

# ♀ ON OUR WAY

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

(617) 354-8807  
TTY and VOICE



\* MARCH '91 \*

PARTY



The Women's Center's 20th Birthday Party is on March 23 at the MIT Student Center, 84 Mass Ave, Cambridge. The evening starts at 7pm in the Mezzanine Lounge. A historical exhibit of flyers and other documents of the Women's Liberation Movement will be on display. Speakers will commemorate the Center's history and discuss the future directions of the Women's Movement. They will include Leslie Cagan, National Coordinator for the Emergency Coalition for Peace, Justice and Non-Intervention in the Middle East; Julia Perez, writer, prison reformer, organizer of women in the military, veteran and mother; Diane Balser, Executive Director of the Women's Statewide Legislative Network, formerly active in Bread and Roses, and the originator of the idea to take over 888 Memorial Drive; Demita Frazer, member of the Black Feminist Group, the Combahee River Collective; Saundra Graham, former Cambridge City Councillor & State Legislator; and Tess Ewing, labor activist who was very involved in Bread & Roses, the building takeover, and the formation of the Women's Center.

Poet Karen Lindsev will read from her work; Karen writes for Sojourner and co-authored Dr. Susan Love's Breast Book. Music will be provided by the Sistematic Liberation Singers, an offshoot of the Newwoman's Chorus which rehearsed at the Center for years, and folk/soul singer Marcia Harris who has performed at Crone's Harvest and Christophers. The M.C. for the evening is Katherine Triantafillou, feminist lawyer and author of the Massachusetts Abuse Prevention Act. ASL interpreters will be provided.

This event will be followed by a dance at the Lobdell Cafeteria from 9pm-1am featuring D.J. Claire Frances. Suggested donation for the dance: \$3-\$5. Refreshments, including non-alcoholic beverages, will be available.

Childcare will be provided from 7pm-midnight. The Student Center is completely wheelchair accessible.

Come to learn, come to frolic, come to commemorate a colorful and amazing herstory, come to give tribute to one of the oldest community women's centers in existence.

For more information, or to volunteer to help, call 354-8807.



## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

### LESBIAN RAP

Mondays, 8-10pm

- March 4 Ageism
- 11 Book Review
- 18 Night Out At Jillian's, Ipswich  
St. Boston, meet there
- 25 Games Night

### BISEXUAL WOMEN'S RAP

Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30pm

- March 5 Bi-Phobia/Stereotypes
- 12 Rap on rap/group dynamics
- 19 Gay Militancy
- 26 2 in 20 (episodes 3 & 4)

### 30+ LESBIAN RAP

Tuesdays, 7-8:30pm

- March 5 Lesbian Sex
- 12 Open Discussion
- 19 Feelings About the War
- 26 Where/How Do We Find Support

### FACILITATED OPEN DISCUSSION FOR INCEST SURVIVORS

Third Thursday, 7:30-9:15pm

- March 21 Sexuality
- April 18 Intimate Relationships
- May 16 Public Image/Private Selves
- June 20 Body Image/Befriending Our  
Bodies

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Knowing Herself: Women Tell Their Stories in Psychotherapy. Friday, March 22, 7:30pm.

Therapist/author Joan Hammerman Robbins discusses her new book. Using women's detailed accounts in therapy, Robbins reveals society's part in shaping women's roles and offers fresh understanding for women grappling with changing themselves as well as the culture's constrictions.

### THE WOMEN'S CENTER'S 20TH BIRTHDAY

CELEBRATION, Saturday, March 23. MIT Student Center, 84 Mass Ave. Cambridge. Wheelchair accessible, ASL interpreters, childcare provided.

7pm: Speeches, singing, poetry, exhibit. Mezzanine Lounge.

9pm: Dance, Claire Frances, D.J., \$3-\$5 donation. Lobdell Cafeteria.

### International Women's Day, a video by Cambridge Women in Cable

Tuesday, March 26, 7-8:30pm.

Compiled from the International Women's Day Video Festival, this video offers perspectives of women from many different cultures. A discussion will follow.

## ONGOING GROUPS AT THE WOMEN'S CENTER

### SUNDAY

-Women for Sobriety.....2-3:30pm  
(starts March 17)

### MONDAY

-Support for Battered Women.....7:30-9pm  
-Women's NA 12 step.....7:30-9pm  
-Lesbian Rap.....8-10pm  
-Boston Bisexual Women's Network-Intro  
(1st Mon, even #'d months)...7:30-9:30pm  
-All Center Meeting (biweekly).....6-8pm  
-Reproductive Rights National  
Network R2N2 (2nd, 4th Mons.)...7-9:45pm  
-Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest  
Survivors (1st & 3rd Mon.).....7-8:30pm  
-Coming Out As Disabled (3rd Mon.)...7:30-9pm

### TUESDAY

-Bisexual Women's Rap.....7:30-9:30pm  
-30+ Lesbian Rap.....7-8:30pm  
-Video show and discussion  
(last Tues., monthly).....7-8:30pm

### WEDNESDAY

-Lesbian Al-Anon (childcare).....6:30-8pm  
-Writing Support Group.....7:30-9:30pm  
-Battered Women's Support Group (Weekly  
except 3rd Wed. of month).....7-8:30pm

### THURSDAY

-Incest Survivors Discussion  
Group (weekly).....7:30-9:30pm  
(facilitated 3rd Thursday, Sept.-June)  
-Women's Community Cancer Project  
(1st Thursday).....7-9pm  
-Cancer Support Group  
(2nd & 4th Thursday).....7-9pm  
-Lesbians Choosing Children Network  
(2nd Thurs, monthly).....7:30-10pm

### FRIDAY

-Birthmothers (1st & 3rd Fri).... 7-9:30pm  
-Incest Survivors Anonymous.....6:30-8pm

### SATURDAY

-Women's Writing Group  
(biweekly).....noon-2pm  
-Open discussion on Coming Out for Women  
of All Ages(monthly, 1st Sat)...11am-1pm  
-Living Without Cigarettes for Smokers &  
Ex-smokers.....noon-1:30pm  
-Post-Abortion Support Group.....noon-2pm  
(1st, 3rd Sats., starting March 16)

## WOMEN'S CENTER HOURS

Monday - Thursday 10am - 10pm  
Friday 10am - 8pm  
Saturday 11am - 2pm

## COMING OUT GROUP

As we all celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Women's Center, we wish to also acknowledge the Coming Out Group. For two years, women of all ages, from all backgrounds, and from many geographic areas (including metro Boston, other parts of MA and neighboring states) have consistently gathered together to support each other as we confront coming out issues.

At each group session, held the first Saturday of every month from 11am - 1pm, women who are at different stages of exploring their sexuality have been meeting with two facilitators to openly discuss their fears, hopes and dreams concerning being a lesbian or bisexual. Some women come only once, others come repeatedly. Friendships have developed as well as some relationships.

The group exists and survives because of many factors, one being the bravery and openness of each woman who attends to share a piece of herself and to respect the other women who are present. Another factor is the dedication of the Women's Center staff and volunteers to help inform women about the group. The most important factor has been the commitment of the Women's Center to provide a safe, non-judgemental home for the coming out group to grow in, and for this we wish to say thank you.

To all women of the Coming Out Group and the Women's Center, Happy 2nd and 20th anniversary and congratulations for caring for and supporting each other.

Maria & Cheryl, Coming Out Facilitators

## FILM CLASSICS ABOUT WOMEN/MARCH 1991

Film Classics and short documentaries about remarkable women shown FREE at 2pm & 7:30pm at the Brookline Public Library, 361 Washington Street. March 6: Queen Christina with Greta Garbo. Also Lotte Reininger, Filmmaker. March 13, Woman of the Year, comedy with Katherine Hepburn. March 20, Carnival in Flanders, French comedy. Also Grandma Moses, Painter. March 27, Black Narcissus, with Deborah Kerr. Also Matina Horner, Educator.

## WOMEN'S COMMUNITY CANCER PROJECT

Feminists meet to discuss strategies for political action on cancer issues and to develop support and services for women who have cancer. Thurs., March 7, 7-9pm.

## PARTNERS & EXPARTNERS OF INCEST SURVIVORS

I'm sure that there are as many impressions of what our group is like, as there are women who attend it. So what follows are my own impressions as someone who has been coming to the group for several years, and who feels responsible to make sure that it continues.

It is a support group open to any lesbian who either knows or perceives herself to be the partner or lover, or former partner or lover of an incest survivor. Each woman is responsible for getting what she needs out of the group, and I believe that for most women, it is a validating experience. There have been anywhere from four to nine women at a given meeting, and right now there is a core of four of us who have been attending for quite a while.

While we request confidentiality, and make sure that every woman has a chance to speak, the group has a limited structure. Topics are based on what women need to discuss at the time, and we are never at a loss, in an effort to understand this very complex issue.

It also seems to me worthy to note, that while a woman may come to the group for many reasons, I think the underlying element is because she cares. She cares and wants to understand. She cares about someone and about their relationship. She cares enough to attempt to grapple with what may be unresolved or unsolved feelings.

Incest is so prevalent among women, its impact is very pervasive and deep. My own feeling is that since our community is based on our relationships and on our interconnectedness with each other, that when we try to shed light on or understand, we are walking in the direction of healing for our entire community.

## SINGLE LESBIAN MOTHERS GROUP

Thank you so much for providing space for us to meet and for our children to play over the last few months. It's made a huge difference for us to be able to get together here every other week, and we really appreciate your generosity in setting aside two meeting rooms for us when there is so much demand for meeting space. We feel very supported as mothers.



### **MOTHERS GROUP SEEKS NEW MEMBERS & A FACILITATOR**

The Mother's Support Group which meets on Fridays from 11am-12:30 is seeking several new members. The group is free of charge; childcare and healthy snacks for the children are provided.

In the meeting group members check in and share how the week has been for them. Out of the check-ins, a topic for discussion emerges. Topics have included limit setting, trying something new, and managing conflict. If you are interested in attending, call the Women's Center at 354-8807 and ask to speak to Alice.

The group has been meeting since October. Initially, Laura Laster volunteered to facilitate the group. More recently, Joan Parish has been the group facilitator. While they each have enjoyed facilitating the group, both had to stop facilitating because of overly busy schedules. At this point, the Women's Center is looking for another woman to volunteer to facilitate the group. We are looking for a mother who has experience with group facilitation, and who is not presently feeling in urgent need of support herself. If that sounds like you, and you are interested, give Alice a call at 354-8807.

### **LESBIANS CHOOSING CHILDREN NETWORK**

In our last issue of On Our Way, there was an article which indicated that the Lesbians Choosing Children Network might be discontinued due to insufficient interest. Happily, that is not the case. The network continues to meet on the second Thursday of each month at 7:30. While the group is presently comprised of lesbians who are trying to get pregnant, the group is open to, and warmly welcomes, lesbians who are contemplating motherhood and lesbian moms.

### **INCEST SURVIVORS' NETWORK**

The Incest Survivor's Network continues to provide strong and vital support for survivors through groups and resource books at the Women's Center. Facilitated open discussion groups meet at the Women's Center every third Thursday of the month from 7:30-9:15. These drop-in groups are open to anyone with a history of sexual abuse. These groups are facilitated by a few dedicated volunteers.

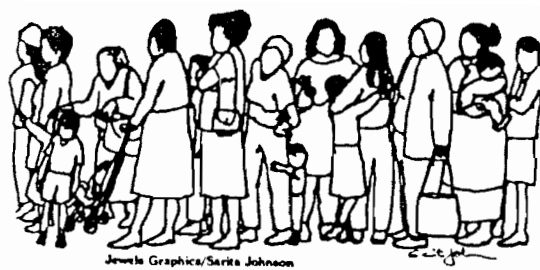
There is also a lesser known volunteer effort to maintain the Network: taking care of correspondence, finances, secretarial work and the resource books. In October, this part of the organization changed hands and these duties were turned over to a couple of new, willing volunteers. This is the first such transition and we see it as a sign of vitality.

The Incest Survivors' Network has developed and keeps up a current listing of therapists, groups, and resources available to anyone interested in professional counseling or self-help networking in the incest and child sexual abuse area. This resource is located at the Women's Center. The therapist referral section consists of questionnaires providing information on the therapist's location, fees, experience, and attitudes on a variety of issues. Feedback pages follow each counselor's questionnaire.

Public speaking also comes under the auspices of the Incest Survivors' Network. Invitations for public speaking engagements are welcome.

### **WOMEN'S COUNSELING & RESOURCE CENTER**

The Women's Counseling and Resource Center is a volunteer collective of feminist therapists offering mental health services for low and no income women. We have had an office at the Women's Center for 3 years, after moving from the damp church basement from which we had operated since 1971. We currently have a waiting list of clients, and are recruiting new members. If you are a therapist with a master's level degree, at least 2 years post-graduate experience, and a feminist orientation, and can give 2-4 hours per week, please call us at 492-8568.



## WOMEN'S SCHOOL

The Women's School has existed since 1971 and is the oldest, consecutively-running women's school of its kind in the U.S. We are committed to feminism and social change and therefore have adopted a non-hierarchical structure. For example, classes and workshops are offered by "facilitators" rather than "teachers" and the School is coordinated by a group of women who operate as a collective. All facilitators and staff are volunteers. Classes are offered free of charge; those who can are asked to contribute what they can to cover postage, printing and other expenses.

Our primary goal is to help women work for fundamental change that affects their lives. To the extent that it applies to the given topic, we encourage women in each of our classes and workshops to examine issues of racism, sexism, homophobia, ageism, classism, ableism, and other prejudices that oppress women and people in general.

Women taking courses through the Women's School have an opportunity to learn in a non-hierarchical and noncompetitive, women-only environment. The Women's School is feminist, woman-centered, and collectively run. It is not an academic environment. Courses focus on some aspect of social change or women's culture which would not be offered at colleges or adult education programs. We believe that every woman's knowledge is valuable. Frequently, "students" go on to offer classes and workshops of their own, sharing what they've learned. We encourage all women to participate as facilitators, regardless of their level of expertise; interest in a relevant topic is all that is needed.

The Women's School originally offered only 8 week classes. There was always a core group of classes including Marxism, Introduction to Women's Lib, and Lesbian Liberation. Over the years, our format has changed in order to reflect the changing needs of the community. In any give semester we now offer, in addition to a few ongoing classes, several workshops. Most are offered at the Women's Center.

Over the years, many women have been a part of the School -- by offering or participating in a course or by being on the collective. When the School reorganized this past fall, 6 women stepped forward to form the current collective. One of our members has been on the collective for over 7 years, another for 2 years, and the remaining are new to the collective - although they may have taken courses (for several years even!) at the School. We have coordinated 7 workshops and classes for this Spring semester.

If you are interested in attending these new workshops/classes, please register if you can (call 354-8807 for a school brochure.) If you can't register, just show up. Also, you can attend any individual class, even if it is part of a series that has already begun.

We are always interested in hearing from women who would like to facilitate courses for future semesters or who would like to take on other responsibilities by joining the collective. You may contact us by telephoning the Women's Center or by leaving a written message for us there. (It may take us a few weeks to return you message, and if you have not heard from us in a reasonable time, please be persistent.) With the new reorganization, we have not kept up our mailing list, so if you would like to remain on our list, please drop us a note. Come be part of the Women's School!

## THE WOMEN'S SCHOOL SPRING 1991

### WRITING SUPPORT GROUP

Wednesdays, 7:30-9:30pm; ONGOING

Come and join us and share some of your work. We are a casual and open group of writers who meet to discuss writing. Everyone gets a chance to read and receive feedback in a supportive atmosphere. Criticism is constructive, honest, clear, gentle, and respectful. Feminist issues are raised and addressed.

### A SAMPLING OF 20th CENTURY AMERICAN WOMEN ARTISTS (You can join at any time.)

4 Saturdays March 9th-30th 11:00am-1:00pm

We begin with Georgia O'Keefe and some of her flowers. We'll ask what her contribution to American art is as a realist. Moving on, we'll consider Lee Krasner, an abstract expressionist. Finally, we'll cover more contemporary artists such as Judy Chicago.

**WAR TAX RESISTANCE FEMINIST STYLE**

Saturday March 23 9:30am - 12:30pm

Every day the US government spends millions to finance war while over 35 million people in the US live in poverty; 3/4 of these are women. In this workshop, we will discuss war tax resistance from a feminist perspective. We will also address the practical issues of tax resistance including methods and possible consequences.

**GIRLS WITH GUITARS: A SERIES OF 3 WORKSHOPS (come to any or all)**

Night 1: Tuesday March 19 7:00-9:00pm

Boston women singer/songwriters share an evening of their music and discuss the creative process with workshop participants. Bring your own experience to share.

Night 2: Thursday March 21 7:00-9:00pm

Similar to Night One but more time for workshop participants to share their own finished or unfinished songs. Feel free to bring your own instruments.

Night 3: Tuesday March 26 7:30-9:30pm

Breaking Into the Acoustic Music Scene  
In this open discussion, we'll talk about the process of doing recordings, self-management, networking and playing open-mics. Participants are encouraged to come with questions prepared. Facilitators will discuss their own individual process and show examples of press packets.

**LESBIAN AND BI SEX: BEYOND CUDDLING**

4 Sats: April 13th-May 4th 11:00am-1:00pm

A look at the ways that our sexuality is hindered by a society that devalues being woman and lesbian - and the ways that we feel good about ourselves in spite of it. We'll use lots of laughter, comedy, poetry, imagery, and prose to broach "unspeakable" topics such as erotica and body image. Come prepared to share as we validate our sexuality!

**STANDING AGAIN AT SINAI: A READING DISCUSSION GROUP**

4 Mondays March 4th-25th 7:30-9:00pm

Have you ever wondered: "As a feminist, how can I be a Jew? As a Jew, how can I be a feminist?" Come explore and discuss the issues of Jewish feminism. Discussion will be based on independent reading of Judith Plaskow's Standing Again at Sinai: Judaism from a Feminist Perspective. Please try to read Chapter 1 for the first meeting.

**WOMEN FOR SOBRIETY**

Women For Sobriety is a self-help program for women with drinking problems. Its purpose is to help women recover from problem drinking through the discovery of self gained by sharing experiences, hope and encouragement with other women in similar circumstances.

Women For Sobriety is an organization of women for women. It stresses self-discovery and building self-esteem. It is not affiliated with AA.

Meetings are led by a moderator who is well-versed in Women For Sobriety.

The group will meet at the Women's Center on Sundays from 2:00pm-3:30pm starting March 17th.

**POST-ABORTION SUPPORT GROUP**

A new support group is forming for women who have had abortions and need to talk about their experiences as part of the healing process. It will be an open discussion group with a facilitator who will introduce topics and also make sure that those who wish to speak get a chance to do so. We will meet on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month from 12:30-2pm beginning March 16th.

**SUPPORT GROUP  
DOS AND DON'TS**

My name is Maria Cimino, and I am doing a community project at the Women's Center. The project involves producing a manual about "How to Start a Support Group." The manual will include different ideas about support groups such as whether or not to have a facilitator, whether to keep the group opened or closed, whether groups should be open discussion, time-limited discussion, or topic-oriented. The purpose of the manual is to provide a resource for those of us who want to begin a group but don't know how to begin. Hopefully, the manual will help answer questions about how to keep members coming, how to include women of differing backgrounds, and how to confront disruptive group members.

The information I have compiled for this project comes from my own observations of various groups at the Women's Center. I have been able to speak to some facilitators of groups.

I would like to talk to members or facilitators of any Women's Center group. If anyone is interested or would like me to focus on any particular problem encountered in a group, please call me at 524-3793.

## **LIVING WITHOUT CIGARETTES: FOR SMOKERS & EX-SMOKERS**

We are a new group comprised of women who have recently stopped smoking and women who are presently smoking. So far, we are a small group and the meetings have consisted of free-flowing discussion. Some members talk about why we feel the need to smoke and what situations are particularly difficult for us. Some of us talk about how we are managing to stay away from cigarettes and what that feels like. We offer each other encouragement and support wherever we are in the process of living without cigarettes.

The group is open to women in every stage of the quitting process. It is not necessary to quit cigarettes before joining the group, or even soon after, but only to have a desire to live without cigarettes. Women who have quit months or years ago but who are having difficulty staying away from cigarettes are also welcome. The group is non-judgemental and respectful of every woman's process. We are decidedly opposed to attitudes which are hostile or condescending to smokers.

Living Without Cigarettes is not a therapy group, nor a 12-step group. We are a self-help support group started by a woman who was still smoking when she requested space at the Women's Center.

Members are enthusiastic about the group. Although we are a diverse group of women, we find that we understand each others' experiences with cigarettes and the difficulties of stopping and staying stopped. We are excited to be able to share the process of discovering who we are without cigarettes. We welcome other women who are struggling with a nicotine addiction, and/or an obsession with cigarettes, to join us.

## **WOMEN WANTED FOR VIDEO ON SEXUALITY**

"Finding Our Way: Men Talk About Their Sexuality" is a video that will be shown at the Women's Center at 7:30pm on Wednesday, March 27. The producers want to make a companion documentary about women, and are looking for women of different ages, backgrounds and sexual preferences to be in it. It would involve spending a weekend with a group of women and participating in filmed discussions. (Info: 964-4466, Karen Levitt.)

Come to see if that might interest you, or just to see the video.

## **SUPPORT GROUP FOR WOMEN WITH MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES**

For more than half a year a support group for women with multiple personalities (both self- and professionally-diagnosed) has been meeting at the Women's Center on alternate Saturdays from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Several women find here the support and safety they have felt unable to get elsewhere for dealing with this complex and difficult issue.

The uncovering of the existence of multiple personalities in people with histories of severe early sexual (and other) abuse has become more prevalent in the past couple of years. As with incest itself, about 10 years ago, the professionals are now scrambling to catch up with those actually experiencing the MP phenomenon. Particularly because this is true, the women in the Multiples Group have found that the sharing of information, experience, histories, feelings, wisdom and caring which exists in the group is vital to their mental and emotional equilibrium and healing. On the occasion of its 20th Anniversary, the Multiples Group celebrates the Women's Center for all its efforts on behalf of women in the Boston area, and in particular wishes to express its gratitude for providing the group congenial, warm, safe and FREE space in which to meet -- as well as excellent staff services.

Women who may be interested in joining the Multiples Group are invited to call the Women's Center in order to be put in touch with a contact person in the group.

## **R2N2**

Boston R2N2 (Reproductive Rights National Network) has been meeting at the Women's Center for over a year. After the Webster decision activated women around abortion issues, we outgrew our previous meeting place. R2N2 is a grassroots organization committed to educating and activating women and men around reproductive rights issues. Our work includes fighting to eliminate all forms of oppression which necessarily restrict our reproductive freedom, particularly economic oppression, racism, sexism, ageism, and homophobia. The group has existed since 1981, and was a member of the national network while it existed (until 1984). We meet on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month. If women are interested in joining us, please call 738-9479 for more information about R2N2 and our current activities.

THE WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL CENTER, INC.

46 Pleasant Street  
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Phone: (617) 354-8807

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**BOSTON AREA RAPE  
CRISIS CENTER**

The Boston Area Rape Crisis Center is deeply indebted to the Cambridge Women's Center for assisting in our birth and growth. We're proud of our roots and we wish you a long life.

**DORCHESTER WOMEN'S  
DAY EVENT**

Saturday, March 9, 10am-4pm, at the Grover Cleveland School, 11 Charles St. (Fields Corner) Dorchester. The theme is 'Sharing Our Strengths, Defining Our Struggles.' Morning workshops will be broken down by cultural and ethnic groups. The goal is to find ways to unite and be supportive of each other's efforts.

There will also be a crafts & resource fair, and hopefully drummers and percussionists will be present to enhance the spirit of sisterhood. If you want to play, to help, to lead a workshop, or to get more info, call Maggie 739-9751; Samara 265-8784; or Mec 288-1235(TTY).

**TRANSITION HOUSE**

Transition House, a multi-racial and multi-cultural shelter for battered women and children, congratulates you on 20 years of loving care to the women's community. In the case of Transition House, which celebrates our own 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, that care is essential. The Women's Center, which found Transition House, helped provide maintenance over the years, and continues to provide space for our volunteer trainings and support groups. Last year we sheltered 200 women and children, responded to over 6,000 crisis calls, and our Dating Violence Intervention Project made presentations to over 5,000 young people. We couldn't do it without you. Love.

The women and children of Transition House

(P.S.. our 24-hour hotline number is 661-77203, and our next volunteer training begins April 4. Call 354-2676 for info.)

MY SPECIAL 20th BIRTHDAY DONATION TO THE WOMEN'S CENTER IS:

\$20    \$40    \$60    \$80    \$100    \$200    \$1000    \$2000    Other

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_





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## MULTIPLES

The phenomenon of multiple personality is pushing its way onto the front burners of 12-step groups, self-help groups, psychotherapeutic and (slowly) community consciousness. Ten years ago the word "incest" conjured up sensationalized images. Today we sadly know better. And within a few years, we will almost certainly be acknowledging the existence-- and manifestations-- of multiplicity in our acquaintances, co-workers, relatives-- and in ourselves.

A natural concomitant, or outgrowth, of the past decade's massive incest "coming out" all over the Western world, multiplicity is just now emerging in the consciousness of some of those incest survivors who were most cruelly raped and brutalized. Every multiple was viciously tortured as a very young child-- sexually, physically, emotionally, and spiritually-- probably under the age of three. Usually at least one close family member was a perpetrator and often there was more than one family member and/or others. Frequently, these acts were committed as part of some form of bizarre and dehumanizing ritual which involved some private individual ritual of derangement, a full-fledged Satanic or other "religious" cult, or an organized secular group.

Multiple personality is an ingenious solution to an insoluble problem! Essentially it means if you can't take the heat, send someone else. But that someone else resides, thinks, feels, and grows inside of you-- and the "heat" is often the unimaginable torture of the damned.

The notion of multiplicity as a widespread phenomenon is currently being resisted by the psychiatric and mental health establishment, and ignorance about what it is-- and isn't-- abounds both in these professions (who profess to KNOW all about these things) and in the general

public. But for those who have already been identified as multiple-- and we are as often self-identified as professionally diagnosed-- there is need for education, treatment and healing NOW.

While even aware, alert and caring professionals are still groping for answers about "how to go" with multiplicity, we who are in the "vanguard" of this phenomenon are (fortunately or unfortunately) in the position of having to lead the way for our therapists, each other, and those who come after us in their recognition of themselves as multiples.

Since April 1990, the Women's Center has sponsored a support group for women with multiple personalities. Over the first six months the four or five women who started the group struggled with unstable membership and with the terror and uncertainty of sailing such shark-infested and uncharted waters. After that, other women who came began to stay, as they desperately and courageously sought validation, answers, information, support, or appropriate therapy. The group grew and solidified.

These women began coming up with answers about mutual help and gained knowledge from within themselves and from each other-- knowledge about multiplicity that just wasn't available anywhere else. For in the group there is probably as much knowledge and understanding-- and certainly as much support-- about multiplicity as there is "out there" in most of the professional arena.

The group has grown to where it now has a firm, committed membership of more than a dozen. There is almost never an absence from a meeting. Over the past few months we have expanded our activities to establish a bi-weekly topic discussion group as well, and a committee has just been formed to explore other needed modes

of healing and activities that we can provide for ourselves and each other.

To other women who are currently experiencing themselves as multiples and are seeking validation and support we must say: there is good news and bad news. The bad news is that our group has been so successful that it is now overflowing and we have had to close it to new membership-- at least for now.

The good news is that we are beginning to develop the confidence that "we know how to do it" and we are therefore encouraging others who are looking for support to call the Women's Center. You will be put in touch with one of the current group members, who will talk to you and, if appropriate, add you to our growing list. We are planning to help form and facilitate a new multiples' support group, to start in the very near future, probably in the fall.

Thanks to the Women's Center we have been able to form a unique and extraordinary group of women, demonstrating once more-- as so often happens at the Women's Center-- the incalculable strengths, ingenuity, spirit, and mutual caring that women in pain and need can offer each other.

Our current motto is: MULTIPLES UNITE!

### COMING OUT GROUP

The coming out group welcomes women of all ages and backgrounds: women who have newly discovered their feelings of attraction for other women; who are looking for support for their lifestyles; who are looking for the community; all lesbian women. The coming out group usually meets the first Saturday of every month from 11:am to 1:pm, as it has for over two years.

The groups are usually very well attended with returning friends and always some new ones. Often there are two facilitators of the group. Topics are flexible and wide ranging; coming out to ourselves, friends, family, dealing with lifestyle issues and problems at home and at work, discussing what is and where is the lesbian community. Women are encouraged to question, share their experiences and feelings and find solutions best suited for themselves.



## NEW! EATING AWARENESS & BODY IMAGE GROUP

On June 4, the Eating Awareness & Body Image Group held its first meeting at the Women's Center. At this writing the group has quite a few steady members and is always open to welcoming more. The group meets weekly on Tuesdays from 7-9 pm and has a semi-structured process.

In the first hour our focus is eating awareness. There are two types of hunger: physical and emotional. Physical hunger is understood to be eating in response to physiological cues such as hunger pangs, light-headedness, or an empty feeling in the stomach, whereas emotional hunger is understood to be eating in response to anything else. Emotional hunger can be cued from boredom, anger, loneliness, or needs, wants, desires, feelings and issues that are not being met in better ways. In the group we try to look at how we are using food in our lives, what our relationships with food are, and how we want to change or improve this place.

In the second hour discussion is focused on body image themes, topics, or exercises presented by rotating weekly facilitators, as well as related body image/awareness conversation. We speak caringly and supportively of our bodies to foster peace with and acceptance of them. The last week of the month the second hour is an open discussion to provide time for feedback on the group, to generate future topics, and for anything else that is relevant or in need of attention.

This is not a dieting group. However, it does not go unacknowledged that we all want to be a weight and body size that we are comfortable with for ourselves. The philosophy is that when people eat most often from physical hunger and satisfy emotional hungers more appropriately their body will maintain its own set point weight and shape. This approach towards food is discussed in depth in the books Overcoming Overeating by Hirshmann & Munter, Fat is a Feminist Issue by Susie Orbach, and Feeding the Hungry Heart by Geneen Roth. These books and this group promote moving from external sources of controls and expectations of food and body image towards internal sources of listening to our bodies, feelings, and HUNGERS!!

### ANNOUNCEMENT:

Congratulations to Libby Bouvier, who has been involved with the Women's Center in many capacities for years and years, and Andrea Devine, our bookkeeper, on the birth of their daughter Lillian Alexandra Bouvier, on June 20, 1991.

## **FAREWELL TO ALICE!!**

We are sorry to report that Alice Roberge, the Center's fundraiser since Nov. 1987, has left the center to take a new job at Cambridge Community Services. Alice was a vital part of the Center, as a member of the All-Center meeting and as a member of just about every decision making committee at the Center (finance, fundraising, hiring, etc.). Among other things, she took the lead in writing the grant proposals that brought in the money that keeps the Center going, processed donations, and helped to keep the mailing list up to date. She also made major contributions to the services provided by the Center for incest survivors, as a founding member of Incest Survivors Network, by providing telephone and in-person counseling to women in crisis, and by compiling a resource notebook on ritual abuse. In addition she also played a major role in planning and running our recent 20th anniversary celebration. For these and other things to numerous to mention, we are glad to have had Alice as a Center employee. We wish her all the best in her new position and hope she will come back to the Center often, since, in her own words, she is "just up the street" (CCS is at 99 Bishop Allen Drive in Central Square).

## **WELCOME ABOARD**

We are excited to welcome Florencia LaChance and Georgianna Saba, who will join the Women's Center staff.

## **COUPLES GROUP**

A support, discussion and socializing group for lesbian couples has recently been formed and is looking for more couples. The group has members of all ages, and welcomes couples who are new to a relationship or are long time partners.

Once a month, usually the last Saturday from 11 - 1pm, the couples meet to get acquainted and to share thoughts and feelings about being lesbian couples in a heterosexual world. Often the subjects are flexible and open ended including topics dealing with isolation, frustration, love, devotion, families, happiness... Information on useful resources is also shared.

Activities outside of the meetings are encouraged. The group is always looking for couples willing to plan and run activities that could involve sports, particular hobbies, day trips, etc.

If interested, please call Cheryl at (617)569-4236 or Marcia at (508)532-3749.

## **NEW: INCEST SURVIVORS THINKTANK**

A Discussion Group on Feminist and Cultural Theories and Political Strategies. This new monthly group will give survivors of incest and child sexual abuse an opportunity to reflect about the cultural context of incest, to debate feminist theories on child sexual abuse and to develop strategies for political change. The group itself will not initiate or endorse specific political actions; however, there will be time for such announcements to promote networking and to provide support for individual endeavors. This will not be a therapy group. Survivors will function as facilitators.

The group will meet one Wednesday each month, from 7:15 to 9:15pm. Please be on time. See calendar for schedule.

## **WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES**

This group is for women newly identifying themselves as disabled, including women with epilepsy and HIV positive women, as well as those with disabilities related to mobility, hearing or vision. The monthly group will be facilitated by Toni Schiff and Alice Fisher.

Toni Schiff, who has been blind for 9 years, describes her first 2 years of visual impairment as a time she did not consider herself as disabled nor a part of the disability community. As her consciousness has grown, she feels she has become freer to be herself.

Alice Fisher is a life-long disabled person, who passed or had the illusion she was passing as not disabled. Her recent activism in the disability community has taught that being 'Super-Crip' is not in her best interest after all.

Suggested topics for discussion include: 'Fear of being labeled'; 'Is there a hierarchy of disability?'; 'The difficulties of hidden disabilities'; 'Asking for and learning to receive help'; and other topics of interest suggested by the group. The drop-in group will meet on the third Monday of the month from 7:30pm to 9:00pm. The first meeting will be on Monday, October 21st and meetings will continue through April 1992. The meeting room is wheelchair accessible. If you require an ASL interpreter please call at least 2 weeks ahead of time so that arrangements may be made. Women who are interested can just come to the group, call Toni at 924-5380 or call The Project on Women and Disability at 277-5617.

**ONGOING GROUPS  
AT THE WOMEN'S CENTER**

**SUNDAY**

- Women for Sobriety.....2-3:30pm
- Birthmothers (Women who have  
surrendered children to adoption)  
first Sunday each month.....1:30pm

**MONDAY**

- Support for Battered Women.....7:30-9pm
- Women's NA 12 step.....7:30-9pm
- Lesbian Rap.....7:30-9pm
- Boston Bisexual Women's Network  
(1st Mon, even #d months)...7:30-9:45pm
- All Center Meeting (biweekly).....6-8pm
- Reproductive Rights National  
Network R2N2 (2nd, 4th Mons.)...7-9:45pm
- Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest  
Survivors (1st & 3rd Mon.).....7-8:30pm

**TUESDAY**

- Bisexual Women's Rap.....7:30-10pm
- 30+ Lesbian Rap.....7-8:30pm
- Eating Awareness and body image.....7-9pm

**WEDNESDAY**

- Lesbian Al-Anon (childcare).....6:30-8pm
- Battered Women's Support Group (Weekly  
except 3rd Wed. of month).....7-8:30pm
- Incest Survivors' Thinktank...7:15-9:15pm  
(Usually first Wed. of the month)

**THURSDAY**

- Incest Survivors Open Discussion  
Group(weekly).....7:30-9:30pm
- Facilitated Open Discussion for Incest  
Survivors (3rd Thursday).....7:30-9:15pm
- Women's Community Cancer Project  
(1st Thursday).....7-9pm
- Cancer Support Group (no mtgs. in August)  
(2nd & 4th Thursday).....7-9pm
- Lesbians Choosing Children Network  
(2nd Thurs, monthly).....7:30-10pm

**FRIDAY**

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

**SATURDAY**

- Women's Writing Group  
(biweekly).....noon-2pm
- Open discussion on Coming Out for Women  
of All Ages(monthly, 1st Sat)...11am-1pm
- Lesbian Couples (once a month)...11am-1pm
- Survival in the Workplace (every other  
Sat).....11am-noon

**GROUPS WITH TOPICS**

**Lesbian Rap** Mon, 7:30-9pm

- Aug 12 Dating Women
- Aug 19 Talking About Sex
- Aug 26 Share Your Talent  
(bring poems, songs, etc)

**Bisexual Rap** Tue, 7:30-9:30pm

- Aug 13 Sex
- Aug 20 Transexualism
- Aug 27 Sexual Abuse

**30+ Lesbian Rap** Tu 7-8:30pm

- Aug 13 What Are We Learning From  
Our Relationships?
- Aug 20 Lesbian Single Mothers
- Aug 27 Codependency

**Lesbian Couples Group**

Saturday, Aug 24, 11am-1pm: 'Here Come the  
... Brides? (Telling the World About  
Our Commitments)

Saturday, Sept. 28, 11am-1pm: 'Sharing  
ideas on keeping our relationships  
alive and well and so romantic.'

**INCEST SUPPORT GROUPS**

**Facilitated Open Discussion Group**

3rd Thursday, each month, 7:30-9:15pm  
August 15: 'Work Issues.'

September 19: 'Trying to cope with the  
demands of work when our inner  
demands are so strong.'

October 17: 'Feeling so bad when things  
are going well.'

November 21: 'I wish I had said...'

**NEW: INCEST SURVIVORS THINKTANK**

Fall/Winter Program

Wed, Sept 4: Is the Mental Health  
Community Meeting Our Needs?

Wed, Oct 2: Incest, Sexual Orientation  
and Sexuality

Wed, Nov 6: Incest in the Media

Wed, Dec 4: Anti-Racism and Incest  
Survivor Work

Wed, Jan 8, 1992: Public Accountability  
of Perpetrators

\* The group will begin promptly at 7:15pm  
and will end at 9:15pm. Please be on time!

**FANTASTIC BOOK SALE!!**

Coming in early autumn a gigantic,  
fabulous, wonderful Women's Center Library  
3rd Annual Book Sale. A great selection  
of fiction, non-fiction at low prices.  
Bring donations to Center. Call 354-8807  
for date of Sale or to offer to help.

**WOMEN'S CENTER HOURS**

Monday - Thursday 10am - 10pm  
Friday 10am - 8pm  
Saturday 11am - 2pm

THE WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL CENTER, INC.  
46 Pleasant Street  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Phone: (617) 354-8807

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**CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY TELEVISION**

provides programming of local interest to Cambridge residents on cable channels 19, 54, 55, and 66. Every Wednesday night at 9 pm on Channel 19, watch for CAMBRIDGE WOMEN IN CABLE, a series produced exclusively by women, for women. Call 225-2500 for a free program guide.

**WCRC**

The Women's Counseling and Resource Center, a volunteer collective of feminist therapists, is seeking new members. We are looking for therapists who are licensed and have at least two years of post graduate experience. They must be willing to commit 2-4 hours a week to provide mental health services to low and no-income women. We use space at the Women's Center. For more information call the WCRC at 492-8568

**WOMEN'S SCHOOL**

You can Dance in our Revolution! The Women's School is developing a fall course schedule now. We can help you learn to teach. Call the Center for details.

**MOVE TO THE BACKYARD**

On these warm summer evenings, it is very pleasant to hang out on the front steps and walkways of the center, and perhaps smoke a cigarette, when your group pauses for a break, or before and after a meeting. Unfortunately, this sometimes makes it difficult for women who are entering the center to come in without stepping over (or on) someone. It can also be a problem for women who are allergic to cigarette smoke. The smoke often drifts back into the house through the open windows and door.

We have come up with a solution to these problems that will (hopefully) be acceptable to everyone concerned: We would like to make the backyard the place for congregating and smoking. The backyard has the advantages of more space, a picnic table and benches to sit on. We will provide buckets of sand and a trash can for butts and litter so that the area can be kept neat, clean and safe. Of course this space is also open to all women who want to use it throughout the day and evening when the Center is open.

Thanks for your cooperation.



WE DEPEND ON YOUR SUPPORT!! EVERY DOLLAR COUNTS!! MANY THANKS!!  
Yes - I want to help the Center. Here is my tax-deductible contribution.

\$5      \$10      \$25      \$50      \$100      other

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

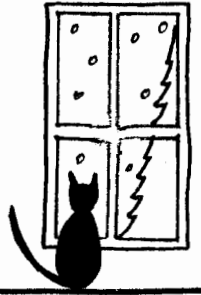


# ♀ ON OUR WAY

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

(617) 354-8807  
TTY and VOICE

December, 1991



## FOR CRYING OUT LOUD! SEEKS NEW MEMBERS OPEN MEETING DECEMBER 16th at 7pm

We are delighted to report that after a hiatus of several months, the Survivors Newsletter Collective is becoming active again. The "remaining, struggling collective members" will be holding a meeting here at the Center at 7pm on December 16th for any women who are interested in helping with the production of *For Crying Out Loud*. At the meeting, the current members will explain what's involved in putting out the newsletter.

The next step will be to organize a topic meeting for the re-vamped collective in early January, and to put out a Winter '92 issue. All interested women are encouraged to attend the meeting on December 16th and to become involved in this great project. We are all looking forward to the next issue of *For Crying Out Loud*.

## LETTER ABOUT JUDGE THOMAS

To the Editor:

"JUDGE CLARENCE THOMAS CONFIRMED--TIME FOR HEALING" read the headlines. The struggle to heal has been the story of my life for the past two years.

Several months ago I confronted my uncle with his sexual abuse of me when I was a child. This week on television I watched Professor Anita Hill tell the simple truth about being sexually harassed, while Clarence Thomas used the same defenses my uncle used when confronted: categorical denial, public outrage, self-pity, counter-attack (she's crazy), red herrings (it's a plot), and reputation (everyone else says I'm a terrific guy). My uncle could have written his lines.

I am deeply sad that sexual abuse is still something so many people refuse to look at. Thomas is going to get away with it--as my uncle did. This is a crime of power that thrives in secrecy. It has to be brought out into the open if it is ever to be stopped. I wish to say to all sexual abusers on behalf of their victims:

We are not crazy, we did not fantasize your sexual aggression or desire it, and I, for one, will no longer support your lies with my silence.

Eleanor O'Byron

## ALTERNATIVE HOLIDAY GATHERING

Whether you're feeling isolated, overwhelmed, or just want to spend some time in a warm, supportive environment, come to the Women's Center from 6-9pm on Christmas Day. Join together with other women to share feelings, concerns, and strategies for coping with the holiday. All women are welcome; bring food to share if you'd like.  
TOGETHER WE CAN DETOXYFIFY THE HOLIDAY!

## INCEST SURVIVORS NETWORK

Urgently needs volunteers to do light bookkeeping or to co-facilitate some of the third Thursday survivors' drop-in groups. If you're interested please call Judy at (617) 354-8807.



## EXPOSED!

Over the last year, the Women's Center has received quite a bit of attention in the media. A very complimentary article in the Cambridge TAB described the Center:

"The Women's Center is a pleasant place on Pleasant Street. For 20 years this lovely old Victorian home near Central Square has provided a place where women can find friendship, serenity, support and information. It is a peaceful oasis in a not-always peaceful world."

The article went on to elaborate on the "staggering" variety of services the center provides.

The Women's Center has also been mentioned in the media several times as a place for incest survivors to receive help and information. Nationally, we have been listed as a resource in an article about incest in *Cosmopolitan* magazine, and in several self-help books written for survivors. Locally, our phone number was given out on the Good Day television program. We also sponsored and provided resource information to accompany a photographic exhibit about incest survivors at the Boston Public Library.

Our most recent media exposure came during the Thomas confirmation hearings, when Channel 56 came to the Women's Center to interview Francine Crognale from the Sexual Harassment at Work group, and Manjusree Sen from Surviving in the Workplace for the 10 o'clock news.

We appreciate the recognition we have received in the media, and hope that word of our resources and services will continue to spread.

## HOME IMPROVEMENT

Thanks to Laura McMurry and Dotty Prout for picking up the fixing-up activity at the Women's Center. The transformation of the front of the garage is, after 2 years, nearly finished. Several holes in the walls are now filled, and there is lots of fresh paint (latex, because alkyd paints keep emitting toxins into the environment). A bookcase/table for notebooks in the sitting room has been built.

More has been done and there's lots left, so if you'd like to volunteer to repot plants, wield a hammer, or join others for a clean-up day, call Judy at 354-8807.

## NEW AND IMPROVED

The needs of women in our community are always changing, to keep up with these changes we must update old and create new resources. Over the last year, a great deal of effort has been put into this project, much of it on the part of our four summer interns: Greta, Tracey, Amy, and Jennifer. We now have new notebooks on reproductive health issues, eating disorders, and lesbian resources, which are kept in the sitting room. Our former fundraiser, Alice, worked hard on the notebooks containing articles about Ritual Abuse and Multiple Personalities. These books, also in the sitting room, are constantly being used by women who visit the Women's Center.

Another useful, frequently updated resource we have that some women may be unaware of is our therapy referrals--questionnaires filled out by therapists that are kept in the staff office. You need to ask to look at these. They are in folders organized by the therapists' location (Boston, North of Boston, New Hampshire, Cambridge, Somerville, West of Boston, etc.)

Women call for all different kinds of information. If you have any suggestions of good resources (aerobics for pregnant women, health care providers, sports, support groups, temp agencies, therapists, anything!), please give us a call or send them in the enclosed envelope so we can add them to our listings.

## A CELEBRATION OF 2 DECADES!

On Saturday, March 23rd, old friends and new friends gathered together to celebrate the Women's Center's 20th Anniversary at the MIT Student Center. The program for the evening included intriguing recollections about the dramatic beginning of the Women's Center, personal accounts of both good and bad experiences at the Women's Center over the years, poetry, singing, a historical display about the contemporary Boston area Women's Movement, and of course a cake. It was a time to reminisce and rejoice, to think about the value of the Women's Center and to make a commitment to keep it alive for the next 20 years, and the next 20..., and the next....

A dance followed the program, with a music mix to satisfy the oldies and the now generation.

Thanks to all who participated in making the celebration such a success. It was nice to see so many of you there!

## 'WOMEN AND WORK' DAY

"Women and Work" is the theme of the open house job fair that will be held on December 6, 1991 from 12 noon to 9pm at the Women's Center. Despite the "depressin' recession", this event will help women uncover the hidden job market and learn the inside scoops on how to secure the "right" job. The event will include a panel of women sharing their work experiences as well as workshops on interviewing, resume writing, networking, and evaluating the Myers-Briggs Personality test.

### PROGRAM:

#### Noon-2pm - EXPLORING WORK OPPORTUNITIES

A presentation of women sharing work experiences. Panelists will include: Anna Chen (videographer), Terry Haliday (paramedic), Connie Nelson (recruiter, Women in the Building Trades), and Robin Prentice (Small Business Owner).

#### 2:15-4pm - INTERVIEWING WORKSHOP

Elena Cervone, President of Bio Works and volunteer at the Women's Center, will discuss proven techniques to make the job interview a success.

#### 4:15-6pm - RESUME WRITING

Representatives from various career counseling agencies will present resume writing guidelines and provide one-on-one assistance to writing the 'right' resume. Sheila Cook (Women's Job Counseling Center), Alberta Nicholson (My Sister's Place), Gina Milani (Employment Resources, Inc.), and Carol Rosenblatt (Jewish Vocational Services).

#### 7-9pm - NETWORKING

Linda Wong, Associate Director of Sojourner magazine, will lead a workshop on finding the 'ins' in the hidden job market. Network and meet new contacts.

7:30-9pm - MYERS-BRIGGS PERSONALITY TEST  
Eileen Lee, career development graduate student and the Women's Center job program intern, will discuss the Myers-Briggs Personality test.

Currently, the Women's Center has two drop-in job search support groups. Women in the groups have come together to break the isolation of the job search and share resources with each other to encourage a more positive approach to becoming happily employed. Lack of motivation, increased anxiety, and a need for more focused goals have been the common threads that tie the members together. Through the positive reinforcement provided by the group, some women have discovered that there is a possibility of success beyond the "help wanted" ads.

The "Women and Work" day and the job search support group were a result of a job/career program survey that was conducted at the Women's Center. The survey had questions regarding the needs of women who were in the process of looking for a job and the answers revealed that the women were interested in having a job fair and a support group to discuss the difficulties of the job search. When asked "what problems/difficulties have you encountered during your job/career search?", some of the responses were:

"fear, mental block about resume writing"

"figuring out what I want to do. Knowing what to do to get what I want."

"Low pay. Few jobs, many people applying."

"Biggest obstacle is my internal blocks from cold calling, networking, etc."

"Knowing what I want to do has been a lifelong problem. Organization and planning are also difficult."

As revealed through the survey, the job search is difficult, but if you attend a job search support group or the "Women and Work" day, the search does not have to be lonely or impossible.

### THANKS, EILEEN

The Women's Center wishes to thank our intern Eileen Lee for starting up and running the job search support groups, and for all the other work she's done to make the Center a better resource for job-hunters. Unfortunately for us, Eileen will be going back to her masters program in Career Development on the West Coast in January. We hope to be able to keep the job search support programs going when she leaves. If you would like to facilitate a group, or volunteer to help women with job search skills, please call Judy or Jennifer at 354-8807.

### WELCOME, JENNIFER

After working at the Women's Center as a volunteer for five years, Jennifer Norris recently accepted a full-time staff position. Jennifer has been involved in the production of the newsletter, staffed the phones, provided childcare, made flyers, run errands, and was a key to the success of our 20th Anniversary celebration. As a volunteer, Jennifer could always be counted on during the toughest of times, and as our new staff member, we have confidence that she will be a great asset to the Center in the coming year.



### 30+ LESBIAN RAP

The 30+ Lesbian Rap group meets at the Women's Center every Tuesday evening from 7-8:30pm. Each week there is a specific topic and a facilitator who has agreed to start the discussion. The Rap has been going on for about three years. It is a place to discuss topics of interest to 30+ lesbians. New women are always welcome. Attendance varies. Some nights there is barely room for another woman to sit on the floor while other nights the chairs and couches are not quite filled. The faces of the attendees vary as well, there are often some women who have attended regularly for weeks, some who have come for the first time, some who attend now and then. On your first night, it's easy to think that everyone else is a regular. It's not true.

The discussion is started at 7 by the facilitator who welcomes everyone, introduces the topic, and describes whether we should speak at will or in order. No one is required to speak, although everyone is asked to say her first name. The discussion depends on everyone in the room and is often very interesting, fun and lively. At 8:15 or so, the facilitator allows room for those who haven't had a chance to get a word in. Around 8:30, she wraps up the discussion and thanks everyone for coming. Sometimes women in the group will go out afterwards for coffee or food.

Topics vary, from "Lesbians and AIDS" to a sing-along. You can call the Women's Center for this week's topic. Topics are chosen by the group on the first Tuesday of each month for the following month. All suggestions are welcome and everyone is encouraged to suggest topics and to be a facilitator.

### SURVIVING IN THE WORKPLACE

The "Surviving in the Workplace" support group allows participants to discuss job-related problems in a safe environment. Participants are able to creatively problem-solve on issues that impact their lives. Sexual Harassment and Sex/Race Discrimination that can and do cause joblessness are issues of concern for every woman. Participants can help, and have helped one another to find creative solutions to "Surviving in the Workplace". In December we will start meeting on the second Tuesday of each month from 7-9pm.

### INCEST SURVIVORS 3rd THURSDAY FACILITATED DISCUSSION GROUP

This is a topic focused, facilitated meeting. All women who have had incest experiences or who suspect that they might have been abused are welcome.

Acceptance of ourselves where we are now is the key to our healing. Survivors need to be listened to and heard, not judged or advised. We are a diverse group coming from all backgrounds, races, sexual preferences, political persuasions, ages, physical abilities, classes, and professions. What we do have in common is the betrayal and violation that all of us experienced. We can help each other by accepting our sister survivors for who we are now and by giving each other the mutual support that we all need.

Recent topics have been "Dealing with Abusers in the Present" and "Self-Esteem". The topic for the meeting on December 19th will be "Grieving and Mourning". Topics for the next four months will be selected by the group at December's meeting.

Please call the Women's Center at 354-8807 for topics and information.

### COMING OUT GROUP

The Coming Out group welcomes women of all ages and backgrounds; those who have recently acknowledged their feelings of attraction towards other women and those who feel that coming out is a life-long process. The topics are varied, flexible and responsive dealing with issues such as: coming out to ourselves, friends or family; lifestyle issues; work problems; or finding or defining "the community". Women are encouraged to share, question, or discuss their ideas, experiences or feelings in a relaxed and accepting atmosphere.

The Coming Out group has been ongoing for two and a half years with the same facilitators. The meetings, usually well attended, are the first Saturday of every month from 11am to 1pm. There are always new members as well as many returning friends.



## PERFUME

Remember when you were considered a wimp or health freak for telling someone their cigarette bothered you? That was before the days of studies on passive smoke and cancer rates in non-smokers. Well, it seems that quite a few women these days are allergic to strong perfume, and it's not all in our minds.

Formaldehyde or other heavy chemicals are used in some perfumes, and a number of us develop headaches, sweats, fatigue, nausea or muscular weakness in response to these perfumes.

It's hard to tell people that their perfume is making us feel sick. Who wants to imply that someone smells, after all? But if people are aware of the problem, they're less likely to be offended. It's not a personal criticism, it's an allergy--just as some women are allergic to cats.

Please, when you come to the Women's Center--in fact, when you go out anywhere that you are in prolonged contact with others--be aware of this issue. The person next to you on the bus or in the movie theater could be very allergic to that perfume.

## REMINDERS

We ask that if you use the Women's Center you will do your part to keep our space clean, neat and uncluttered. Hundreds of women come in and out each week, and while staff are happy to help women get information, we do not want to clean up after anyone.

Another request: please don't congregate in large groups out front before your meeting or during a break. Many women talk about how hard it is to get themselves to come to meetings here, and we want to make sure it is easy for anyone to get to the door. Your help in making the Women's Center a welcoming place is most appreciated!

And, lastly, on the cold days and nights of winter, please keep the front door closed until you are really going to exit. Often, in the past, women stopped to chat after opening the door and the Women's Center absorbed chilly air that lingered long after they had gone.

Thank you for your cooperation!



## CHILDCARE



It's Friday morning, and you walk into the Center to sounds of crying, laughing, screaming, and singing echoing through the house. No, it's not a staff meeting, it's childcare for the Mother's Support Group. For the past several weeks, Lisa Watson and I have been taking care of between four and six (the more the merrier!) children while their mothers meet upstairs, sharing with and supporting one another. Every week I look forward to Friday mornings, when Lisa and I have the pleasure of getting to play with and getting to know these fascinating little people. They can certainly be a handful, but are always a delight. Thanks Morgan, Jack, Philip, Theona, Kelsey, and Jenna Rae for making childcare SO MUCH FUN!

By the way, women are requesting childcare so they can attend support groups, particularly the Battered Women's Support Groups on Mondays 7:30-9pm or Wednesdays 7-8:30pm. If you would be willing to do some childcare during meetings, please call me, Jennifer Norris, at (617)354-8807.



## AND FOR MOMS

The Mothers Support Group meets from 10:30am-noon on Fridays at least through December. If you are interested, we'd love to have you and your kid/s! Call (617)354-8807 to get in touch with the facilitator, or just come by. If it's not a good time for you, call anyway to leave your name, #, and schedule. The Women's Center often offers time-limited Mother's Support Groups with childcare.

## THE WOMEN'S SCHOOL

The Women's School finished another exciting semester this Fall. It included a great variety of classes which were met with a high level of enthusiasm.

The school is currently gearing up to start planning for next semester and they need YOU! They are looking for volunteers to join the collective, and/or to facilitate workshops. No experience is needed for voluntary positions, and the Women's School will provide any necessary training.

If you are interested in becoming a part of the oldest continuously-run women's school in the nation, call Beth Rosen at 848-4981, or Holly Daschbach at 876-4818.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS  
GROUPS WITH TOPICS**

**Lesbian Rap** Mon, 7:30-9pm  
 Dec 2 Getting Over One-way Crushes  
 Dec 9 Cruising 101  
 Dec 16 Holiday Party: Games & Potluck  
 Dec 23 How to Deal with your Family & the Holidays  
 Dec 30 Coming Out Stories

**Bisexual Rap** Tue, 7:30-9:30pm  
 Dec 3 Reclaiming Language  
 Dec 10 Games Night  
 Dec 17 Dealing with Family in the Holiday Season  
 Dec 24, 31 - NO MEETINGS

**30+ Lesbian Rap** Tu 7-8:30pm  
 Dec 3 Lesbians & their Families  
 Dec 10 Breaking Up or Making Up  
 Dec 17 Holiday Party Potluck  
 Dec 24, 31 - NO MEETINGS

**INCEST SUPPORT GROUPS**

**FACILITATED OPEN DISCUSSION GROUP**  
 3rd Thursday, each month, 7:30-9:15pm  
 December 12: Topic - 'Sadness & Mourning'

**INCEST SURVIVORS THINKTANK**  
 Wed, Dec. 4: Anti-racism & Incest Survivor Work

Wed, Jan 8: Public Accountability of Perpatrators

\* The group will begin promptly at 7:15pm and will end at 9:15pm. Please be on time!



**"Say It, Sister!"**

"Say It, Sister!" is a community radio program with a strong feminist and progressive political perspective that is currently on the air every other Wednesday, 7-8pm, on WMBR, 99.1FM. "SiS" NEEDS NEW BLOOD! NO RADIO EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY to join, just a hearty enthusiasm for getting women's voices heard, and a desire to learn about radio in a fun, non-competitive women's collective. We especially need women interested in training to be engineers.

To get involved, or for more info., call Michele at 623-8681 (eves, wknds.), or write to: WMBR Radio, "Say It, Sister!" 3 Ames Street, Cambridge, MA 02142

Thanks!

**ONGOING GROUPS  
AT THE WOMEN'S CENTER**

**SUNDAY**  
 -Women for Sobriety.....2-3:30pm  
 -Birthmothers (Women who have surrendered children to adoption) first Sunday each month.....1:30pm

**MONDAY**  
 -Job Search Support.....11am-12:30pm  
 -Support for Battered Women.....7:30-9pm  
 -Women's NA 12 step.....7:30-9pm  
 -Lesbian Rap.....7:30-9pm  
 -Boston Bisexual Women's Network (1st Mon, even #'d months)...7:30-9:45pm  
 -All Center Meeting (biweekly).....6-8pm  
 -Reproductive Rights Network R2N2 (2nd, 4th Mons.).....6:45-9:30pm  
 -Lesbian Partners & Ex-Partners of Incest Survivors (1st & 3rd Mon.).....7-8:30pm  
 -Women w/ Disabilities (3rd Mon)..7:30-9pm

**TUESDAY**  
 -Bisexual Women's Rap.....7:30-10pm  
 -30+ Lesbian Rap.....7-8:30pm  
 -Eating Awareness and Body Image.....7-9pm  
 -Surviving in the Workplace (2nd Tuesday).....7-9pm

**WEDNESDAY**  
 -Lesbian Al-Anon (childcare).....6:30-8pm  
 -Battered Women's Support Group (Weekly except 3rd Wed. of month).....7-8:30pm  
 -Incest Survivors' Thinktank...7:15-9:15pm (Usually first Wed. of the month)  
 -Job Search Support Group.....6:30-8:30pm

**THURSDAY**  
 -Incest Survivors Open Discussion Group (weekly).....7:30-9:30pm  
 -Facilitated Open Discussion for Incest Survivors (3rd Thursday).....7:30-9:15pm  
 -Women's Community Cancer Project (1st Thursday).....7-9pm  
 -Cancer Support Group (no mtos. in August) (2nd & 4th Thursday).....7-9pm  
 -Lesbians Choosing Children Network (2nd Thurs, monthly).....7:30-10pm

**FRIDAY**  
 -Incest Survivors Anonymous.....6:30-8pm

**SATURDAY**  
 -Women's Writing Group (biweekly).....noon-2pm  
 -Open discussion on Coming Out for Women of All Ages (monthly, 1st Sat)...11am-1pm

**WOMEN'S CENTER HOURS**

Monday - Thursday 10am - 10pm  
 Friday 10am - 8pm  
 Saturday 11am - 2pm