

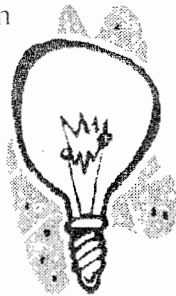
ON OUR WAY

Newsletter of the Women's Center
46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 354-8807 (TTY/Voice)

COMMUNITY MEETING AT THE WOMEN'S CENTER

Saturday, April 17, from 2:00-5:00pm

The Women's Center is hosting an open community meeting to brainstorm about what kinds of changes we want to make in the Women's Center's governing structure. Who would like to get involved. We invite all interested women to come! Bring your ideas! We hope to have an interesting, stimulating discussion, as we take on the task of changing the Women's Center's governing structure for the future.



The hiring of our first Director and the development of an active Board are harbingers of change. We want more women to have a sense of ownership of the Women's Center and the power to participate in decision-making. We would like as much input and involvement as possible to make the Women's Center more reflective of all women in our community. Come help move the Women's Center into the new millennium. Some of the questions we will explore: How do we balance power and decision making? Who makes what kinds of decisions at the Women's Center? What should the Women's Center Board look like?

Community meetings were held in the fall of 1972, to determine how the Women's Center would be run. Back then we made a commitment to making decisions by consensus and working collectively, and as non-hierarchically as we could. This will be the first time since that we gather together to discuss Women Center's governing principles and our ideas about what changes are needed. Hope to see you there!

- Board and Staff Members

P.S. If you can't make the meeting, and would like to register or discuss your ideas, please call Mary Quinn at (617)354-8807.

WOMEN'S CENTER WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR, MARY QUINN!

Ten hardworking women on the Women's Center's Hiring Committee (representing paid staff, volunteers, and board members) unanimously agreed to offer the position of Women's Center Director to Cambridge native (and current resident), Mary Quinn, who began her new position on March 1, 1999.

Mary comes to the Women's Center with 20 years of experience working on women's issues as both organizer, Director, fundraiser, and activist. Mary's commitment to ending oppression, as well as her enthusiasm, warmth, and skill, will help ensure the Women's Center's continued success. She is also the proud mother of Jennifer ("a budding activist"), and the adoring grandmother of Keira ("the most wonderful, precocious, 3-year old girl"). In addition, Mary loves whitewater rafting, swimming, and boating.

We are delighted to welcome Mary on board as our new Director! ¡Bienvenida!

-Pamela Goldstein

WOMEN WRITING

Women Writing meets every other Saturday from 12:30-2:20pm. Something about writing together is as comforting as the warm smell of cinnamon in a grandmother's kitchen. It is even sweeter knowing we have a safe place for our voice to be heard. We give each other only positive feedback. We enjoy building a sense of community, spending time writing together, and then sharing what we've written.

The structure is based on Natalie Goldberg's *Writing Down the Bones*. All the rules imposed by those humorless critical high school English teachers are suspended. No one is forced to read, but all are encouraged to do so. New members are always welcome. We look forward to seeing you there soon. Call the Women's Center at (617) 354-8807 for the exact schedule.

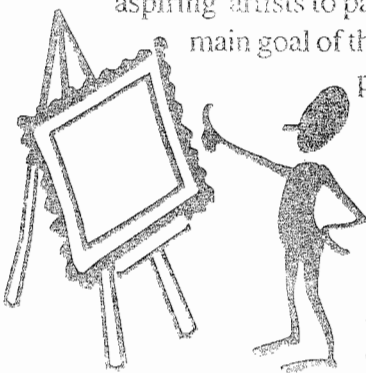
WHAT DOES COMMUNITY MEAN TO YOU?

- Everyone's opinions count!
Everyone has equal say!
- Acceptance, learning from each other, standing together to fight oppression, love.
 - Respect.
 - Diversity.
- A support system.
- Women connected to women.
 - Community to me means reaching in, way in, to give out, way out!

HEALING OURSELVES THROUGH ART

My name is Lisa Allard and I have had the pleasure of leading *Healing Ourselves Through Art* for nearly a year. This is a group which meets once a week, Thursdays from 7:00-9:00pm. The group is open, which means that anyone can come anytime and there is no obligation to come every week.

We do not have to be accomplished artists or even aspiring artists to participate in this group. The



main goal of the group is to facilitate active participation in positive, motivational and self-esteem building exercises which utilize and honor the creative process.

There is no need to bring art supplies - although we encourage you to bring in supplies of your choice if you'd like. We use mediums such as: water colors, craypas, ink, collage, clay, pencils, pastels, markers, etc. We basically keep it simple.

Healing Ourselves Through Art is a strong and rewarding experience. Hope to see you next Thursday night! If you have questions regarding the group, feel free to call me at (978) 463-2255.

-Lisa Allard

FROM THE DESK OF OUR FUNDRAISER

Last we wrote, we needed your contribution to support the Women's Center's many ambitious plans: our ongoing *Capital Improvements Campaign*, the hiring of a new staff member, the completion of our gorgeous *Commemorative Tile Mural* tribute to women*, and the kick-off of the *Judy Norris Fund for the Future of the Women's Center*. These projects strengthen the Women's Center for the long haul, making a difference to countless women.

YOU made a difference by donating generously to our

"Our staff is growing and we have exciting ideas for the continued expansion of our many diverse programs."

D e c e m b e r fundraising appeal. Thank you! Our sincere gratitude for digging into your pockets and getting

behind this thriving women's resource in 1998!

Last year we added vital new groups to the Center's program, such as the *Trauma Survivors' Gathering*, *Older Women Finding our Voices*, and *Transitioning Out of the Patient Role*. We also improved many of our resource and referral books, such as *Housing*, *Battered Women's Resources*, *Disability Resources*, and *Eating Disorders*.

1999 promises to be another year of women's triumphs at the Women's Center. Our staff is growing and we have exciting ideas for the continued expansion of our many diverse programs. Your tax-deductible contribution truly fuels this work on behalf of all women. Whether it's buying a t-shirt or snazzy cap (hey, it is finally warm enough!), giving of your time, energy, resources, or money — \$5, \$500, or \$5,000 — every bit helps to keep your community women's center going and growing. Thank you!

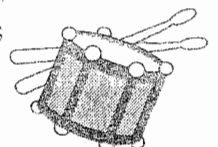
-Pamela Goldstein

Development Coordinator

*p.s. Only FOUR (4!) TILES LEFT of 56 total to finish our mural! Call me for details - act now! (617) 354-8807.

BATUCADA BELLES

The *Batucada Belles*, the women's percussion band which plays Afro-Cuban/Brazilian/funk rhythms to enhance various events, is now open to new members. Previous experience is not necessary. Please call Laura at (617) 628-1038 for more information!



GRANDMOTHERS AND OTHERS RAISING A RELATIVE'S CHILDREN

Where are the grandmothers and others raising grandchildren, nieces, nephews, etc.? I know I can't be the only one. We have taken on the major responsibility of raising these children. My grandson is a special needs child. I am fortunate to live in Cambridge, where he gets lots of extra help in school. Raising a relative's child today can be very isolating. There are many issues involved besides the emotional, physical and spiritual needs of the child. There is the legal stuff, relationships with parents, extracurricular activities, etc. It can at times seem overwhelming. In my efforts to raise a healthy grandchild, I need to connect with other grandmothers and others. Lets reach out to one another to form a circle. Inside that circle, are our grandchildren, nieces, and nephews looking up to us. They are precious. Stay hopeful. We meet on the third Wednesday of the month, 10:30-11:30am.

-Sheila

REFLECTIONS FROM A SURVIVOR

Looking back, I really don't remember the first time I ventured up the stairs of the Women's Center to attend *Incest Resources'* monthly drop-in discussion group. What I do remember is that the group quickly became an important component of my healing process. There is nothing like being with other women who have been sexually abused as children. I feel validated during the meetings by listening to their experiences as adults, and feel part of and normal in a very deep way.

The group is facilitated by two survivor-therapists, Elaine Westerlund, EdD and Patricia Hunt, LICSW, which helped me feel more safe and secure in the beginning. At the start of each meeting, one therapist reads the group guidelines and the other introduces the topic, describing common issues for survivors. Then the women in the group share their own experiences with the topic, keeping the focus on present challenges, strategies, and successes.

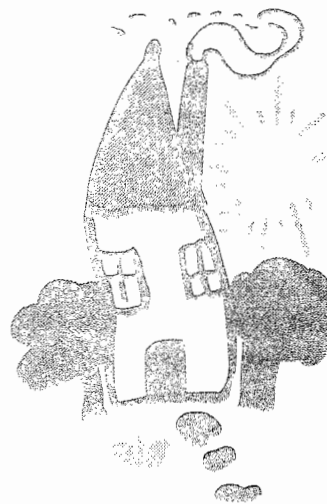
Upcoming topics include: *Hope and Renewal, Intimacy and Sexuality, and Courage and Growth*. If you identify as a survivor, or believe you may have been sexually abused as a child, I hope you will join us on the last Friday of the month from 6:00-7:30pm. Feel free to come and just listen: sharing is optional!

- Ara

ENSEMBLE OPEN READINGS

Sharing original writing and supporting the work of other writers are empowering activities that create community and stimulate new work. The Boston and Cambridge area is home to many up and coming writers and there's a vibrant open mike circuit here. However, many clubs and open mikes in town are held on late nights and/or in smoky bars. Some of them are held in an atmosphere that's more judgemental than community oriented.

Ensemble's new *Open Readings* series is a weekend, daytime "open mike" (without sound equipment) in a



comfortable living room setting for any woman or girl who wants to share or appreciate writing.

The purpose of this group is to create a community of writers and provide informal performance experience, especially for writers who are new at sharing their work publicly or who want to share new drafts, controversial materials or experimental work with a non-judgemental audience. Like all events at the

Women's Center, it is free of charge.

Sign-up is at 2:00pm sharp -- we must vacate the Women's Center at 4:00pm. If participants are interested in continuing to converse, network, share writing, etc. past 4:00pm, they may choose to adjourn to a local cafe and continue there.

The next *Open Readings* are April 17 and May 22 from 2:00-3:45pm. In addition to the *Open Readings*, I also facilitate the *Ensemble* collaborate workshops, which meet one Saturday a month, 11:00am-1:30pm at the Women's Center.

CO-DEPENDENTS ANONYMOUS

Co-Dependents Anonymous (*CODA*) is a Twelve-Step Fellowship of women whose common purpose is to develop and maintain healthy relationships.

CODA meets at 6:30pm on Fridays at the Women's Center. *CODA* is a non-profit organization supported by voluntary contributions of attending members. For more information, call Helen at (617) 247-8630.



EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT
SEARCH SUPPORT

Fridays, 2-4pm

Find help writing resumes/cover letters, tips for job interviews, info on educational opportunities, someone to talk with about fears/concerns related to going back to work or school, etc. Sensitive to family trauma. All women are welcome. Sponsored by Transition House

Call (617)354-2676 x21 to register before attending

WOMEN'S CENTER COMMUNITY MEETING

Saturday, April 17, 2-5pm

Come discuss ideas for making changes in the Women's Center's decision-making structure! Who should make what kind of decisions? What should the Board look like? Etc. All women and children are welcome

TRANSITIONING INTO MIDLIFE

Saturday, April 17, 11:30am-1pm

Come talk with others. It can be very helpful! Led by therapist Marcie Miller, (617)497-5283

DEMYSTIFYING INVESTING

Monday, April 26, 7-8:45pm

Learn a few basics that will help you invest prudently (info on mutual funds; IRA's, 401K's, etc.) Led by Anita Springer, formerly an investment advisor, currently writing a book about investing for women

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

LESBIAN RAP

Mondays, 7:30-9pm

April 19 City Dyke/Country Lesbian
26 Game Night

30+ LESBIAN RAP

Tuesdays, 7-8:30pm

April 20 Zodiac Signs & Love Signs
12 Cultural Diversity in the Community

BISEXUAL WOMEN'S RAP

1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm

April 20 Defining Boundaries in Relationships

WOMEN'S READING GROUP

3rd Wednesdays, 7-9:30pm

April 21: *One Winter's Beginnings* by Eudora Welty
Info: Mary, (781)891-5727

SEPARATION/DIVORCE SUPPORT GROUP

Tuesday, May 11, 7-9pm

Come join with others to start a group
Info: Victoria, (617)277-6315

FACILITATED OPEN DISCUSSION FOR
SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Usually last Friday/month, Sept.-June, 6-7:30pm

April 30 Hope & Renewal
May 28 Intimacy & Sexuality
June 25 Courage & Growth

THURSDAY NIGHT GATHERING FOR
SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Weekly on Thursdays, 7:30-9:30pm

A topic on the 1st Thursday of the month
May 6: *Forgiveness*

ONGOING GROUPS

MONDAY/LUNES

- Al-anon Grupo (semanalente, en español) 6:30-8pm
- Battered Women's Support Group (weekly) .. 7:30-9pm
- Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest Survivors
(Usually 3rd Mon.; info: Daniella, 497-0911) .. 7-8:45pm
- Lesbian Rap (weekly) 7:30-9pm
- Reproductive Rights Network (R2N2)
(Usually one Monday/month; 661-1161 for information)

TUESDAY

- Bisexual Women's Rap (1st & 3rd Tuesday) 7:30-9pm
- Sexual Harassment Support Group (one Tuesday/mo;
Louise Bonar, 254-1729, for info, to register) 7-9pm
- 30+ Lesbian Rap (weekly) 7-8:30pm
- Transitioning out of the Patient Role [open every 6th
week - April 13; info, Diane, (781)226-7097] .. 6-7:30pm
- Women with Disabilities and/or Chronic
Conditions (2nd & 4th Tuesday) 5:15-6:45pm
- Writers Circle (every other week;
info: Cassandra, (617)494-2695) 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
- Healing Hearts - Grandmothers and Others Raising a
Relative's Children (3rd Wednesday) .. 10:30-11:30am
- Lesbian Al-Anon (weekly) 6:30-8pm
- Single Women in Mid-life & Beyond [2nd &
4th Weds; info Esther, (781)396-3415] 7:30-9pm
- WomanSpeak (2nd Wed., Camb. Cable TV, Ch. 9) .. 5:30-6pm
- Women Maximizing Abilities Now (1st & 3rd
Wednesdays; women@braintrust.org) 2-3:30pm
- Women of Color Rap (1st Wednesday) 7-8:30pm
- Women's Reading Group (3rd Wednesday) ... 7-9:30pm

THURSDAY

- Healing through Art (weekly) 7-9pm
- Jewish Lesbians & Bisexual ♀ (2nd Thurs) .. 7-8:30pm
- Mothers without Custody (1st Thursday) 7-8:30pm
- Older Women Finding Our Voices
(2nd & 4th Thursdays) 10:30am-noon
- Thursday Night Gathering for Survivors of
Child Sexual Abuse (weekly) 7:30-9:30pm
- Women's Community Cancer Project, Open
General Meeting (1st Thursday) 7-9pm
- WRAG (♀'s Radical Action Group) (weekly) 6:30-9pm

FRIDAY

- CODA (Codependents Anonymous)(weekly) 6:30-8pm
- Eating Awareness & Body Acceptance
(1st & 3rd Fridays) 6:30-8pm
- Incest Resources Facilitated Discussion Group for
Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse (last Fri) .. 6-7:30pm
- Incest Survivors Anonymous (weekly) 6:30-8pm
- South Asian Women for Action (2nd Friday) .. 5:30-8pm

SATURDAY

- Coming Out Discussion for Women of All Ages
(1st Saturday, except some holiday weekends) 11am-1pm
- Ensemble (one Sat./month) 11am-1:30pm
- Ensemble Open Readings (one Sat./month) 2-4pm
- Friendship Connection (usually 2nd Sat.) .. 12:30-2:15pm
- Trauma Survivors Group (monthly) 1:30-3pm
- Women Writing (every other week) 12:30-2:30pm

WOMEN MAXIMIZING ABILITIES NOW (WOMAN)

WOMAN represents a small consistent gathering of women with visible and invisible chronic illness and/or disabilities coming together bi-weekly on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month from 2:00-3:30pm at the Women's Center. We share concerns about a topic of Grand Canyon proportions: "Living with our Conditions." We hold one another up with our stories about how we manage living in the wake of illness and its consequences. We bear witness to the struggle. The group has been together for about a year and welcomes newcomers. The facilitator is a registered nurse. We request confidentiality as well as respectful and empathetic feedback in response to member sharing.

We talk frankly about the impact of illness on our lifestyles, the adjustments we make from moment to moment and the reception of family, friends and others to our conditions. Certain themes repeatedly emerge as we strive to survive with radical changes in physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual status.

Financial issues are a concern for many group members so we all share "living on the cheap" discoveries when we meet. We share information on housing, medical providers and organizations, therapies and above all ... how to help health care providers help us. It seems the better we manage our illness, the more we stabilize our lives.

We sometimes go out for coffee, a meal and a laugh or two. This valuable community enriches our lives and helps all of us cope more effectively with life accompanied by chronic illness and/or disability. For more information, join us or contact us via e-mail at woman@braintrust.org.

LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP... NOT YOUR ORDINARY CAREER DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

Look Before You Leap is a workshop for any woman who is at a crossroads or transition in her work and/or career. In this three session workshop we explore themes of identity, values, accomplishments and aspirations. The unique and personal information discovered provides a framework for re-thinking and reshaping our work and/or career choices and direction.

Participants complete the program with a renewed sense of themselves, having invented a plan of action that provides the sense of joy, satisfaction and motivation we all long for. The workshop will begin on Monday, May 17 from 6:30-9:30pm, followed by two closed sessions.

-Barbara Harris



We've changed our newsletter! Tell us what you think! Call (617) 354-8807 and speak to Mary or Montserrat.

WOMEN'S RADICAL ACTION GROUP

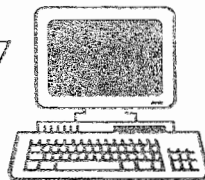
The Women's Radical Action Group (WRAG) has been meeting weekly since October with anywhere from three to fifteen women attending, ranging in ages from 19-27. We formed WRAG to create a woman-only time and space in which we learn from, support and empower each other.

So far we've shared skills in silk screening, woodblock printing, and sewn reusable cloth menstrual pads. We have participated in an abortion rights demonstration, thrown a potluck dinner, held a presentation on women's herbal health, formed a band and a radical cheerleading squad. We held a rally to expose how corporate environmental destruction affects our lives. Join us!

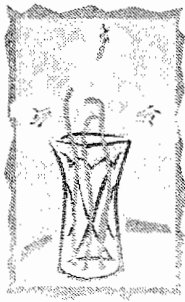
Upcoming events include a protest against makers of bleached tampons for Earth Day; a split benefit for WRAG and the newspaper *We Dare Be Free*; a wacky night of bowling in May.

We meet every Thursday at 6:30pm at the Women's Center. For more information contact Ivanna at (617) 562-8150 or by e-mail at ivannab@hotmail.com.

HELP! ARE YOU A COMPUTER SAVVY WOMAN?
DO YOU HAVE 3-10 HOURS A WEEK TO DONATE TO YOUR LOCAL WOMEN'S CENTER?
WE NEED: A SYSTEMS ASSESSMENT, BASIC TROUBLESHOOTING HELP FOR HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE, AND FUTURE HELP WITH NETWORKING.
PLEASE CALL (617) 354-8807 AND ASK TO SPEAK TO MONTSERRAT IF YOU ARE INTERESTED. THANKS!



WOMEN'S CENTER WISHLIST:



COMPUTER WORK STATION

TOASTER OVEN

RUGS IN GOOD CONDITION

If you have either one of these that you would like to donate, please call (617) 354-8807. Thanks!

SEPARATION AND DIVORCE

Women who would like to get involved in a self-help separation and divorce group and meet with like-minded women, come to a meeting on Tuesday, May 11 from 7:00-9:00pm. Let's get this important group going again.

- Victoria

THRILLED TO BE ON STAFF

I am so pleased to join the staff of the Women's Center. The Women's Center is an important force and resource in the women's community and in the neighborhood. We offer a wide range of groups and workshops that provide support, information, and assistance to women in a variety of circumstances. I am delighted to be coordinating those groups and working on long term programming that is crucial to women.

The oppression of women continues. The safety net needed by so many is in shreds. Institutional decisions affecting the lives of women are still made by men. Combinations of different forms of oppression continue to ravage lives. Within this context, the Women's Center plays a vital role with its groups, resource information and other programming. As the Women's Center makes its way through a period of transition, we have the opportunity to make that role more vibrant than ever. This is a very exciting time.

I come from an organizing background, having spent 14 years working for the *Coalition For Basic Human Needs*, a statewide welfare rights organization. I am committed to the elimination of all types of oppression. I hope to foster an atmosphere that enhances both diversity and collective decision-making at the Women's Center. I look forward to meeting and working with all of you. Please drop by to say "hello," or give me a call.

-Mary Quinn, Director

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NO. 59699

THE WOMEN'S CENTER
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AMBRIDGE, MA 02139