



♀ ON OUR WAY

Newsletter of the Women's Center
46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Spring 1992 (617) 354-8807
TTY and VOICE

FOR CRYING OUT LOUD IS BACK!

After a much needed period of rest and renewal the Women's Survivor's Newsletter Collective has come together again. We are some members of the previous collective and many new members joined together to speak our truth as women survivors of child sexual abuse. We plan to print the newsletter quarterly with the next issue coming out in late April.

If anyone is interested in contributing to the newsletter or subscribing we can be reached (by mail only) through the Women's Center.

I for one, am very happy For Crying Out Loud is back providing a voice for survivors to speak out together about the pain, the strength and the hope of surviving and thriving.

-Annwyl Rhyfelwr

WOMEN'S GROUP FOR SOBRIETY

The Sunday afternoon Women for Sobriety meeting has been renamed the Sunday Women's Group for Sobriety. The main purpose of this group is to provide a safe, supportive environment in order for women to be able to freely speak of the specific issues surrounding their addictive behaviors. Women who find the conventional, traditional programs difficult may see this meeting as a workable alternative or this meeting may be used to augment an existing traditional AA program. Subjects relating to addiction are discussed on a weekly basis. We meet at the Women's Center Sundays, 2-3:30pm.

If more information is needed, please contact Bev at 784-5383 or Annette at 566-8474.

WOMEN'S SCHOOL

The Women's School is alive and well and operating out of the Women's Center. Since the early 1970's we've been offering courses and workshops, with a feminist perspective, to women in the greater Boston area. This makes us the oldest consecutively running women's school of this kind in the U.S. In each of our classes we encourage women to examine the biases and assumptions which oppress people in general and women in particular. This April we are offering the following classes:

-Relaxation Techniques for Childhood Sexual Abuse Survivors; Tuesdays, April 7 & 14, noon-1:30pm.

-I Read it on a Wall Somewhere: Women's Graffiti Slideshow and Discussion; Thurs., April 16, 7-8:30pm.

-Everyday Resistance: A Workshop for Timid Writers; Tues, April 7-21, 7-9pm.

-Getting the Word Out: Telling Our Self-Defense Success Stories; Tuesday, April 28, 7-9:30pm.

All classes are free and are held at the Women's Center. Please see our brochure or call (617) 354-8807 for more information. If you are interested in proposing a course or joining the collective, please give us a call.

IN MEMORIAM

We are sorry to learn of the deaths of two friends of the Women's Center, Robin Holmes in December and Dr. Pamela Gunnell in March. We extend our sincere sympathy to the many friends and family who knew and loved Robin and Pamela. Thank you to all who have sent memorial donations to the Women's Center, we deeply appreciate your honoring these two women by supporting our work.

MOTHER'S SUPPORT GROUP

The Mother's Group has been meeting at the Women's Center since early October 1991. We meet on Fridays from 10:30am to 12:00noon. We have a babysitter available for those who want to bring their children for \$2.00 per child.

Presently 3-5 of us meet regularly to discuss our lives, how we raise our children, and our own childhoods. The group is a warm and supportive atmosphere in which to discuss any parenting or other issues with other moms. We are looking for other mothers to join us. Please come to any meeting.

If you have any comments, suggestions, or questions, please call the Women's Center at 354-8807 or Gayle at 491-8450.



ALL KINDS OF FAMILIES CELEBRATION

Come celebrate the diversity of families, May 9, 11am-3pm (rain or shine) at Franklin Park in the Playstead area (between the zoo and White Stadium). This event, co-sponsored by the All Kinds of Families Alliance (AKOFA) and over 20 other organizations (including the Women's Center), will feature entertainment and speakers for the enjoyment of both parents and children.

The celebration will be ASL interpreted, and wheelchair accessible. For more information, call 863-0435 or TTY 254-4041 (Deaf, Inc.).

Families deserve to thrive, not just survive! We hope you can join us for this day of fun and celebration of all our different kinds of families.

GROUP THERAPY FOR PARENTING ISSUES

On Tuesday mornings a closed, ongoing therapy group for mothers meets at the Women's Center. This group, led by two therapists, is now opening for new members. If you are interested in joining, please call the Women's Center and you will be put in touch with one of the therapists, who will place you either in this group or another appropriate group.

BATTERED WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

The Wednesday night Battered Women's Support Group meets at the Women's Center from 7-8:30pm. In the year of its 15th anniversary, the Battered Women's Support Group is still going strong. It is still as vital as ever, and unfortunately, still as needed. Over the years, hundreds of wonderful women have come through the support group. I've watched them grow and change, gain confidence and more control over their lives. Some come for a few weeks, some come for months, others continue after a year; growing, giving support to other women, and participating in other projects that will improve the lives of women.

For instance, one of our alumni is helping to train police in another city to deal more sensitively with battered women; another is heavily involved in working on the "Jane Doe Fund" (a project to raise money for battered women who need bus fare, etc. to escape violent partners); still another is speaking before the legislative judiciary committee against the ravages in the lives of women caused by pornography and is part of an effort to afford women civil rights protections against this; another is a frequent guest on talk radio raising consciousness about battered women; yet another is practicing law in the Northwest as an advocate for battered women. And there are many others out there helping women.

We have also trained other women to start support groups in their geographical areas. Presently, an advocate from the Norfolk County District Attorney's Office received help from us to prepare for a group in the Franklin area. We use a no-nonsense, common sense feminist approach that eschews all the trendy neopsych fashions which subtly blame the victim, or make them equally responsible for the transgressions of male supremacy.

Starting in April, we will have a Law Intern from the Harvard Battered Women's Law Advocacy Project attending our group on the last Wednesday of each month to give women advice on the Abuse Prevention Act (i.e. Chapter 209A), restraining orders and related matters. They may also accompany women who are making out complaints, going to hearings, etc.

We continue to welcome new women to our group.

-Betsy Warrior

WOMEN'S COMMUNITY CANCER PROJECT

The Women's Community Cancer Project has had a busy and productive winter. We are now in our third year and have a committed, hard-working group of 25+ women working to change the medical, political, and social approaches to cancer.

Donna Spiegelman, Rita Arditti and the Political Action Committee have completed the "A Woman's Cancer Agenda: Demands to the National Cancer Institute and US Government". It is a one-page document addressing research and policy issues including the bias against women's health, the race and class bias, and the bias against research and prevention of the environmental causes of cancer. The "Demands" have now been sent out to women's groups, health and environmental organizations, and legislators throughout the country. The response so far has been great!

In recent months, we have received many invitations to speak at academic institutions in eastern New England. In March, the New England Regional Conference on Women at Tufts featured Rita Arditti and Ann Maguire as panelists speaking on "Women's Health: The Personal and the Political Recovery". Harvard has invited our group to speak to medical students for the 2nd year in a row. Jean Hardisty, Judy Meyers, Jeannie Marshall, and Linda Swanson will be giving a talk at Salem State College on women and cancer and health insurance issues. In April, Rita Arditti and Jean Hardisty will be speaking at Rhode Island College.

HOT OFF THE PRESS: Our "SHOCKING FACTS about Women and Cancer" and "ALARMING FACTS about Women and Breast Cancer" have been translated into four languages! Spanish, Haitian-Creole, French, and Portuguese fact sheets are now available in beautiful striking colors. Thanks to Kris Waldman and Lisa Beane for their wonderful graphic design work.

The National Breast Cancer Coalition had their February planning committee meeting in Boston. Nona Mahoney represented the WCCP (one of the founding organizations of the Coalition) on the planning committee

The newly revitalized Direct Service Committee (Nona Mahoney, Betty Furdon, Ellen Leopold, Ruth Cronson, Arline Davis, and Jeannie Marshall) is coordinating the support group which meets on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the month at the Women's Center from 7-9pm.

Our interns from Tufts University's Urban and Environmental Policy program, Traci Sawyers, Kate Dempsey, Nechama Katz, and Ellen Taggart are researching the risks and benefits of mammography and the status of mammography facilities throughout the Boston area.

The WCCP's new archivists/librarians Arline Davis and Betty Furdon are coordinating the archives and doing a fabulous job. Ruth Cronson has been keeping us in touch with the outside world by handling our phone calls.

"How to Stop Cancer from Killing Women" was the topic of a radio show on WMBR (88.1 fm) on March 21 in honor of International Women's Day. Members Ellen Crowley, Rita Arditti, and Tatiana Schreiber were interviewed by Kate Diaz.

Jean Hardisty will be going to San Francisco this month for the Computer Network Cancer Grassroots Project sponsored by the National Women's Health Network. Jean will be trained in the use of a new computer system designed to link grassroots breast cancer activist groups.

WOMEN'S WRITING GROUPS

The Women's Center currently has two active groups for women writers, both of which would happily accept any new members. Writers, read the descriptions below and come to one or both to share your writing and receive support from other writers.

-Saturday afternoon Women's Writing Group: Our casual format includes two 20 minute writing exercises on topics chosen by the group, followed by (optional) reading aloud and discussion. Only positive feedback is given. The focus is writing from your own experience, and nothing is too bizarre or trite for us. Beginners and all others are welcome. Alternate Saturdays, 12:30-2:30pm.

-Thursday night Women's Writing Group: Bring copies of your writing and receive suggestions and feedback from other members (writers request the type of feedback they prefer). Women bring all kinds of writing: fiction, essays, plays, poetry, etc. We meet the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month from 7-9pm.

Drop-in to either of these groups, or call 354-8807 for more information.

WOMEN'S CENTER HOURS

Monday - Thursday	10am - 10pm
Friday	10am - 8pm
Saturday	11am - 2pm

MACHINE QUANDARY

Our copier and computer are maturing. We would love to have leads to or donations of more youthful equipment. If you can help, please call Judy or Jennifer at 354-8807.

ONGOING GROUPS AT THE WOMEN'S CENTER

SUNDAY

-Women's Group for Sobriety.....2-3:30pm
-Birthmothers (Women who have surrendered children to adoption) (first Sunday each month).....1:30pm

MONDAY

-Support for Battered Women.....7:30-9pm
-Women's NA 12 step.....7:30-9pm
-Lesbian Rap.....7:30-9pm
-Boston Bisexual Women's Network (1st Mon, even #'d months)...7:30-9:30pm
-Reproductive Rights Network R2N2 (2nd & 4th Mondays)....6:45-9:30pm
-Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest Survivors (1st & 3rd Mon.).....7-8:30pm
-Women w/Disabilities (3rd Mon.)..7:30-9pm

TUESDAY

-Bisexual Women's Rap.....7:30-9:30pm
-30+ Lesbian Rap.....7-8:30pm
-Eating Awareness and Body Image.....7-9pm
-Healing After Abortion.....7-8:30pm

WEDNESDAY

-Lesbian Al-Anon (wheelchair accessible).....6:30-8pm
-Battered Women's Support Group (Weekly except 3rd Wed. of month).....7-8:30pm
-Incest Survivors' Thinktank...7:15-9:15pm (1st Wed. of the month)
-Women's Group of Queer Nation (1st,3rd Weds after 1st Mon)...8-9:45pm

THURSDAY

-Incest Survivors Open Discussion Groups (weekly).....7:30-9:30pm
-Facilitated Open Discussion for Incest Survivors (3rd Thursday).....7:30-9:15pm
-Women's Community Cancer Project (1st Thursday).....7-9pm
-Cancer Support Group (2nd & 4th Thursday).....7-9pm
-Lesbians Choosing Children Network (2nd Thurs, monthly).....7:30pm
-Women's Writing Group (2nd & 4th Thursdays).....7-9pm

FRIDAY

-Mother's Support Group.....10:30am-12noon
-Incest Survivors Anonymous.....6:30-8pm

SATURDAY

-Women's Writing Group (biweekly).....12:30-2:30pm
-Open discussion on Coming Out for Women of All Ages(monthly, 1st Sat)...11am-1pm

FEMINIST FILM

Critique of "The Famine Within" (Coolidge Corner Theater, late April): A movie I believe one of the best, most empowering, fascinating movies about women and self-esteem via body image and society's inculcation of the negative which as all else, is foisted on women not men.

-Colleen

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

LESBIAN RAP

Mondays, 7:30-9pm

April 13 Too Intense, too Fast?
20 Breaking Up can be Healthy/
Staying Friends
27 Is Fantasy Good for your
Health?

BISEXUAL WOMEN'S RAP

Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30pm

April 14 Reproductive Rights
21 Coming Out Stories
28 Sex

30+ LESBIAN RAP

Tuesdays, 7-8:30pm

April 14 Open Discussion
21 Art of Dating
28 Safe Sex (with speaker)

FACILITATED OPEN DISCUSSION FOR INCEST SURVIVORS

Third Thursday, 7:30-9:15pm

April 16 Spirituality-Reclaiming Our
Own Beliefs
May 21 Confronting Family
June 18 Memories
July 16 Body Image
August 20 Intimacy

INCEST SURVIVORS THINKTANK

First Wednesday, 7:15-9:15

May 6 What Role Does Religion Take
in Abuse?
June 3 The Impact of Survivor Work
on Society

CCTV

Cambridge Community Television provides programming of local interest to Cambridge residents on cable channels 19, 54, 55, and 66. Every Wednesday night at 9pm on Channel 19, watch for *CAMBRIDGE WOMEN IN CABLE*, a series produced exclusively by women, for women. For a free program guide, or if you are interested in doing a video project on women's issues, call 225-2500.

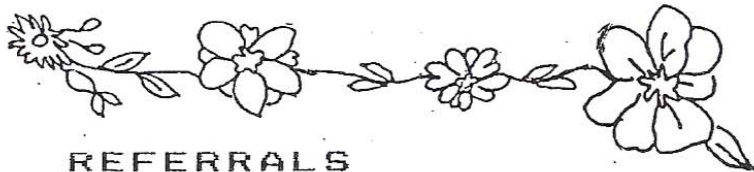
INCEST SURVIVORS THINKTANK

The Incest Survivors Thinktank is a monthly drop-in group which gives survivors of incest and child sexual abuse an opportunity to reflect about the cultural context of incest, to debate feminist theories on child sexual abuse, and to develop strategies for political change. It provides an opportunity to gain social support for and to share our varied intellectual contributions to the understanding of child sexual abuse.

The group itself does not initiate or endorse specific political actions, however there is ample time for such announcements. Thinktank members understand political action to include: speaking to friends and co-workers, lobbying, demonstrating, acting as public speakers, writing articles or books, confronting perpetrators, and the very act of healing from the abuse. Participants in the discussions decide on the direction of the group. Incest survivors function as facilitators.

The group began last fall with four members and membership has steadily grown. New members are welcome to join at any time. The Thinktank meets the first Wednesday of each month from 7:15-9:15pm. The first hour is spent focusing on the topic, the second on examining issues raised during the first hour. If you have questions regarding the Thinktank or wish to join the facilitator group, please call the Women's Center at 354-8807 and ask to have a Thinktank member contact you or come to our next meeting.

Topics for the next two months are: May 6 - What Role Does Religion Take in Abuse? & June 3 - The Impact of Survivor Work in Society. All topics are chosen by popular vote the prior season. Thinktank members will soon be deciding whether to meet this summer and choosing topics for the fall. Come join us!



REFERRALS

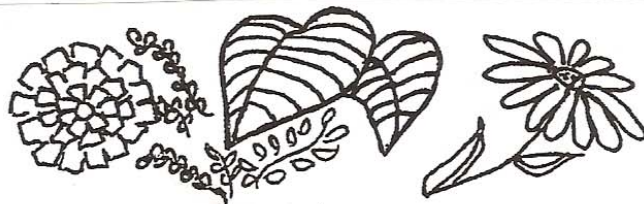
When you ask for a referral, the staffer will usually give you several people or places. These are not endorsements, they are simply options for you to explore. We urge you to select a health care provider, a therapist or any practitioner very carefully. We also appreciate feedback on our referrals.

INCEST SURVIVORS ANONYMOUS

Incest Survivors Anonymous is an open drop-in discussion group that welcomes survivors of incest and women pro-survivors (lovers, friends, non-abusing parents). The group meets Friday nights from 6:30-8:00pm. This is a 12-step group modeled after AA. The meeting opens with a reading of the 12 steps, and other member-written literature. Then the group divides. One section focuses on a particular step; the other has open discussion. There are ground rules for discussion: no responses to the comments of others, no judgements, 3-5 minute time limit. Participants share thoughts, feelings and experiences. The size of the group is quite large, attendance fluctuates between 20 and 40 women. The group has recently expanded into using a third room to accommodate its growing membership. New women are always welcome.

INCEST SURVIVORS WORKSHOPS

Reclaiming Our Voices: New Options, New Choices will be a special two-day workshop for survivors of child sexual abuse and childhood trauma. The event, which is presented by Interface, will take place June 13 and 14, from 9am-5pm. The cost for the weekend for non-members is \$135. For more information or to negotiate the fee, call Susan Chiat at 876-4600.



SPORTSWOMEN

Well, spring is here (or should I say somewhat) and we need your help to update our Sportswomen Resource Network book. If you know of any activities or teams for women or would like to start one, please put a notice in the Sports book or leave for Dotty Prout or Lisa Watson on the Women's Center message board.

We are also looking for softball gloves again this year or any sports equipment to send out to the women at MCI Framingham. We wish to thank you again for all your support in the past.

Address correction requested



WORK-STUDY REPORT

Since February, I have been complementing my studies in Psychology and Women's Studies at Suffolk University with a practicum placement here at the Women's Center. After graduation, I will pursue my interest in women's health by starting a Physician's Assistant graduate program at Northeastern University.

My project here at the Women's Center is to create a resource book for Free and Low-Cost (non-emergency) Health Care, which I hope to have finished by the end of April.

I have also spent a lot of time staffing, which has been truly rewarding. I have learned so much in regards to support groups and the vast number of resources set up to help women in the Cambridge-Boston area. The information I've gained working here will go a long way.

Thanks to everyone who has made me feel welcomed, and especially to Judy and Jen for being flexible when I really needed it.

-Crystal Upshaw

COMPUTER ACCESS

The Somerville Community Computing Center has public access hours. For a requested donation of \$2 per visit, you can learn how to use computers, do word processing, play games, and much more. There are a variety of computers available for use, and staff or volunteer instructors are on hand to help. For more information, call 625-1335, x6948.

HARVARD "TAKE BACK THE NIGHT"

From April 13 through April 25 the Radcliffe Union of Students will sponsor Take Back The Night, an annual series of events to raise awareness of and end violence against women. Events include panel discussions on such topics as "Violence Against Lesbians, Gays & Bisexuals", and "Prosecuting Rape"; workshops; and a march and rally on April 23 at 7:30pm behind the Malkin Center at Harvard. At the rally there will be an open mike for people to share experiences of violence; followed by a candlelight march through the streets of Cambridge and across Harvard. For info., call Jessye at 493-2981 or Heidi at 493-7475.

BIOENERGETIC EXERCISE CLASSES

In Bioenergetics the emphasis is on being rather than doing or achieving. The intent is to get down into our natural, spontaneous, non-compulsive and non-driven state of being. The exercises are of three types:

- 1) Grounding - discovering and learning to respect our own particular physical and emotional reality.
- 2) Stretching/relaxing - loosening tense muscles, tendons and joints, thus promoting greater aliveness.
- 3) Expressive - sound and gesture for relieving muscular and emotional tension.

Classes are held at 2000 Massachusetts Ave. in Cambridge. Weekday classes cost \$5 and are offered on a drop-in basis. For more information, call 876-3652.