



# ♀ ON OUR WAY

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

(617) 354-8807 TTY and VOICE



SPRING '95

## WOMEN'S HEALTH DAY MAY 13th, 1995

The Women's Center, in collaboration with the Cambridge Women's Commission, the Cambridge Hospital, Partners in Health, and the Graham and Parks Community School, is pleased to present the second Cambridge city-wide HEALTH DAY FOR WOMEN. Join us May 13th for a day of workshops and information on both traditional and non-traditional approaches to women's health. Lots of information and materials will be available throughout the day.

The Women's Health Day will take place from 10am to 4pm, Saturday, May 13th. Plan to spend the day with us, or just drop in for a while. Workshops and activities will take place simultaneously at the Women's Center, the Graham & Parks School, Partners in Health, and the Riverside Health Center.

The Health Day will include three workshop periods on topics including: breast cancer, yoga, menopause, eating issues and body image, holistic health care, lesbian health concerns, acupuncture, Haitian women's health, aging, nutrition, healthy relationships, Latina women's health concerns, domestic violence, HIV/STD's, abortion options, and much more. Most workshops will be offered in English, with some in Spanish and Haitian Creole. There will also be free massage offered during the day...something of interest to every woman!

All activities at the Women's Health Day are FREE. For a full listing of the day's events or for further information, call the Women's Center at (617) 354-8807 (TTY, Voice). Please call by April 28 to request childcare, ASL interpreters, or to make wheelchair/accessibility arrangements. The Women's Health Day is a day for all women to learn, share, network, and become empowered about our health. Please join us for this interesting and informative event for women. Hope to see you there!

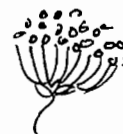
## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO INCEST RESOURCES!

1995 marks the 15th birthday of Incest Resources! The first survivor organization in the country, Incest Resources was founded in 1980 by Susan Lees, Elaine Westerlund, Kathy Morrissey, and Elizabeth Brown. Along with a handful of other survivors, the women of Incest Resources helped to pioneer the national and international survivor movement. "Things happened early here for a reason," says Elaine. "We had this incredible Women's Center, which didn't exist in other parts of the country, and it gave us two very critical things: a radical model to follow on our path to empowerment, and an in-house big sister for us -- the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center. We were truly in the right place at the right time, and we'll always be grateful for the Women's Center."

Incest Resources provided the incest survivor community with many firsts in 1980, including: its first political voice, first speaker's bureau, first phoneline, first self-help support groups, first referral & resource network, first survivor self-help literature, and the first legislative lobby. In its 15 years of volunteer service since then, Incest Resources has introduced many other firsts, continuing to support both survivor recovery and survivor activism.

Does Incest Resources have a 15th birthday wish? "Sure!" says Elaine. "What we'd really like is a commemorative tile in the Women's Center living room, where so much of our history took place. That would be the most meaningful present the survivor community could give us, and the nice thing is that it would thank the Women's Center as well as us for being there for survivors."

To contribute towards the purchase of a commemorative tile, please send donations, payable to **The Women's Center**, and designated for the **Incest Resources Tile**, to the Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA 02139.





### WOMEN OF THE WORLD

The International/Intercultural Group has changed its name to *Women of the World*, which we felt was a friendlier and simpler phrase.

We still meet the last Saturday of the month at 1pm at the Women's Center. Our monthly discussions are open to all interested women, as we explore issues such as immigrants' experiences, friendship, and population. Our next meeting on Saturday, March 25 will focus on racism in our everyday lives.

We recently produced a brochure on the group and are distributing it widely. You can pick up a copy at the Women's Center or call for multiple copies or more information.

We are also looking for a few more people to help coordinate the group, as I will be moving out of town in August. Please call if you would like to find out more about how you can help facilitate this growing group that improves cross-cultural understanding. Call the Women's Center at (617) 354-8807 or my home number, (617) 628-1280.

-Dalya Massachi

### UN GRUPO PARA LATINAS SOBREVIVIENTES DEL ABUSO

El grupo es para Latinas que han sufrido abuso sexual cuando eran niñas o como adultas. El grupo será en español y la reuniones serán cada semana en el Centro de Mujeres. Maria Turreilles, una terapeuta, va a dirigir el grupo. Comenzará en abril o mayo si hay bastante interés. Para más información llame a (617) 876-8837.

### HOW OPPRESSION WORKS

**Saturday, May 6, 1 - 4 pm**

All types of oppression (racism, sexism, heterosexism, etc.) have common characteristics, attitudes and practices, including "internalized" oppression and "horizontal" oppression. We'll increase our understanding of how oppression works, drawing from our own experiences. We'll also discuss practices that interrupt oppressive systems. This workshop is for women of all ages and backgrounds who are interested in learning about oppression. Led by psychotherapist Kate Wylie. For information, call Kate at (802) 257-5722 or the Women's Center at (617) 354-8807.

### ELLEN BASS SPEAKS - MARCH 25

Ellen Bass, co-author of *The Courage to Heal: A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse* will be speaking at MIT on Saturday, **March 25** at 8pm. The talk, "An Evening of Hope and Celebration," is a benefit for Heartlines, Inc., a Jamaica Plain-based organization of incest survivors helping survivors. The event will take place at Kresge Auditorium, MIT, 48 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge. Singer/songwriter Susan Herrick will also perform.

*Tickets are \$15 and are available at Croner's Harvest bookstore in Jamaica Plain, New Words bookstore in Cambridge, Lunaria bookstore in Northampton, and H.A.W.C. in Salem. For tickets, information, or to volunteer, call (617) 524-6850.*

### SURVIVORS NEWSLETTER COLLECTIVE

Survivors of child sexual abuse do not need to be alone in their healing! **For Crying Out Loud** is a newsletter published by and for women survivors of child sexual abuse. We write about our experience as women survivors in order to heal and to support one another.

Our goal is to publish quarterly. Subscriptions are \$10 for four issues mailed anywhere in the world. We offer free subscriptions to women who request them. We also welcome your letters and submissions.

For info, subscriptions, or any other correspondence write to: Survivors Newsletter Collective, The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, MA 02139.

-Annwyl Rhyfelwr for the Collective

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT BATTERED WOMEN'S GROUP

For me, moving forward occurred six months ago. Inside me was my voice telling me I can never go back to the way I was before and during my battering. I thought about how I could help make a difference in the lives of other battered women. Talking to women on the phone was one way, giving support and maybe giving a practical hint to a solution. That was (and is) good, but not enough. I hope opening my mouth and talking to those who don't understand will make them more aware of the plight of battered and oppressed women. That's great but still not enough. I found a forum in Newton, a new program. I am taking this course in Peer Advocacy training. I will be helping women to move forward with their lives, and making a difference. I now have validation. Thank you Betsy Warrior and the Wednesday night support group.

-Pat Haas

## RE-GROUPING

Groups can help us feel better about ourselves. They can also make us feel more connected and sensitive to others, more in charge of our lives, and more aware of our potential. Each of us can contribute to a group's success or failure. Here are some ingredients for making an empowering group:

- The group begins with a "welcome!" and an opening statement that describes the group's purpose and structure, and any behavioral expectations (non-judgmental listening, affirmation, time-sharing, appropriate kinds of feedback, etc.). We benefit from knowing what to expect and what is expected of us.

- Everyone has a chance to talk and be heard. We go around the circle, divide the time, or find other ways to make sure everyone has a chance to speak. This promotes cohesiveness, a sense of mutuality, and a feeling of belonging. If we are inclined to speak a lot, we hold back to give space to others. Those who do not want to talk know it's okay just to listen.

- Differences of all kinds (race, culture, ethnic background, class, religion, etc.) are appreciated. We reach out to each other as allies, welcoming the opportunity to learn about each others' lives and perspectives. Each woman's right to give opinions, hold different views, and feel safe here is supported. On that note, if someone feels attacked or offended, she speaks up for herself and increases others' awareness. Standing up for ourselves is an important part of empowerment.

- We accept that each woman is her own expert and only she knows what is best for her. We avoid telling each other what to do. We may share how we have dealt with a similar situation, if that is requested of us.

- If there is a facilitator, she makes opening remarks, ensures that everyone is included in discussions, provides validation and acceptance, keeps discussions focused, and brings attention to any insensitive remarks or tension within the group. If there is no facilitator, each group member shares responsibility for keeping the group focused, affirming, inclusive, and safe for all.

- We discuss and make decisions together about the purpose and structure of the group. We take steps to help newcomers feel included - before, during, and after the group.

- When one of us says "I liked what you said," "Good for you," or "I'm glad you're here," we know it can make a big difference.

Mix well and enjoy!

## COMING OUT TO SAY THANK YOU

In April the Coming Out Group will celebrate its 6th Anniversary. Over these years approximately 1,500 different women have supported each other in this open discussion group on coming out, the first Saturday of each month from 11am to 1pm.

Each woman who participates shares her own fears, self-doubts, joys, and unique life issues, and in return receives loving support and feedback from other members. From this sharing and validation of feelings, sisterhood is achieved. Most women leave empowered and with increased courage to cope with life's challenges and joys.

As a way of saying thank you to the Women's Center for providing a safe, supportive space for this group to happen, the Coming Out Group is collecting money to dedicate a tile in the living room. A total of \$1,000 is needed.

To all members of the Coming Out Group, past and present, your contribution is requested. Any amount is appreciated. If you wish to make a contribution by mail please send your check to: The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge MA 02139. Please make the check out to **The Women's Center** and write on the check that it is for the **Coming Out Tile**. A contribution box will also be available at each monthly Coming Out meeting.

The Coming Out Tile will be dedicated to all women's Coming Out struggles and triumphs.

-Marcia Gagnon & Anna Tarquinio, facilitators



## AUTOBIOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

So far we've had 3 satisfying sessions for the new "Finding Our Own Words" workshop. The favored technique for getting words out of our bodies and onto the page has been newspaper poems (come and see what we mean!), and we've done some stream-of-consciousness writing, playwriting, and word games. Collaboration and sharing has been part of each session, with time for solitary writing and a choice of what to share. Because we're bound to open up some doors and windows with our writing, we've each agreed to a confidentiality pact within the group. This provides a safe space for experimentation and honesty.

Eventually we may have a reading of our work - probably in the spring. What's so exciting is that the workshop seems to evolve each week, as we try out new ways to tell our stories. Join us every Friday night from 6pm to 8pm or call Amy at (617) 497-2654 with questions.



## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

### LESBIAN RAP

*Mondays, 7:30 - 9pm*

- March 20 Religion.  
27 Pornography vs. Erotica.  
April 3 Sexual Harassment.  
10 Video (Thelma & Louise).



### 30+ LESBIAN RAP

*Tuesdays, 7 - 8:30pm*

- March 21 Topicless Night.  
28 Hobbies.  
April 4 Parenting.  
11 Video Night.

### BISEXUAL WOMEN'S RAP

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

- March 21 Renewal and Rebirth.  
28 Our for Fun & Food (meet at the Women's Center).  
April 4 BiVisibility.  
11 Local & National Activism.

### WOMEN OF THE WORLD

*Usually the last Saturday of each month, 1pm*

- March 25 Everyday Experiences of Racism.

### FACILITATED OPEN DISCUSSION GROUP FOR INCEST SURVIVORS

*3rd Thursday, each month, 7:30 - 9:15pm*

- April 20 Anger.  
May 18 Confronting our Fears.  
June 15 Grieving Loss & Moving Forward.

### INCEST SURVIVORS' THINKTANK

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

- April 5 Physical Impact of Child Sexual Abuse.  
May 3 Self-Disclosure as a Survivor in the World.  
June 7 Depression and Incest.

### AGING WELL

*1st Sunday, each month, 2 - 5pm*

- April 3 Poetry reading with Myra Shapiro.

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT SUPPORT GROUP

Will meet from 7 - 9pm Tuesday, April 18,  
Wednesday, May 24, and Tuesday, June 20.

### FEMINIST READING GROUP

*One Monday, One Thursday/month, 7 - 9:30pm*

Monday, March 20, Sexual Personae, Camille Paglia.

### W.I.T.C.H. Feminist Lecture Series

*Thursday, April 27, 7:30 - 9:30pm*

"Lesbian Feminism in the 90's...Standing Our Ground and Passing It On." With Patricia Kramer, Director of Women's Studies, UCONN - Stamford.



## ONGOING GROUPS

### SUNDAY

- ☞ Aging Well (*1st Sunday*) . . . . . 2-5pm

### MONDAY

- Anti-Racism Task Force (*2nd & 4th Mon.*) . . . 6-8pm
- Battered Women's Support . . . . . 7:30-9pm
- Feminist Reading Group (*1 Mon./1 Thurs.*) 7-9:30pm
- Lesbian Rap . . . . . 7:30-9pm
- Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest Survivors (*1st & 3rd Monday*) . . . . . 7-8:45pm
- ☞ • Reproductive Rights Network (R2N2) (*usually 2nd & 4th Monday*). . . . . 6:45-9:00pm
- ☞ • Women with Disabilities and Chronic Illness Support Group (*1st & 3rd Monday*) . . . . 7:30-9pm
- Women's NA 12 Step . . . . . 7:30-8:30pm

### TUESDAY

- Bisexual Women's Rap . . . . . 7:30-9:30pm
- ☞ • 30+ Lesbian Rap . . . . . 7-8:30pm
- Eating Awareness & Body Image Group (*Newcomers, 1st Tuesday, 6:30pm*). . . . . 7-9pm

### WEDNESDAY

- Battered Women's Support Group (*weekly except 3rd Wednesday of month*) . . . . 7-9pm
- Boston Bisexual Women's Network (*2nd Wednesday, odd #d months*) . . . . . 7:30-9pm
- Incest Survivors' Thinktank (*1st Wed.*) . 7:15-9:15pm
- ☞ • Lesbian Al-anon . . . . . 6:30-8pm
- Moods & Emotions Workshop (*2 sessions, April 26 & May 24, Judi Goodman, 862-3699*) . . . . . 7-9:45pm
- Moving to Transform. . . . . 12-1pm
- Women of Colors Rap . . . . . 7-8:30pm

### THURSDAY

- ☞ • Cancer Support Group (*2nd, 4th Thurs.*) . . 7-8:30pm
- Chemical Injury Information Network (*1st Thursday*). . . . . 6-7:30pm
- Facilitated Open Discussion for Incest Survivors (*3rd Thursday*) . . . . . 7:30-9:15pm
- Feminist Reading Group (*1 Thurs./1 Mon.*) 7-9:30pm
- Incest Survivors Open Discussion . . . . 7:30-9:30pm
- Thinking About Quitting Smoking (*irregular*) 6-7pm
- ☞ • Women's Community Cancer Project, Open General Meeting (*1st Thursday*) . . . . . 7-9pm
- Women over 45 (*2nd & 4th Thursday*) . . . 7:30-9pm

### FRIDAY

- Autobiography: Finding Our Own Words . . 6-8pm
- ☞ • Incest Survivors Anonymous . . . . . 6:30-8pm

### SATURDAY

- ☞ • Coming Out Discussion for Women of All Ages (*1st Saturday; usually ASL interpreted*) . . 11am-1pm
- Finding & Surviving the Workplace (*2nd & 4th Saturday*) . . . . . 11:30am-1:30pm
- Women of the World (*4th Saturday*) . . . . . 1pm
- Women Writing (*biweekly*) . . . . . 12:30-2:30pm
- Works in Progress (*biweekly*) . . . . . 12:30-2:30pm

## DO SICK BUILDINGS MAKE YOU SICK? LET'S CLEAR THE AIR!

Why is it that many of us develop flu-like symptoms after exposure to new carpeting, building materials, plastics, paints, adhesives, pesticides, office machinery and supplies (such as white-out, felt-tip markers, and printer's ink), auto exhaust, tobacco smoke, air fresheners, mothballs, hairspray, nail polish, and countless other toxic substances in common use? We are hypersensitive or hyper-reactive to toxins that off-gas into the air. Our lives are forever changed by limitations around work, travel, and public gatherings.

There are many workers in the Boston area who have had to leave their jobs in sick buildings, including more than 75 nurses on disability-leave from Brigham and Women's Hospital; there are also others with deteriorating health who are not unionized and cannot afford to quit. Along with the staff at Brigham & Women's, numerous workers at the Registry of Motor Vehicles, Cambridge Rindge & Latin High School, UMass Boston, and the Suffolk County Courthouse are describing symptoms that indicate chemical sensitivity.

We invite women from these sites and others experiencing chemical sensitivity to the discussions from 6pm to 7:30pm on the first Thursday of each month at the Women's Center. Both in an open format and with invited speakers, we provide information and resources. In coalition with other environmental-justice groups, we work to effectively revise public policy on the use of pesticides, carpeting, solvents, synthetic fragrances, etc. Together we can force change that will hasten implementation of the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) with respect to chemical barriers that now impede full access for a growing number of disabled people.

-Judy Spear, Chemical Injury  
Information Network

### WOMEN'S WRITING GROUP

The Women's Writing Group continues with new members adding to the momentum of an already-strong group. Recent meetings every other Saturday at 12:30pm have found us writing: "I have always wanted to write about..." and, "What I don't know about my grandmother," and writing a spontaneous haiku in the last ten minutes of a meeting. The group is special because of the experience of discovering ourselves by writing and reading aloud in a safe space for women. Newcomers warmly welcomed.

-Heide Meyer, Co-contact person

## TILES, TILES, TILES...

In the last issue of *On Our Way*, we announced a new fundraising campaign to increase the size of individual contributions to the Women's Center. For a large donation, you can buy a tile to honor or remember a woman (or group) that is important to you. We are excited to be working with local women artists to create beautiful commemorative tiles for our kitchen and living room. Tiles may read *In honor of ...* or *In memory of ...*, or you may choose a brief phrase that has inspired you. The tiles will enhance the Center with their permanence and beauty. Donations toward this campaign start at \$250. Thanks to those who have already participated and expressed interest! For more information, call Pamela at the Women's Center, (617) 354-8807.

### ...AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT NEWS

The Women's Center was pleased to be granted a \$1,100 award from the Jane Doe Safety Fund toward our resources and services for women overcoming the effects of battering and child sexual abuse. The Safety Fund sponsors the annual Jane Doe Walk For Women's Safety, slated this year for October 15. We are also grateful for the financial support of the following establishments which have allocated grants of \$1,000+ to the Women's Center since October: The Campbell and Hall Charity Fund, Cambridge Community Development Block Grant, the Weber Charities Corporation, the Cambridge Community Foundation, Shawmut Bank (we'll miss you ☺), Arthur D. Little, Inc., the Decrow Foundation, the Ratskesky Foundation, and The New England. We are especially grateful to Arthur D. Little for their generous in-kind photocopying of this newsletter. Many thanks to our friends in the funding community!

### FACILITATOR NEEDED

The Facilitated Open Discussion for Incest Survivors, a topic-focused group that meets the third Thursday of each month, is seeking a new facilitator. If interested, call Maria at (617) 628-7806.

- YES!** Sign me up as a **regular monthly sustainer** so I can help the Women's Center "On Our Way!"
- Enclosed is my **first monthly sustainer gift** of \$\_\_\_\_\_/per month (we send monthly reminders)
  - Enclosed is my **one-time gift** of \$\_\_\_\_\_
  - Please send me a **volunteer application**.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

All gifts are tax-deductible...Thank you for your support!



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### MOODS AND EMOTIONS WORKSHOP

183 A two-session workshop on moods and emotions will be held at the Women's Center on Wednesdays April 26 and May 24 from 7 to 9:45pm.

If we see our moods as the deep waters of our lives, and our emotions as the surface waves and breakers, we can begin to learn something about our capacity to have peace, take actions that support us, and allow nurturing relationships. Moods just happen automatically, but they predispose us to what we are able to do, and how we will be in the world.

As we begin to reflect on how to deal with our feelings there are several questions to ask: Do we even know how we feel? Do we need to accept the moods we find ourselves in and stop resisting? Do we need to work within our moods to connect with something deeper? Do we need to change our negative moods and do we know how to begin to do that? Can we train our bodies and posture to be more centered, experiencing a wider range of feelings than those with which we are accustomed?

In this two-session workshop, we will practice and do exercises, as well as have readings and homework to work on between sessions. For more information or to register, please call Judi Goodman, (617) 862-3699 or Linda Kelley, (617) 267-0416.

### WOMEN AND SELF INJURY PROJECT

We are seeking a woman who has a history of self-injury to facilitate a support group for women who self-injure. Please send resume to Robin or Jan at ILCNS, 583 Chestnut St., Lynn, MA 01904.

### MOVING TO TRANSFORM

This group provides a safe, supportive atmosphere for healing through gentle movement and stretching. Participation in this group enables one to become more aware and in tune with one's physical body, to feel more grounded, to feel much looser, and to help create more positive energy to proceed through the day.

The stretching and movement draws from yogic and Taoist traditions. We meet on Wednesdays from 12 noon to 1pm in the Children's Room. If you have questions, please call Judith at (617) 923-8856.

### "NO MORE RAPE" MARCH A SUCCESS

It was great to be among over 200 women and supporters who participated in the February 11 Cambridgeport "Stop Violence Against Women" march and rally. After being snowed out the previous weekend, we had a crisp, sunny Saturday to take to the streets with an emphatic message against rape and violence, and for women's safety. The pleasant weather brought many spectators to Central Square who witnessed the high-energy procession. Among others, Women's Center staffperson Pamela Goldstein spoke at the rally. The event was a great success, and the Women's Center was thrilled to be a co-sponsor. Continued activities are being planned concerning Cambridgeport neighborhood safety. For information, contact the Cambridge Women's Commission at (617) 349-4697.

**WOMEN'S CENTER HOURS**  
Monday - Thursday 10am - 10pm  
Friday 10am - 8pm  
Saturday 11am - 4pm