

# ♀ ON OUR WAY

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

(617) 354-8807 TTY and VOICE

SUMMER/FALL '94

## RECOGNIZING THE ABILITY IN DISABILITY

For a long time I did not consider myself "disabled". To me being disabled meant using a wheelchair, or being visually impaired. Since my condition is not visible to the naked eye, I don't look disabled. I have a breathing problem in my lungs.

Back in December 1991 I was diagnosed with a rare lung disease. Once physically active, I now found myself having trouble with things most people take for granted. I get short of breath climbing stairs, walking to my car, and I certainly don't climb mountains like I used to. Even simple things, like getting groceries, are now very difficult.

It has taken me a while to realize that, yes, I, too, am disabled. It took me a year to apply for my handicapped parking sticker. Now that I have one I realize how much easier life has become. I just don't like the stares I get from people who see me using a handicapped space when they don't see the crutches. That is one of the problems people with "hidden disabilities" have to face.

Fortunately the Women's Center has a new group for Women with Disabilities and Chronic Illness. Our main goal is to provide a supportive and empowering environment for women to discuss our experiences being disabled or having a chronic illness. We also exchange valuable information, including where to go for medical insurance, how to get assistive equipment, and how the Americans with Disabilities Act can help people with disabilities. This group is free of charge and open to all women who have a disability or chronic illness. It is a peer-run support group, meaning it isn't run by a therapist, but by group members themselves. Currently we have about five members and are looking to increase our numbers. So if you feel you might benefit from a group such as ours, please join us.

We meet at the Women's Center on the first and third Monday of each month (except holidays) from 7:30 to 9pm. The Center is wheelchair accessible, with some handicapped parking available. Sign Language interpreters can be arranged, with advance notice, free of charge.

If you are interested in the group, and/or wondering if you have a disability, call Karen Couture at (617)868-8964 or Sarah Kenemuth at (617)354-2438. And know you are among friends.

-Karen Couture

## INTERNATIONAL/INTERCULTURAL GROUP TAKES OFF

The International/Intercultural Group is now over one year old. We have been meeting since April 1993 to share our ideas and experiences about life in the U.S. and other countries where we have lived. Our monthly groups are proving to be an exciting, educational, and fulfilling activity for us all.

Our Mission Statement is as follows: The Women's International/Intercultural Group is an informal network of women who live in the Boston/New England area. We are women of diverse backgrounds who have gathered to evolve creatively toward our vision for social change: universal sisterhood. We share experiences, work to address isolation and loneliness, offer solidarity and support, and promote cross-cultural understanding. We are helping each other to grow (inter)personally and to challenge injustice in our lives.

This summer we received a grant of \$500 from the Boston Women's Fund to help in our efforts to reach out to as many women as possible. We are interested in expanding opportunities for cultural sharing and bringing new perspectives to the group.

Recent discussion topics have included women's status in the family, domestic violence, and our daily challenges with cultural differences. We have also held a picnic and a visit to the Museum of Fine Arts.

Our plans for the coming year include a forum on women's immigration issues and a film festival.

Our next meeting will be on September 24 (fourth Saturday of the month) at 1pm at the Women's Center. Our guest will be a counselor speaking on the relationship between mothers and daughters, across cultures. Please plan to attend!

-Dalya Massachi



## WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPORT GROUP FOR BATTERED WOMEN

Many members of our group are at grave risk of continued male violence. We are concerned about access to panic alarms for women in our group, and for all women. Women in the Middlesex and Norfolk Counties have access to panic alarms to help protect themselves and back up their restraining orders. Thanks to some hard work and your support we have been able to achieve this.

Women from all over the state attend our group, but not all have access to panic alarms. It's especially troubling that Suffolk County (including the very populous Boston area) does not provide panic alarms.

You can help by calling these agencies to express your concern and support for better protections for battered women and for access to alarms:

Suffolk County District Attorney Ralph Martin's Office: 617/725-8617, Diane Coffey.

Sheriff Bob Rufo's Office: 635-1100 ext. 247, Marilyn Kerry-Mills. (Prison overcrowding appears to be the chief concern here - not the safety of women. Rather than send a batterer to jail after he has broken a restraining order, they propose to put a leg bracelet monitoring device on him.)

Boston Police Domestic Violence Unit: 343-4350, Sgt. Jeanette Thomas and Det. Paul Cato. (Here we were told with the greatest soothing that panic alarms would be a problem because they are a repetitive expense. Court time spent on violated restraining orders, assault, rape, custody hearings and murder trials are surely no less expensive, and all too repetitive under the current regime.)

We have been calling these numbers for over a year now. We've been patronized, dismissed and stalled off. They said they would get back to us, but they haven't. Meanwhile women keep dying. Your calls will make a difference.

-Betsy Warrior

## WOMEN WRITING

We are a group of people sharing in the process, not necessarily the product. Beginners and Pulitzer Prize winners welcome! We ask that you simply want to write. Be open to learning about yourself and your voice. We meet every other Saturday from 12:30-2:30pm. Join us!

## SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT

We are thrilled to announce that the Women's Center has two brand-new, hand-painted large signs hanging on the building. We extend our sincerest gratitude to artist/signpainter extraordinaire Grace Peters for donating the signs. Please drop by to see them...you won't have any trouble finding us now!



## FOR CRYING OUT LOUD



### 10th Anniversary Special Commemorative Issue

In honor of its tenth anniversary, a special issue of FOR CRYING OUT LOUD is being published by the Survivors Newsletter Collective. FOR CRYING OUT LOUD is a quarterly newsletter written by and for women survivors of child sexual abuse. The Survivors Newsletter Collective represents a continuum of women dedicated to healing through writing and putting out healing energy to the world.

"The most important message we can give women out there is that *you are not alone*," said member Annwyl Rhyfelwr. "For women who choose to deal with rather than deny the effects of abuse, there is very little cultural, social, or family support. It takes tremendous courage for a woman to name the abuse, put feelings to it, reach out to others, and be heard. For many women, recovery starts with reading about other women's experiences and contributing their own. We are committed to supporting this process and are grateful to all survivors who have the courage to speak about their abuse."

This special edition includes an insert of writings from past collective members along with letters and pieces from its readers.

- FOR CRYING OUT LOUD can be purchased at: The Women's Center, Crone's Harvest, Harvard Bookstore Cafe, and New Words Bookstore.
- To subscribe (\$10/year) or for a sample copy, write: The Survivors Newsletter Collective, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, MA 02139

## LAWSUIT FILED AGAINST AUTHOR OF *THE COURAGE TO HEAL WORKBOOK*

A lawsuit has been filed in California against Laura Davis, author of *The Courage to Heal Workbook* and co-author of *The Courage to Heal*, two books that have helped many thousands of survivors find their way to healing from pain and isolation. Kimberly Mark, who filed the suit, claims that the workbook convinced her she had been sexually abused as a child, thereby causing her emotional damage. The suit argues that the book is a "dangerous product" and therefore should be exempt from First Amendment guarantees of free speech. A group of survivors, activists, writers, civil libertarians, therapists, lawyers and others has formed to support Laura Davis' constitutional right to free speech. The group is seeking financial contributions towards legal costs as well as help spreading the word about this case. For more information, contact the Courage to Heal Defense Committee, c/o Dana Scruggs, 340 Soquel Avenue, Suite #205, Santa Cruz, CA 95062. Or call (415)255-4603.

## COMING OUT IN CAMBRIDGE

Are you experiencing emotional attachments to certain women in your life that are making you unsure of your own sexuality? Do you yearn to explore these feelings in a non-judgmental atmosphere, where you can be with other women who are in a similar situation? Do you want to be able to share your experience anonymously?

There is a group that will help you with all this, plus more. Led by Marcia, who has been the main facilitator since it began five years ago, the Coming Out group has been meeting at the Women's Center on the first Saturday of every month from 11am until 1pm. On holiday weekends (such as Labor Day), the group will meet on the second Saturday.

The topics range from what a lesbian is to family relationships and when and how one should go about "coming out". There is laughter, as well as tears. Along with this comes a sense of camaraderie few groups ever have. One will definitely discover a whole new group of friends not found anywhere else.

After the meeting ends, many go out for lunch. Some make plans to do other things, like camping parties, or going to Provincetown for a weekend.

This group is open to all women. It is free. There are interpreters available for those who are deaf and hard of hearing.

The members range in age from nineteen to sixty plus. Many are, or have been, married. Some have children. Most are single, although there are a few lesbian couples who come for the support they cannot get where they are. The one thing all members have in common is the acknowledgement that coming to this group was the biggest step they ever took. For most of them it was a step that proved to be a step forward into a wonderful new world.

## RIDE YOUR BIKE TO THE WOMEN'S CENTER!

We are excited to report that this summer the Women's Center has a beautiful new bike rack! Thanks to Gräber Bicycle Parking Systems for selling us the rack at cost, and to our dedicated volunteers who installed the bike rack (no easy job!). It is located in the back yard. So ride on over!

## NEW FACILITATOR NEEDED FOR INCEST SURVIVOR GROUP

For over 10 years, the Facilitated Open Discussion Group for Incest Survivors has provided a place for survivors to heal and get support. We hope to keep the group going, but to do so must find a new facilitator. The group meets on the third Thursday of every month, and discusses a pre-selected topic. If interested, please call Judy Norris at 354-8807.

## AGING WELL

Aging Well begins its third year at the Women's Center in September. We invite women to join us in building a community of older women exploring our interests. Our members span four decades, ranging in age from the 50's to the 80's. We meet the first Sunday of the month (the second Sunday on holiday weekends) from 2 to 5 pm for lively discussions and friendship.

In the past year we've enjoyed: "*Music We All Love*," the film "*Strangers in Good Company*," and guest speaker, Diane Laskin Seigel, co-author of *OURSELVES GROWING OLDER*, speaking on "*Postponing Fragility*." One member spoke about her trip to Haiti, and two of our members reviewed a book on feminism in 20th century revolutions.

In April we participated in the first Cambridge Women's Health Day. We titled our workshop: "*How Do We Age Well? Let Us Count the Ways*." Some of the ways we've found are to encourage, inspire, enlighten and support one another.

We'll be meeting next on Sunday, September 11, with a Welcoming Women Potluck and a discussion on "*Remembering Old Women We Have Loved*"

For our October 2 meeting, Dr. Camilla Parham will speak to us on: "*How the Medical Industry Targets and Exploits Older Women*." We heard Dr. Parham speak at the Cambridge Women's Health Day and welcomed her strong message to women to take charge of our health care.

We welcome diversity and invite women of color, women of all ethnic groupings and ways of life to join us.

## WOMEN 45 & OVER

### What Now?

You can fade out or radiate more brightly.

Life may not be what you expected. Are you feeling stuck, lost, scared, lonely, wondering where your life has gone and where it might be going?

This is a place to come share, discover, revive, and renew with other women. There will be four meetings, September 12, 19, 26, and October 3rd from 7-8:30pm. The first meeting, on September 12, will be open, after that the group will be closed. Led by therapist Vera S. Cohen, (617)354-2304.

## OPEN ART STUDIO FOR SURVIVORS

A place for survivors of any kind of sexual abuse to create things and express themselves in an atmosphere of fun. Meets from 2-4 pm (come for all or part of the time) every Tuesday.

Questions? Call Marjy B. at 489-6910.



## THE ABORTION ACCESS PROJECT HOLDS STATEWIDE CONFERENCE



The Abortion Access Project held its first statewide organizing conference in June and developed a series of task forces. All of these task forces need activists to accomplish our goals. We hope you'll get involved in one of the following projects:

- **Mid-level provider training:** Vermont has successfully changed their laws to allow mid-level practitioners to perform abortions. In October we plan to bring together activists from Vermont and providers from Massachusetts to strategize about changing the Massachusetts law which prohibits non-M.D.s from performing abortions.
- **Ob/gyn resident training:** The Planned Parenthood Clinic in New York has pioneered the use of their clinic site as a training facility for ob/gyn and family practice residents to learn abortions. A number of Massachusetts practitioners would like to learn the procedure, but do not have a training site. This fall the Abortion Access Project will bring together staff from the New York Planned Parenthood clinic and activists, providers and clinic directors from Massachusetts to explore instituting training opportunities at Massachusetts clinics.
- **Catholic hospital mergers:** There is a national trend of smaller hospitals merging to be more economically viable. In many cases, community and private hospitals are merging with Catholic hospitals, and losing all family planning and abortion services. The Abortion Access Project will compile information about how local groups are fighting to maintain vital women's health services in their communities.
- **Nursing issues:** In a number of hospitals, a primary obstacle to provision of abortion services is the refusal of nursing staff to attend abortion patients. We will explore avenues to raise nurses' awareness about access issues and ways to identify and support nurses who are pro-choice.
- **Directory of abortion services:** By the end of the summer, we hope to publish a comprehensive directory of abortion services available in Massachusetts. We will include information about costs and accessibility of first and second trimester procedures in hospitals and clinics across the state.

Please call (617) 738-9479 for more info.

## WOMEN'S COUNSELING & RESOURCE CENTER SEEKS NEW MEMBERS

The Women's Counseling and Resource Center is a volunteer collective that provides therapy to no and low income women at the Women's Center. If interested in volunteering (master's degree and experience required) please send your resume to WCRC, c/o The Women's Center, or call (617) 492-8568.

## SILENT NO LONGER

*Silent No Longer, People United to End Sexual Violence Against Children* is a new local activist group, organizing around the idea that sexual abuse of children is an abuse of power, and that by working together we can help prevent it. *Silent No Longer* is led by survivors and open to women and men, survivors and non-survivors. We welcome anyone interested in doing direct actions and education about child sexual abuse, including cult and ritual abuse survivors, multiples, and survivors of pornography and prostitution.

Although we do not meet at the Women's Center because our membership includes men, *Silent No Longer* got started by passing around a signup sheet at last fall's Women's Center "Surviving the Family" fundraiser. Although we're not a support group — and focus on political work instead — we are bringing what we've learned in therapy into our activism. We emphasize taking care of ourselves, and we're working to create an activist community that is safe and empowering for survivors in various stages of healing. We're also committed to exploring how race, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and other factors affect people's experience of incest and other forms of childhood sexual violence.

Our successes include: confronting a board member of the False Memory Syndrome Foundation, speaking publicly on the power dynamics underlying sexual violence against children, attending demonstrations and events as a group (so much more fun than alone!), and building our organization. Our future plans include:

- Hosting a forum on the nature of memory and why **all** survivors, including the most marginalized, are believable;
- Informational leafletting at movies that are offensive, or relevant events and lectures;
- Responding to offensive articles and images in the media, including those that sexualize children;
- Combatting backlash against survivors;
- Social gatherings, singing, and other things just for fun!

To join us, to be added to our mailing list, or for more information about our work, please call the Women's Center (354-8807) and leave your name and number. A member of *Silent No Longer* will call you back. Or you can write to us at *Silent No Longer*, 955 Massachusetts Ave. #262, Cambridge, MA 02139. Break the silence, end the violence!





## SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON THE JOB:

### Questions and Answers

#### 1. What is sexual harassment anyhow?

Sexual harassment is any *repeated, unwanted, unwelcome* sexual advance such as jokes, innuendoes, and repeated requests for dates at work which make you feel uncomfortable and/or cause you problems on your job.

Sexual harassment can range anywhere from a look to a rape. It can include leering or ogling, verbal sexual suggestions, "accidentally" brushing against your body, a "friendly" squeeze or pinch, catching you alone for a quick kiss, an explicit proposition backed by the threat of losing your job OR by the promise of a better one.

In short, *if you object* to any of the above, then you are experiencing sexual harassment. *Ideally*, you will be able to report the behavior to your boss and the office sexual harassment policy will provide a speedy, confidential and satisfactory resolution.

Alas, employers are woefully slow to adopt policies and offer education and training to managers, supervisors and employees. This "head in the sand approach" is found everywhere from offices and warehouses to operating rooms and classrooms.

#### 2. Why don't women talk about it more and warn others?

Women are afraid to be ridiculed, embarrassed, humiliated, and/or fear losing their jobs. We have been told that "boys will be boys", that it is not really serious; that we should be good sports; that we should be flattered. The truth is unwanted sexual advances are degrading and very stressful. Women have been taught to feel it is their fault; so we rarely even tell family members for fear we will be laughed at. And to report it risks being blamed or even fired.

#### 3. What is my legal protection?

Sexual harassment is covered by the Civil Rights Act under Title VII which prohibits discrimination. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is charged to look into your complaint and you may also want to file with the Mass. Commission Against Discrimination.

Hiring your own attorney is another option, as is mediation if your employer is willing.

Should sexual harassment happen to you, *immediately* start documenting in detail and keep this file at home. If there are witnesses, ask if they will stand by you. If not, tell other people and record these conversations.

The Women's Center has a monthly Sexual Harassment Support Group (Sept. 22, Oct. 18, Nov. 16, and Dec. 12). 9 to 5 is also a good place to call.

-Louise Bonar, Consultant specializing in sexual harassment education and training. (617)254-1729.

## 9 to 5 ASSOCIATION OF WORKING WOMEN

9 to 5 is an advocacy organization of working women. Since 1973 they have been fighting to end sexual harassment and protect the rights of workers. 9 to 5 has just opened a new Boston office. For more info., call (617)348-2970 or 1-800-522-0925.

### FINDING & SURVIVING THE WORKPLACE SUPPORT GROUP

This is the fourth summer that this support group has been meeting. Women of varied education and experience meet to exchange their stories about both success and failure. From our experiences we learn to cope with our situation and go on with our lives. This support group has helped women who have lost jobs to regain their self-confidence. From time to time, for example, a participant in the support group has also become a facilitator.

Are you unemployed? Dissatisfied with your job? Job searching? JOIN US. Tell us your stories. Let us support each other in our period of transition.

We meet the second and fourth Saturday of every month from 11:30am to 1:30pm. For more information call the Women's Center at 354-8807 or the facilitator Manjusree Sen at 693-4427.

### BOSTON WOMEN'S ACTION COALITION

The Boston Women's Action Coalition (WAC) is an open alliance of women committed to direct action on issues affecting the rights of all women. We are witnesses to the current economic, cultural, and political oppression that limits women's lives and the horrifying effects of these limitations. WAC insists on economic parity and representation for all women and an end to sexism, homophobia, racism, religious prejudice, and violence against women. We insist on every woman's right to quality health care, child care, and housing, and to reproductive freedom. We will exercise our full creative power to launch a visible and remarkable resistance.

Boston WAC meets Wednesdays at 7 pm at MIT Building 1, Room 135 (Not meeting until Sept. 14th). Call the WAC line for more information at 446-0364. All women are welcome! Come join us!!

### SPOTLIGHT ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

On June 21st, the Women's Center appeared in the 10 O'Clock News on Channel 56 to comment on the O.J. Simpson murder trial for the brutal stabbings of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman. The media coverage was an opportunity for the Women's Center to raise awareness about domestic violence, and to tell women that support networks exist to help them.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION



### LESBIAN RAP

*Mondays, 7:30 - 9pm*

- Sept. \*5 No Rap - Holiday.
- 12 Making a Pass.
- 19 Entering/Re-entering the Lesbian Community
- 26 Singles vs. Couples: the Issues.

### BISEXUAL WOMEN'S RAP

*Tuesdays, 7:30 - 9:30pm*

- Sept. 6 Spirituality & Sexuality.
- 13 Scavenger Hunt.
- 20 Coming Out at Work.
- 27 Stereotypes about Bisexuals.

### 30+ LESBIAN RAP

*Tuesdays, 7 - 8:30pm*

- Sept. 6 Lesbians and the Media.
- 13 What Makes Relationships Last?
- 20 Improving Ourselves.
- 27 What are We Getting Out of the Rap?

### INTERNATIONAL/INTERCULTURAL WOMEN'S GROUP

*4th Saturday/month, 1pm (not meeting in August)*

- Sept. 24 Mothers and Daughters, Across Cultures and Generations.

### FACILITATED OPEN DISCUSSION FOR INCEST SURVIVORS

*3rd Thurs./month, 7:30-9:15pm (4th Thurs. in September)*

- Aug. 18 Anger.
- Sept. 22 Boundaries.

### INCEST SURVIVORS' THINKTANK

*1st Wednesday, each month, 7:15-9:15pm*

- Sept. 7 Pathologizing Incest: Who is Sick, the Survivor or Society?
- Oct. 5 Incest and the Media: What is Included, What is Left Out?
- Nov. 2 Surviving the Backlash: the Second Wave of Assault on Survivors.
- Dec. 7 Isolation and How to Break It.

### AGING WELL

*1st Sunday/month, 2-5pm (2nd Sun. in September)*

- Sept. 11 Welcoming Women Potluck and Discussion on "Remembering Old Women We Have Loved".
- Oct. 2 Dr. Camilla Parham will speak on "How the Medical Industry Targets and Exploits Older Women".

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT SUPPORT GROUP

*Upcoming fall dates, all meetings from 7-9pm*

- Thursday, Sept. 22; Tuesday, Oct. 18;
- Wednesday, Nov. 16; Monday, Dec. 12.

## ONGOING GROUPS

### SUNDAY

- ♿ • Aging Well (*1st Sunday, except 2nd Sunday in September*) . . . . . 2-5pm

### MONDAY

- Battered Women's Support . . . . . 7:30-9pm
- Women's NA 12 Step . . . . . 7:30-8:30pm
- Lesbian Rap . . . . . 7:30-9pm
- Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest Survivors (*1st & 3rd Mon.*) . . . . . 7-8:45pm
- Reproductive Rights Network (R2N2) (*usually 2nd & 4th Mon.*) . . . . . 6:45-9:30pm
- ♿ • Women with Disabilities and Chronic Illness Support Group (*1st & 3rd Mondays*) . . . . . 7:30-9pm

### TUESDAY

- Bisexual Women's Rap . . . . . 7:30-9:30pm
- ♿ • 30+ Lesbian Rap . . . . . 7-8:30pm
- Eating Awareness & Body Image Group (*Newcomers, 1st Tues., 6:30pm*) . . . . . 7-9pm
- Healing After Abortion (*alternate Tues.*) . . . . . 7-8:30pm
- Open Art Studio for Survivors of Sexual Abuse (*Please bring supplies*) . . . . . 2-4pm
- Support Group for Women of Color . . . . . 8-9:30pm

### WEDNESDAY

- Assessing Your Therapy (*meets irregularly, every few months. September 28*) . . . . . 7-9pm
- Battered Women's Support Group (*weekly except 3rd Wed. of month*) . . . . . 7-9pm
- Boston Bisexual Women's Network (*2nd Wed, odd #d months*) . . . . . 7:30-9pm
- Incest Survivors' Thinktank (*1st Wed.*) . . . . . 7:15-9:15pm
- ♿ • Lesbian Al-anon . . . . . 6:30-8pm

### THURSDAY

- ♿ • Cancer Support Group (*2nd, 4th Thurs.*) . . . . . 7-8:30pm
- Facilitated Open Discussion for Incest Survivors (*3rd Thurs., 4th Thurs. in Sept.*) . . . . . 7:30-9:15pm
- Incest Survivors Open Discussion . . . . . 7:30-9:30pm
- ♿ • Women's Community Cancer Project, Open General Meeting (*1st Thursday*) . . . . . 7-9pm

### FRIDAY

- ♿ • Incest Survivors Anonymous . . . . . 6:30-8pm

### SATURDAY

- Childbirth Preparation Class (*6 weeks, beginning September 24*) . . . . . 11am-1pm
- ♿ • Coming Out Discussion for Women of All Ages (*2nd Sat./Sept, usually 1st Sat; ASL interpreted; optional lunch out after*) . . . . . 11am-1pm
- Finding & Surviving the Workplace (*2nd & 4th Saturday*) . . . . . 11:30am-1:30pm
- International/Intercultural Women's Group (*4th Saturday*) . . . . . 1pm
- Women Writing (*biweekly*) . . . . . 12:30-2:30pm
- Works in Progress (*biweekly*) . . . . . 12:30-2:30pm

## THANKS TO BREAD & CIRCUS

On July 12, 1994, our local Bread & Circus store held a "5% Day" to benefit the Women's Center. The store donated 5% of their proceeds for the day - a total of \$1,396.44 - to the Women's Center! We also had an information table set up in the front of the store, which many women visited throughout the day. The Women's Center is very grateful to Julie Barsam and everyone else at Bread & Circus for making this day happen and for making it such a success! And thanks to all who shopped!

## CHILDBIRTH PREPARATION CLASS

### 6-Week Series, Saturdays, 11am - 1pm

As a pregnant woman, there are choices you have and decisions you can make that can improve your and your baby's birth experience. Understanding the process of labor, knowing comfort measures, and having supportive people with you are a few things that can have a positive effect.

In this class we'll discuss the health care you give yourself and that you receive from health care providers. Also, we'll discuss your concerns, expectations, and questions about this tremendous transition to parenthood. It's also a good opportunity to begin making a network of mothers.

This is a woman-only class that is open to lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual pregnant women, single or partnered, and female support people. Women at all stages of pregnancy are welcome.

The class begins on Sat., Sept. 24, 11am-1pm, and runs for six weeks. There will be a video and ample handouts to supplement the discussions.

-Robin Snyder-Drummond

Robin Snyder-Drummond is a trained labor coach, certified childbirth educator, and mother of 2. For more information, call Robin at 522-9316.

## WOMEN'S CENTER WALKS IN "FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE"

On June 5, 1994, a team from the Women's Center participated in the *From All Walks of Life* AIDS pledge walk. A total of \$1,614 was raised by the nine women on our team! Thanks to all those who participated and helped to raise money for this very worthy cause. We hope to do it again next year (June 4, 1995) with an even bigger team!

## VOLUNTEERS: DATA ENTRY ANYONE?

The Women's Center is seeking some volunteer help with data entry. We can train you, but some experience is preferred. A great opportunity to help the Women's Center and the women of the community! For more information, contact Pam at the Women's Center (354-8807). (flexible hours)



## EATING AWARENESS & BODY IMAGE

The Eating Awareness and Body Image Support Group meets Tuesday nights at the Women's Center. The group is not run by a therapist or permanent leader. Facilitation is shared among group members. It is neither a diet group nor a 12-step group.

Eating Awareness participants are women of all sizes. We aim to support each other rather than compare ourselves, and to be sensitive and accepting of our differences. It is our hope that each woman foster a loving, comfortable relationship with her body. We encourage each member to find her own truths and to develop the confidence to believe that she is trustworthy and able to make satisfying choices about food and all other areas of life.

The meeting is loosely divided into 2 parts. During the first hour, discussion is centered around food and related topics. In the second hour, the focus shifts to body image issues. Clearly, there is a great deal of overlap between the two halves of the meeting. The second hour also provides a forum to discuss specific topics or participate in structured exercises, such as guided visualizations, art or writing projects, and other activities. All women may choose whether or not to participate.

Discussions of food and body image often remind us that we experience many different kinds of hunger, deprivation, and satisfaction. These discussions are often an entry point into a range of emotional issues, such as incest and abuse, anger, power and control, culture, media, family history, sexism, homophobia, and patriarchy. Some of the sources we are informed by are the writings of Geneen Roth, Susie Orbach, and Kim Chernin, as well as the Feeding Ourselves group. A bibliography is available for more information on these authors.

Each woman is welcome to share whatever she wishes about her own experience. When one woman finishes, others may, if they wish, give her supportive, respectful, non-judgmental feedback. We keep our feedback relevant to the needs and experiences of the speaker. The attention of the group stays focused on the speaker until she feels fulfilled.

Everything discussed during the meeting remains strictly confidential. An orientation for newcomers takes place from 6:30-7pm on the first Tuesday of each month. At all other times, newcomers are welcome to call the group contacts listed at the Women's Center for more information.

## WOMEN'S CENTER HOURS

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

## Address Correction Requested



### THOUGHTS ABOUT THE WOMEN'S CENTER

I first found out about the Women's Center a year and a half after I moved to Boston. I wanted to get involved in some sort of volunteer work serving women and I saw a listing for an upcoming training for BARCC - the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center. "Yes!", I thought, "this is for me." After a phone interview, I was invited to attend the BARCC training, then being held... at the Women's Center.

In 1980 I came to the Women's Center regularly. Rape crisis counseling can be very demanding and upsetting; often I arrived at the Women's Center with such focus on the work that I had little left over to notice the surroundings. Bit by bit, however, and in a most unobtrusive way, the Women's Center itself, apart from BARCC, began to make itself known to me.

Daytimes, it was a quiet, almost meditative place. Rooms were open, inviting, comfortable in a lived-in somewhat run-down sort of way. Staffers answered the phone, responded to questions, sorted and organized resource material, handled numerous postings that the walls sported. At night the Women's Center was dynamic, full of life and energy, laughter, arguments, charged discussions, light social interchanges. It was as if the walls changed shape to accommodate any sort of female energy that entered; an accepting holding place for all that it means to be a woman. Day or night, it felt like a safe, protecting, nurturing space.

I left BARCC after two years and eventually went back to graduate school. Throughout those years I'd occasionally stop by the Women's Center for a support group meeting, to catch a presentation, to browse through the innumerable resources there. While I didn't visit often, it was reassuring to find the Center still present, comfortable, active, and functioning while other women's centers disappeared. The Center felt

like a "good parent" - one who lets you develop along your own path, but is there for you when needed.

Almost three years ago I joined the Women's Counseling and Resource Center (WCRC), a feminist therapist's collective which the Women's Center houses. As part of WCRC I began seeing clients at the Women's Center every week, as well as attending once-a-month collective meetings.

The Women's Center itself seems to have changed little in tone; still a place where one can go to find a quiet cup of tea, or engage in a heated discussion, or browse through postings, listings and books, or get support from other women on a plethora of topics. It feels like a place of safety and acceptance, of growth and inquiry, a place to consolidate new learning or push into unknown territory. But most of all, it is still a place for women and women only; it is unlike any other place I have ever been. I am most grateful for its existence in this age and location, so generally toxic to women. To the Cambridge Women's Center and all who make her go, I say a heartfelt "thanks!"

-Eve M. Goldfarb, MA Counseling Psychology,  
member, WCRC (currently on leave)

**YES!** I want to help out the ♀'s Center!

Enclosed is my **tax-deductible contribution** of:

- \$100    \$50    \$25    \$10    \$other \_\_\_\_\_  
 I'd like to become a regular monthly sustainer,  
with a pledge of \$\_\_\_\_\_/per month.  
 Please send me a volunteer application.

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your support...we appreciate it! ☺