



MEN & HEALING

Psychotherapy for Men



Dear Friends & Colleagues:

The winter has all but melted away. The trees are reviving...budding. This spring of 2017 let's follow the lead of nature and let the sunshine into our minds and hearts.

Clinical Services:

- **Individual Therapy**
- **Anger Management Group Program (Early Summer Start)**
- **Emotional Intelligence Group Program (Early Summer Start)**
- **Men & Healing: Phase 1 Group Program (Early Summer Start)**

We are now completing assessments for the above programs! Interested clients can sign up directly on our [website](#) through the [enroll online](#) page!

BOTH MAY BE THE TICKET

by Rick Goodwin MSW RSW, Clinical Director

We get asked this question quite often: At *Men & Healing* – what is with all the group programs?

It's probably true that we run more group psychotherapy programs than most agencies and private clinics here in Ottawa: [Anger Management](#), [Emotional Intelligence](#), and perhaps our most known service for men seeking recovery from childhood abuse and trauma, aptly entitled [Men & Healing](#).

While all of these issues can be addressed through our [Individual Therapy](#) options, we make our group programs a viable option because of their inherent benefit for clients. Not to say it is a choice of one or the other (trauma research suggests the combination of individual and group therapy is the gold standard for treatment, not one or the other) – however the process and experience is fundamentally different.

Just like a tree's roots, there is need for both *depth* and *breadth*. Certainly, tree's roots needs to be deep, and this is the appropriate metaphor for individual therapy. But a tree's roots must spread out as well – and this is the essential role that group can play in one's experience.

As shame is such a core experience for many men (some shame may be from childhood abuse or neglect experiences – elements of shame may also be inherent due to masculine socialization itself), it is hard to work on this without the community of others on the same journey. Just as the strength of shame is eroded simply in the context of group (“You too? I thought I was the only one!”), the beginning roots of self-compassion are best tended through the compassion expressed to other “Travelers”.

But perhaps it is best to consider that people are essentially “pack” animals – we spent the vast amount of our evolution in small, tight-knit tribes of people – and this is the structure we must return to for both support and growth. As noted trauma theorist Judith Herman says: *“Recovery can take place within the context of relationships, it cannot occur in isolation.”* And while shame pushes us to hide from others, perhaps the best antidote to this tendency is to work at recovery in the presence of like-minded, and like-hearted men.

Perhaps group work works because of how it replicates what a healthy community (or tribe) would do. It essentially makes connection in lives that may be peppered with isolation. So, if you are considering individual or group therapy for yourself (or others), keep in mind that like many things in this world, it is not an “either/or” option. Both may well be the ticket!

Training

We just finished a training with **1in6, Inc.** and the **Los Angeles Department of Mental Health** on issues of male sexual trauma. The unit we specifically worked with was their staff that address “Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children” (CSEC). Lots to consider, given that boys constitute a sizable group of the children and youth that are part of this population.

On the local scene, we are honoured again to provide training for the many service providers who are part of the **City of Ottawa’s Community Capacity Building for Homelessness Programs.**

We will continue our busy-ness in May with training engagements with the **House of Hope** here in Ottawa, the **Sexual Misconduct Response Centre** of the Department of National Defence, and the **Sexual Assault Centre of Kingston.**

Best, Rick & MAH Team

Rick Goodwin, MSW RSW

Clinical Director

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It's about men. It's about time.

