



# ♀ ON OUR WAY

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

Spring '93 (617) 354-8807  
TTY and VOICE

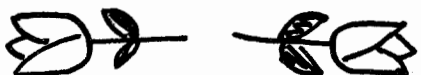
## ABORTION MAY BE LEGAL ... BUT WHO CAN GET ONE?

Doctors who perform abortion are harassed and even murdered. 10% of women who want to have an abortion cannot obtain one. Only 12% of medical schools are providing abortion training to ob/gyn residents. Only eight hospitals in Mass. perform abortions.

To address this crisis in health care and reproductive freedom, the Abortion Access Project has been formed. Called together by the Reproductive Rights Network (R2N2), the project is a network of individuals and organizations that is developing a pro-active state strategy which will be a model for other states and be coordinated with a national strategy. The Abortion Access Project's goals include:

- Increasing the number of abortion providers, including nurse practitioners, midwives, and physician assistants.
- Increasing the availability and affordability of abortion services.
- Demanding accountability from health care institutions to provide training in abortion procedures and availability of abortion services.
- Returning control of the abortion issue and other women's health care issues to the women's community.

Join us! We meet the 4th Wednesday of each month at Boston City Hall.  
Call (617)738-9479 for more information.



## IN APPRECIATION

Thank you very much to each of the over 130 women who responded to our fundraising letter that went out with the December '92 issue of On Our Way. The Women's Center is here because of friends like you who value and support it. Many thanks for your much-needed help!

## BATTERED WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

I am going to the Wednesday night group for "Battered Women" because I was physically and verbally abused by my ex-husband, and so was my son age 3 1/2. The purpose of the group is for women to understand that no women, child or animal should be abused. By understanding abuse they can avoid getting involved in the same situation again so women and children can learn to live without fearing for their lives. In the Battered Women's Support Group I have learned how to prevent violence in the future. -D.B.

I joined the Wednesday night Battered Women's support group with Betsy Warrior as a result of a brief marriage to a sociopath. The teaching of Betsy has been invaluable in my recovery from that tragedy. Her wisdom, insight and expert facilitation of the group inspired me to want to help other women who have been victimized. Betsy's dedication to the justice of women's lives and to freedom for women to realize their full potential is an extraordinary statement of her use of justifiable anger. We have no language, no name, for women who have died senselessly at the caprice of a male. And we have no adequate name for a woman who dares to stand against the prevailing culture and say "No". She is a pioneer and priestess in the struggle for healing and growth of women's souls. -M.J.

## CHILDCARE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



The Women's Center is looking for volunteers to do childcare for the Battered Women's Support Group on Wednesday nights (7-9pm) and/or for other occasional meetings (days and nights). If you would like to help mothers and children and have fun at the same time, please call Judy or Jen at 354-8807.

## STRUCTURED INCEST SUPPORT GROUP

For me the Structured Incest Support Group is a roomful of mirrors. Once a week, on Thursday nights from 7:30-9:30pm, I hear the anguish and hope of other women as they cope daily with the legacy of sexual abuse. Some of the abuse is vividly remembered - some is emerging in consciousness as a vague fleeting dream - and some only as a sense/feeling of "something disturbing". However the result is so often the same. No matter how vivid the memory or how disturbing the feeling - it's so hard to believe anything REALLY happened. ("I'm probably making this up" or "crazy" or "I always was different".)

I can be in this roomful of mirrors and slowly begin to believe as I see reflected back the undeniable truth in each women's voice, face and story. Things are beginning to fall into place. In this very safe space where we can all speak without fear of denial, diminishment, or reprisal can finally be heard and believed - all the while gathering the collective courage to at last lovingly and compassionately believe in ourselves.



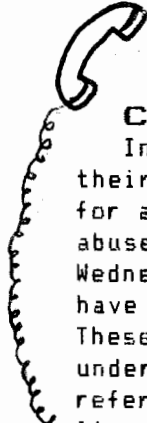
### FROM VERA

In May, I'll offer a closed 4-session group on Loss and Loneliness. Loss has always been a part of life. Therefore - to live well, we must learn to deal with loss. Loneliness, often an immediate result of loss, is also a part of life and something to learn about, but being alone need not make for loneliness.

If you've suffered a loss, recently or not-so-recently, come and share and learn. Meetings will be on Tuesdays, May 4, 11, 18, and 25 from 7:30-9:00pm.


And because I'm eager to have people make good use of therapy, I am continuing the 2-hour workshop on Assessing Your Therapy which meets the first Wednesday of every month from 7-9pm. This workshop will help you understand the treatment process better so you can have more ability and confidence in your therapy and in asking questions and talking openly to your therapist. You will be able to make your therapy change and be better for you or to know when that is not possible and a bigger change is necessary.

## NEW HOTLINE FOR SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE



In March 1993, Heartlines, Inc. opened their new anonymous, confidential hotline for adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse. The hotline is staffed every Wednesday from 7-10pm by survivors who have been trained in crisis intervention. These survivors can offer support and understanding, as well as information and referrals for other resources. The hotline number is 617-524-6959. Give them a call, they want to listen! (Of course, survivors are still always welcome to call the Women's Center, too.)

## FOR PARENTS WHO ARE INCEST SURVIVORS




I am planning a newsletter of support and guidance for survivors who are parenting, but I need some help. I am hoping to be inclusive of all types of parents (non-perpetrators): single, lesbian, straight, adoptive, and partners or others in a parenting role.

Some issues I hope to cover are: dealing with extended family; discipline; knowing what is physically appropriate; how to be honest with your children about your history; teaching kids about their bodies; dealing with anger in families.


I have received very positive responses from the Women's Center, Mothering Magazine, Heartlines, therapists and other survivors. I hope to find at least one other woman to share ideas, resources, and of course, the work.

If you are interested please call: (508)287-0516, and say that you are calling about the newsletter.

## INTERN-ALLY GRATEFUL



1993 has been a busy year for interns at the Women's Center! We had the help of three interns for the month of January: Tyrena Hunt from City Year; Aurea Kelvin from Oberlin University; and Mindy Miffitt from Hampshire College. These interns worked on a variety of projects including staffing the phone, updating referral information, organizing resource books, neatening the bulletin boards, and more. We appreciate their amazing efforts to benefit the Women's Center.



Currently, we are pleased to have two interns from Boston College, Jennifer Brya and Beth Eagen, and Sonja Berndt, a student of social work from Kassel, Germany helping out here at the Women's Center. Thanks so much for your help! You make a huge difference in the health and well-being of the Women's Center.

## **AGING WELL, FOR OLDER WOMEN**

This group has been meeting the first and third Sundays of each month from 3 to 5pm. The first Sunday is a potluck - bring a dish to share. Women interested in meeting other older women and exploring their interests are welcome. At the potluck, we choose the topic for discussion for the 3rd Sunday of the month. Participation ranges from 7 to 12 women aged 55 to 75 each session.

We are all aging. The group offers an opportunity to present aging concerns in an informal and comfortable setting for review, sharing, solving, or further investigation - usually with a measure of good humor added to balance the dilemma. We find by talking and sharing we grow and the anxieties of aging are lessened. There is strength in knowing you have company in your concerns.

Our last session was spent discussing alternative housing options. GROUPS of people interested in sharing themselves and expenses work together planning a community setting in which to live. This could be done with a group of older women - harmonious, graceful living. Ongoing discussion on this subject will be offered in our aging group as continued research on housing alternatives are explored. As our new President promises a health care plan for all persons we discuss the health issues presently being faced by the group - expenses and procedures. Several of our members are active in the political issues of the health care complexities and they share their expertise with us. In some areas we are developing a sense of consciousness about older women's issues and the impact we can make to educate others about the need for change. And in some areas we are celebrating our aging together, creating confidence, increased self-worth, and peacefulness.

## **WOMEN WITH DEPRESSION AND MANIC-DEPRESSION**

This is a support group for women coping with manic-depression and depression. It is a prerequisite that all women be active in treatment with a medical professional, and that they comply with their medication regimen.

This group is informative, and has a topic discussion format which includes every woman who wishes to share. Coping mechanisms and empowerment, as well as humor, are the tools for recovery used in this group.

## **INTERNATIONAL AND INTERCULTURAL WOMEN'S GROUP**

You are invited to help decide on the goals and activities of a new women's group dealing with international and intercultural women's issues. We will empower each other by forming a network of women who are in the Boston area to work, study, live or visit.

Through these woman-to-woman connections we will tap our great potential by sharing resources, ideas, contacts and experiences concerning women locally and globally.

We can show support and sisterhood through self-education and awareness activities like talks, pot-lucks and seminars. We can also focus on ESL training, a newsletter, a speaker's bureau and important issues like discrimination and racism. Any level of commitment is welcome.

We hope to see you on Saturday, April 24 and/or May 22 at 1pm at the Women's Center!

## **CELIBACY ISSUES SUPPORT GROUP**

The newly formed Celibacy Issues Support Group is a safe space for women to acknowledge a choice that is not often honored or considered valid by society.

In the group we explore and support our triumphs and struggles. By acknowledging our celibacy we soften and lessen our shame and judgements of ourselves.

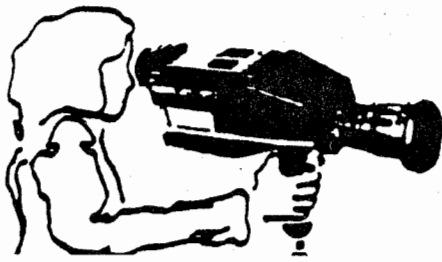
We structure our meetings with a brief focused topic and then allow open time for discussion. Some of the topics we have and want to discuss are celibacy and: prejudice that exists in our society; creativity; storytelling; every day difficulties; family beliefs; writing/making art.

Bring your ideas, thoughts and voice to this group. All women are welcome - celibate or not - bi, heterosexual or lesbian. Please come and join us!



## **\$\$ ADVICE WANTED**

Many of us know about how to spend money, but we are looking for women to volunteer to advise us on how to save and invest the Women's Center's funds. If you are an expert on investing (particularly in a socially responsible way), we would love to hear your suggestions! Please call Judy or Jennifer at 617-354-8807.



## FINDING & SURVIVING THE WORKPLACE

- Recently lost your job?
- Considering a job change?
- Unclear about what to do next?
- Bursting with ideas about what to do next, but needing some structure in order to proceed effectively?
- Wanting support from women eager to listen & with similar experiences?

If so, come join us at the Women's Center's "Finding and Surviving the Workplace" group meetings, held 11am-1pm, on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays each month.

I first began attending these meetings in January. I'd lost my job last year and found myself in need of support from someone in a similar situation. I felt my friends and family were tiring of my soul-searching and frustration, but I still needed to talk about my experiences. Little did I know, when I first inquired about the meetings, that I would not only get the support for which I was looking, but would form friendships that have proved invaluable to my ongoing process of self-discovery and self-empowerment.

Manjusree Sen, a talented, compassionate and supportive woman, created the group 2 years ago when she was wrestling with her own workplace survival and could not find a women's group on work-related issues. When she inquired at the Women's Center, she was encouraged to start a group herself. "Who, me?" was soon replaced by "If not me, who?" and, in May 1991, she began holding regular workplace survival support group meetings. In addition to facilitating this group, Manjusree occasionally offers workshops in resume writing and interviewing.

You may join the group at any time and continue to attend for as long as you wish. Manjusree facilitates the group in such a way that the women meeting on a particular day create the format of that day's sessions. And while each woman is provided with the opportunity to tell her story, nothing is required or demanded. Some women choose to simply listen, some women need to talk about a current crisis. Others come to network, explore career objectives, ask advice, and/or learn specific job hunting skills.

I have been most touched, surprised and healed by learning how much we have in common. Every woman has a different story to tell, but with each story you hear "Yeah, me too!!" from other women in the circle. Many of us have felt the injustice of being fired or laid-off in an underhanded manner and/or of not hearing from anyone at the old job after we left; some of us feel stuck, knowing we need a change, but paralyzed with the fear of taking next steps; some of us have experienced abuse from previous or current employers. All of us share the self-esteem and courage that brought us here, but it sometimes takes seeing those qualities reflected in another woman before we see them in ourselves.

In addition to providing a forum for safely airing our grievances, fears, and frustrations, the group offers support and encouragement for our next steps. Do you have even a gleam of a dream that you would like to pursue? Dare to mention it to the group and, in addition to encouragement to follow your passion, you may leave with concrete tips, contacts for information interviews, resource lists, or even a job lead.

For more information, come to our next meeting! Or call Manjusree Sen at: (617)576-2153 or (617)693-4427.

### WELCOME, CINDY!

We are happy to welcome Cindy Lewis, longtime friend and volunteer at the Women's Center, as our new bookkeeper.

### FAREWELL, TITCH!

For over 20 years, the Women's Center cat, Tituba, was a very special part of the Women's Center for many of us. Now, we are happy to report that Tituba has moved into a new, loving home where she is thriving! Kathleen Collins, a Women's Center volunteer, has adopted Tituba and reports that they are very happy together! We all miss Titch but are glad she is so happy in her later years.



**ONGOING GROUPS  
AT THE WOMEN'S CENTER  
SUNDAY**

-Aging Well, for Older Women.....3-5pm  
(1st Sun/potluck; 3rd Sun/discussion)

**MONDAY**

-Support for Battered Women.....7:30-9pm  
-Women's NA 12-step.....7:30-9pm  
-Lesbian Rap.....7:30-9pm  
-Reproductive Rights Network  
R2N2 (2nd Mon., May/June)...6:45-9:30pm  
-Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest  
Survivors (1st & 3rd Mon.).....7-8:45pm  
-Women with Disabilities (3rd Monday)  
(wheelchair accessible).....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

**WEDNESDAY**

-Assessing Your Therapy (1st Wed.)...7-9pm  
-Battered Women's Support Group (Weekly  
except 3rd Wed. of month).....7-9pm  
-Boston Bisexual Women's Network: Intro  
Mtg.(2nd Wed., odd months)..7:30-9:30pm  
-Celibacy Issues (2nd/4th Weds.)..7:30-9pm  
-Incest Survivors' Thinktank  
(1st Wed. of the month).....7:15-9:15pm  
-Lesbian Al-Anon (wheelchair  
accessible).....6:30-8pm

**THURSDAY**

-Incest Survivors Open Discussion  
Groups (weekly).....7:00-9:30pm  
-Facilitated Open Discussion for Incest  
Survivors (3rd Thursday)....7:30-9:15pm  
-Women's Community Cancer Project (wheel-  
chair accessible) (1st Thurs.)....7-9pm  
-Cancer Support Group (wheelchair acces-  
sible) (2nd & 4th Thursdays).....7-9pm  
-Lesbians Choosing Children Network  
(3rd Thursday).....7:30pm  
-Manic Depression/Depression Support...1pm  
-Women's Writing Group  
(2nd & 4th Thursdays).....7-9pm

**FRIDAY**

-Incest Survivors Anonymous  
(wheelchair accessible).....6:30-8pm

**SATURDAY**

-Open discussion on Coming Out for Women  
of All Ages (and lunch out afterwards,  
all participants welcome). (1st Sat,  
except holiday weekends).....11am-1pm  
-Finding and Surviving the Workplace  
(2nd & 4th Saturdays).....11am  
-International/Intercultural Women's  
Group (one Sat./month).....1-2:30pm  
-Lesbian and Bisexual Parents of  
Adolescents (2nd Sat.).....11am-12:30pm  
-Women's Writing Group  
(biweekly).....12:30-2:30pm

**TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

**LESBIAN RAP**

Mondays, 7:30-9pm  
April 26 Stereotyping within the  
Lesbian community.  
May 3 Handling H.S./College Reunions.  
10 Potluck/Post D.C. March Party.  
17 Lesbian Vacations.  
24 Media Sensationalism.  
31 No Rap/Holiday.

**BISEXUAL WOMEN'S RAP**

Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30pm  
April 27 Coming Out Stories.  
May 4 Washington Weekepd in Review.  
11 Potluck; open discussion.  
18 Living in the Body.  
25 Movie night: 'Welcome Home,  
Roxy Carmichael

**30+ LESBIAN RAP**

Tuesdays, 7-8:30pm  
April 27 Social Night.  
May 4 Guess Who's Coming for Dinner?  
11 Street Smarts (Video/discuss.)  
18 Ask Sappho (Advice night).  
25 Lesbian Pride.

**FACILITATED OPEN DISCUSSION  
FOR INCEST SURVIVORS**

3rd Thursday, 7:30-9:15pm  
May 20 Relationship Patterns.  
June 17 Trust.

**INCEST SURVIVORS THINKTANK**

First Wednesday, 7:15-9:15pm  
May 5 Survivor's Analysis of Depression.  
June 2 Can We Talk about Sex?

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

SUPPORT GROUP, Thursday, May 20, 7-9pm.  
(Monthly, different nights). Lots of info  
and support. Led by Louise Bonar.

**NEW GROUP FORMING**

LESBIAN COUPLES AND PARENTING. Group form-  
ing to help parents become more supportive  
of each other and create a healthier  
environment for the children. 354-8807.

**COPIER NEEDED**

Our copy machine, which was donated  
to us in 1986, has served us well for  
many years but truly seems to be on its  
last legs. If anyone has a copier to  
donate or ideas on where we might get  
one, please call Judy, Jen or Jacqui at  
354-8807. Thanks!

## WOMEN'S CENTER HOURS

Monday - Thursday 10am - 10pm  
Friday 10am - 8pm  
Saturday 11am - 4pm

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### WOMEN SAY NO TO VIOLENCE

On Tuesday, May 18, 1993, the Somerville Women's Commission will be sponsoring a RALLY AND MARCH to protest violence against women. There will be speakers, music, information, and a chance to add your voice to protest violence against women in our community.

Gather at 6pm at the Somerville High School Gym Concourse at 81 Highland Ave for the rally and march to Davis Square where a candlelight vigil will be held. Participants are encouraged to wear something purple or black. ASL and foreign language interpretation will be provided. For transportation, childcare, or further info, call the Somerville Commission for Women at 625-6600 x2400.

Come Say No to Violence, and stop by the Women's Center's table while you're there!

### POETRY SUBMISSIONS

Seeking poetry, letters, prose, etc. written to or for those who have died from AIDS (or are HIV+) for a book to be published, I Never Said Good-bye To Nat.

Profits will go to AIDS organizations. Please send submissions to:

Mary R. Sanders, The Nat Foundation  
P.O. Box 308, Briarcliff, NY 10510

### VOLUNTEER ON A FARM!

Food for Free's FIELD OF GREENS FARM seeks volunteers to work in spring, 1993

This project plants, weeds, cultivates and harvests produce to go to Food for Free, which distributes it to soup kitchens, shelters and food pantries.

We hope to be working with a crew of women who enjoy tending the earth and watching things grow while providing good things to eat for people in need. A great way to spend some weekend time!

If interested, leave a message for Maria T. at 354-8807.

### HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

On Tuesday, June 1 at 7:30pm, the Campaign for Affordable Health Care (CAHC) will be hosting a forum about health care reform at the Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School. The purpose of the forum will be to demonstrate the need for quality, universal, affordable health care and will feature testimonies from consumers, speeches from political representatives, and questions from the audience. Please come - the more people present, the more likely our elected officials will take our opinions back with them! For more info, call 354-2210.

### SEEKING SONGS FOR WOMEN'S MARCH

I am collecting the songs and chants we sing at women's marches, especially ones about women's solidarity and stopping violence against women.

Please contribute to the recording of this oral tradition and phone me with songs/chants. Sabynthe 491-7642.