

# MEN IN RELATIONSHIPS

## A THERAPY GROUP FOR MEN

“The curse upon men at the moment is that they have been driven to seek from women what can only be found among other men or in community and decent work: a sense of connection, justification, shared power and mystery... There is at the center of men’s lives a sexual despair and isolation stemming from their separation from other men, the absence of shared male tenderness and wisdom. I see the same thing in all of my friends: a yearning not only for women but also for fathers, sons, and comrades... Without comrades, men bend and wither in relation to women, they come to them lacking conviction, pride, and potency, and what vanishes then is all real chance for softness, tenderness, or joy.”  
(In a Man’s Time, by Peter Marin. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974, pp. 214-215.)

“When men speak of fearing intimacy what they really mean is that they fear subjugation. In a visceral way, most men in our culture experience vulnerability as opening themselves up to be overrun.” (How Can I Get Through to You: Reconnecting Men and Women, by Terrence Real. New York: Scribners, 2002, p. 245.)

As men, we continue to struggle in our relationships with women, as Peter Marin observed forty years ago, in part because we are isolated from the support and nurturing, in Marin’s words, of “a community of loving male comrades.” Often, absorbed in our roles as workers and husbands and fathers, we don’t begin to know how to even locate such a community.

As men, we were not socialized to share our struggles and our “quiet desperation,” in Thoreau’s words, with other men. Terrence Real, in his book, I Don’t Want To Talk About It, writes, “Men are not supposed to be vulnerable. Pain is something we rise above.” (p. 22). As we encounter problems—often in the relationships that matter most to us—we are hesitant to voice our pain, and lack a community of comrades who can resonate with our situation and provide us with much needed support.

M.Scott Peck began his best seller The Road Less Travelled with the sentence, “Life is difficult.” Yes, life is difficult and being a man is difficult. “Fearing subjugation,” in Terrence Real’s words, it is hard to know when to take a stand in our relationships, or when to yield.

This is a group for men who wish to better understand ourselves and improve our relationships. In each group meeting, men will be encouraged to explore common relationship issues and concerns. We will support each other as we learn more about our feelings and our needs. We will learn from and become comrades for each other.

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TIME: Wednesdays, 6:00 to 7:15 p.m.

FACILITATOR: Philip Chanin, Ed.D., ABPP, CGP

COST: \$60 per session

PLACE: 2313 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212

REGISTRATION: Contact Dr. Chanin: (615) 386-3333 or philchanin@gmail.com