



*The ManKind Project  
Presents*

# HEART STORM

*The MKP Pulse of New Mexico*

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[www.mkpnm.org](http://www.mkpnm.org)

January, 2005

## Arizona and New Mexico Share this Special Edition

**New warriors from Arizona and New Mexico joined forces to produce a joint NWTa weekend January 21-23 at Kamp Kiwanis, near Gallup and a joint newsletter. This special edition of Heartstorm honors the men of both communities in this historic event.**

### LOOKING AHEAD

**By Carl Rosenberg (Forest Man)**

With a new year before us and 2004 now in the rear view mirror, it is time to look ahead and think about the plans we can make to manifest the world we wish to live in. Some of you may not know that I have stepped down as New Mexico Center Director. It came to me that for me to move forward into this next year and manifest what I wish to see for myself, that the time has come for me to step down. I do it with great joy and satisfaction. These past few years I have served the community have been some of the richest times of my life. I have learned so much from that service. I hope the community has benefited as much as I have. I still will be

### CHECK IN

Fellow Warriors!

I'm excited to be delivering this newsletter to you. Moving from burnout to passion has been a huge stretch for me but here I am! As I was gathering and reading the various submissions I found myself relating to the writers from my heart, and being really moved by much of what I read. This is a MONUMENTAL shift from the first newsletter I produced in which I was focused mostly on the logistics of collecting enough content, getting the style right, making it all fit, and getting it all done on time.

I feel much lighter now. I get that the value of this newsletter is in giving voice to our manly passions, successes, challenges, hopes and dreams. And the value is also in inspiring uninitiated men to join us in this work!

Savor these pages.

In service and with gratitude,

**Sol Lederman (Smug Poodle)**

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here, mentoring men as they step into service for MKP-NM.

On one hand, the state of the world seems more dire than ever before, from global warming, ozone depletion, wars, droughts, food shortages, a grossly unbalanced distribution of resources and now the earthquake and tidal wave destruction in Indonesia. And yet on the other hand, there have never been more people informed, caring and acting to work to set things right! Looking to the past we can see all the shortcomings. Looking to the future I see so much hope for the positive world I want to live in. There are many brilliant thinkers all around the globe working to understand the current state of affairs and suggesting great ideas. Here is a list of some of my favorites. My hope is that some of the resources I mention here will inspire you to learn more and if you are interested, get involved.

Plan B by Lester Brown is a serious look at the current state of the world with some serious suggestions of where to put our attention. Lester started the Worldwatch Institute in 1974 to provide an in-depth look at the issues facing the planet and its people. They publish an annual State of the World report highlighting the most critical issues. As stated in the beginning of the book "As world population has doubled and as the global economy has expanded seven-fold in the last half century, our claims on the earth have become excessive. We are asking more of the earth than it can give on an ongoing basis." This book is free on the world wide web! Each day as I make prayers to the earth, I take to heart the impact of my daily choices upon her. Plan B tells me what those impacts are. [www.earth-policy.org](http://www.earth-policy.org)

Winning the Oil End Game by Amory Lovins, funded by the Pentagon. It offers a strategy for ending US oil dependence. It offers a roadmap towards straightforward solutions, led by business, for profit. The seven-fold expansion of the global economy has only been possible by the use of fossil fuels that are beginning to run out. Imagine a life without oil, without cars, without lights? Here are some ways for businesses to start working towards a positive future without any more wars for oil. Also free on the web. [www.oilendgame.org](http://www.oilendgame.org)

Soulcraft by Bill Plotkin is an experiential guide to the wilderness of the soul. Bill is a neighbor

of ours, living in Durango. His organization, the Animas Valley Institute leads vision quests, dream workshops and numerous other programs that assist folks in their quests for more meaningful and fulfilling lives aligned with both nature and soul. [www.animas.org](http://www.animas.org)

The Power of Now by Eckhart Tolle is subtitled "A guide to spiritual enlightenment". This book is a powerful tool to leave behind our analytical mind and its creation, our ego, and to move rapidly into greater communion between self and others. It is great tool for getting in touch with your soul, spirit and body.

Nonviolent Communication- A Language of Life by Marshall Rosenberg helps us move out of the race to judge, compete, demand and diagnose those around us. It is a primer for participation in one of Marshall's "practice groups" that happen in over 30 countries, all around the globe, for free. It has a lot in common with our I-group work, but takes it into the world, with our mates, and helps create a compassionate world through careful communication and understanding the impact of our communication. [www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org)

Loving What Is by Byron Katie is a doctor's degree on understanding, accepting and transforming our natural judgmental natures into loving kindness and connection. She teaches us how to meet our mental concepts with understanding, and once we learn to do that, they let go of us, letting us be truly free. [www.thework.org](http://www.thework.org)

Buffalo Woman Comes Singing by Brooke Medicine Eagle is a great series of introspections and exercises to develop authentic rituals to make life richly connected with spirit.

Medicine for the Earth by Sandra Ingerman takes her shamanic soul retrieval work beyond the self, out to the world. Learning to heal our lives and the Earth will only become more important as we wake up to the toxins all around us.

Any one of these books could be ample inspiration for the coming year. Making time to read is one of the most soulful things I love to do. I hope you can find the time to do so as well! If you want to give yourself a gift this year, give away your TV and get a good book!

## THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF KWAANZA

By Jim Rogers

1. **Umoja** (Unity) (00-MOE-jab). This is to strive for principles and harmonious togetherness in the family, Community, nation and world African community.
2. **Kijichagulia** (self-Determination) (koo-jee-cha-goo LEE-ah). To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for our ourselves and speak for ourselves instead of being defined, named, created for and spoken for by others.
3. **Ujima** (Collective Work and Responsibility) (oo\_JEE-mali). To build and maintain our community together and makes our sisters' and brothers' problems our problems and solve them together.
4. **Ujamaa** (Cooperative Economics) (00JAH-mah). To build our own businesses, control the economics of our own community and share in all its work and wealth.
5. **Nia** (Purpose) (flee-All). To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.
6. **Kuumba** (Creativity) (koo-OOM-bah). To do always as much as we can in the way we can in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than when we inherited it.
7. **Imani** (Faith) (ee-MAH-nee). To believe with all our heart in our Creator, our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

Here is a link for more info.

<http://www.tike.com/celeb-kw.htm>

*What wisdom can you find that is greater than kindness? --Jean-Jacques Rousseau, French philosopher (1712-1778)*

## ENROLLMENT AS SERVICE

By Paul Fiske  
Invitation/Enrollment Coordinator, MKP-NM

I was wondering what more I could say about enrollment that has not already been said during the lead up to our January training. My counterpart in the Arizona community wrote many beautifully crafted appeals to the men in our communities, to search within themselves and invite men to the trainings and our expanding community.

Then my wife came home from a memorial service for a beloved man in our Santa Fe community, Michael Hopp, who died suddenly on Christmas day. I did not know Michael personally, but after reading about him and listening to my own beloved talk about his extraordinary life of service, a desire stirred in me to be of more service in the world. My intention is to bring love, community and the deep connection we all share into my everyday experience. One way I can serve that intention is to invite and enroll men into MKP. MKP is very committed to community and awakening the connection to love those men so long for. If you too are wanting to serve more in your life and to create a safer world, enrolling men is one way to accomplish that goal.

I know many of you share my horror as to what is happening out in the world these days, many of these horrors are a result of men who have lost their way and are disconnected from their hearts. We in MKP offer a way back, a way to deal with the insanity in our present world. Each time a man is initiated, another spark of hope is born.

Einstein said "We can not solve the problems of the world with the same consciousness that created them." The consciousness of fear that pervades the minds of men is not going away anytime soon, it is everywhere and most rationalize it as sane thinking. The trainings and the I-groups that follow, offer men an opportunity to look inward and backward to see how and when they lost those integral parts of themselves and to begin the process of reclaiming them. We offer them a way out of the fear based thinking and a way to express the love that they so long to feel in their lives.

We have been so fortunate to have found this work and each other. It is a service indeed to share who we are with all those we come into contact with in our daily lives. We are constantly in service to ourselves, our families and our communities. Now is not the time to judge ourselves for what we do not do, but to rejoice in what we are able to do and to be. Enroll more deeply into your own life and others will be affected by your presence. Speak your truth about how this work has changed your life and you will be supporting that man. Invite him into your heart and you will be tending to all men. We are all ministering to humanity in some way; I invite you to aid mankind by opening the door for a man in your community who longs to re-connect with the love that is his birthright.

*Paul Fiske has been a New Warrior since 1998. He is currently the Invitation/Enrollment Coordinator for MKP New Mexico. He can be reached at [pfiske@earthlink.net](mailto:pfiske@earthlink.net) or 505-466-7333.*

## STILL LEARNING

**By Tim Schladand  
Fatherland Whale**

Over 60,000 people have died following the tsunami in Indochina. I struggle to slow down and really see the devastation...it'll hurt too much.

Finally, I've let the images in and I feel deep sadness for all of the survivors whose faces of grief are haunting.

I awoke this morning and held my wife longer than usual. I knelt and prayed on her belly. I gave thanks for my life and everything in my life that is "precious".

I continue to do our work to celebrate all that I love and to open the eyes of men to all of the beauty and love that surrounds them. I believe we open men's hearts and the world becomes a kinder, gentler place.

The theme for the January weekend is "What do you hold precious in your life?"

I pray I slow down and appreciate the sweetness of life that surrounds me.

I am going to go and hold my wife now and linger in the "precious-ness" of our love.

I'm still learning.

## BEFORE AND NOW

**By A.L."Jake"Jacob  
Soaring Eagle**

My weekend was life changing. I was raped at the age of six by two men and as a result I never trusted-ANYONE.

I was punished for expressing my anger toward one of the perpetrators by my parents who did not know what had happened. So, I grew up in what I considered a very unsafe and dangerous world. I had no close men friends before my weekend. My marriage was a wreck because I was emotionally stuck.

My defenses to all good were strong and as soon as they went up, I closed down. My wife said she was leaving on a regular basis because of sheer frustration.

My son and I were becoming distant as I was not being able to lead him from childhood into adulthood. He's 19 and he and I got along fine when he was a kid, BECAUSE I still felt like a child.

I felt like I had a suit on that was too big and was overwhelmed, felt pressured, depressed, and just plain miserable a lot of the time. I often fantasized about just taking off and being ALONE. I was a child in a man's body.

That was before and NOW. Well, the weekend put me in touch with me. I now feel like a man and have support through the movement and know deep down that I AM NOT ALONE. I have learned to express my feelings in a way that I never thought possible and love the new life that I am living. I have been given the power of choice and the victim mentality that plagued me for 46 years is passing away. I feel like I made a wise decision in going. I can honestly say that now as a result of the weekend, "as a man among men I am FREE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

## NEW MEXICO WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION A HUGE SUCCESS

By Frederick J. Snoy II

On December 19th men from the Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Taos communities gathered at a remote location to celebrate the Winter Solstice. This was the culmination of a 4 week long I-group program looking at the 4 quadrants and how they are active in each of our lives. The evening turned out to be an awesome spiritual experience.

I propose that a Winter Solstice celebration become an annual community event. What a great way to get together, celebrate, and connect to each other and our higher power! I would like to see locals provide accommodations so that men from Las Cruces and Durango can come as well. I will put this on the agenda for the next council meeting.

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## THE GREEN MAN

By Victor Gibbs  
Phoenix Rising

No one quite knows when the Green Man first peered his head from the dense foliage. He may have always been there, watching us with the equal fascination as we see him. He remains a mysterious figure, with no defined point of origin. Stories associated with this figure appear to represent a promise of new life through a ritual death of his evergreen visage. In this death and rebirth, he represents the Celtic cycles of Summer and Winter. He also represents the wildness of man's spirit, offering a challenge to live in that wildness without fear.

The images of this character become prevalent in Europe beginning in around A.D. 200, when paganism met with early Christianity and Roman architecture. By the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, they were prevalent on most cathedrals in Great Britain and Western Europe. Today, over 2000 leafy

heads grace the columns and other architectural elements of sacred spaces of new and old.

Several sources can be drawn upon for understanding the roots of the Green Man, including the Celtic tribes of northern Europe. The Celtic God Cernunnos may be one of the early representations of the Green Man, depicted on the phallic shaped St. Goar pillar dated to the fifth Century B.C., and the Gunderstrop Cauldron, date to the first century B.C. The focus on the head within the Green Man images is important among Celtic mythology, as the head is the seat of prophecy, inspiration, and wisdom. The Celts placed skulls at various shrines, and carved heads of Cernunnos have been found in important places with holes for the placement of antlers or vegetation. Roughly carved heads have been found in agricultural contexts, suggesting that the heads were an important fertility symbol as well.

In Greece, the God Dionysus (and later the Roman God Bacchus) were venerated not only for wine and beer, but also for creativity, knowledge, and inspiration. These beings were often depicted with vines entwined with their persona. With the blending of these cultures beginning of the first millennia, the architectural elements of the Green Man took on its current form.

Many stories have been written about spirits of the forest, including fairies, brownies, gnomes, leprechauns, but the Green Man appears to represent the spirit of the forest itself. Around the 14<sup>th</sup> Century A.D., some of the better recorded myths about the Green Man appear within the Arthurian legends and the legend of Robin Hood.

In the story of Gawain and the Green Knight, a contest is wagered with King Arthur's court during a large Christmas celebration. The contest is offered by the Green Knight, who bursts into the festivities on his horse during a bragging session, and issues a challenge that whoever is brave enough to cut off the head of the Green Knight will in turn have his head cut off in a year and a day's time. Gawain, one of the less accomplished knights, steps forth and agrees. He cuts off the Green Knight's head, and the Green Knight replaces his head and says he will see Gawain in a year and a day.

The fateful day draws near and Gawain rides forth into the wilderness to meet his doom at the green chapel. He searches for the chapel but is unable to find it. He comes to a castle, and the inhabitants, Sir Bercilak and his wife, claim to know the whereabouts of the Green Knight. During his stay, Sir Gawain is sexually tempted three times by Sir Bercilak's wife, and in the end he agrees to take a green sash she says will protect him from being killed by the Green Knight.

Sir Gawain goes to the Green Chapel and the Green Knight is there sharpening his axe. Sir Gawain prepares himself for the blow, and the Green Knight lets the axe fall just enough to cut his neck. He tells him that the nick was for his cowardice in accepting the green sash. We find out at this point in the story that Sir Bercilak is in fact the Green Knight, testing and forgiving Sir Gawain for being human.

Robin Hood, the Lord of the Merry Greenwood, and his Lady, Maid Marion, were also born from previous incarnations of the Green Man. Robin Hood is known for his wild and trickster behavior, living in the forest, and having strong abilities in camouflage, dexterity, and fighting.

The Green Man is still widely recognized today in Europe by May Day festivals and Morris dances. During these present-day festivals, a Jack in the Green is ritually executed to "renew the world" and to ensure a good crop season. In Hastings, an annual ceremony is held where Jack-in-the Green in the form of a towering framework of leaves, which a man inside carries accompanied by a figure known as "Black Sal" and a team of men who support him. The climax to the ceremony comes when Jack is 'killed' to release the spirit of summer. This type of folk custom occurs all over Europe where the central character is a foliage-clad man.

The Green Man is a wild and untamed being, which is reflected back in all of us, if we so choose to look there. He symbolizes to each of us a promise that in the winter, when all of the trees are barren of leaves and all is dark, that the green will eternally return to the Earth in the Spring. He represents the attainment of ancient wisdom for those who are brave enough to seek it out and are prepared to die for it. He also symbolizes forgiveness and rebirth, for each year is born anew.

## MY OWN HEARTSTORM

By Arthur Riegel  
Golden Owl

I recently started asking myself the question "If I weren't afraid what would I be doing with my life?" The answers varied, depending on their source. My ego/mind with all of its attempts to protect and serve this physical body, quickly reminded me with its incessant chatter to remember what has happened in the past. "Work as a counselor? No way, it won't pay enough!" "You need a sales job where you can make big money!"

"Follow your heart's desire? Are you crazy? You'll go bankrupt!" As I notice the responses and one by one thank myself for sharing, I find the chatter begins to subside, I take a deep breath, put my attention on some approximation of where my heart should be and with each succeeding breath I consciously decide to blow out the fear. Now a whole different set of responses arises. "Now we are getting somewhere", "Ah yes, this is where you will do the most good" "You are meant to do this kind of work" "If not you, then who?" "Take another step forward, it is in the right direction." New thoughts flood my conscious mind and fill it with a vision of all possibilities... I become energized, I feel encouraged and my mission becomes clear again.

I read an article about a football coach who teaches boys to love and it brought tears to my eyes. I researched further and found that it was this man's opinion that the world needed more men of empathy. I realized I have been one for a very long time. I remember seeing a picture of Sai Baba in the House of Blues in Boston while there for a Men's Weekend event and the slogan read "help ever, hurt never"; I sighed and wondered if as a man I could really live that way. The football coach said in the article that we have been taught three lies about masculinity: athletic ability, sexual conquest and economic success are the measurements for manhood. My ego/mind loved those lies, my heart on the other hand has always known better.

*Keep your face toward the sunshine and the shadows will fall behind you. – Author unknown*

## POEMS EMERGING FROM DREAM LAND

By Jeff Hood

Men, I've participated in a 13 day vision quest with Animas Valley Institute this Fall and want to share a bit of it with you. As it is in the NWT, the quest provides a number of experiences through which ego is allowed/encouraged/coerced to release its protective grip on psyche in pursuit of a conversation with soul. No small task as you know. I found the combination of community council and ritual, fasting, and solo time in the wilderness to be very effective catalysts. The dark mystery of my dream life exploded and the following poems emerged. Rather than explain and analyze which just satisfies ego again. I'll just share them.

*Indigo, sleek serpent, shiny midnight,  
wrap yourself around my throat.  
Send me into darkness. Please.  
I'm not managing out here  
in the light very well,  
and there are people I would meet  
with you, terrible top knot chinamen  
come to remind a boy  
that his plastic model PT boat is no good  
this time, offers him no protection  
from your world of shadows in dreams.  
And lying clamped silent in a shiver  
will not do either.*

*I could offer a mouse, a lizard,  
take my finger for god's sake!  
but that is not what sustains you.  
You require a place in my house,  
Wild, by the creek, flowing dark,  
across which no road will go  
and a promise to bring no shovel there.*

A second poem:

*Flicker maybe,  
tap tapping on the other side  
of the cotton wood tree  
I've stopped beneath  
calling my soul<  
not to discover him.*

## TAINTED HEART

By Ken Thomas  
Kodiak Bear

*I bask in the glow of my own self absorption.  
My light is my own, I shelter it with fear.  
I trust through clouded eyes,  
I love with tainted heart.  
Give to me a sacred memory,  
I will expose your soul  
I bask in the glow of my own self absorption,  
you cannot know me, not until I know myself.*

## TO THE MEN OF NEW MEXICO

By Frederick J. Snoy II

Here are some of my thoughts on the council and Carl's Recent Resignation

2005 brings MKP NM new challenges and opportunities. This past month Carl Rosenberg tendered his resignation as Center Director. Carl has served this community with passion and perseverance and I am sorry to see him leave the council at this time. Carl has provided us with a watermark for his contributions, efforts to stimulate our training alumni, and his willingness to live a life of environmental awareness and challenge this community to do the same. Carl is well known throughout the project. He has stimulated thoughtful discussion in Glen Ivy and at the summer meetings. He will be missed there. He has empowered many of us and provided a sounding board for old veterans and new initiates alike. I will miss the calls from that prepaid calling card number! Recently MKPI had established a Center Director Alumni Directory and I will submit Carl's name. The purpose is to provide a body of men whom can be called upon for advice, guidance and suggestions. It is an elder body of sorts. It is my hope that Carl will remain active and perhaps take up another role when it seems right. It is my hope that the Center recognizes Carl's contributions in some meaningful way.

Carl's departure leaves the council with yet another open position. It is my belief that this center and this community needs fucking warrior energy. I have spoken in the past about this Lover Center. We love to wallow in that

quadrant. Yet as we know too much of a good thing turns into shadow and debilitates. At a recent council meeting a controversial decision was made about a council position. I believe it was one of the first times this community has stood in that warrior energy. We challenged a man to stand in his warrior energy. I believe it portends great things for 2005 and MKP-NM.

This center is looking for powerful men of mission. **Yes you!** If you are reading this you surely have a mission. (Recite your mission to yourself now.) Does serving this community further your mission? Is the action word in your mission consistent with serving the other men in MKP NM? What are you really doing to further that mission? As we enter this new year consider your warriors mission and step up, ask what you can do, shit, state what you want to do. Contact a council member and Demand it. Make MKP-NM what you want it to be.

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## FINDING YOUR PURPOSE/MISSION

By Dmitri Bilgere

A good way to find your life purpose (or "mission") is to ask yourself this question: When I am at my very best, what are the people around me empowered to be like?

We all have moments where we are at our very best, where it seems like what is best about us is flowing through us. We are "in the zone." We are "on." In those moments we are usually not thinking at all, we are just experiencing life as it was meant to be.

Think about one of these moments in your life. Remember how it felt. Now start to think about this idea: when you are at your best, you have an effect on the people around you. Something opens up for them, because of you. And it's possible that the effect you have on people when you are at your best is your purpose in life.

If that's hard to believe, think of it this way: When you are at your worst, you tend to draw

the worst out of the people around you. Most everyone can agree with that. This is simply the same dynamic, at the other end of the spectrum. When you are at your best, you bring out the best in other people.

If you are looking for your core purpose in life, this is a good place to start, because each of us brings out something slightly different in the people around us when we are at our best, and that something, whatever it is, might just be the special thing that you have to bring to the world. Bringing it to the world might just be your purpose.

So think about that moment when you were at your best, and ask yourself, "What were the people around me free to be like?"

Here are some examples:

"When I am at my best, I notice that the people around me are free to really accept themselves, even things about themselves they would otherwise be ashamed of. I think my purpose is to create a world where people can live without shame."

"When I am at my best, I notice that the people around me laugh and have a great time. I think my purpose is to create a world where joy and laughter are the norm."

"When I am at my best, I notice that people around me feel empowered to take on the biggest problems in their lives. I think my purpose is to create a world where people feel empowered to take on and solve their biggest problems."

"When I am at my best, I notice that the people around me feel loving of themselves and others. I think my purpose is to create a world where people love themselves and others."

The cool thing about taking on your purpose in this way is that it doesn't make life into one big assignment or an unending vista of work. All you need to do is be you, when you are being you at your best. Your effect on the world flows from that. You get to have a great life, and to live your purpose automatically.

*Dmitri Bilgere is a New Warrior and has been leading deep process work since 1989. His websites, [www.dbweb.org](http://www.dbweb.org), and [www.innerking.com](http://www.innerking.com), may be of interest to readers.*

*In everyone's life at some time our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flame by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who rekindle the inner spirit.*

--Albert Schweitzer

## A POEM

By Tom Garcia

*In a vision  
I stood atop a mountain  
in the valley below  
was the world  
I will to create  
Beside me  
stood my beloved  
in her eyes  
I saw  
I could not fail*

*People usually consider walking on water or in thin air a miracle. But I think the real miracle is not to walk either on water or in thin air, but to walk on earth. Every day we are engaged in a miracle which we don't even recognize: a blue sky, white clouds, green leaves, the black, curious eyes of a child -- our own two eyes. All is a miracle.*

--Thich Nhat Han, Vietnamese Buddhist monk

## THE FACES OF MEN

By John Van Herpen

*I hear the beat of a solitary drum in the close  
clear distance*

*Face to Face with a man  
This Man both scared and rejoicing*

*Another beat  
Another Man*

*Looking deeply into his eyes  
I see myself those many years ago at the  
beginning of my journey  
Joy, Sadding, Fear*

*Another beat*

## Another Face

*Eyes welled with tears, the cleansing of yet  
another soul that only yesterday lay cut and  
bleeding on the floor of his destiny  
Completely unaware of his future now shining  
with the hope of tomorrow so unknown*

## Another beat

*Looking again deep into his eyes, him looking  
deeply into mine  
Love  
An intimacy, a closeness experienced only by  
going into the battle for his life  
side by side  
to the depths of a personal hell  
Coming out together on the other side battered  
and bruised  
but more alive then his mind can remember and  
standing in the center of the circle  
The Victor*

*His Wounds are my wounds as well*

## Another beat

*The flurry of emotion, so full experienced in the  
silence as I move down the line of those I have  
been with on this journey  
Their face  
My Face  
The same face*

*Sitting at my desk in the reality of my other life  
I see them, feel them and miss them*

## The Faces of Men

JVH 10/04

*Thanks Dee and George for your mentoring*

*It's not enough to have lived. We should be  
determined to live for something. May I suggest  
that it be creating joy for others, sharing what we  
have for the betterment of personkind, bringing  
hope to the lost and love to the lonely.  
--Leo Buscaglia, author & university professor  
(1924-1998)*

## AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES Part I

By Del Sutton

I started working at age thirteen in the second location of the first real estate franchise invented. I quickly developed a taste for money, and worked as much as I could to get more of it, which allowed me to buy all the things I wanted throughout high school—alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, and friendships. I loved being the center of attention, getting drunk and having sex. These were my purpose in life, as they seemed to be the only things that made me feel good.

To others, I was a productive, good, loving boy; on the inside, however, I was frightened, self-centered, and self-serving. I never felt like I fit in with my family, or any crowd I hung out with. My best times were getting drunk and having anonymous sex with men at adult bookstores, or with my school buddies. We would pretend not to remember anything the next day, but I wanted more. I was afraid and stuck, behind the closet door.

I was just eighteen when I got pulled over and arrested for a DWI, and a year later I got another. I breezed through the legal process with a good attorney and the defense that I was the victim and that others should feel sorry for me. I got a slap on the hand in the form of adult detention.

My hometown of Tucson, Arizona could not give me all the freedoms I wanted, so I went to Houston for a summer, where I discovered a wealth of bars, parties, drugs, and sex, available on a daily basis.

Despite all the fun, or maybe because of it, I was getting really frightened. I wanted to hide. On the advice of my Uncle Frank DeRocco, a retired Navy Chief, coupled with my own sense of patriotism, I joined the Navy. By chance I ended up stationed in San Francisco in 1980. It was all I had dreamed of and more. Lots of drinking, sex, Chinese food, and a steady paycheck made life seem really good. I had great, frequent sex on the ship, and made many sex friends. I was leading a double life. I was loaded all the time and under pressure to play the role of a “got-it-together” guy, trying to please everybody. I

made it through the Navy without ever getting in trouble despite my heavy drinking and being a sexually active cocaine user.

The feeling of electric death shot through me when I heard the news for the first time about a mysterious illness that was killing homosexual men. My intuition told me that this 20-year-old had it, whatever it was, and I was terrified of being exposed and stigmatized.

I was getting tired of the bay area and wanted a geographical change. I put in a duty station request for San Diego, which was approved. I got stationed at Coronado Island. After a few months there, I was ready to move off base. I was out drinking one night, and met a man named Steve. He said he needed a roommate, and I jumped at the opportunity. It would be easier to hide while living off base and, as it turned out, Steve was actually looking for more than just a roommate. We got into a relationship.

The day came to be discharged from the Navy. I took one month of leave, and Steve took me to Europe. I was not comfortable. He told me he was a “carrier” of this new disease. Out of anger and fear, I ended the relationship and moved back to Tucson, where I dove into work. I started making a lot of money.

One night at a bar I met a man named Pete, who was in a relationship with someone in Dallas. Within six months he moved to Tucson to live with me. Four years later, I was more than a hundred pounds overweight, I was drinking, doing cocaine, smoking, gambling, and buying people things to make them like me. One day I got the news that Steve had died. I went to the doctor and had myself tested, already knowing what the results would be. Pete and I took a trip to San Francisco together, and I told him.

I continued to bury myself in my work and became a big shot again. I was awarded a top achievement award—one of a thousand in the field of all of the real estate agents in north america to be earning \$500,000 a year. I was paying people to do my laundry, to clean my house, maintain the landscaping, and to wash my car. It was during this time that my guts had begun to hurt.

Despite my financial success, I was not happy. I blamed Pete, my family, my friends and peers. I hated myself. I was out of shape, weighing 285 pounds. My world was caving in. I broke up with Pete, who I suspected was already in another relationship, anyway. It hurt terribly. I got kicked out of bars in tears.

A year of misery passed. I was at the Stonewall one night and saw Rod there, Pete's new lover. I was feeling good with a few drinks under my belt. I approached Rod and told him, "I will stop bothering you and Pete and you will never have to worry about me again." I had not planned to say that. I hugged him and left the bar, and wound up at the Graduate. After having a few more drinks, I followed a guy home. Then I saw police lights in the rear-view mirror. Oh shit, I thought, they got me! I spent a few hours in a field sobriety test, and then they took me to the station. I gave them my self-pity story and they let me go home.

I woke up the next day, feeling like a huge failure. At that point I knew my drinking career was over. With two DWI charges less than a year apart, I was scared shitless that my driver's license would be taken away. I never wanted to feel the way I did that day again, ever.

I had begun a healing process. I was not aware of it at the time, but on that 15th day of February, 1995, I was willing to do whatever it would take not to feel that misery again. I sought help, and it came to me. By the grace of a power greater than myself, many people showed up in my life, most whom I had never seen before. They shared their experiences, their strength and hope with me.

I was more terrified than I had ever been. My mom told me, "Del, there is nothing I can do for you now. You're a lost soul. Your dad and I don't have the money to help you." The empty spot in my gut grew bigger. I told my sister about the second DWI, and she was furious. My pain grew even more.

I was ready to learn, and teachers kept showing up, one after another. They were everywhere. They did the thinking for me in that first year of my 12-step program, as my mind was so foggy I could not think straight. They made suggestions like going to a meeting every day, changing the people, places, and things I hung around, and talking to other people in the program. In

general, they were telling me to follow their example, and that is what I did. From that point on, my life has not been the same. I joined the local Metropolitan Community Church. I was inspired to go. I remember my mom telling me I should go to church, and the 12-step book said to seek help from religious people. So, as uncomfortable as I felt about it, I started showing up at church. I rode my bicycle four miles each way, to and from church every Sunday.

To be continued.

Have you wanted to connect with other initiated men and women?

Will you commit to keeping your life on purpose?

When is the last time you spent a weekend with people in your life who really matter?

How do sex, money, and God affect your relationships?

What is at risk for you to go deeper in your life with those you love?

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