tuesday, Mar 3 at 11 am, or download the program at http://www.kdrt.org/station/archives/138.

I hope you enjoy the show!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:28PM (-08:00)

Comments

- NHitchcock February 21, 2009
Hi OFW. I want to thank you in your efforts on behalf of MKP. There are lots of men who would benefit from doing this soul work, but need encouragement from another man to take that risk.

I also see you discovered my blog. Thanks for directing some readers that way.

Nathan

- EQmatters February 21, 2009
Hey OFW - You're gonna do great. You know who you are. You know who you're not. And that is all you need to know! :) -Boysen

26K on Square Root Day

Tuesday, March 03, 2009
Today I noticed that my blog had reached the milestone of 26,000 hits. I haven't really paid close attention other than to note that the number goes up every day and that feels good.

I was left wondering if this blog serves its purpose for me and you. Since I can't know if it does for you without you contacting me, I can only know how it serves me.

When I started this blogging exercise, it was an answer to a question about the ManKind Project's Web site. It can be pretty vague and I wanted to share more information about the project. I scoured the Internet for articles, other MKP bloggers, and tidbits of information hoping to bring it all to one place. I think I have done an admirable job. Although, there has been less written about MKP, lately, that I can then share with you.

So I hope you continue to come back, maybe set up an RSS feed so you can know when I post new material. In the meantime, thanks for coming back and thanks for coming again in the future.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:31AM (-08:00)

Comments

- BarryF March 10, 2009
No OFW... thank YOU for doing it. This site has inspired me many times and I continue to come by weekly to read your inspirational posts. And I have to admit, I've used the chat box a few times for ideas and input.

Aho...
“Sometimes a man stands up during supper
and walks outdoors, and keeps on walking,
because of a church that stands somewhere in the East.

And his children say blessings on him as if he were dead.

And another man, who remains inside his own house,
dies there, inside the dishes and in the glasses,
so that his children have to go far out into the world
toward that same church, which he forgot.”

Ranier Maria Rilke, translated by Robert Bly; from The Rag and Bone Shop of the Heart:
A Poetry Anthology by Robert Bly, James Hillman, and Michael Meade

Are you willing to die not heading to the East; where things are born; new days and beginnings arise?

Are you willing to make choices that will hold you in place and stifle you so that your children must go out to live in the place you forgot?

What are you waiting for? Permission...an invitation...hand-holding? Do it. Stop mamby-pambying around and become that man you want to be. Don’t you think the world deserves to see what you have to give?

I do not care if you attend the New Warrior Training Adventure...although there is great value there...I care that you step into the risk of being you, however that comes about.

Nearly ten years ago, I took the risk to be a better man; to get out of my own way. You can to.
In this reprint of a Huffington Post article, the writer shares his deep self-honesty and experiences around men, the ManKind Project, and the New Warrior Training Adventure.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Men's Warrior Weekend

By Peter Clothier, from the Huffington Post

I have just returned from a men's training weekend. Okay, I think it's true to say that these weekends have come in for a lot of misinformed rumors and a good bit of nervous mockery in recent years -- particularly amongst those who might have reason to fear them the most. I'll tell you upfront that this one, the New Warrior Training Adventure, when I first experienced it in 1992, was a life-saver for me.

I had by then developed, over the years, a huge amount of self-protective armor which served only to cut me off from those I loved the most, not to mention the rest of the world. I was pretty much unreachable, at least at the level of basic human feeling. Like many men, I had learned that it was not safe to trust anything much in the way of emotions, let alone expose myself to the risk of actually sharing them with anyone else. When I first heard about the NWTA, though, I was in a barrel of emotional trouble in my life with no way of knowing how to extricate myself from it. Its title was enough to provoke my own intellectual ridicule and resistance. "Warriors"? What an obnoxious concept. "Adventure"?
Please, we're adults, aren't we?

And yet the day after I first heard about it, I signed up and sent my money in. I don't know why. Call it an instinct that somehow superseded every other instinct in my body. I was not merely skeptical, I was petrified. But I showed up. I showed up, as one friend later described it, shrink-wrapped. And I emerged, if not a totally new man, at least a man who was open to looking at his life with emotional honesty and integrity.

Since then, I have served on staff for more than twenty weekends. I am privileged to be thought of as a senior staffer at this point, and to provide some significant part of the eldership our organization honors. I take enormous pleasure and pride in the response I get from men whom I myself honor enormously, and respect.

That said, I have been on a kind of sabbatical from the weekends for the past couple of years and more. To be back, after this long hiatus, and in a position of real responsibility, was a challenge only intensified by a particularly challenging weekend leadership team.

And as is usually the case, the greater the challenge, the greater the reward. The location, in the mountains up behind Santa Barbara, was a gift of nature, beautiful and serene. (On Sunday morning, as I was leading a particularly... well, spiritual event, a half dozen red-headed woodpeckers were playing happily among the pine trees up ahead of me.) The staff men, thirty or more of them, were magnificent, fiercely present, challenging, compassionate. And the men who were there to experience the weekend for the first time came willing to put in the hard work -- emotional, intellectual, physical -- that we asked of them. On their way back home, they were eager to say that they got as much, if not more than they had bargained for. I myself see the weekend as a meticulously planned and passionately enacted piece of participatory theater, in which a man is invited -- as in all good theater -- to travel down into the murky depths of his soul, and to emerge with whatever gold he finds there.

Too many of us men, in today's troubled world, have failed to grow out of being little boys. We boss and strut and bully and control to hide our insecurities, we addict ourselves to booze or women or work to hide our fears of being seen for who we are. Too often we refuse to see ourselves and too often we deny accountability for our actions. Too often we carry around huge shadows without recognizing how our shadows can control us and damage those around us. We can, mindlessly, cause endless anguish for ourselves, the women we love, our families. I think of our (thankfully!) past president and see the dire, worldwide damage caused by one ungrown little boy.

And yet we are good people, we men, I promise you. We are inspired by mission, a sense of purpose, and a vision. We are powerful, each in our own way. We are capable of great deeds, of noble generosity, of amazing acts of selflessness. We can be smart, and subtle in our thought. Underneath the armor all too many of us were encouraged to put on as boys, we are also capable of experiencing and sharing love. It's these qualities I see when I serve on staff at a New Warrior Training Adventure, and these qualities we invite other men to find in themselves. It's a truly inspirational experience.

As a concluding note, the NWTA is now offered in many locations in the US and Canada, as well as in Europe, South Africa and Australia. The umbrella organization, The Mankind Project, is international in scope, and more than 40,000 strong. Its mission is no less than to change the world, one man at a time. We need more good, well directed masculine energy in this world. I happen to believe that this is one way to inspire and release it.
This article reprint from the Lawrence Journal World & News (Lawrence, Kansas) reflects men's experiences in their iGroup and in the New Warrior Training Adventure.

Nobody has all the answers for you....except you. The ManKind Project is an organization that will hold space for you to find your answers...not anyone else's.

It's no a spa.

It's you and your life.

Ready?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Men at work
Controversial male-bonding movement building momentum in Lawrence

By Sarah Henning; March 15, 2008
Photo by Rachel Seymour

Mark Zwahl is tired of men making lame excuses for not being responsible - such as being late to dates.

"If I choose to meet you and I'm 15 minutes late, the consequences, they're not huge, but the consequences are that you won't trust me as much," the Lawrence resident says. "What's the message that I'm probably sending? Well, I'm sending a message that you're pretty far down my priority list. We say one thing and do something else."

These are the sorts of priorities Zwahl deals with as part of the ManKind Project, which has a chapter in Lawrence and has created controversy in other parts of the country.

The project is an international nonprofit educational and training organization for men. More than 30,000 men from at least nine countries have completed the group's initiation weekends, called the New Warrior Training Adventure, according to the program's Web
Charles Gruber, a Lawrence resident and the center director for the Kansas City area, says 300 men from a region including Lawrence, Topeka, Kansas City and Wichita have completed the initiation weekends with the group. There are 100 active regional members - including 18 in Lawrence.

Lawrence’s 18 members are split between two "Integration Groups" - or "I Groups" - that meet weekly.

Generally, members extend personal invitations to join the group. But as it seeks to become more visible, Gruber and Zwahl, the "leader body" for the Lawrence group, will lead an "Introduction to Men's Work" program at 7 p.m. Friday at the Lawrence Public Library, 707 Vt.

Gruber says the group deals with issues of parenting, finances and, generally, how to be a better man. For Zwahl, this means taking responsibility over his own life - his relationships, feelings and emotions.

"In some ways what we do is somewhat of a departure from ordinary life. That's the point," Zwahl says. "There are some things that are missing in our culture, and I like to think that the men's work we do adds something back in that is really valuable, that is otherwise missing."

Becoming a man

Men who want to become involved with the local ManKind Project and the men's work group must first be initiated during a weekend event at a camp near Parkville, Mo.

The initiation weekend costs $675 per person, though Gruber says payment plans and scholarships can be available.

"The weekend is a portal to the community," says Gruber, who went through his New Warrior Training Adventure in 2003. "Now there are many boys and men who have never been honored in their transition from being a boy to becoming a man. And we try to fill that gap."

The ManKind Project and its members are secretive about what happens during the initiation weekends. Participants sign a confidentiality agreement as part of pre-weekend paperwork that includes a standard injury waiver. Gruber says the confidentiality agreement works in two ways. He says it protects the identities of the men involved as well as the experience of the weekend, which he says could be destroyed without the mystique.

Zwahl says the weekend is meant to be a challenge, and those interested in initiation should be prepared for a tough time emotionally and physically.

"It's not a spa," Zwahl says. "I didn't have a clue. I was all ready for a little bit of conference stuff during the day and (to) lay back in my cabin and read a book at night. I didn't know they were going to keep me busy the whole (darn) time. That's why we make sure people know it's an initiation and not a conference workshop."
Allegations

Making that distinction clearer has become more important to the group after a 2005 incident in Texas. Michael Scinto committed suicide after attending an initiation weekend.

Scinto had been struggling with alcohol and cocaine abuse and claimed the weekend unearthed a traumatic childhood memory, according to a 2007 Houston Press article. The suit against the Houston chapter of the group is pending.

"There was a tragic incident where a man committed suicide two-and-a-half weeks after he went through his NWTA weekend," says Gruber, adding Scinto needed outside help for his problems. "I have since talked to the men who ran that weekend, and (the claims in the suit about the weekend) were just ugly, perverted, twisted lies."

Zwahl, a former volunteer grief counselor with Headquarters Crisis Center, 211 E. Eighth St., says as a result of the Scinto case, he and other group leaders are more careful in screening men for the initiation weekend.

"We're going to try to screen out somebody who is significantly troubled or depressed or seems to be in a really fragile time in their life," Zwahl says. "And that's going to be a crapshoot, just like any kind of screening would be."

Emotional connection

Zwahl says "becoming a man" is more about psychology and less about morphing into a stoic John Wayne-type character.

"For men especially, culturally, stereotypically, we're encouraged not to show our emotions. 'Boys don't cry.' "Buck up, be a man," Zwahl says. "The phrase 'be a man' means tough it out and don't show your emotions. That's dangerous because those emotions are there, we bottle them up and, quite frankly, they come out anyway."

To work on showing emotion, Zwahl says that as the men meet in their weekly I Groups they are as honest as possible - even when it comes to each other.

"Sitting in a circle of men who are being 100 percent honest with each other is a pretty rare event," Zwahl says.

The involvement in the group has been important to Zwahl, who got involved with men's work in 1990 and the ManKind Project in 2004.

"Men aren't particularly good at looking for help, let alone ask for it," Zwahl says. "You see the uphill battle we've got? We have a men's organization that involves men helping men and the convention of the culture is that men don't ask for help. For me at least, but I know for some men, it has been a real life-changing event."

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:49AM (-07:00)

Pray

Monday, March 16, 2009
Readers

My wife's dear and beloved father has a non-cancer brain tumor. It appears to be operable and he is scheduled to have surgery Weds. morning (3.18.2009). He will be at Mission Hospital in Mission Viejo, CA (Orange County).

I need you to dig deep and pray hard for this good and loving man. I need you to dig deep and pray for his sweet wife, Diane, in this very hard time.

Breathe Deep! Send it out!

Vic Larson
Vic Larson
Vic Larson

Aho!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:39AM (-07:00)

Creating My Own Reality

Monday, March 23, 2009
I think there is true wonder in the statement that "I create my own reality." I struggle with the meaning and depth of the statement. I love to live it when things are "good" and doubt it when things are "bad."

In my iGroup, I work on living this statement. I practice creating love and trust in the group by being loving, trusting, and trustworthy. If I am not these things, the reality I create is the opposite of love and trust; confusion and uncertainty.

I offer this from Gary Zukav, from Soul Stories, in the Earth School chapter:

The Creator gathered all of creation and said, "I want to hide something from the humans until they are ready for it. It is the knowledge that they create their own reality."

"Give it to me," said the salmon. "I will hide it on the bottom of the ocean."

"No," said the Creator. "One day they will go to the bottom of the ocean, and then they will find it."

"Give it to me," said the bear. "I will take it into the mountain."

"No," said the Creator. "One day they will dig into the mountains, and then they will find it."

"Give it to me," said the eagle. "I will take it to the moon. They will never find it."

"No," said the Creator. "One day they will go to the moon, and then they will find it even there."

Then Grandmother Mole rose. Everyone became quiet. They knew that, although she has no physical eyes, Grandmother Mole lives in the breast of Mother Earth and sees with spiritual eyes.
"Put it inside them," she said.

"It is done!" said the Creator.

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I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:25AM (-07:00)

The Heart of a Man

Monday, March 30, 2009

by Jim Mitchell

From the time we're in diapers, adults socialize us to the ways of the family and the culture at large. What the family doesn't accomplish is usually driven home in our teen years by conformist peer pressure, through the powerful forces of shame, ridicule and judgment. On top of that the mass media through movie characters, ads, and icons sets other standards against which we judge ourselves, others and our relationships. Women and men learn very different ways of behaving and develop very different expectations about love, marriage and intimacy.

THE HEART OF A MAN

Male socialization teaches boys to minimize and ultimately deny feelings and emotions that make them appear vulnerable, such as fear, sadness, grief, and to a great extent, joy. These feelings are boxed up, put away and seldom spoken of again in the company of other boys or men. By the time most boys reach early manhood, they are comfortable only with feelings such as anger and lust. Power, sex, women, possessions, money and success take the place of any authentic emotional life.

Boys learn to play by the rules of manhood from the older boys and men in their lives. Such 'rules' may never be actually spoken. Instead they are learned mostly through
observation and inference. Any random group of college-aged young men asked to describe the rules on how or what it means to be a man, will likely include:

- Don't trust other men, especially with anything personal
- Every other man is your competitor for food, stuff, women, employment, promotions, grades, etc.
- Don't talk about what you really think
- Don't feel...anything
- Never let them see you sweat
- Never ask for help
- Be rational
- Control is your friend
- Toughen up! Don't show sadness, fear or anything soft
- No mercy!
- Go it alone. It worked for Dirty Harry, Superman, John Wayne, it will work for you!
- It's all about you (get what you want out of life; other people's needs, feelings, desires don't matter)
- And on and on

Is it any wonder then, that men are challenged to create successful and fulfilling relationships, no matter what their partner brings to the relationship table.

The Way Out

So what then is the way out you ask? Go ahead, ask. Well I'll tell you. For men the way to truly successful and fulfilling relationships lies in recreating our relationship with ourselves first and foremost, then, from that new place, recreating our relationships with everyone else. That means coming to terms with my socialization as a man and the discerning the parts of it that do not serve me or take me towards my desired life and desired relationships. It also means doing the hard work of reclaiming the parts of me that I abandoned as a child or young man in my desire to fit in and gain approval. And here comes the scary part. You ready? It means dealing with the part of me that is still a hurting, wounded, scared little boy. Except now the boy is trapped in your adult body. You know the part I'm talking about don't you. Yeah, you know. You never talk about that part do you? But it's there, scratching at you from the inside every day. And you keep trying to relate to women from that place? That is never going to work, Chachi! If you think the ole Jimmeister doesn't know what he's talking about here, go and ask the last 2-3 women you've been involved with. See what they say about it. Go ahead. Go! Don't be scared.

Here's what I've found it my life as a man. It is only in doing work on me as a man, men's work, and beginning to heal myself that I discover something really magical about myself. I discover I have everything I need to create the kind of relationships I want. I have. I have always had, at my disposal a full complement of emotions to help me to connect deeply with others and to build authentic relationships and communities. I find an emotional range and fluency I was certain had be lost to me a long time ago. I discover that as a man I am fully capable of being fierce and loving, strong and tender, rigorous and compassionate, tenacious and giving. I discover I can feel all my feelings and emotions, maybe for the first time since I was a child. I discover a new strength, powerful masculine strength, in my openness, vulnerability and tears.

In working on myself and my inner life as, a man, I make another discovery. This one is as important, if not more so, than reclaiming my emotional life. I see how I have spent
most of my life as man projecting my boyish needs from women on to them, rather than truly engaging them as equals in an authentic partnership. I find that I need to reframe how I see the women in my life, be they mother, friend, lover or spouse. Through my self examination and discovery I withdraw and transform my projections that every women somehow needs to be my mother, my comforter, my nurturer, my place of solace and refuge or my sexual fix. I see that I need to work on my ‘stuff’ as a man in the company of men. I can no longer expect that somehow the women in my life can fix what ails me as a man. I learn that the real power and my own grounded sense of self as a man comes from having authentic, grounded, vulnerable relationships with my own gender first. It is in men’s circles that I find myself and the man I want to be and to become. Only then I can relate to women from a place of mature masculine energy.

To assist me in bringing all this new wisdom to life and rebalancing my inner life I focus on:

**Five Simple Truths**

- **Integrity**: I create for myself a true, grounded sense of integrity. I am who I say and I am…and you can trust that. I do what I say…and I say what I do. My thinking, feelings, words and actions are congruent. I choose behaviors that will raise the trust level in my relationships, not lower it. I give up my need to self promote and self protect. I keep my agreements and promises with others. When I can't keep a given agreement, I renegotiate a new agreement before the old one expires. My integrity is never in question. I am who I say I am.

- **Accountability**: I am willing to account for and be responsible for the choices I make in my life, both conscious and unconscious and the consequences or impact of those choices. I stop making excuses. I stop blaming others. I give up my need to be a victim. I finally get that I create my reality and my life. I stop blaming others for what I've created or failed to create in my life. If I don't like my life, I know I have to change, not expect others to change for me.

- **Telling the Truth**: I create a practice of telling myself and others the truth. Period. I get out of the denial, delusion and fantasy that I use to manipulate reality and get into the truth. I get out of the Matrix! I practice telling myself the microscopic truth about myself and my choices. I no longer accept half truths, partial truths, lies, deceit, manipulation, coercion from myself or others. I always practice compassion in telling my truth to others. I get that my truth is not THE truth, it is a truth. I don't have to explain nor defend my truth to others. I simply have to know and live what is my truth.

- **Emotional Literacy**: I teach myself to feel and experience the full expression of my emotions. Joy, sadness, fear, anger and dozens of others. I grieve my losses. I use my feelings, as well as my brain, to help me make decisions, large and small. I express my feelings appropriately. I practice compassion and gratitude daily.

- **Mission and Purpose**: I develop for myself a clear vision of the kind of world I'd like to see it and create a mission statement for myself that speaks to what I'm willing to do each day to bring that kind of a world into being. I live my mission truthfully and passionately. I ask others to support me in making a difference in my world. I support others in doing the same when ask. I stop waiting for other to take care of or fix what is important to me. I passionately and compassionately participate in creating the kind of family, relationship, school, community, government, country or world I’d most like to be a part of.

As you focus on these Five Simple Truths and manifest a bit more of each of them each
day, you will discover a whole new way of being as Man. You'll feel a newfound sense of authentic, masculine power, grace and love. Now, what woman wouldn't want some of that?

NOTE: Jim Mitchell is a Certified Full Leader and Leader Trainer in the ManKind Project.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:14AM (-07:00)

Escaping the Past

Wednesday, April 01, 2009

ESCAPE
By D.H. Lawrence

When we get out of the glass bottles of our ego,
And we escape like squirrels turning in the cages of our personality
and get into the forests again,
we shall shiver with cold and fright
but things will happen to us
so that we don't know ourselves.

Cool, unlying life will rush in,
and passion will make our bodies taught with power,
we shall stamp our feet with new power
and old things will fall down,
we shall laugh, and institutions will curl up like burnt paper.

I see this is a piece on initiation; getting out of our heads and the common world, into the forest, up the mountain. Let in the change, the vast unknown, the “cool, unlying life,” and then the “institutions” of your life will come tumbling down.
What "old things" will you let fall down?

When is the moment of change for you?

The time is now.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:41AM (-07:00)

Total Accountability Day

Friday, April 03, 2009

" 'Today I am accountable for everything I do and every word I utter. It's my responsibility. Try it one day. Mark it on your calendar. Draw a circle around one day next week and declare it Total Accountability Day. Don't blame anybody for anything and take total responsibility for everything that happens that day.'"


I'm not quite sure I can add anything to this. Except maybe get off your ass and take responsibility for your situation in the world.

Now that's easy for me to say but not always so easy to do. I still blame others for my fate in life. I still look outward for my inward answers. Where I get some great support for looking at taking responsibility is in my ManKind Project integration group.

The men there are honest and have great intention. Sometimes they get swept up in their stuff too. But we roll along and try to support everybody in their work.

Get to the training; you'll know why when you get there.
I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:27PM (-07:00)

Comments

- Rrramone
  August 22, 2007
Great post, always good to hear about taking total responsibility. Keep up the great work. :-)

Glorious Cheetah

- NathanaelSchwarz
  September 08, 2007
I am glad you encourage us readers to take responsibility for ourselves, I can resonate with that very well. Not taking responsibility for our actions is creating a lot of pain in others. I am trying to learn how to communicate nonviolently and this is one of the principles. I am very interested in your blog and I am glad you are writing about the MKP. Thank you

Free Hugs

Tuesday, April 07, 2009

In my small town, there is a young man who comes to the farmer's market every Wednesday and Saturday. He holds a sign that says "free hugs."

I love this young man! He is the example of what I think we need in this world...men who aren't afraid to freely give and be freely given to.

He simply asks you, with his sign, if you would like a free hug. I hug him and we smile and that's that. But it turns out he has made an impact on another man in my iGroup, as well. He gets free hugs from the "free hug guy" every time he goes to the market, too.
This is how men change the world. This is how men show up and do good in the world. This is how men make a difference.

Will you make a difference with me?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:28AM (-07:00)

**Lost...for DancinWolf**

**Thursday, April 09, 2009**

Michael Buble, Lost, off Call Me Irresponsible (2007)

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In my life there are places that only my best friend knows. Places of fear and pain so deep that I think it will crush me flat if I speak of them out loud.

My best friend has these places, too. Right now, my best friend is carrying a pain so large I think my best friend thinks being crushed flat might be a better option.

To my best friend....I say...

"...you are not alone
And I am there with you
And we'll get lost together
Till the light comes pouring through
'Cause when you feel like you're done
And the darkness has won
Babe, you're not lost
When your world's crashing down
And you cannot bear the cross
I said, baby, you're not lost"

I love you, best friend!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:31AM (-07:00)

**What Is The New Warrior**

**Sunday, April 12, 2009**
From the Los Angeles Center of the ManKind Project, this article spells out the New Warrior pretty well.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

What Is The New Warrior?

Male and female; yang and yin --- inseparable reflections of a single whole. Yet, how separate men and women can appear! How easy it is to focus only on the distinct legacy of our own sex. We men have inherited the role of "warrior". First, there was the Old Warrior, the warrior of the past. Now, there is the New Warrior, the warrior of the present.

The Old Warrior competed with the elements, other animals, and other males, through force where necessary, for the ancient prize of survival. Our histories are filled with tales of combat and competition, male against male, tribe against tribe, nation against nation, for territory, food, women, and more. And competition and domination worked, we survived, when many did not. The memories of the struggle of the Old Warrior haunt our bones, and live and breathe in each of us today.

We feel it, yet our polite modern world condemns it. It tugs at us and in desperation we become "nice boys", secretly baring our bloody fangs in hidden, vicious ways. We bury and deny our warrior energy, and in response, it finds expression in distorted "shadow" forms.

The New Warrior has looked at his Old Warrior in the eye. He has learned to spot the shadow of his Old Warrior, and to make new, healthy choices in his life. The New Warrior commits himself to living a life of passion, energy, and feeling beyond survival, to harnessing and openly directing his warrior energy into a personal mission of service in the world.

The New Warrior is a man for today's world, ready for full, vibrant, equal partnership with other men and women. For most of us, the struggle for physical survival is over. The New
Warrior has put down the sword, pick up his own heart, and placed it in service to himself and others.

What Are The Characteristics Of A New Warrior?

A man who has been taken the journey of the New Warrior Training Adventure is offered the opportunity to take on the characteristics of a New Warrior and take his place in the world carrying those traits with him into his family, his work, and his community. It is these traits and his choice to do his own personal growth that enables him to face the struggles of life, to attain his personal successes, and to forge ahead in his life's journey with clarity and intention. These characteristics become the fundamental values of the New Warrior, by reshaping and redefining a man's awareness of his world, his choices, and his feelings. These values include:

- **Responsibility** - A New Warrior is responsible for his life, his feelings, his choices, and his actions. He chooses his reactions.
- **Integrity** - A New Warrior's choices and actions are consistent with his intentions, mission and commitments. He keeps his promises.
- **Congruency** - A New Warrior's actions equal his thoughts and words. He does what he says he will do. He "walks the talk".
- **Self-awareness** - A New Warrior examines his thoughts, feelings and behaviors. He is aware of his "shadows", patterns, and limiting beliefs that compromise his integrity with these principles.
- **Accountability** - A New Warrior "owns" to another man when he is out of integrity. He acknowledges and owns the consequences of his actions, and the choices and intentions behind them.
- **Clarity** - A New Warrior discerns and articulates his feelings and judgments. He seeks understanding. He knows what he wants. He knows who he is. He knows the choices he wants to make.
- **Mission** - A New Warrior seeks to discover his true mission of service and to live in integrity with it.
- **Commitment** - A New Warrior clearly articulates his pledge or promise to do something. His intentions are clear and follows through.
- **Action** - A New Warrior takes action to live his mission and fulfill his commitments. He asks for help when he needs it. He asks for what he wants. He moves through his fear. He takes risks.
- **Service** - A New Warrior offers himself through acts and deeds without expectation.
- **Authenticity** - A New Warrior is sincere and honest in all of his dealings. He is aware of and owns his feelings. He speaks his truth. He comes from his heart. He is genuine and real.
- **Directness** - A New Warrior speaks clearly to another man of his perceptions, feelings and judgments towards him. He neither practices nor tolerates sideways comments or 'gossip'.

The New Warrior is the man of the modern world! He is as common as you and I. And, what makes him different is that he has chosen to live his life in a new fulfilled way by being conscious of who he is in the world and the choices he makes.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:29AM (-07:00)
"One day, out of nowhere, you realize you don't know who you are, and none of the cards in your wallet provide the slightest clue to your real identity."

Sam Keen

The ManKind Project isn't about fixing men who are broken; we're all broken in some fashion. From my seat, MKP is about a man finding what works and what doesn't in his world. Then, and only then, can a man take his world into his own hands and "fix" what is broken.

If you could find a place that supported what you really wanted in your world, wouldn't that be the place to stand in?

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:39AM (-07:00)

**Articulate Their Passions**

**Wednesday, April 15, 2009**

This re-post is borrowed from Kip de Moll's blog Zen and the Art of the Midlife Crisis. Kip talks about his experience with the ManKind Project and the men he sees there.
Thanks, Kip, for your post.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

The Mankind Project

Men do not just talk about football and sex anymore.

Clearly, so many of the stereotypes of masculine and feminine roles no longer apply. The world has changed, and men are adapting.

In my world this weekend, I gathered at a camp with 60 some men who are committed to making their lives better by living consciously, feeling their emotions, and honoring the wealth in others. Being the Annual Gathering required in the By-Laws, there was plenty of financial discussion, hard looks at the past, and lofty dreams about membership growth in the future. Hearty and delicious meals were combined and prepared to feed the mass artfully by an ebullient master who invited men to join him in shifts, and made it fun.

Two workshops were presented to help us uncover thick layers of impenetrable protections over our emotions, and to build porous boundaries of discernment in their place. A ropes course raised us high. An auction raised money for great causes, and kept us delightfully high.

Throughout the weekend, there was a continuous and fascinating thread of men talking over the look and feel of churning emotions in their lives. Not about the promotion in question, the arriving new grandchild, the marriages of agony and joy; the talk was all about the feelings around these events: the envy of another man, the shame of our own inadequacies, the pride for our actions. Each and every conversation was an effort to hold those feelings, recognize how they affect us, be able to shed some of them, and walk more freely in awareness.

Listening to men articulate their passions about making themselves and the world a better place was truly the most moving aspect. Most of these men I knew only as little as I would people at a social function listing job descriptions, number of kids and sports scores. Most of these men I left knowing little more about their particulars, but precious more about the colors of their internal lives.

These are men who can wear wigs, poke fun at each other, and be outrageously silly. These are men who can face each other in conflict and, with all due respect, agree to disagree, recognizing that the charge between them is more about oneself than the other. These are men who can listen, admit they are wrong, and act to restore their integrity. These are men who can compassionately hold their companions accountable, understanding that every action affects the group, but most especially the man in action.

As comfortable to hug as to shake hands, they will do whatever it takes to stand behind a man who suffers, or causes suffering, if he will accept their total--and honest--support. These are men who do not leave their talk at the door like cultists their masks and robes, but take their compassion to the streets, to prisons and soup kitchens, and to their own homes and offices.
To be among these men is to feel strong, safe, cared for, and powerful, to feel alive at the core. These are warriors in the new world.
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:49AM (-07:00)

I Could Have Resisted

Friday, April 24, 2009

This post is from an e-mail sent via a Northern California ManKind Project mailing list from Robert Logan. Robert shares his experience being a first-time (rookie) staff member on the Northern California April 2009 New Warrior Training Adventure.

It spoke to me and reminded me of my rookie staffing. I was drawn to speechlessness watching men get to the deepest parts of themselves; honored to be present for such monumental changes; reverent to the space created by the staff for these men.

My rookie staffing was a giant step toward being of service to other men. It meant getting out of my own way to be present and clear about what was going on around me.

I hope one day Robert or I see you in this space.

Thank you, Robert; for your writing and for staffing for a man in my iGroup who went through the Northern California April 2009 New Warrior Training Adventure.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

My Rookie Weekend
By Robert Logan

I went to give. I went to receive.

I went to rediscover.
I went to learn.
I went to connect.
The Lover.

I gave strength and received satisfaction.
I gave sweat and received purification.
I gave sage and received the Container.

The Warrior.

I gave my body a stretch and received a crystal.
I gave time and received clarity.
I gave my shadow and received my mask.
I gave black granite and received the eyes of three scared men.
I gave stillness and received accountability.
I gave two paths and received contradiction.
I gave water and chains and received my Wild Man.
I gave my imagination and received my new name.
I gave instructions at midnight and received a rebuke.
I gave a place to rest and received compassion.

The Magician.

I gave effort and received warmth.
I gave music and received a dance.
I gave attention and received sadness, anger, happiness, fear and shame.
I gave a statement and received me, myself and I.
I gave in and received my mission.
I gave watchfulness and received nourishment.

I gave a Journey and received intense joy.

I gave protection and received trust.
I gave abandonment and received brothers.
I gave a place to rest and received satisfaction.

The King.

I gave to a circle and received my old name back.
I gave food and received gratitude.

I gave music and received the Gift.

I gave service and received a man.
I gave my eyes and received tears.
I gave longing and gratitude and received love.
I gave a look back and received peace.

I connected with the souls of beautiful men.
I learned to be present with all my feelings.
I rediscovered my mission.

I gave from the heart and I received wisdom.
I could have resisted. But that wasn’t why I went.

- Howling Wolf That Dances By The Sea
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 10:27AM (-07:00)

I'll Meet You There

Thursday, April 30, 2009

"Out beyond ideas of Wrongdoing and Rightdoing, there is a field. I'll meet you there. When the soul lies down in that grass, the world is too full to talk about. Ideas, language, and even the phrase 'each other' doesn't make any sense."

Rumi, c. 532 A.D.

In my view, men are men first; everything else second. That is where I start from; we at least have "man" in common.

As men, we share common bonds on masculinity and maleness. We have common biology, fears, and joys.

In the ManKind Project, men are embraced for who they are; men. I welcome you to look into the New Warrior Training Adventure and the ManKind Project. We are full of all kinds of men who are men first; everything else second.

I wish for a chance to meet you there; out beyond ideas of Wrongdoing and Rightdoing.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 10:11AM (-07:00)

A Congruent Life

Friday, May 08, 2009
"We share our humanity – our hopes and dreams, our trials our troubles. We share our laughter and our sorrows, our strengths and our weaknesses, our greatness and our faults. We support and challenge our faults. We support and challenge ourselves to face our fears, live our dreams, make use of our gifts and become the men we've always wanted to be."

ManKind Project; New Zealand

The ManKind Project is a place for men like me to stretch themselves to be the men they say they want to be.

When I first came to be involved in the ManKind Project, I was a man who spoke one way and did something else. My life was not congruent with my words and so-called beliefs.

The men I know in the ManKind Project hold me in a space that offers me truth from them and a place for truth from me. I can speak my truth about what does and doesn't work in my life and then ask for guidance from the other men. Now the truth here is that sometimes I don't ask for the help I want, but all changes come in time.

Are you living a congruent life? The New Warrior Training Adventure offers a place to start living in a congruent way.

See ya there...

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:49AM (-07:00)

Growth

Wednesday, May 20, 2009
"When we look at a finely manicured lawn, we see how the grass has been clipped uniformly by the "owner", there is no other plant growth allowed, we understand that to accomplish this is to regularly mow the grass and to spray some toxic chemical all over the land so that only the selected grass grows.

The action plan of MRT (Multicultural Resource Team, ed.) can be likened to plowing the land over and allowing new growth of dormant energy. When land is newly plowed over and without spraying chemical all over it, we see that what will come up initially are "noxious weeds of every description" (shadows) these are the repressed and angry energies.

When we are patient and trusting, we see that these "weeds" lose energy and give way to another new growth. This new growth which follows are grasses of many descriptions, flowers of many wonderful and different colours, shrubs and trees. Medicinal plants grow, birds, butterflies and "wildlife" return to the land, and what we have is a diverse and beautiful land. "

John Crier, Cree Nation -- MKP Multicultural Resource Team Member

I really enjoy this piece. The author has hit upon a basic truth for me. Growth is often met with resistance. How many times I cling to the manicured lawn idea when, if I was willing to allow the growth, I would see the great beauty lying in wait underneath.

What growth are you waiting for?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:27AM (-07:00)
For men in and around the northern California area:

In support of men changing themselves, and the world, one man at a time, we invite you join men from the ManKind Project at:

The Summer 2009 ManKind Project Davis Open House

Come experience what it looks like to sit in a ManKind Project men’s circle. The ManKind Project offers men a place to be honest and clear about what is working and not working in their lives; to be supported by men of like kind.

Learn more about the ManKind Project, New Warrior Training Adventure, and Integration Groups from men in the ManKind Project.

For more information and location, contact DavisWarrior.

RSVP appreciated.

All men of all ages welcome. Bring nothing more than your open heart.

May 21, 2009, 7.30-9.30 pm, Davis, CA
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 03:22AM (-07:00)

Conscious Choice: Men, Mentoring, and M.A.N.

Friday, May 22, 2009
A piece from Robert Spatz.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Men, Mentoring, and M.A.N.

by Robert Spatz; November 1996

Twenty-eight men stood before the audience. One by one they came forward to speak about the experiences they'd had over the past week. Before they had shared the past weekend together they had been strangers to one another. Now as their friends and families listened they spoke their "truth." The first man said he had been sad all week, had even cried several times — and said it was good, it felt good to be sad, because for most of his life he had felt nothing. Next, a big heavy set middle-aged man said he had been angry all his life and was tired of it, and sorry for how it had affected his wife and children. When the weekend had ended he hugged his wife like he had never hugged a woman before, and as she sat in the audience he told her he loved her.

Another man said that he’d thought at over 60 years old it was too late for him to change. But when he attended Yom Kippur services the day after the weekend he discovered a new depth of spiritual meaning in the service. A man spoke of not being afraid anymore to confront the men who treat him unfairly at work. A young man spoke of not knowing his real father but feeling like he had twenty-seven fathers during the weekend.

It continued, each man speaking from the heart about his experience. Most stumbled for the right words until an unexpected eloquence flowed forth and moved the audience to sound their appreciation. Something extraordinary was occurring in that room, but before trying to make sense of it it’s necessary to look at what led up to that evening. In fact it would help to go back about 25 years.

Men and Masculinity

Since the women’s movement began in the early 1970s many men have been encouraged and challenged to re-examine what it means to be masculine, what it means to be a man. For most men it was difficult to accept this challenge because they were being asked to exercise faculties that were not a large part of the male model of life. They were being asked by girlfriends, sisters, wives, mothers, and the media to be introspective and to show feelings — just as they had been thoroughly trained not to do.
Most of the pressure to become a “new man” — more open, sensitive, and caring came from women and focused on our relations with women. We baby-boomer men were told we needed to do change to become better husbands, sons, and fathers. Some of us saw a potential pay-off there. Perhaps instead of feeling like we needed to be strong and successful, it might turn out that we could be valued instead for being honest and good.

Still, all of this uproar was confusing and unclear. What was even more uncertain was how we could make these changes, redefine masculinity, and still compete and thrive in the world of men. It was one thing to ask us to let down our guard in the bedroom; quite another to ask us to do so in the boardroom or the clubhouse.

Despite the uncertainties, many men in the last 25 years have taken the risk of introspection, self-awareness, and self-disclosure. Many women, while encouraging and supporting, have never understood just how risky the venture has been for men. Since all men are assumed to be competitors, if not potential enemies, it hardly made much sense to reveal one’s weakness and vulnerability to other men. And be assured, most of us figured that what we would discover in our own inner search would be faults, weakness, and a touch of evil.

At first, we conceded that maybe, just maybe, a women who loved us might accept the truth. We’d open up, if the alternative was having her leave — but that’s where we’d draw the line. Gradually, however, men began entering therapy, self-help groups, 12-step programs, and commercial personal growth programs (such as est seminars, Lifespring, and Forum). Men’s personal growth programs and writings slowly grew into a men’s movement that could complement the work of the women’s movement.

Eventually men began to realize that at the core of who they were was something called masculinity, together with a series of relationships with men. We began to respect and even honor our relationships with male friends, brothers, and, of course, fathers. We discovered that some of the qualities that we considered feminine that were sought for by the women in our lives could also be expressed in the company of men. In short, it was okay to have feelings with men and for men.

Many men have discovered that recognizing a fuller range of emotions not only doesn’t diminish their power and stature but increases and reforms these qualities. Many of us have discovered that by confronting our own inner demons we have uncovered an unanticipated strength and power. Dominance, wealth and status, no longer seem such desirable pursuits — and they don’t control our lives. They begin to appear to be at best, possible means, to a more meaningful end. Fortunately the same programs that led men to pose basic questions were able to suggest some general answers.

Mentoring: Spirituality and Service

As men began to question how to bring their inner personal work into the outer world two messages began to resonate: spirituality and service. Men like to be useful. Men like to be needed. We like to fix things. We are practical; we like to see results. Material things, whether earned, fixed, or purchased are a measuring stick. Now a new measure arose. What have you done for the good of the world starting with your own personal world? This is a spiritual question; it asks a man to find his place in the whole of the universe. It implies our connection to all of life. It suggests we have a part to play in the plan of a creator, a higher power, the nameless one, God. Perhaps we are not here to get what we can for ourselves and our loved ones, but to give what we can give to as many as our
Men who had explored their emotions found their power and strength coming from something spiritual: love. As a man faces the turmoil of his emotional life he often discovers the core emotion from which all others are an imperfect, distorted expression. At the center and core of his feelings resides love. Not his love, just love, universal and profoundly powerful. When a man discovers his ability to love he naturally wants to use it to fix something or somebody. He wants to keep uncovering and sharing his love with others. He may well learn to express his love with hugs and words. But if a man’s way is to express himself in actions; he must do something, not just be someone. He will want to serve others without diminishing himself.

How can a man serve others, especially other men? He can mentor them. He can teach, guide, encourage, advise, and support another boy or man. Of course, he can mentor a girl or woman, too, but by mentoring a male he may short-circuit competition and share a wisdom he hardly knew he possessed — wisdom about growing up male.

Traditionally men have mentored other men in sports or occupational roles. They have taught a trade, coached a team, or helped a man advance in a business. Typically, a mentor is older than the man being mentored, too old to be a peer and too young to be a father figure. Generally the relationship is clearly circumscribed, covering only a particular part of the mens lives. There may not be any personal relationship outside the field of mentoring. They probably never talk about their personal lives or their feelings about each other. Yet removed from the competition among peers and the ambivalences of fathers and sons, the relationship can be rewarding for both men. They both may be able to give and receive, not a small thing between two men.

Unfortunately, the evidence indicates that few men born since World War II have either mentored or been mentored. Most of us had to rely on fathers who often were either not around or unavailable, friends who knew no more than we did, or media images of what a ‘real man’ was.

**M.A.N: Mentor’s Action Network**

Let’s return to the twenty-eight men standing before their friends and families. This event was extraordinary on several counts. The obvious one was that these men were publicly expressing thoughts and feelings men rarely even express in private. They also hugged one another with real feelings of affection — again, in public. It was extraordinary that these feelings were elicited during just one weekend together at a New Warrior Training Adventure. What made this event even more extraordinary was the organization behind it, and what will be offered to the men after their Adventure.

These weekend trainings are provided in conjunction with the New Warrior Network that has training centers around the country. This is a national not-for-profit corporation that operates with a small paid staff. Most of the work is done by volunteers, men who have gone through the male initiation provided by the training. The paid leaders on the weekend are highly motivated, experienced men with a wide range of occupations who have been trained by the organization as guides. Most of the weekend staff are volunteers.

What all these men have in common is the desire to mentor other men by welcoming them into the New Warrior community. After the weekend the new men are encouraged...
to join weekly Integration Groups which help them deepen their self-examination and integrate the training into their lives. The men who teach them how to begin an I-group are also volunteers who wish to mentor other men.

Mentoring has thus become an integral part of fulfilling the New Warrior Statement of Purpose: “We are an order of men called to reclaim the sacred masculine for our time through initiation, training, and action in the world.” Indeed, the Chicago training center has become the Mentor’s Action Network (M.A.N.). They have opened their own physical space, the Mentor Center (in the Mural Building, famous for Dennis Rodman’s traffic-stopping face), and formed the Mentoring Foundation. Taken together, these entities embody the merger of the national trends toward a mature masculinity, a growing spiritual consciousness, and the recognition of the value of service.

M.A.N is training and initiating men who eventually want to turn their newly discovered inner gifts into outer actions. The organization then seeks to nurture the efforts of these men to mentor others both within the organization and outside it. But unlike traditional mentors this group specifically seeks men who will teach others by example to live a life that balances the expressions of the head and heart, respects the body and the earth, trusts intuition and truth, and honors the spirit and the sacred.

A New Warrior becomes a new kind of mentor. He mentors others not merely in how to perform, but in how to become — how to make the world a better place by their inner struggles as well as their outer accomplishments. He is a man who can be of service to his family, his friends, his community, his nation, his earth, and his God. If he chooses to be.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:57AM (-07:00)

A Man's Quest

Thursday, May 28, 2009

"A man must go on a quest to discover the sacred fire, in the sanctuary of his own belly to ignite the flame in his heart, to fuel the blaze in the hearth, to rekindle his ardor for the Earth.

Sam Keen

Men are not born men, but born boys. We must travel the terrain of coming male maturity
with caution, bravado, fear, reluctance, joy, and passion. What stands in the way is the fear of losing our childhood security (imagined or real, as it may be).

What does a man have to give up to stand as a mature man in his mature masculine? What does a man need to look at letting go of to then grasp the maturity his body aches for?

In the ManKind Project, men are encouraged to look at what they need to do to step into a male maturity that is honoring of the man, as well as the world around him.

Men are not born men, but born boys. The world does not need more adult-sized boys running around pretending to be men. Rather, the world needs men to take their place as boys who have stepped into manhood in a courageous, fiery, honoring way.

The time is now; men are waiting.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 02:24AM (-07:00)

**Vets Journey Home**

**Tuesday, June 02, 2009**

From FrederickNewsPost.com, a story of ManKind Project men who have taken on the loving task of helping vets bring their journey home in a honoring and open space.

Blessings to them for their work. Blessing to the vets for their work.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

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Separating the warrior from the war
Vets Journey Home program offers emotional healing, support

By Susan Guynn; May 24, 2009

Vietnam veteran Don Jestes of Ellicott City is comforted by Gene McMahon, founder of
Don Jestes looked at the black-and-white photo of himself at 19 — a U.S. soldier in Vietnam; drafted. Rebel, a German shepherd, is with him.

They were a team, scouting the jungles for booby traps. You can feel Jestes’ intensity, the stress of days without sleep. You can see it etched in his face, in his eyes.

He knew the risks. When he deployed to Vietnam in 1968, he didn't tell his parents what his assignment was.

He knew it was best to not get too friendly with any other soldiers. But he did. They were buddies and fellow dog handlers. “He watched my back and I watched his.”

Jestes came back home. His friend was killed. “Life was ripped out of him. It was May 13, 1968.”

He now realizes that's when the intense anger began; an anger he's lived with for 40 years. “At 19, I thought I could control that emotionally. I didn't know how to let it go when I came home,” he said. “I don't want to deal with the anger anymore.

“My family suffered from it ... everyone around me,” said Jestes, now 60 and living in Ellicott City. “It wasn't until 10 o'clock today I realized what happened to me on May 13, 1968, changed my life, and not for the better.”

Jestes spoke these words following the graduation ceremony for the participants in the Vets Journey Home program, a weekend of emotional healing held earlier this month at Gaia Healing Center, near Mount Airy, for combat veterans and others who have experienced the trauma of war. The program was founded by Vietnam veteran Gene McMahon.

Jestes' experience is common among veterans, said McMahon, an acupuncturist. “All vets know this -- you don't get too close to anyone (in war), you only get so close and no closer. Losing someone is too painful,” he said. “But that carries out into after the war. A lot of vets have difficulty with intimate relationships -- you'll only get so close. It helped in war,” but not in marriage or family relationships.

McMahon served two tours of duty in the late 1960s; both were on river patrol boats. “I didn't get welcomed home (from the war). I kind of hid that I was a Vietnam veteran.

“I was expecting my dad, who was a World War II veteran, to ask about my experience, but he didn't,” McMahon said. “I learned to shut up and not talk about it.”

A safe weekend

Twenty years ago, he attended a similar emotional healing program for Vietnam veterans, called the Bamboo Bridge, and became involved with that program until 2004 when he took it over and rewrote it as Vets Journey Home, for veterans of any war.

“We feel that it's a safe weekend for them to express their emotions,” said McMahon. “That starts Saturday morning with the volunteer staff explaining why they are there.
There's usually a lot of tears. The vets get to see that the staff are there for the vets' healing, but (the staff) also experience healing.” Some are veterans themselves or have a loved one who is, or have lost a loved one to war. All are volunteers and paid $50 to cover the expenses for themselves and the participating veterans.

Co-instructor Teresita Fawcett was there because of a desire to support the vets. Her father was a World War II veteran, but he never talked about it. Two of her brothers, her ex-husband and her fiancé were veterans. "We never talked about it," said Fawcett, who is a grief counselor in Berkeley Springs, W.Va.

"I never had the opportunity to connect with them on this level," Fawcett said. "That's when I realized vets don't typically talk about it. That's the biggest gift we give them (at Vets Journey Home). They can talk about it. We listen to the vets and vets listen to vets."

She said, in combat, veterans were put in traumatic situations they didn't want to be in and "sometimes, these traumas, they caused them." Once back home, they may feel shame or guilt because they've lost people they had bonded with ... "multiple losses in a condensed version; trauma after trauma after trauma. They lived it 24/7," Fawcett said.

"They have to separate the war from the warrior. That was one of my personal journeys as someone who is against war," Fawcett said. She would also like to see programs like this for significant others of veterans because "they are dealing with it, too."

Helping someone else

Billy Sims, 80, of Middletown, retired from the U.S. Army in 1973, after 36 years of service, including in Korea, Vietnam and Germany. Sims said he didn't have any issues following his return from war, but then again he stayed in service with people who shared his experiences; understood. He said that helped.

"I came to see if I could help someone else. It's always interesting and educational to hear some of the other people's stories," he said.

One activity was for each of the five participating veterans to write two letters of forgiveness -- one to himself and one to people he thought he had let down or "owed an apology to for things you had done or not done," Sims said.

He wrote a letter of apology to a young warrant officer who was with him on a mission and was killed in Vietnam. "He was going to go home in a month," Sims recalled. "He was killed instantly" in an aviation accident. "I felt I should have taken the plane myself."

Vietnam veteran Jack Graff is 78 now. From 1966 to '67, he was based in Thailand and flew over North Vietnam. He retired from the Air Force 34 years ago. He said there are not enough programs like this. "There's so many people who need it."

Graff came from his home in San Diego to participate. The first time he came was as a veteran in need of emotional healing. Now he's on staff.

"We all have memories; some of which are not positive, that cause us to react in certain ways to certain stimulus that we don't quite understand," Graff said. "Here, we can get to the root of our 'shadows,' recognize them, but they don't go away."
"The effects of war and seeing your friends die and the enemy die; it changes people. Nobody's the same when we come back from war," Graff said. "It makes us less than we could be with our family, marriage and relationships. Understanding why we do that can be useful."

He said the program helps veterans deal with the "bugaboo" of guilt about why you survived and others didn't and second-guessing decisions made in combat. "That guilt shouldn't be there," he said.

"We don't try to psychoanalyze. We try to give veterans a forum to talk about anything that happened and to listen to themselves talk." Sometimes, he said, saying it and hearing it can bring understanding.

A veteran's welcome home

Rows of folding chairs filled the room at Gaia Healing Center. Family and friends came to honor their husband, father or friend who participated in the program. On the walls were hand-printed posters: "Welcome Home." "God Bless You." "Welcome Home: I Honor You. I Honor Your Service."

"No veteran should have to feel he's done something wrong," said McMahon during the opening of the graduation ceremony that closed the Vets Journey Home weekend. "He has to separate the warrior from the war."

Each veteran received a "welcome home" hug and a "Proud Service" pin designed by a former Marine. It's design included a black onyx bar representing the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington.

Trent Coyle, 26, of Colorado, served in the Army for six years and was deployed to Iraq for 15 months and Afghanistan for about a year.

"I feel compelled to mention my inherent cynicism and skepticism about these events," Coyle spoke after receiving his pin. "I felt I could handle things that happened to me on my own. But at the suggestion of some people, I came," he said. "I think real progress was made in the company of other veterans."

Jestes told how his search for a tailgate led him to the program. The man he bought it from was also a Vietnam veteran and told him about the program.

"I have spent a pretty rough 40 years trying to find out what happened and why. Probably in 21Ú2 days here, they showed me how to find the answer. This is a hidden treasure. There are so many people out there suffering ..." he said as tears welled up in his eyes.

"Tears are OK here," McMahon told him.

"We came in here as strangers but we're leaving as friends," Jestes said.

The ceremony ended as every veteran present was invited to participate in folding the U.S. flag into which the participants had placed their letters of forgiveness.

Those letters, with the veterans' permission, will be placed at the Vietnam Veterans
Memorial and become part of its archives.

Jestes said his problem wasn't "fixed" in the weekend, "but I know I can fix it. It wasn't a revelation of a religious sort; it was a sigh of relief. Hopefully, I can pull my life together and make my life easier," he said, adding he plans to return as a staff member.

"What happened, happened. I'm not walking point in Vietnam anymore,"Jestes said. "I don't have to be in total control.

Vets Journey Home

A homecoming of honor is what Gene McMahon wants to give veterans through the Vets Journey Home program. McMahon, a Vietnam veteran, knows the struggles veterans face when they return home from war. He founded Vets Journey Home to give emotional healing to veterans or anyone who has experienced the trauma of war.

Vets Journey Home is held in cities around the country and at Gaia Healing Center, near Mount Airy, where McMahon and his wife, Dr. Marianne Rothschild, are “stewards” of the land. There is no cost for veterans to attend the program here, but volunteer staff are asked, but not required, to pay $50 each to participate, to help cover costs and make it possible for veterans to attend at no cost.

In other cities, Vets Journey Home programs are underwritten by veterans organizations and individual donors. McMahon would like to make that possible for the weekend programs held here. The next will be in October.

For information on the program, to register or make a donation, contact Gene McMahon at 301-829-2808 or e-mail ottervision@wildblue.net, or visit www.vetsjourneyhome.org.

— Susan Guynn
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:00AM (-07:00)

A Bit Woo Woo

Wednesday, June 03, 2009

From the Examiner.com, an article about a man's experience in his weekly MKP Integration Group (I-Group).
Men are changing the world right before your eye.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

A small group of men weekly speak truth & evolve – It happens in ManKind Project
By L. Steven Sieden; April 24, 2009

A couple years ago, I would not have believed this to be possible. Then, last year I completed the ManKind Project's New Warrior Adventure Training weekend along with 39 other men. What was most important to me was that eight of us new brothers from the Seattle area formed an I (for Integration) Group so that we could really delve into the newfound concepts we had experienced during the weekend.

That group, like so many I Groups worldwide, has continued to flourish as we meet every Thursday night for three hours. We don't shoot the bull, play cards or watch a game. Instead, we expand our awareness and claim our true feeling. We don't have a leader or facilitator. Each night, one man who feels the energy claims the role of "king" and runs the group following a sacred ceremonial protocol.

Our time is divided into four sectors or round – lover, warrior, magician and king. The first two portions bring us together and help us clear anything that will keep us from being fully present for our time together. Then, we move into the magician or work round where we often get "down and dirty" sharing issues and past history that can only be done with the utmost trust and love.

Such was the case last night, when we moved deep into explorations of the incidents and people that had brought us the most pain and shame during our lives. In all my years of workshops, seminars and therapy, I have never experienced such genuine heartfelt telling of the truth and found each man to witness the truth of the man speaking without judgment. No man tried to outdo another or make another man wrong for anything that he shared. Experiences were simply put on the table as something that had happened and had deeply affected the man speaking.

The next step in that process was how we released those issues that have so challenged us for so long. Since we had each written them down before sharing, we had tangible objects to deal with – simple pieces of paper that we could burn, which is what we did as we spoke what we were releasing. Following those words, the man who had burned his paper stated what he was filling that new void with – always a positive affirmation.

If this all sound a bit woo woo, especially for a bunch of guys, I can only say that the proof is in the putting. From processes such as this, I have witnessed men reclaim major portions of their lives including relationship, finances, careers and simply being themselves. This is no small thing for a man living at a time when everyone seems to be attempting to pigeonhole him into a specific role – tough, individual, loner, etc.

Through the ManKind Project programs, I (and thousands of other men) have become more of the man I want to be. These groups and trainings offer the best men's work I have found, and I highly recommend them to all men. They were so profound that I advocated for my teenage sons to attend, and they did so while paying their own tuition.
Challenge the Voices

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Life is full of voices in my head saying I can't do this and I shouldn't do that.

- I was told I was too skinny and too geeky to have a loving, intelligent, kind, witty, beautiful wife...I am married to a loving, intelligent, kind, witty, beautiful wife.
- I was told I should not try to look at myself too much because "you don't need to"...going against that voice has changed my life forever.
- I was told I could not do math...I was a professional fabricator and built race car chassis' and parts and was a crew chief for a major professional race team.
- I was told I should not aim too high or I might fail...I am a senior editor at a major university and am successfully trading on the foreign exchange market.
- I was told I would never be taller than 5 foot 6 inches...I am 5 foot 10 inches and much taller than the voice who told me that.

What is your voice? Do you hear it holding you down? What voices have you overcome?

In my life, the ManKind Project has been a voice of "yes, you can," not "no, you can't or shouldn't."

I am asking you to challenge the voices! Now!

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

What If?

Monday, June 15, 2009

I remember the day I walked away from my New Warrior Training Adventure weekend; a
sunny Sunday afternoon. I felt exuberant, alive, tested, triumphant, connected, and full of questions.

One question always pops into my mind, and is background for this blog. I asked myself this simple question: what if all the men in the world took the training on the same weekend?

Well, getting past the hypothetical improbabilities of the question, I think the world would be unrecognizable.

Men would take themselves and their lives seriously, for one thing. I am in no way implying that men don’t now. I am saying with new and different eyes, though.

Men would care for the planet with new vigor and intensity; recognizing their connection to men and all things.

Men would listen; really listen, to what the voices inside them were saying, and then respond to those voices with clarity and definitive action.

Men would set down arms, and really hear the issues that cause the separation between us, and then work out those issues in clear ways.

My view on the world changed dramatically after the training. Why; because it was time for me to see. I was opened to the possibility that my life could change, that my life was my choice, that my life was mine.

So are you willing to take the leap? Are you the next man to wonder what the world would be like if all men led lives of integrity and accountability?

I am! And I am waiting to meet you on the other side!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:16AM (-07:00)

Comments

- RichardSkrzypczynski June 17, 2009
My reality say’s doing the week end is not enough! I have opened the door for a couple of men and then got a great big F**K YOU within weeks thereafter. I know that was their shit and not mine but it still hurts. Not every man is willing to face the hurt and pain after he see’s his shadow. Those of us that do reap the rewards of truth and justice and are charged to carry this work further. Bless you brother. Aho!
Finding Your Man

Tuesday, June 16, 2009

What does it look like to be an NFL player and a man? Aaron Taylor talks about what it was for him to find his "man" in the ManKind Project.

As men, we all come from differing backgrounds. Our needs are primal and cannot be denied. We need good fathers, uncles, grandfathers, and mentors to model "man" for us in a good way. Be that for a young man. Step into looking like the man you wanted to see when you were a young man.

He needs it; so do you.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:40AM (-07:00)

Camper Parts Can Change Your Life

Thursday, June 18, 2009

A man's voice on the New Warrior Training Adventure from The Worlds of carl Michael rossi:

"A good part of the reason that I am here in Chicago is due to the New Warrior Training Adventure. I was visiting my family here in Chicago for the Christmas holidays when the camper, in which I had been traveling across the US in search of my next home, broke down. While I waited for the necessary parts I thought I was "stuck" here, and looked for ways to fill the 6 weeks it ended up taking to get the parts.

One of the things that happened as I filled the time, was I met a man. And he saw in me how truly stuck I was, and how my wandering wasn't getting me unstuck. He suggested I call a men's group called New Warriors. One thing I was aware of was how much I wanted a connection with men. No, how much I wanted to learn to be a man.

The short is, I went to "the weekend". And learned enough about myself that I wanted to stay for the 3 months of follow-up meetings with the men I had "gone through with."

That was in February of 1996. Eight years later I'm still here. Still growing. Still learning more about me. It's been the single most unexpected wonderful journey of my life...so far."

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:31AM (-07:00)
The ManKind Project has several pages on Facebook. I suggest the page below because it has become a clearing house for men sharing their experiences in MKP; much like I do here. So check in and become a "fan."

See ManKind Project on Facebook (http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-ManKind-Project/95845568627).

And Happy Father's Day to all you men who give the gift of love and light and love to your children and their mothers.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:37AM (-07:00)

So you found your way here. Chance? Fate? What force brings you here? Call it what
you will; here you are reading this.

In my world view, everything is, and has a, purpose. You didn't just stumble in and start reading. Even if you think you did. For me, everything is a part of the great mystery. I can speculate or I can ride the joy of it.

Part of the great mystery is what goes on during an NWTA weekend. I see that men get a chance to look at their lives; what works--what doesn't. Men get to stand in a place that they may have never stood before.

A man asked me once, why did you go the the weekend? I answered as I had so many times before, "Something called to me, and I decided to listen. That listening changed my life."

What calls to you? The NWTA weekend? Will you listen to it?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:36AM (-07:00)

A Man's Experience on the NWTA

Tuesday, June 23, 2009

From Daily Doings at the Line of Death Bar & Grill:

"I was at a camp near Bedford, Indiana, participating in the New Warrior Training Adventure, a weekend-long training sponsored by the Mankind Project. I had been active in a local mens' group for three years, and had heard about this training through some of the men in the group. I had been thinking about doing this training for a while, and when another man I befriended in the group went through it in August of that year, I knew I was ready to take this next step.

As cliche'd as it sounds, what I learned and did on this weekend has truly changed my life for the better. It taught me more about myself, and what being a man is about, than I
could ever learn from either a college classroom, a textbook, a typical weekend seminar, or from the years I was in a college fraternity.

In a way, I got to take my own "hero's journey" that weekend. This ancient story is told many times in science fiction and fantasy, in different ways and using different characters -- Frodo Baggins, Luke Skywalker, John Sheridan, or Paul Atreides. Many people I know are content to just sit back and read about their adventures (or view them). I had a chance to experience one for myself, and my life is better off because of it.

Thanks to the help and guidance of many other men who had previously been through the training, I was able to take a good, hard look at myself and my life -- what has worked for me in the past, what didn't work for me, why they didn't work, and what I needed to change in order for those things to work. I learned who I am and what I want, in a powerful, lasting way. And I learned how to listen to the voice of my heart again, which had been repressed the past several years.

Each man's experience during the weekend is unique and personal, as it draws on each man's previous experiences in life. If I were to tell you the details, it would be like telling you about a movie that I saw but you haven't seen. Why should I spoil it for you or anyone else? I will also not recommend this training lightly -- in order to get the most out of it, men who are interested should be ready to look deeply within themselves and have a genuine interest in personal growth.

I've also got to meet many other men who have gone through the same weekend, and develop friendships with them.

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Look, how many experiences do you look back on and remember it like it was yesterday? I mean with real clarity; like you are standing there right now! This is one of those experiences. Are you ready? Men are waiting...

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:35AM (-07:00)

Man in the Mirror

Friday, June 26, 2009

"I'm starting with the man in the mirror
I'm asking him to change his ways
And no message could have been any clearer
If you wanna make the world a better place
Take a look at yourself and then make a change"

Glen Ballard, Siedah Garrett, & Michael Jackson (1958-2009)

Make that change.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:19AM (-07:00)

Touching the World

Tuesday, June 30, 2009

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

The ManKind Project is men dedicated to changing the world one man at a time. What does that mean in the context of the statement above?

Men in the ManKind Project are dedicated to standing next to every other man in the ManKind Project and holding a space to look at the way they touch the world around them. When you stand with these men, you know you are supported in change; whatever that change is for you. When a man changes, he changes part of the world.

As a group, ManKind Project men change the world. Will you change the world with us?
Going for 8

Wednesday, July 08, 2009

Quite simply...I am rooting for Lance Armstrong to push into his 8th Tour De France win this month.

I am reading a book by Dr. Wayne Dyer, called Excuses Begone. I am finding that it fits in well with my experience in the ManKind Project; no excuses and living in congruency with what I say I will do and actually do.

I see that Lance has made it his mission to prove those wrong who say he was doping in the last 7 tour wins. He insists that he is clean and that this will prove it. You go, Lance, live your truth with no excuses.

Stayed tuned to see if Lance can get 8.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:20AM (-07:00)

Wits & Hearts

Tuesday, July 14, 2009
"I know you can fight. But it's our wits that make us men."

Malcolm Wallace, from the motion picture Braveheart (1995)

In the ManKind Project, men do not learn to fight with their fists or weapons. However, they may learn how to fight with their wits and hearts to defeat the issues that hold them back from what they say they want.

In my experience men are mostly held back by what they believe; not anything physical or even tangible. What they believe has mostly been taught to them by others; passed on to them as mind viruses. Getting past those mind viruses allows a man to see what he can really be and accomplish.

Are you ready to get past your mind viruses?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:14AM (-07:00)

First Pitch & NWTA

Thursday, July 16, 2009
I love this photo! Why?....for so many reasons.

I have loved baseball all my life and my Tigers are leading the ALC.

A black president throwing out the first pitch at the All-Star game; which not that many years ago was a white-only affair.

President Obama showed up to pitch in his White Sox jacket (at the Cardinals’ stadium), because, as he said, he is a life-long Sox fan and his wife thinks he looks good in the jacket. Two great reasons to be yourself!

I admire that President Obama spoke his truth and said baseball is not his game...he never played organized baseball. I haven't either and I am very good at the game and love it.

What's all this got to do with the NWTA and MKP?

Men are supported in standing in their power and grace in the MKP. In the NWTA, men are asked to take a look at where they are and where they say they are and where they want to go. I see that President Obama shows up in this way.

Do yours all match up? Come...be supported...find your path.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:02AM (-07:00)

Love & Now

Monday, July 20, 2009

Today, I am remembering the important things. Love & Now.

For my best friend in this journey...Dancing Wolf, I love you!

I'm out.
We Are All in This Together

Friday, July 24, 2009

July 24 (Bloomberg) -- Mark Buehrle of the Chicago White Sox became the 18th pitcher to throw a perfect game yesterday and has Dewayne Wise to thank for preserving his place in Major League Baseball history. (photo mlb.com)

Mark Buehrle is a terrific pitcher, no doubt. But he cannot be a great pitcher without his entire team supporting him...offense, defense, coaching, management, bat boys, the whole deal. He also can't be great pitcher without himself on board.

I am reminded today that nothing is done by one's self. We are all in this together. I pride myself on being part of the ManKind Project, because I see it helps men find what they need and helps them pursue it.

So today I ask you...are you willing to get on board and be a part of the world around you? Are you willing to attend the NWTA and see what holds you back?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:49AM (-07:00)
Simple Rules

Thursday, July 30, 2009

Part of my work in the ManKind Project is listening to and living the *simple* in life. Simple is hard for me in this world of work, responsibility, fatherhood, etc. Simple is a stretch for me.

I like the piece below because it reminds me of what I believe is true....but then I forget it.

My MKP iGroup** is a place for me to remember these simple things. The NWTA helped me along that path. I am sure it can do that for you. Come with me on the *simple* path. Let's see what there is to see.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

**Men who have completed the New Warrior Training Adventure, or state their intention to do so within a specific time period, are able to join a Integration-Group (iGroup). Integration Groups vary in their admission policies, but generally invite men who are currently known to members, or have completed training. These groups generally meet once a week in the evening, and are a continuation of the process of doing personal work around life issues raised during the New Warrior Training Adventure weekend, and that arise in one's own personal life journey. The Integration-Group allows men the opportunity to stay connected to the MKP Men's Community and to important issues in their own lives.

Ten Rules for Being Human
by Cherie Carter-Scott

1. You will receive a body. You may like it or hate it, but it's yours to keep for the entire period.

2. You will learn lessons. You are enrolled in a full-time informal school called, "life."

3. There are no mistakes, only lessons. Growth is a process of trial, error, and experimentation. The "failed" experiments are as much a part of the process as the experiments that ultimately "work."

4. Lessons are repeated until they are learned. A lesson will be presented to you in various forms until you have learned it. When you have learned it, you can go on to the next lesson.

5. Learning lessons does not end. There's no part of life that doesn't contain its lessons. If you're alive, that means there are still lessons to be learned.

6. "There" is no better a place than "here." When your "there" has become a "here", you will simply obtain another "there" that will again look better than "here."

7. Other people are merely mirrors of you. You cannot love or hate something about another person unless it reflects to you something you love or hate about yourself.

8. What you make of your life is up to you. You have all the tools and resources you need. What you do with them is up to you. The choice is yours.

9. Your answers lie within you. The answers to life's questions lie within you. All you need to do is look, listen, and trust.

10. You will forget all this.

Walking the Streets of Memphis

Tuesday, August 04, 2009
A great article that talks about why men get what they need in the ManKind Project, the New Warrior Training Adventure, and iGroups.

Men, here's the deal, you need to step up and participate in life. This is one way to that.

I think every man gets something from it...you included.

The time is now...step up.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

A small band of warriors called the Mankind Project battles the isolation that comes with being a man

By Christine Arpe Gang
Special to The Commercial Appeal
Sunday, September 23, 2007

Small groups of men meet weekly in several locations in Memphis to talk about what it means to be a different kind of warrior; one who fights against the social, psychological and emotional isolation that they say often comes with being a man.

They are part of the Mankind Project, an international organization that provides training to help men get in touch with their feelings in order to live their lives with integrity and accountability.

"When men get married their social network of buddies drops away," said Ralph Chumbley, a founder of the Memphis chapter of the Mankind Project. "They look to their spouses for everything."

Because it isn't easy for men to trust each other enough to share feelings and secrets, they first go through a New Warrior Training Adventure. It's an intensive weekend that
encourages men to look deep inside themselves.

"Men are not socialized to be introspective and intuitive," said Chumbley, executive director for continuing education at Southwest Tennessee Community College.

While women find it easy to talk about their feelings, men have to learn techniques and words to allow them to do it.

"The weekend gets you out of your head and into your heart," said Craig Nadel, who went through a training weekend in 2000 with his father, Dr. Alan Nadel. "We all got comfortable with each other in a short time and as we opened up, we learned that everyone has pain and we're all scarred in some way."

The experience improved the often-strained relationship between father and son.

"I'm now accepting of who Craig is and willing to hear his truth," Alan said.

Those who have been through the weekend training don't reveal a lot of details about the experience.

"We don't want men to think about it a lot before they do it," Chumbley said.

Every training weekend includes physical and introspective aspects as well as quiet time and fun activities.

Men may refuse to participate in any activity that makes them uncomfortable.

Intrigued by an ad in a magazine, Chumbley went through the New Warrior Training Experience in Kenosha, Wis., in 1988. Three men -- former Marine officer Rich Tosi and therapists Bill Kauth and Ron Hering -- founded the program there in 1984. It has more than 30,000 members in the U.S., United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

In 1991, Chumbley and a few other Memphians who had gone to Kenosha for training established a men's council here and offered the first New Warrior Training Experience.

Since then, about 800 men from a racial and economic cross section of the city have gone through the training, and many of them attend the weekly Integration Groups (I-Groups) afterwards. The groups are a way for men to continue to integrate what they learned in the training into their daily lives.

The meetings are held in various locations around town, in addition to a lodge house that the group rents on James Road. The local organization is also building a training center on property it owns near Somerville in Fayette County.

"For me the most satisfying aspect of being in the Mankind Project is my weekly men's group meeting," said Carson Owen, a lawyer with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. "These are the men who know me the best and have supported me through the years."

Whenever warriors meet, even at business-like board meetings, they take time to "check in" with each other. Each man tells the others in the circle where he is emotionally and
spiritually. They also do "shadow" checks.

Shadows, a term introduced by psychologist Carl Jung, are feelings or thoughts that are hidden or repressed.

Check-ins are a daily process for Bert Dinkins, who works at home as a Web designer for a company owned by a fellow "warrior." Some of his co-worker are also "warriors."

"Every morning we do a check-in on the telephone," said Dinkins, who recently moved from Memphis to El Paso after his wife, Rebecca, moved her optometry practice there.

Dinkins, a recovering alcoholic, was drawn to Mankind 1997 to improve his relationship with his three children who were 14, 12 and 8 at the time.

"I thought I had to scare my kids to get them to respect me," Dinkins said. "After the weekend I felt safe in allowing them to see the real me. And I found out it's okay to show affection and tell them 'I love you.'"

Dinkins' father died when he was 22 and the father of a 9-month-old son.

"I felt like I didn't know how to be a man," he said. "The only emotions I saw from my father were happiness and anger. I never saw him cry."

Weekly I-Group meetings are now an important part of life for Dinkins.

"You bond so closely to these men over the training weekend. I feel I could trust them with anything painful in my life."

Being able to express their feelings in the I-Groups allows the men to be more honest with their feelings in other relationships.

The men report having been better able to communicate with their wives, children, extended families, friends and co-workers.

For Joseph Pegues, the Mankind Project helped him kick his addiction to alcohol and to regain the trust of his wife and children.

"It made me look at what was wrong with my life and gave me direction in what I could do to make it better," he said. "Now I'm not trying to cover up things. I don't have anything to hide."

Chumbley's daughter, Julene Simmons, was in her early teens when her father completed his weekend of training.

"He was more affectionate and more positive and affirming of my sister and I," she said. She and her sister also came to love and enjoy her father's warrior friends.

"They were all like big brothers or uncles to us," she said. "Everyone was so close and supportive."

When she married, she insisted on her husband, Ben Simmons, going through the training.
"He's from a family that is very quiet and doesn't talk about things," she said. "The men who come out of the weekend are different. There is positive energy that radiates about them. I told Ben he was out of his box."

Ben told her he had not only come out of his box, he had "crossed the street, gotten in a boat and gone down the river."

He encouraged Julene to attend one of the occasional Woman Within training weekends offered by the Mankind Project.

When their son Alex was born 2½ years ago, she asked the Mankind community to dedicate him into their circle.

Owen and his wife Sharon Trammell wrote the ceremony that blessed Alex and his parents and relatives and committed the Mankind community's support to them.

"They blessed us with joy and laughter," said Julene, who now lives in Chattanooga with Ben, Alex and Paxton, who is 1. "I see my father, my husband and my sons always being part of this community."

Zoe Nadel was inside the house observing her husband and son sitting on the deck right after they returned from their training weekend.

"I had never seen such contentment between them," she said. "Their bonding and friendship is the greatest gift I could have gotten."

The communication skills they learned over the weekend improved the family dynamic.

"Everyone is happier," she said.

Alan, who recently had surgery to get a pacemaker, sought support from his I-Group in overcoming his apprehensions of the procedure.

"When I need help I know they will be there for me," he said.

He saw how the men kept a monthlong bedside vigil for a fellow warrior who was dying of pancreatic cancer.

"It was difficult for all of us but we wanted to be there for him in whatever he needed," Alan said.

Every man who goes through the training creates a mission statement for his life.

Owen, a lawyer for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, said his mission gives focus to his life.

It is: "I create love and joy on the earth while embracing and blessing my imperfections and yours."

Fulfilling it can be as simple as smiling at someone he passes in the street or as involved as helping someone achieve equity in their job. Participating in the training weekends is
"The men are in such a place of love and joy after the weekend, that being a part of that is important to my mission," he said.

After his own training, he learned to deal with the need for perfection lovingly instilled in him by his mother.

"I realized that I'm good enough exactly the way I am. I don't have to be perfect," Owen said. "I had been letting Mom control my life instead of me taking control of it."

The training weekend put life into perspective for Craig Nadel.

"I realized how lucky we are and that it is so much easier to love than not to love," said Nadel, who is now a music professional in Austin, Tex. "It is truly a magical experience. It should be a requirement for life. If everyone did it, the world would be a better place."

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:21AM (-07:00)

What Was Your Rite of Passage?

Thursday, August 06, 2009

This piece used to appear on the Louisville ManKind Project Center's Web site. Since it no longer appears there, I thought it should be on the Internet somewhere; no better place than here.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

What Was Your Rite of Passage?

Composed by Ed Cash and appended by Ernie Perry (Elders - MKP Louisville Center)
Men, if you can complete the following statements in one minute or less, then you needn't read any further.

(1) The event in my life that was my "rite-of-passage" into manhood was...
(2) As a man among men I...
(3) My life's mission is...

Men who have completed the New Warrior Training Adventure weekend for men have their answers on the tips of their tongues.

It's been said that it takes a woman to nurture an infant into his boyhood .... but it takes men to guide that boy into his manhood. Most tribal cultures have known this for centuries. The "rites-of-passage" that their boys experience, have been deemed necessary and are supported by the entire tribe. The boy completes a process, is honored by Elders, and returns to the community to take his rightful place.

We seem to have lost the knowledge that boys just don't automatically become men. It doesn't happen by itself, like a caterpillar transforming into a butterfly. Human males are hard-wired to need the guidance, mentorship, and honoring by healthy older men ... in order to become the man their individual natures intend for them to be. When a boy doesn't get enough of these (or none at all), he is fated to wander in his boyhood for a very long time ... until he recognizes what's been absent, and takes action. This action can be taken anytime, at any age.

Many of us, placed a part of our manhood into a protective "lock box" long ago. The boys we were, may have had to do this to survive. As we become older and stronger, at some point it serves us well to find the "lock box", risk knowing what all is in there, and "reinstalling" the pieces. This can be a liberating, powerful journey.

Understand that the "manhood" being talked here is NOT about adolescent "macho" ... it's about whatever healthy manhood is authentic for you.

You might be one who would benefit from a "rite-of-passage" if a few of these fit you ....

1) your father was a passive man or not really there for you
2) you didn't connect with other boys whose friendship you wanted
3) your mother was strong and ran things
4) you feel distanced from strong men
5) you fear the power of your anger
6) most of your friends are women
7) your male friends won't talk about feelings
8) you see men that you admire, and believe they have something you don't

There are ways to get the guidance, mentorship, and honoring that you didn't get, in a safe way that works ... that honors and blesses a man for who he is.

One way that's available, is the New Warrior Training Adventure weekend for men. The New Warrior Training Adventure (NWTA) is a weekend Initiatory experience for men ... and a "rite-of-passage" Initiation is one of the main reasons that men enroll into the NWTA. Many men enroll to learn how to have meaningful relationships with men. Still other men may be battling addictions or other difficult situations and need a supportive male environment ... and some men enroll seeking to restore a sense of adventure and
aliveness into their lives. The Staff is well-trained, contains men of all ages, backgrounds, and ethnicities; and each Staff man has completed the NWTA. Most Staff men are there as volunteers, giving back to the organization that made a difference in their lives. They offer their experience in support of your journey.

Every man who completes the NWTA weekend remembers what he did on that particular weekend of that particular year...for the rest of his life.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:14AM (-07:00)

**Living an Accountable Life**

**Monday, August 10, 2009**

This article, from the Financial Mail, talks about the ManKind Project, New Warrior Training Adventure, and how it works for these South African men.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

**Mobilising male energy**

How do SA businessmen relate the holistic, nurturing concepts of the ManKind Project with the hard-nosed practices of the corporate world?

By Hilary Prendini Toffoli, from Financial Mail

The ManKind Project (MKP) came to SA from America eight years ago. It was one of the men's movements spawned by Iron John, the bestseller by American poet and activist Robert Bly that promoted nurturing brotherhoods and got Bly on to the cover of Newsweek in the 1980s.

Behind these networks lay what one reviewer described as "a brooding conviction that the emotional isolation and violence of American men masks a hunger for fathering and male mentoring, lost in a time of soaring divorce rates and single-parent households".

Since MKP's launch in SA in 2001, 958 men have undergone one or more challenging weekends of initiation and self-examination designed to develop mature masculine selves. They range across the board from the unemployed to captains of industry.
"Every man going on an MKP weekend does so for his own reasons. It's all about taking account of your life, acting responsibly and being in touch with yourself and others," says Andrew Page Wood (48), MD of VideoIQ Africa, a CCTV surveillance company. "For me it was a near-fatal car accident. Before that I'd felt invincible. I'd worked and travelled extensively, earning big bucks in IT. But after the accident I began to ask questions I never had before."

He went on an MKP weekend after seeing the profound impact it had on a friend's life. "The challenge of facing my deepest, darkest self was absolutely terrifying, yet doing this with a group of men who have done the same themselves was a beautiful experience."

"There were twice as many facilitators as delegates - 40 of us and 80 of them. The youngest delegate was an 18-year-old Xhosa man, the oldest a 76-year-old English speaker - and there was everything in between. Christians, Jews, Muslims, black, white, rich, poor. I got to know all of them better than I know my mates. I left knowing where I belonged and what I had to do. And I now have a group of men I can trust and reach out to anywhere in the world because MKP is international."

"It's all about taking account of your life, acting responsibly and being in touch with yourself and others. My problem in business was always that I was never hard enough. MKP gave me the ability to say No' with confidence, to access my feelings about something or someone, and tell them. This is powerful. Also, I have managed to balance my life."

He's since moved to a small farm between George and Knysna, where he's started a business school for the poor, grows veggies, spends time with his family and travels on business to Jo'burg.

"We are a diverse society with deep wounds," says Rurik McKaiser (40), CEO of The Phoenix Group, a Cape Town-based marketing and distribution company for food ingredients. "The black-white divide of racism and internalised oppression is very real. But what is beautiful about the MKP brotherhood is that we have these hard conversations in a fierce yet loving and healing way. The issues relating to money, privilege and sexuality are also real, and I must honour the men of MKP for the constant appetite they/we demonstrate - by fiercely facing up to these conversations."

McKaiser has been involved in MKP since 2004 and done more than 30 training weekends. "My first training was definitely not pleasant, but it eventually grew on me. I am constantly experiencing emotional and intellectual growth because of my exposure to amazing men.

"The weekends allow me to weave the theoretical concepts of living and of leadership into my psychic DNA. For instance, a core pillar of the MKP ethos is related to living an accountable life. I have walked away from many deals and clients, and recently dismissed two of my colleagues for lack of accountability and unethical behaviour."

The challenge for him is that MKP is voluntary. "We do not have a fat bank account and offices, and we have zero employees. All is done by us for us."

Benjamin Kodisang (38) is MD of Old Mutual Investment Group Property Investments, the largest real estate company in Africa. He's only done MKP's initiation weekend. "Time to
be committed to MKP processes is a challenge."

He heard about the network through his coach on the UCT Graduate School of Business's Emerging Leaders programme. "Her husband had done MKP and she had witnessed what good it did for him. She advised me to be open, non-judgmental and trust the process. It was with this attitude that I arrived for the initiation weekend and the experience was life-changing.

"But facing your demons is never an easy task. The main thing I learnt was to unlearn the lesson that expressing my feelings was a sign of weakness, and to learn that life is about being authentic, being who you are and having the courage to show it, regardless of the consequences.

"Business leaders who utilise only the hard-nosed intellectual part have been found wanting. Today business requires leaders who are connected to their customers and their stakeholders at the emotional level and who bring their being to every engagement."

One of MKP's main goals is to attract men from all race groups and socioeconomic backgrounds, says Craig Carter (48), who has staffed several weekends. He's the chief operating officer and director of JSE-listed Purple Capital financial services company and its subsidiary Global Trader.

"We have been successful in attracting men from varying backgrounds but have struggled to keep them involved in the MKP community on an ongoing basis, largely because of transport and communication difficulties. The Soweto iGroup trainings are our most recent attempt to bring MKP to the men we are trying to reach.

"SA is a particularly patriarchal and male-dominated society. Many men took part in the bush war, either for MK or the SADF, and still carry the baggage of their traumatic experiences. In addition we have the burden of apartheid which most of us still carry. In MKP we help men look at these shadows and to try to lead more conscious lives. For me, interacting with men from all race groups and economic backgrounds has fundamentally shifted my world view."

Andrew Fulton (38), director of Eighty20, a management consulting and data analysis company, has staffed 10 weekends, and facilitates group work after the weekends. He says MKP is not about trying to change others, but about "living with yourself in light of the decisions and choices you've made. So I try not to get too upset when people act without integrity. I think a lot of people who do the weekend come back with an over-exaggerated sense of accountability that just doesn't work in this world. You have to temper it.

"For me MKP's greatest gift is just making it possible to sit in a group of men and share something deeper than how I felt about last night's soccer match. Women will tell their deepest secrets to their hairdresser. Men sometimes take decades to move beyond basic grunting with each other. MKP accelerates that ability to trust and share."

He found trusting the hardest part. "I was so jaded and cynical. And men in MKP let me down regularly. We aren't perfect. But I would say they're usually aware enough to acknowledge it."

In one of the groups he recently facilitated, he briefly involved his neighbour's four-year-
old son. "It was incredible to see how a nervous four-year-old came out of his shell and
felt safe in a group of male strangers. For the men it was a visceral reminder of why this
work is so necessary - to get an opportunity to be the father/uncle/friend you would have
liked to have in your own life when you were younger.

"My company deals with statistics daily, and with more than half of all mothers in this
country being single, and some of the highest murder and rape statistics, SA men
certainly need something more than they have."

* The cost is R3 800/weekend. But since MKP don't turn anyone away, there are
scholarships for those who can't pay.

WHY NOT JOIN

The ManKind Project's next training programmes take place on August 14-16 at Habonim
Camp in Onrust near Cape Town, and August 28-30 at Magaliesberg Retreat near
Johannesburg.
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:10AM (-07:00)

It's Inside

Tuesday, August 18, 2009

"They tell me the gates of hell
That you shake and you rattle
Are secretly locked
From inside"

Kenny Loggins, The Art of Letting Go from Unimaginable Life (1997)

For me, the ManKind Project is about looking inward at what works and what doesn't in
my world.
When I stepped up to attend my New Warrior Training Adventure weekend, I was afraid of what was on the other side. What would it be like after the training weekend? Would changes would stick or would I see any changes at all in my world?

What I found was more about me than I could have imagined. During the weekend, I took a hard look at the gates of hell that I shake and rattle from inside. It was hard work and it still is. I tend to resist change and therefore sometimes resist my own best interests.

I offer that you can find a place among men who care about your journey in the ManKind Project. I am one of those 43,000 men. I will stand with you while you look at your gates of hell.

Jump in with both feet...men are waiting.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:23AM (-07:00)

**Fighting Fire**

**Friday, August 21, 2009**

"We didn't start the fire
It was always burning
Since the world's been turning
We didn't start the fire
No we didn't light it
But we tried to fight it"

Billy Joel, from We Didn't Start The Fire off the Storm Front CD, 1989

So, we didn't start the fire, but aren't we supposed to try to put it out? Aren't we, the men, supposed to make the world a better place?

My work in the ManKind Project is to make my world, the world, a better place. A better place looks like men who are engaged in life; not passengers to the pain and damage of the past. A better place looks like you engaged in your life enough to make a difference in it.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:39AM (-07:00)

**Following Your Compass**

**Tuesday, August 25, 2009**

443
One of the strong points of being a part of the brotherhood known as the ManKind Project is the space I create to follow my compass or mission.

My mission guides me to creating and living my life in way that serves my soul purpose. Mission is my goal; like a compass leading me to a goal. I choose my mission. It does not choose me. I can keep it static, rearrange it, succeed at it, and fail at it.

My mission is to "create a world of love by loving." What does that mean to me? It means I create the world as I want it to be. I don't stand around waiting to be loved. I love. I share my love, create space for love, nurture love, notice love, listen for love. I "be loving."

A great leap in my loving myself came when I jumped, in a leap-of-faith, into the New Warrior Training Adventure. I didn't grasp it at the time, but for my soul and piece of mind, the training was my first step in creating a world of love by loving.

Changing the world, one man at a time. Will you step into the change at a training near you?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:37AM (-07:00)

Lost Boys

Thursday, August 27, 2009

Earl Hipp, from his Man-Making blog, says, "OK, just for a moment, withhold all your judgments about this man. Try to get past the glamor and his late life history to listen as he begins to touch on his very real pain and speak some truth about lost boys. The clip is from his 1993 acceptance speech at the 35th Annual Grammy Awards. Can you find some compassion for him? There are hundreds of thousands of lost boys like him.

In the ManKind Project, men take a look at how they show up in the world. They look at where they come from and where they are and where they think they are going.

Are you ready to take that look?
Blessings to You, Uncle Dick

Friday, August 28, 2009

My Uncle Dick made the transition to Spiritworld at 9 am EST today.

He blessed me with heart, honesty, humor, gentleness, great stories, love, eldership, and a look at what "man" looks like.

I ask you to look toward New York City and raise your voice to honor this sweet man.

Richard Larson!
Richard Larson!
Richard Larson!

Aho!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:04PM (-07:00)

Afterward

Tuesday, September 01, 2009

"The group is about men finding their magnificence, their wonder, and their power. Yes, we look at all the parts of us and that includes looking at our shadows. In the end we are focused on knowing who we truly are and maximizing the best of us."

ManKind Project Four Stone Circle iGroup, Northern California

My ManKind Project iGroup, the Four Stone Circle, meets every Thursday night. It is the follow-up to the NWTA. What we do in the circle is continue to build on what was created for each of us in the training weekend.

For some men, it is getting into old pain or beliefs that hold them back. For others, it is about getting to know who they really are by letting go of being right or perfect or pretending to be who they aren't to be accepted by someone else. For others, it is getting what they need in a myriad of other ways.

The bottom line is, in the ManKind Project, there is support after the experiential NWTA weekend. There's a landing pad to go as far as you need to complete, or continue to make, whatever changes you feel are needed for you.

When will you stop making excuses not to attend?
Don't Lose Heart

Wednesday, September 02, 2009

"Don't lose heart, oh don't lose heart
Though it feels like yours will fall apart
Just remember when the road gets dark
I will always be beside you
Well, I will always be beside, beside you"

Dan Fogelberg, from Don't Lose Heart off the Portrait CD (1997)

In the ManKind Project, we stand beside other men to support them in their journey.

We listen, we stand aside, we offer some options that a man can take or leave, we hold the light up to a man so he can see how he shows up in the world, we sometimes laugh and sometimes cry and sometimes we just do nothing.

All in all, the ManKind Project is an entity of support and honor.

Are you interested in a group of men like this?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:59AM (-07:00)

Critic and the Doer

Saturday, September 05, 2009

"It is not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done better.
The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming, but who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself for a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who knew neither victory nor defeat.”

President Theodore Roosevelt, Citizenship in a Republic, Speech at the Sorbonne, Paris, April 23, 1910

Powerful!

I am not here to say whether the ManKind Project will change you or make you a better man. I am not here to judge whether you are ready for change in your life? I am not here to be your wake up call to action.

I am here to share with you that the ManKind Project and the New Warrior Training Adventure have changed my life and made me a better man. I was ready for change in my life. I needed a wake up call to action.

I found it in this group of men; all types of sexual intentions, former addicts of all kinds and addicts in action, all colors and nationalities, all manner of religious and non-religious spirituality. I found it in a group of men that is so vast it is beyond compare.

You are one of those men, whether you know it or not. You are a man who can choose between the critic and the doer. What is your choice?

I’m out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Focus on You

Monday, September 07, 2009
"Focus on what's really important in life. Quality rather than appearance...ethics rather than rules...integrity rather than domination...knowledge rather than achievement...serenity rather than acquisitions."

Dr. Wayne Dyer

Focus....are you ready to focus on you? On what's really important to you?

Are you ready to step into a group of men who will hold space for you while you realize what you need to focus on?

Step in.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:49PM (-07:00)

**Staffing the NCal November NWTA, Part 1**

*Wednesday, September 09, 2009*

An on-going series of posts around my staffing of the next MKP NWTA in Northern
California. I thought it would be interesting and enlightening to follow how this all works and you'll get to ride along on what it looks like to put on an NWTA from one man's experience...mine.

I signed up to staff my third NWTA as a way to honor my tenth anniversary of my NWTA; October 10, 1999. I have staffed twice before; December 2001 and May 2003.

I got signed up just in time and waited for a week to hear if I was accepted to staff. I heard, via e-mail, that I have been added to the staff. So, here I am today, 64 days from the November NCal NWTA.

I feel grateful, honored, and have some fear about stepping into this training. I will be asking my IGroup men to help me with the cost. Each staff member pays a small fee to be of service to the men who are coming to their NWTA.

I am picturing the men who are coming to the training. I wonder if they feel the change coming? Do they feel the future changing in front of them? It is for me!

Catch you in part 2!

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:57AM (-07:00)

Staffing the NCal November NWTA, Part 2
Thursday, September 10, 2009

An on-going series of posts around my staffing of the next MKP NWTA in Northern California. I thought it would be interesting and enlightening to follow how this all works and you'll get to ride along on what it looks like to put on an NWTA from one man's experience...mine.

Today, I sent in my "paperwork" to the man who handles all the administration for the NWTA I am staffing.
I needed to fill in an extensive medical form; the usual questions about my health and habits. Also, there's a section dealing with mental issues; depression, therapy, suicide, and the like. The attendees fill in the same form. All the forms are screened by a Medical Doctor for issues and flagged for follow-up, if need be. I signed it, no problem.

Another form around ethics and what I agree to around the attendees and the men I am staffing with. Basically, I agree not to enter into any financial, business, therapeutic, or sexual relationships with any man who does the training for six months. This is because men who attend the training may see me in the light of experience or power just because I am a "staff man." I signed it, no problem.

The last form was the standard liability release. Ya know, I fall down and get hurt, it's my deal. I signed it, no problem.

I did not send in the $100 fee, yet. I don't have it. I am asking my iGroup to financially help me get to the training. That's one of the great things I learned doing this work...ask for what I need. I am taking an 8% pay cut over the next year, so things are tight at my house. I have helped men get to the training as staff men and as attendees. And now, I am asking men to help me help other men. It's a wonderful thing.

Now, I wait to see what my part will be in the training and contact the other staff men to work out a carpool up to the training.

See you in part 3.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 02:00PM (-07:00)

**Remembering; 8 Years Out**

**Friday, September 11, 2009**

Remembering the loss, the day, the overwhelming sadness.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:32PM (-07:00)
Journey of Tears; We Will Not Turn Away

Sunday, September 13, 2009

This post is particularly wonderful. A ManKind Project man in the Northern California center wrote this wonderful piece. I urge you to read the entire piece.

This post goes well with my on-going posts on staffing the November Northern California NWTA.

In his words:

"I wrote this immediately after my first staffing. My rookie staffing (9-03) was TEN TIMES more powerful than my "going thru" in 9-02...It was the most healing event of my life, as I finally realized that I now had the opportunity to step beyond and truly make a difference, and have a legacy of doing something truly worthwhile rather than simply living a life of buying toys and having adventures."

The New Warrior Training Adventure and ManKind Project change men's lives. Simple as that.

Are you ready to risk change? Are you ready to stand with men who will see you and honor you and hold space for your change?

The time is now.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Journey of Tears

By Rick Canham; Manhawk, Shadow Warrior; Camp Krem, Sep 02

Wounded Soul, Empty of Spirit, A Man Stands Alone, It is His Time, One Step Forward, And Across the Carpet, in the Eyes of Another Man, he Sees the Powerful Presence of Connection and Strength, and he Begins to Feel Trust, Allowing him to Descend into the Abyss, Where in the Cold and Dark, on the Journey of Tears, He Will Face His Own Fear, Touch His Own Pain, and Challenge His Current Reality. Finally in His Moment of Truth,
he Finds in Himself, the Power of Choice, and His Future, No Longer held Hostage and Forfeit to His Past. Now, Victorious and yet Humbled, He Will Forever Enjoy Proudly and Without Shame, the Salty Taste of his Own Tears as they Become, The River, in which He Will Cleanse His Newly Reborn Soul. Tears that Will Speak of His Connection to Self, and to All, and Hard Earned, they Will Not be Hidden from View, Nor Offered up, Apologetically as Weakness. They are Honored now, Shared Without Restriction, and Show his Willingness and Courage, to Guide and to Live, His Own Destiny Celebrate His Own Future, from this Moment Forward …

And Now, His Powerful Tears will say to Another Man “Trust Me, You Are Seen”, and as your Brother Warrior, I Would Be Honored to Stand Beside You, as You Journey into the Darkness, to Face Whatever Pain or Fear Lurks Within...

My Blood to Your Blood, My Soul to Your Soul, We Journey Together, You Are not Alone, And I Will Not Turn Away, Let Us Become One, and Powerful, and When Finally Beyond the Darkness, to the Safety of the Light and Warmth, We Will Dance, We Will Sing, We Will Laugh, For as Men, We have Shared a Journey Together...We Are Brothers, Never to be Alone Again, No Longer to be Separate, Lost Islands, in the River of Tears...Now as We Look to Each Other, We Feel the Strength of Our Connection, the Good of Our Dreams, and Together in Battle, We Found the Courage to Stand Before and to Face the Unknown in the Darkness...

True Power, and We Will Need It All, as in the Distance, Another Man Approaches, Hesitantly, His Shadow Large in Pain and Fear, and He Knows Not, Yet, that He is Safe With Us, And No Longer Alone. He Knows Not, Yet, that We, United, Will Now Stand Beside Him, and With Fierce Loving Support, Share his Journey and his Struggle, and that We Honor his Courage and Resolve to Reach Within, Challenge his Past, Touch his Future, and that We Will Now and Forever Be Known to him as, Brothers, in the Spirit of Loyal and Loving Strength...

And Finally, A Renewed Man, Opens his Eyes and his Heart, Breathes Life into his New Self, and His Dreams take Firm Root in a Future of His Own Choosing, and He Now Understands, And Quietly, Gently, He Nods, Grounded in His Own Power and Belief, A Fierce New Warrior Emerges, and He Now Turns, His Heart and His Hand, Offered, and He Now takes His Place in a Long Line of Brothers, and He, Will Make a Difference...

Far in the Distance, and Deep in Shadow, the Voice of yet Another Man, Cries Soulfully, Into the Dark, “ I Am Lost, Please Help Me ”……and We Breathe Deeply in Resolve, We Await His Coming, We Stand Strong, and We Are Ready, and He is No longer Alone, and We Will Not Turn Away, We Will Not Turn Away...

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 06:04AM (-07:00)

Staffing the NCal November NWTA, Part 3

Monday, September 14, 2009
An on-going series of posts around my staffing of the next MKP NWTA in Northern California. I thought it would be interesting and enlightening to follow how this all works and you'll get to ride along on what it looks like to put on an NWTA from one man's experience...mine.

I try to spend a bit of time each day envisioning the men who are coming to the training. I see them wondering what is to come; wondering if they should sign up or cancel out of fear; scouring the Internet for a clues as to what to do, as if the answer were outside them somewhere. I see each man get some piece of "newness," joy, wonder, clarity, or breakthrough. I see them holding their excuses close to heart as if they will comfort them any further.

What will the training bring for them? What would it bring to you?

See you in part 4!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 08:09PM (-07:00)

The Time is Now

Tuesday, September 22, 2009
Today.... a video for the next NWTA in Kentucky, USA. I really like the music and the message.

Download it here.

What are you waiting for? Today is the day to start anew.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 03:20PM (-07:00)

**Stand in the Fire with This Man**

**Friday, September 25, 2009**

This post is a poem by a ManKind Project man. I think he speaks about giving to the man you are the honor, validation, and acceptance you need.

What will you do today to honor, validate, and accept the man you are?

Will it be to grab up your courage to stand in the fire with this man and attend the next New Warrior Training Adventure near you?
I hope so.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

This Man
By Joe Fernandez; Winged Panther; Camp Krem, May 2002
(written March 2003)

This Man

who you have long neglected
ignored
and left
forgotten.

It is time
to set things right.

Look deep into him
into his face
into his eyes
into his soul.

And really SEE
what you've been missing.

How could you not have seen
his beauty
his intelligence
his power.

How could you not honor
the truth of his heart
the kindness of his words
the courage of his actions.

How could you not bless
his willingness to struggle
his hunger to learn
his will to live.

Behold his gifts.
Honor them.

Encourage him
to spread those gifts
far and wide.

Let him know
beyond a shadow of a doubt,  
that he is loved  
for all time  
fully and completely  
without exception.

He craves your love  
your acceptance  
your blessings.

This man  
who stands before you  
in the mirror.

My vision is this; every man attends the training on the same weekend. I guarantee you that you would wake up to a world that you cannot imagine.

I know logistically that isn't possible, but for the sake of my vision, bear with me.

Let's try to imagine this.

How about a world where men take responsibility for not just few things but every thing in their life. It's is no longer someone else's fault that a man's life is the way it is.

How about a world where men respect themselves so much they would not consider disrespecting anyone else.

How about a world where men sit down and clear up the issues between them so cleanly that war is never again a thought.

How about a world where men love and listen and care and stand firm and draw legitimate boundaries and hold space for others to do the same.

My mission to get the word out about the ManKind Project is greater than the fear that I will be judged for it. So, I keep doing it because it is worth it.
Comments

- BarryF

Sign me up! I'll stand with you.
Barry

Shadows in Our Bag

Monday, September 28, 2009

Doing shadow work is part of the work we do in the ManKind Project. We look at the parts of us that we repress, deny or hide; the parts that we may not even know are driving us.

As Robert Bly states in his book the A Little Book on the Human Shadow, the shadow is the “the long bag we drag behind us.” It is filled with all the things we are told, or choose, to hide or deny about ourselves so we can be in the world as we perceive it to be. We tote it around and sometimes bits get out and take over our life while we are not begin attentive.

Getting to know our shadows helps us bring them out of the bag and into the light where we can honor them and understand their power. Sometimes this can completely defuse their power or it can bring them to a place where we can be more conscious of them and work with them.

We all carry shadows in our bag; how we deal with them makes the difference.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:33AM (-07:00)

Blindingly Simple

Thursday, October 01, 2009
Rich Tosi, an MKP founder, says this about the New Warrior Training Adventure:

“This work is, on the face of it, blindingly simple,” Tosi said. “If I can learn to love myself I am empowered to share that love with others in my life. And by sharing my love with others I have found that I receive it back one-hundred fold.”


What could be more simple?

This "work" is the work of the soul; the work of your soul. What could be more important than your soul work? What could be more important than getting real with yourself? I ask you to look at these questions and come up with yet another answer to put off this work or... come and do the work. Your choice.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 02:28AM (-07:00)

Not Today!

Friday, October 02, 2009

Today is Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi’s birthday.

In his honor, International Day of Non-Violence is celebrated around the world.

Funny....I have not heard much mention of it here in the states, where freedom to demonstrate and express our words freely is a tradition. I wonder if having that right means we take it for granted?

NOT TODAY! Have a Happy Birthday, father Ghandi!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Staffing the NCal November NWTA, Part 4

Monday, October 05, 2009

An on-going series of posts around my staffing of the next MKP NWTA in Northern California. I thought it would be interesting and enlightening to follow how this all works and you'll get to ride along on what it looks like to put on an NWTA from one man's experience...mine.

One of the issues I deal with in my world, and I see many men deal with, is asking for help. I has been a long road to be able to ask for what I need in a world that continually reinforces that I should be able to do it all myself.

I asked the men in my iGroup for the $100 fee to staff the November NCal NWTA. One man stepped up with the entire amount. He delivered it to my house on his own time.

This is what we do in MKP. We support each other. This man supported me when I had a need. I just needed to ask.

Are you able to ask for what you need?

38 days out.

See you in part 5!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Obama & the Nobel Peace Prize

Friday, October 09, 2009
President Obama,

Thank you for giving hope and leading with courage. Thank you for stepping into perhaps the most difficult job in perhaps the most difficult times. Thank you for modeling courage.

Congratulations and thank you, Mr President.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:16AM (-07:00)

The New Warrior Code

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Today's post comes from the former chairman of the ManKind Project, Curtis Mitchell.

I welcome and honor his words.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

The New Warrior Code

By Curtis Mitchell, ManKind Project International Chairman, 2003-2007

The New Warrior respects and dignifies the suffering of others. Only then can respect and dignity be had. Only then will the New Warrior learn to dignify and respect the personal self.

The New Warrior refuses to exploit the vulnerability of others.

The New Warrior takes responsibility for his personal suffering, and therefore takes responsibility for his conduct, word and deed, victim and perpetrator, fore going blame of others.
The New Warrior asks questions, seeks the truth, and seeks to understand, learning to speak to each as they need to be spoken to.

The shield of the New Warrior is held over the fallen, and thus held over himself as well.

The sword of the New Warrior is wielded only in the way he knows he can heal the cut he makes.

The quest of a New Warrior is the quest for a conscience, for only in conscience is there true agreement about what should be.

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:40AM (-07:00)

Live on the Radio

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Update: So it went well....you can hear it here.

Tomorrow (Oct 16, 2009) at noon PST, I will be having a live radio conversation about my experiences in the ManKind Project, my New Warrior Training Adventure back in Oct 1999, and in my weekly integration group.

I invite you to listen in live to KDRT 95.7 FM at http://davismediaaccess.org:8000/kdrt.m3u or catch a rebroadcast on Sunday, Oct 18 at 3 pm or Tuesday, Oct 20 at 11 am, or download the program at http://www.kdrt.org/station/archives/138.

I hope you enjoy the show!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:23AM (-07:00)
Sacredness of All Things

Monday, October 19, 2009

"We are already as spiritual as we are going to get. What we seek, we already are, we just need to recognize our connection to the earth and the sacredness of all things."


The sacredness of all things....Can you wrap your mind around that for a moment? It means that everything and everybody and every everything is sacred.

The bottom line here is that I think (and Little Crow thinks) you are sacred. I am, too. So what would it take for you to treat yourself as such? What would it look like to stand in a place of peace with who your are and what you are?

Would you be afraid? Would you be loving? Would you listen to your dreams and make them come true? Would you walk next to me while I find my sacredness?

The ManKind Project doesn't teach any spiritual belief; nor does it try to make you be anything, do anything, or say anything. You are your guide and mentor in your life and in the ManKind Project.

I'm out.

Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:53AM (-07:00)

Making Changes

Tuesday, October 27, 2009
Fear is a very powerful feeling; it can paralyze me or it can move me to direct and decisive action. Men, as boys, are mostly taught to stuff the paralyzing fear and jump right to decisive action; more times than not with dire consequences.

Taking a look at my fear, what drives it, is just one of the ways that helps me open a door to living an authentic life.

Fear is good. I need to be afraid. How I take fear-based action is my path and my choice.

The blog entry below speaks a bit about fear and how this man makes a change in his life.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

From the WarriorGorilla blog:

"Today I begin my academic journey anew. It's been roughly eight years since I dropped out of college and moved to Texas and today, I attend Orientation for the fall semester. I'm really rather excited.

When I went through my Warrior Weekend, I had no idea that this would be the product. Once I set my mission statement ("I will create a world of personal fulfillment by living my dreams") it was only a matter of time before I made it here. In this case, it was approximately eighteen months.

Eighteen months. Eighteen months after deciding on those 12 words, I packed up and moved from my comfortable life in Houston. Away from the friends that I had made and the family that supported me and helped me focus in on my dreams.

And today, I attend orientation. In six weeks I will step into a classroom again - at 28-years-old! And if all goes according to plan, in about two years, I will have my degree and be moving again."
And I'm afraid.

If I learned anything from my Warrior weekend, is that it is okay to be afraid as long as I do not allow that fear to dictate my life. I have spent far to many years allowing fear to lead my life, I overcame a lot of fear when I moved up here.

Fear is still with we, but when I walk out that door this morning and into Orientation, I will be overcoming a little more. When I walk into my first day of classes, a little more."

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:11AM (-07:00)

Comments

- MikeLogan       November 05, 2009

I had a similar experience after staffing my first weekend. Had a very powerful dream, that I was walking down a long sword in my bare feet, so the sword was cutting into the sole of my feet, or soul, and I was walking toward the sun. That image has been a huge symbol for me over the years of initiation. On the following Monday, I went to register for graduate school, and discovered it was the last day to register for that semester. I registered even though I had no job and no money, and managed to trust enough that the appropriate resources fell into place so that I could graduate at 48 with a M.S I am the only one ever in my family line to get a graduate degree and one of the few to get an undergraduate degree. And because of my weekend I get to create an initiation for my eleven year old son sometime soon.

Staffing the NCal November NWTA, Part 5

Wednesday, October 28, 2009

An on-going series of posts around my staffing of the next MKP NWTA in Northern California. I thought it would be interesting and enlightening to follow how this all works and you'll get to ride along on what it looks like to put on an NWTA from one man's experience...mine.

Well, only about two weeks before November NCal NWTA.
The men who are going through the training get to the site in Nevada City later on Friday afternoon. Staff, on the other hand, start arriving on Thursday around 2 pm.

I guess you could call this site preparation. There's a lot to set up and getting organized. Teams of men meet to work out the parts the work on and the timing of certain parts. The entire staff meets several times to get coordinated and meet each other.

All day Friday is spent doing much the same thing....working on getting ready for the men to arrive.

Food is prepared by a staff on men we refer to as the Men of Service. These men spend the entire weekend in the kitchen preparing food for all the men on site.

All in all there are 55 men working to serve the training to 36 men.

I have several pieces to participate in during the weekend. I am learning them now and understanding the intention behind each one so I can be in the right space when the time comes.

17 days out.

See you in part 6!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:18AM (-07:00)

**Mentoring**

**Monday, November 02, 2009**

I love this piece from a fellow initiated man at his blog; love freely.

Being a part of the ManKind Project means I can participate at different levels. I can; attend my weekly iGroup and do my personal work there; staff an NWTA to strengthen my bond with men who are going through the process of staffing or training; contribute to my blog here to give MKP a this man's presence/experience on the Internet; open myself to the leadership opportunities within MKP; attend other trainings that go beyond NWTA; whatever my choices, they are mine and I can own that.
I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

"One of the many stages in the journey to become a certified leader in the Mankind Project is to get an existing leader to mentor you. Over the years I've had many leaders suggest to me that I move onto the leader track, and implicitly they've all been options as mentors for me.

In making the difficult choice of whom to approach, I considered many criteria - who did I most get on with, whom did I admire the most, who's style did I like etc. etc. Finally, I went with my gut, and my gut chose the one I was most scared of - let's call him M. Funny that.

I called him up, and after some very probing questions M agreed to mentor me. I asked him what his terms were, and M said he only had two rules:

Don't waste my f**king time
Don't waste your f**king time

... and then I knew my gut had chosen well."

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:49AM (-08:00)

Comments

- GaryFreedman

Imagine freely.

Staffing the NCal November NWTA, Part 6

Monday, November 09, 2009

An on-going series of posts around my staffing of the next MKP NWTA in Northern
California. I thought it would be interesting and enlightening to follow how this all works and you’ll get to ride along on what it looks like to put on an NWTA from one man’s experience...mine.

I love this sculpture. It looks to me like a man who has just completed the NWTA and has taken off the mask he has worn his whole life.

Three days to go and I head up the mountain to welcome 35 men to the NWTA.

I am feeling strong and committed. I know this work changes men's lives. I have seen it year after year.

I am asking you, now. When are you going to step into changing the way you are in the world? Look we are here to support you. We have done and seen it all. Nothing you have done is going to frighten us away from supporting you.

When, my brother, will you stop running and step into change. Is it today?

See you in part 7!

I’m out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:11AM (-08:00)

Staffing the NCal November NWTA, Part 7; 85 men

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

An on-going series of posts around my staffing of the next MKP NWTA in Northern California. I thought it would be interesting and enlightening to follow how this all works and you’ll get to ride along on what it looks like to put on an NWTA from one man's experience...mine.

There are no words that I can use to express my gratitude and love for the men on the
November Northern California MKP NWTA.

We came together on Thursday evening to create space for 35 men to complete their NWTA. 35 men came and 35 men got what they came for.

I saw 35 Uninitiated Men step into the hardest, deepest stuff one can imagine. I saw 40 Staff Men put up their best to be there for the new Initiated Men. I saw 10 Men of Service men feed all of us with great love and care. I saw amazing things.

When we all walked away on Sunday, I saw 85 changed men. 85 men who came together to share an experience that words cannot describe. 85 men who walk and speak and feel differently than they did just a few days ago.

Are you the next next man?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:58AM (-08:00)

Don't Be Fooled

Wednesday, November 25, 2009

On returning from the MKP NWTA in Northern California this last weekend, I remembered a poem that a co-leader man on the training shared on Friday morning before the initiate men came up the mountain for the training (see below).

I wanted to share it with you because it reminds me that men often say "fine" when asked how they "are."

Deep down, honestly ask yourself this, how many times have you said "fine" and you felt lousy, scared, alone, angry, loving, joyful, tender, alive, free, shameful, determined, alienated, frustrated, etc.? How many times do you choose to say fine when you really want someone to know that you are _______ (fill in the blank)? Get the picture?

MKP is about men finding the deeper stuff that is standing in the way of being alive in the world. It's about you being you, not pretending or hiding "you" behind words or actions.

I challenge you to step into the NWTA and see what is there for you.
I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

I Scream Out To You

By Mark D. Worthen, PsyD, Center Administrator, MKP-InterMountain Center

I scream out to you in a whisper of sorrow:
Hear me, please hear me.

Because I will declare to you,
"I'm fine, really I am."

Don't be fooled.
I am a deep blue lake,
frozen hard.

You do not need to assault me with your ice pick;
You do not need to--nor could you--melt me with your intensity torch;
No, you need only look for the thin cracks in the ice,
And the whisps of steam emanating from the
Glorious spring of sublime masculinity which yearns from below.
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:44AM (-08:00)

Initiation of Men by Men

Wednesday, December 02, 2009

From MKP-Chicago Center:

"I feel anxious, unsettled before attempting this. Why?

If so, this is a good sign. Initiation of men by men is a powerful and deep experience which has been lost in our culture. It involves risk and reward. The risk of truly facing yourself, and the reward of having a safe container in which to achieve that. The intuitive, creative part of you may sense a deep need for initiation. Every man requires this for mature masculinity."

This is about fear.
I was afraid. I stepped into the fear (though I did not know that was what I was doing at the time) and walked with other men who have feared. We walked in together and walked out together.

Will you walk with us; the men who initiate; the initiated; the ManKind Project.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 02:09AM (-08:00)

Women

Wednesday, December 09, 2009

One thing I learned from my work in the ManKind Project is that women are not the enemy. I was taught they were. A mixed message, at best.

Women are, just like men, glorious, joyful, honorable, and loving.

Today, I honor my sacred partner in this journey--my wife.

Going through the New Warrior Training Adventure doesn't change you; you change you. I does give you a place that is safe and sacred to make the changes that you want to make.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:18AM (-08:00)

What Can a Men's Group Do for You?

Friday, December 11, 2009
Tripp Lanier, an MKP man from Colorado, hosts podcasts at the New Man.

I get a kick out of the podcast called What is a Men's Group and Why Should You Care? It speaks to what a men's group is about and not about. MKP iGroups are very similar to what is presented in this podcast. iGroups are weekly support for the man who wants change in his life, wants connection, wants to stop flying alone, or just wants more of ______.

Take a listen here (mp3 file).

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

From the New Man site:

"Are you one of those guys who - deep down - is wondering, 'What in the hell am I doing with my life?"

When you get in the weeds, do you tend to isolate like a wounded animal?

And how likely are you to really follow through on all of those goals?

This week, Revolutionary Man, Jayson Gaddis and I dive into a solution for any guy who has ever felt stuck, isolated and unable to follow through. We’re talking about men’s groups."

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 01:10AM (-08:00)

Ferocity

Saturday, December 19, 2009
In this post I show you what I call "getting it."

I think this man gets it that this type of men’s work is about stepping into our unknown and into our warrior strength.

The MKP Northwest Center has a great blog that this is pulled from.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

From Aho! a blog for the MKP Northwest Center.

"Ferocity – the Flavor of a Healthy and Alive I-Group"

For an I-group to be more than a coffee klatch where men talk about movies or politics or good fishing holes, or philosophize about how life might be if... there must be safety, accountability, leadership and growth. An I-group must be safe enough for men to let their guard down; part of that safety is being accountable to oneself as well as others in one’s life, and accountable to the I-group circle. Men must be willing to step forward and risk wearing the target of leadership. And, there must be growth; both personal growth and growth as an I-group. This growth, this evolution of the I-group that keeps the I-group lively could be expanding the facilitation skill set that men bring or it could be expanding the I-group’s mission of service.

The quality that unites these four elements is ferocity – the passion and dedication to do what it takes to get you want in your I-group and your life. Fierceness is not an emotion, it’s a flavor that enhances whatever quality it’s attached to: fiercely loyal, fierce anger, fiercely committed to a cause, or protecting one’s family with the ferocity of a tiger. Ferocity exists in service to some other quality; in the case of I-groups, ferocity is in service to aliveness.

When fierce aliveness is present, an I-group experiences clarity, direction and flexibility. Fierceness cuts through story and cuts through distraction – compassionately calling men to account, to be responsible for the depth of their inquiry and the truth of their response. Out of clear understanding of the situation, clear direction arises; within the I-group it will
become clear what needs to happen. The I-group may or may not have the skills necessary to proceed. Fierce support of the man doing his work will call forth the courage to move beyond the known and to risk facilitating an inspired process or a process that has only been witnessed by the facilitator until now. Ferocity describes the warrior archetype in action: clear, directed and flexible, he moves through blocks and does what is necessary to bring aliveness to the situation at hand.

Developing fierceness requires only willingness: willingness to move through fear, willingness to move into the unknown, willingness to risk, willingness to do what it takes, willingness to let the process get messy, willingness to trust your brothers. Fear can be paralyzing but it can also energize, focusing awareness on the essential. Life always leads to the unknown and continually presents us with risks. Becoming skillful through practice in working within the realm of the unknown is a blessing for one’s self and for one’s I-group. Men in I-groups must be willing to let the process become messy – we cannot always keep our egos, our misunderstandings, our inexperience, or our ideas out of a process. Thankfully, we have ways to clean up our messes, chiefly, communication skills including accountability and clearing rounds. Even with all our ego-baggage we have to be willing to jump into the work – that is how we learn as both participant and facilitator and that is the doorway through which comes serendipity and truth. Lastly, trust your brothers, trust that flash of insight, trust the need to step back, trust the spontaneous moment, trust the man working his edge, despite whatever judgments may be arising. I-groups are a team sport.

There are tools available for I-groups: guest magicians, “advanced” protocols, serving together as MoS and various trainings. Even with all these resources, the essence of the alive and healthy I-group is a fierce regard for oneself, the other and the I-group.

-Scott Nighbor
Sacred Blue Leopard

 Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:01AM (-08:00)

The Measure of a Man

Wednesday, December 23, 2009

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
It's pretty clear to me that men are amazing at rising to a challenge. I believe we can do anything we set are hearts to doing. That's the easy part. The hard part is deciding what is the task. Will it be going to Mars or conquering some perceived demon in another country?

What about the task of repairing our hearts? Is that not a noble task that will set the stage for future generations? I believe that the work a man does in the ManKind Project is the single most noble work a man can do.

Changing our view of the present means changing our view of the past. Changing the world one man at a time starts with me. I will. Will you?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 07:23AM (-08:00)

**The Time is Now**

**Wednesday, December 30, 2009**

There is no time but now. Simple.

The past is that. Past. It has it place and it has its meaning. I honor it for that, but am I willing to let it run my present and future?

Am I willing to let the voices of fear and suffering rule my future?

Am I willing to treat others poorly because I had a "bad" past?

Am I willing to step into today and change the world for me, my children, my wife, my family.....for you?

It is easy to live in the past, right? No my friend, it is easy to live in the present.
Honor the past for its place...and then be in the present.

I'm out.  
Old-faithful Wolf

This is the Hour  
The Elders; Oraibi, Arizona; Hopi Nation

You have been telling the people that this is the Eleventh Hour.  
Now you must go back and tell the people that this is the Hour.  

And there are things to be considered:  
• Where are you living?  
• What are you doing?  
• Where is your water?  

Know your garden.  

It is time to speak your Truth. Create your community.  
And do not look outside yourself for the leader.  

This could be a good time.  

There is a river flowing now very fast. It is so great and swift that there are those who will be afraid. They will try to hold onto the shore. They will feel they are being torn apart, and they will suffer greatly.  

Know the river has its destination.  

The elders say we must let go of the shore, push off into the middle of the River.  

Keep our eyes open and our head above the water.  

See who is there with you and celebrate.  

At this time in history, we are to take nothing personally, least of all ourselves. For the moment that we do, our spiritual growth and journey come to a halt.  

The time of the lone wolf is over. Gather yourselves.  

Banish the word struggle from your attitude and your vocabulary.  

All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner and in celebration.  

We are the ones we've been waiting for.  

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 10:55AM (-08:00)
Looking back it seems that this year has been the single-most evolutionary year of my life.

I have lost loved ones. I have seen a loved one battle and win against a brain cancer no one has yet to survive. I basked in the joy of having my uncle come and live with my family for three months and then experienced the pain of having him pass just two months later.

I fought, loved, struggled, and adored my wife-my best friend-through so much this year. I have made many strides forward this year, and always my best friend is with me.

I chose a path of no-more-excuses and have seen that make a world of difference in my life. I learned that my thoughts make me who I am and what my experience is. I am changing the thoughts and my life is changing around them.

I have taken the steps toward a financial venture that will lead me off the beaten path of 9-5 toward working an hour or less a day at home and making more than I could have ever imagined just two years ago. The goal is to be with my best friend and my two girls and not look back one day and wish it were different.

I have seen this blog grow into a source of pride for me. In almost five years of writing I have seen it grow to more than 10,000 visits this year from only 5,000 the year before. This writing provides me a place to share what this work looks like to and it provides you my experience and my take on the ManKind Project.

I celebrated ten years in the ManKind Project by staffing a New Warrior Training Adventure; my first in six years; third in ten years. The blessings were tremendous and it renewed my vision of what men can be do.

I am blessed to be a part of the Northern California center. The men here do not seem to understand the word "can't." This warrior song speaks to how I feel about about the calling of the ManKind Project. When you stand in a circle, you never stand alone!

This year, I was asked twice to appear on a radio show to talk about the ManKind Project and what it looks like to me (here and here). I felt honored and full of pride to speak about
the wonder that is the ManKind Project.

It has been an evolutionary year. I am taken back at how much was in this year. All of it I am thankful for. For without it, I would not know the joy I know today.

To you all; I wish peace and love and joy; that the next year brings you closer to knowing your sacredness and your beautiful and unique place in the this universe; and the knowledge that men can, and do, stand together to create a world of love, honor, integrity, and peace.

Aho!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:00AM (-08:00)

Comments

- BarryF January 01, 2010
Randall, thanks for this blog. I stop by here often and have sent me to read your writings. I wish you the best new year of your life.
Barry

- Anonymous January 25, 2010
Randall-
Thanks for being such a powerful teacher and inspiration. You ARE changing the world. My time with you at the November staffing won't be forgotten. Thanks for challenging me to clear when I thought that I had nothing to clear. Pure gold!!
Gratitude for you in my life,
Chris G
Screaming Bald Eagle

Men Trusting Men

Monday, January 04, 2010

From the Colorado MKP Web site.
"Explain how you men are able to trust one another when most men don't trust other men.

We are a spiritual community of men. The weekend experience places a man in ritual time and space where profound transformation happens. This experience of standing in "the outer world" creates a common bond of identity and shared purpose. Men of New Warrior are not naive about men. We have a very deep awareness of what the shadow side of men is capable of, but we are discerning about opening our hearts with other men who have been through the same initiatory experience. We have experience dealing with physical and sexual abuse, suicide, and other severe traumas. The framework and container of the weekend is strong enough to handle any life experience a man has ever had. We welcome you."

Men trusting men...can you wrap your brain around that?

I couldn't...not until I walked into this space. There are places in the world where you see who you are; see what's working for you and what isn't.

It's in this space. Can you wrap you brain around that?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:01AM (-08:00)

Comments

- Old-faithfulWolf

I removed the comment because the commenter spoke about a part of what happens in the training. The commenter did not speak from first hand experience, which, in the case of the NWTA, is everything. The commenter spoke for other men.

Here are some questions the commenter asked:

"Why is everything such a big secret?"
As many of my posts state, the weekend is a personal experience. If I shared what I experienced it would taint yours. We keep it sacred because we want you to get "your" experience, not mine or another man's.

"Why so many different names for this organization?"
There's only one name for the organization; the Mankind Project. The training is called
the New Warrior Training Adventure (NWTA), although some men may use the word weekend, instead of adventure.

"Who started MKP?"
Bill Kauth, Rich Tosi, and Ron Hering (deceased). The history is well documented and published in many places on the Internet.

New Zealand Men Share the NWTA with You

Tuesday, January 05, 2010

Today, I am sharing a great video containing men from the New Zealand ManKind Project center talking about what the New Warrior Training Adventure was like for them.

If you can't see the video below, click here.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:59AM (-08:00)

Imagine

Sunday, January 10, 2010

"You won't get anything unless you have the vision to imagine it."

John Lennon

Yep, it's true in my world. If I can't envision change, how can I make it happen?

Try to imagine a circle of men where you are accepted and honored for who you are and want to be. A circle where men challenge you to be more, to be who you say you want to be and challenge you when you say one thing and do another.

My circle of men in the ManKind Project is that sort of circle.

I'm out.
There, But for the Grace of God, Go I

Friday, January 15, 2010

A long, thoughtful, prayer-filled moment of silence...

and then get busy helping any way you can!
  • Google’s Haiti Relief Page; links to multiple relief agencies
  • Red Cross and Red Crescent
  • UNICEF
  • Yele Haiti
I’m out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Holding the Light for Haiti

Friday, January 22, 2010

I ask you to participate in a world-wide meditation for Haiti, tonight.

See Julie Redstone’s Web site about Response of Light meditation and her page describing tonight's Haiti meditation. The time of the meditation is Friday 8-8:30PM (EST), 5-5:30PM (PST), Saturday 1-1:30AM (GMT).

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:27AM (-08:00)

Comments

- Anonymous

January 22, 2010

Thank you my Dear Husband!
Deardra

25 Years of NWTA

Tuesday, January 26, 2010

Twenty-five years ago this week, three men; Rich Tosi, Bill Kauth and Ron Hering, held the first ever “Wildman Weekend” for 18 men which later became known as the a New Warrior Training Adventure (NWTA).
For me, this brings up a lot of thoughts about service, connecting paths, and hope.

Twenty-five years ago, I was not even remotely aware of men's work. I was doing men's work of the standard kind.

I was a second mechanic on an endurance race car team (click the link and you'll see me pointing at the car in 1988) out of southern California. I had been there one full season and was working with the most un-centered, un-feeling, mean-spirited bunch of guys you can imagine. Every moment was a chance to heckle or pound down the guy you worked with. I look back at my four seasons "in the ashes" as a time to remember the accomplishments and let go of the pain of it. It was brutal, it was educational in many ways, and I would never go back there.

During that time, three men were working an idea that would later change my life...and the life of many thousands of men around the world. They took the idea that men still need an initiation and ran with it, where no one else did, to create the NWTA. I find myself wondering if Tosi, Kauth, and Hering knew that 25 years from that time men would be holding an honoring space for them and their efforts. I wonder if they have any idea how many ways they have changed the world around them. It is a very profound thought to consider that we as individuals change the world around us. We do...and these men have, in a large and wonderful way.

Today, the a NWTA and a MKP stand as a place for men (me) to be themselves and to search for and reach their (my) dreams using their (my) own hearts and ideas.

I asked men to tell me what they were doing 25 years ago and where they are now. In no particular order, here's what they said (see below).

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

Daniel McClanahan; Great Calming Crow; "Men at Work" I-Group Intermountain Area

25 years ago I was 4. I was still in diapers, I was dependent on just about everyone. I had few if any things that were not beyond the basic necessities of life. So why write this? Because the one thing I do know is that at 4 I was still pure. There was Innocence, the kind that gets lost quickly when as you grow. At the time I was so pure that I was completely unaware of the things that had already happened to me.

By the age of 4, my biological father had abandoned my mother and I and whom to date I have not and most likely will never meet, my mother had remarried a man she was already being unfaithful to, but would stay with for another 8 years. This new father had already bonded with me and considered me his son and when confronted with my mother carrying my brother who was not and could never have been my fathers child took him on as well and did everything he could to take care of us. The arrows in and arrows out however could not be avoided.

25 years ago, three men came together so that nearly 25 years later there would be nearly 4 dozen men holding a space and a place for me at my initiation weekend. Because of this I was not alone when I went searching and found my shadow and brought it in front of me to hold it in light and face how none of the things I have lived through were my fault. To face how my legacy with my own son doesn't have to follow all
the same patterns. To take the Man-child that had existed and let him die so that the man could live. MKP has given me the ability to actually make a change in my own future and in so give my sons the kind of nurturing that will help them to become the men that MKP has helped me to find in myself today. The NWTA is the kind of thing that is looked back on from any point in life as a turning point to a new way of life and a new path that for me had eluded me until I experienced it.

Luke Boa; Free Elephant

As a 29 year old British male I was full of questions and doubts that made living my life, the way my "true self" wanted, impossible. I attended the New Warrior/MKP training 16 years ago, and have been involved with the organization ever since. I am now living the life, and the way, my true self wants. I am a gentle, loving, honest, brave, free, powerful, playful and happy man. I believe the MKP/New warrior training was the catalyst for my current life. And for that I am, and will always be Grateful. To all Involved my deepest thanks. Peace.

The First day of the Rest of My Life
Bryant Bell; Loving Deer

A lot has changed in my life since 1985. I felt like I was just drifting through life. I thought I knew what I wanted out of life, but I didn’t know to achieve it. Finally in the early 90’s I earned both my bachelor and Masters Degree. This helped some, as I now had employment that allowed me to accomplish some of my dreams. But I still felt incomplete.

Friendships were few and good solid relationships never developed. I eventually decided that living a life alone was not all that bad and I started to isolate myself from those around me. Of course I realize now that this is not the best path to follow.

Eighteen months ago a friend talked to me about the New Warrior Training Adventure. I was intrigued, but I wasn’t ready for this experience. Then Five months ago I was invited to attend a Men’s I-group. I remember driving home thinking about the great experience I had just participated in. I liked it! I went back the next week and again it felt good. A few weeks later I made the commitment to attend the New Warrior Training Adventure in November at Camp Augusta, CA. There was some fear that nearly derailed me a couple of times, but I will forever be grateful that I attended the weekend. I see changes in myself, changes which I like. I also realize that this is a journey that I have embarked upon and I have a long path ahead of me. But I’m excited to see where this path leads.

As I left the mountain that Sunday afternoon in November, at the conclusion of the training, I felt alive. I felt that I had a purpose to live. I experienced things that weekend that have changed my life. I decided on that drive home that this would be the first day of the rest of my life.

I don’t know the men that started the Mankind Project, but I want to thank them for providing a path that I can follow, that is changing my life for the better.

Graydon; Powerful Dog

When I look back at where I was in January 1985 I feel angry and ashamed at how I was wasting my life. From outwardly appearances I looked like I had my life in order. A good banking job, a nice apartment and a reliable car. On the inside I was a wreck. My life
really revolved around moderate to excessive drinking during weeknights, and excessive to blackout drinking on the weekends. Frequently driving under the influence and a determined quest to have sex with any willing female, married, single or already in a relationship, it did not matter. I was so unhappy and angry. I thought about suicide on occasion and I was on an unconscious mission to destroy myself.

Fast forward almost 20 years to 2003 I was in my second marriage, surviving as a pretty well functioning alcoholic who was subject to sudden and violent outbursts of anger. I was unhappy, pretty dead inside, stuck in a rut and heading towards a second failed marriage. Through a series of male connections I discovered the MKP web-site and was immediately hit across the head, as if by with a 2x4, by a heading that read "Are you the man you thought you'd be?" This was my wake-up call. I had never before thought about who I'd become. I quit drinking in April 2003 one month before attending my MKP warrior weekend in May. My life was turned up-side-down. I saw that I had potential to do anything. I woke up and decided to make giant leaps to a new life.

I now am a sober happy loving father, husband, brother and son. I show up emotionally and physically to everything I commit to. I sit in an I-group every week and through the guidance and support of my fellow brothers I am on a path determined to become the man I thought I'd be.

Courageous Buffalo; Camp Krem 2003

25 years ago, I was trying to find my place in the world...trying hard to fit in without losing myself. I was walking a fine line and doing it pretty well. I was in a good place but was young (22) and disconnected from my true self. Walking the line was a matter of great effort.

Over the years, I mostly lived true to myself...a life of integrity and commitment. Yet, it was 80% of my potential...a good life instead of a great life. How many of us let good be the biggest barrier to great? I was mildly out of integrity, allowing myself outs, just sliding through a bit here and there...having a good life.

During my NWTA weekend, I saw how the other 20% was like a constant low-grade fever...the difference between good and great...something that you had to manage and "deal with" all the time. Wow, what a wake up, especially because if clearly saw why I was blocked from the other 20% and how getting the other 20% was not a matter of effort or task but simply of becoming aware of my choices and lack my of integrity...things I could handle with little physical effort, money or life change. Of course it required inner work and the help of others, but I knew that the last 20% could make all the difference...and it did.

It is a constant piece of work to keep the 20% in focus, but that is how other men (and women) can help, as they have for me. I now know where the path is, even if I stray.

Anonymous

In Jan of 1985 I was 3 month's away from attending my first 12 Step Mtg and a clumsy beginning to my lifes work. Thankfully I entered the MKP door in March 2002 , I was ready!

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:41AM (-08:00)
“When I was a child
I caught a fleeting glimpse
Out of the corner of my eye.
I turned to look but it was gone

I cannot put my finger on it now
The child is grown,
The dream is gone.
but I have become comfortably numb.”

Comfortably Numb by Pink Floyd, from the The Wall, 1979

Becoming comfortably numb...hmmmm...I had to think a lot about that one. I think it really is more like uncomfortably numb.

Allowing yourself to become numb is not a comfortable place to be. I have found it to be anxiety ridden and very limiting. It can be debilitating in it's grip. Certainly not comfortable!

Taking a look at works for you, and doesn't, may be uncomfortable, but there is much to be gained. Staying stuck in the place where your dream is gone is a tragedy.

In the ManKind Project, men look at what works and what doesn't for each man. The changes may be uncomfortable at first, but in the bigger picture, wouldn't you rather be who you came here to be and be supported in that?

Men are here and waiting to be of service; to support you and your dreams. I am one of them.

Is it time?
I'm out.
“The group is about helping men find their magnificence, their wonder, and their power. Yes, we look at all the parts of us and that includes looking at our shadows. In the end, we are focused on knowing who we truly are and maximizing the best of us.”

This is the introduction paragraph to my iGroup’s Web site. It states what you can find in an iGroup after attending the NWTA.

I find my magnificence here so I can take it out into the world. I integrate my iGroup work into my life. I laugh, cry, listen, hear, lead, follow, stammer, fall, rise, shut down, open up, and live in all these parts of me.

Would you like a place in your life that was this safe?

Men are waiting for you to step into yourself. Men are waiting to see who you really are and who you can really be. How long will you keep us waiting?

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 05:57AM (-08:00)

Comments

- Anonymous February 13, 2010

Bravo!!!

'D
"You miss 100% of the shots you don't take."

Wayne "the Great One" Gretzky, Canadian hockey player.

I wonder why you are sitting there not taking your "shot."

I am not trying to be insulting, but, I can tell you this is just the question you can expect being around an ManKind Project man.

You can know that, as well as being a place of support, I will challenge you to take the shot. I will stand with you and look at why you are not taking the shot and what it would look like to take the shot.

Come on...take the shot...sign up, today.

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf
I love this e-mail that came to me. See, I am of the generation that played outside and fell out of trees and stayed outside until dark every night.

I have some sadness that there are parts of this that are great and parts that are not-so-great. Also, there is joy in remembering what a joyful place my childhood was, at times. Some of those parts, good and not-so-good, I deal with every week in my ManKind Project iGroup.

Well, at least I made it to today!

I'm out.
Old-faithful Wolf

TO ALL THE KIDS WHO SURVIVED the 1930's, 40's, 50's, 60's and 70's!!

First, we survived being born to mothers who smoked and/or drank while they were pregnant.

They took aspirin, ate blue cheese dressing, tuna from a can, and didn't get tested for diabetes.

Then after that trauma, we were put to sleep on our tummies in baby cribs covered with bright colored lead-based paints.

We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets and when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets, not to mention, the risks we took hitchhiking.

As infants & children, we would ride in cars with no car seats, booster seats, seat belts or air bags.

Riding in the back of a pick up on a warm day was always a special treat.

We drank water from the garden hose and NOT from a bottle.
We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle and NO ONE actually died from this.

We ate cupcakes, white bread and real butter and drank Kool-aid made with sugar, but we weren't overweight because, WE WERE ALWAYS OUTSIDE PLAYING!

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on.

No one was able to reach us all day. And we were O.K.

We would spend hours building our go-carts out of scraps and then ride down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned to solve the problem.

We did not have Playstations, Nintendo's, X-boxes, no video games at all, no 150 channels on cable, no video movies or DVD’s, no surround-sound or CD’s, no cell phones, no personal computers, no Internet or chat rooms....... WE HAD FRIENDS and we went outside and found them! We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth and there were no lawsuits from these accidents.

We ate worms and mud pies made from dirt, and the worms did not live in us forever.

We were given BB guns for our 10th birthdays, made up games with sticks and tennis balls and, although we were told it would happen, we did not put out very many eyes.

We rode bikes or walked to a friend's house and knocked on the door or rang the bell, or just walked in and talked to them!

Little League had tryouts and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment. Imagine that!!

The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke the law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law!

These generations have produced some of the best risk-takers, problem solvers and inventors ever!

The past 50 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas.

We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned HOW TO DEAL WITH IT ALL!

If YOU are one of them CONGRATULATIONS!

You might want to share this with others who have had the luck to grow up as kids, before the lawyers and the government regulated so much of our lives for our own good.

While you are at it, forward it to your kids so they will know how brave (and lucky) their parents were.
Kind of makes you want to run through the house with scissors, doesn't it?!

Posted by Old-faithful Wolf at 12:28AM (-08:00)

Comments

- JeffR  February 24, 2010

Very good--true and entertaining both. I have thought many of these same things myself........ particularly around both the work ethics of younger Americans and the willingness which we previously had to engage the Federal government intensely--I was out on the streets with many others shutting down a screwed up machine in the late 60's and I wish the current 17-25 year olds would now do the same.