

UPCOMING TRAINING - RESOURCES - SUPPORT**CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE RECOVERY GROUP**

Group information night: Monday, September 16th at 7:30 p.m.

This will be an opportunity to meet the group facilitators and to hear a short overview of the group process and the materials used. This group is designed to provide education and a safe environment for women to grow through the pain of past abuse into richer relationships with God, others, and themselves. No set fee. A donation is requested from participants for each session once the group begins.

VOLUNTEER ADVOCATE TRAINING

Beginning Saturday, October 12th from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

A 16-hour training course designed to prepare members of the body of Christ to act as advocates for women dealing with childhood sexual abuse, sexual assault, and/or domestic violence. Cost is \$30.00 for workshop and materials. Optional box lunch is \$7.25.

PERSONAL GROWTH & MINISTRY TRAINING COURSE

Beginning Tuesday, September 10th.

A weekly class that is beneficial for personal growth and/or preparation for ministry. Over a period of seven months this course covers the fundamentals of spiritual life, understanding people, understanding pain, and principles of ministry. The *Personal Growth and Ministry Training Course* is designed to renew and strengthen a believer's confidence in the sufficiency of Christ and His gospel and her/his own ability to minister to hurting people.

This year there will be a daytime class from 1:00 to 2:45 p.m. and an evening class from 7:15 to 9:00 p.m. Cost is \$7.50 per week for class and materials.

ALL TRAINING WILL BE LOCATED AT THE SAFE PLACE MINISTRIES OFFICE, 2645 N. COLE ROAD, SUITE H
Space is limited. Call or e-mail the SPM office for more information and to sign up for classes, training, or group:
323-2169 or splace@spro.net

**2002-2003 SPM RESOURCE
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We want very much for **SAFE PLACE NEWS** to be a helpful resource for many people. With this in mind, permission to duplicate this newsletter for free distribution is granted. Any quotations or references to it should give proper credit to SAFE PLACE MINISTRIES. We encourage input and suggestions. Send correspondence to:
SPM, P. O. Box 4892, Boise, ID 83711, or call 208-323-2169.

An annual tax deductible gift of \$10.00 is welcome to help cover expenses.

SAFE PLACE NEWS

*Promoting safe places, consistent with the character of Christ,
for women and their families to heal and grow.*

Issue 17

August 2002

TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM PROVIDES HOPE

*"Powerlessness, like poverty,
steals the passion to
dream....When we lose hope,
we stop remembering and
telling stories that arouse our
desire and anticipation. Our
thoughts become narrow,
focused on loss rather than on
what will one day be
sure and true."
~Dan Allender
"The Healing Path"*

Abuse victims are often short on hope. Months (often years) of betrayal and powerlessness have eroded their hope and exhausted their resources, leaving them physically, emotionally, financially, and spiritually depleted. Without the skills needed to financially provide for themselves and their children, they face a future without the hope to carry them forward.

It is estimated that half of all homeless women and children are victims of domestic violence.¹ Some shelter programs estimate that 30 percent of their clients return to abusive environments because they are unable to obtain safe and affordable housing.²

After months of research, planning, and prayer, Safe Place Ministries has launched a program to help women make the transition from their abusive past to living purposeful, hopeful, and viable lives in the future. The **Transitional Program** is designed to provide support for women in all major life areas while they are pursuing an education or job skills that will allow them to earn an adequate income to provide for their families' needs. (In Idaho's

current economy, a single mother with three children must earn \$14.98 an hour in order to provide safe and affordable housing for her family. With minimum wage at \$5.15 per hour, a person would have to work in excess of 100 hours a week to afford a three-bedroom rental.)

Financial viability may be one of the most urgent goals for women, but it is only one piece of a much larger picture for women to successfully meet the challenges they face. To meet those needs, the Transitional Program provides for case management, vocational and educational counseling, advocacy, professional counseling, support groups, spiritual care, social services, life skills training, and mentoring. These direct services and those

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FUN FALL FUND RAISER

Come join the fun! Walk with our team at the St. Luke's Celebration Women's Fitness Walk on Saturday, September 21st. Now in its tenth year, the Celebration Walk is a great opportunity to support SPM while inspiring your fitness. For the second year in a row, SPM will have a walking team. Last year 17 women walked on behalf of SPM, gathering over \$635.00 in sponsorships and donations. This year we would

like to have 50 walkers on our team and gather contributions in the amount of \$1,500.00. To join the SPM team, your entry must be sent in together with our team leader form. Please contact our office by September 4th to sign up!

*Ask co-workers, family, friends,
and neighbors to sponsor your
efforts and their contributions will
go directly to
Safe Place Ministries.*



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Reviewing some of my non-profit management resources this past month, I came across one of my favorite concepts related to nonprofit organizations. In Robert Andringa and Ted Engstrom's introduction to their book, "Nonprofit Board Answer Book," they say this about nonprofits:

"Nonprofit organizations are one of America's greatest heritages and a distinguishing feature of our society. Business supplies goods and services, government controls and regulates, but the nonprofit organization has a different mission. Its 'product,' writes Peter F. Drucker, 'is neither a pair of shoes nor an effective regulation. Its product is a changed human being. The nonprofit institutions are human-change agents.' We are drawn to what Drucker calls the 'high ground effort of changing lives for the better' in a world of selfish interests."

Our mission, our *product*, is a changed life. We hope each time we meet with a client, each time we make available a service, that we create an environment, an opportunity for life-giving transformation to take place.

Our English words, **metamorphosis** and **transformation**, relate back to the Greek word **morphoo** (the inward and real formation of the essential nature of a person). For many of us when we hear the word **metamorphosis** we think of the change or transformation of a creeping caterpillar into a soaring butterfly. The corresponding Greek word is **metamorphoo**—a complete change in form or character.

I like the words **morphoo** and **metamorphoo**. I like in the Bible how Paul talks about Christ being formed (**morphoo**) in each one of us (Gal. 4:19), and appeals to us to be transformed (**metamorphoo**) by the renewing of our minds (Rom. 12:2). As we have been working on the development of our new Transitional Program these past few months, I even thought of calling it a *Transformation Program*, but I was pretty sure people

wouldn't know what we were talking about!

At SPM we do hope for positive change and transformation in our clients' lives. We appreciate that we cannot control change and would never want to coerce change. We do, however, want to promote safe places, consistent with the character of Christ, for women and their families to heal and grow. We have designed our Transitional Program to help women and their children change—

—from homelessness to safe homes
—from poverty and financial stress to financial viability
—from overwhelming circumstances to deliberate, healthy lifestyles
—from lies to truth
—from abuse and isolation to healthy, supportive relationships
—from confusion and hopelessness to an intimate, secure relationship with God.

Nancy

exhaustion to the joy of learning to live healthily. We can determine when new life skills are learned but how do we measure the joy of hearing children's laughter as, for the first time in their short lives, they invite friends over, no longer tyrannized by a father's explosive anger?

"Evil intends for us to succumb to betrayal by giving up on relationships; it intends for us to resign to powerlessness by giving up on the future."
~Dan Allender
"The Healing Path"

We can encourage our clients' spiritual growth, but only God can measure the emergence of faith that overflows in gratitude expressed in this young mother's words as she writes: **"Thank you so much to everyone who has been a part of praying for, encouraging, and giving to our family so graciously financially. I have no idea who you are, but I thank God each and every day**

for you. . . . I am sure that our situation would be devastating and hopeless without the love and faithfulness of God through each of you. Thank you!"

¹Conference of Mayors, *A Status Report on Hunger and Homelessness in America's Cities*, December, 1999.

²Dawn J. D. Sydney, *Helping Women Out of Homelessness*.

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available in partnership with other agencies throughout the community enable women to join a network that provides hope and encouragement.

The Transitional Program took a giant step forward this spring with the purchase of a multi-family housing unit in Boise. For the first time, we can offer two single mothers and their children affordable housing while they pursue their educational and life goals. The program allows them to attend school and work up to 35 hours a week. The remaining hours are set aside to allow them to spend time with their children, participate in program goals, and experience healing and growth. When opportunities arise for participating clients to move into more permanent housing, SPM will help them make the transition into those units while continuing to assist the clients in reaching their goals in all of the other areas.

It's always easiest to talk about the areas of a program that can be measured and quantified. We delight in seeing women move from poverty to financial stability. We can document their progress and inform those who contribute the financial resources, both individuals and organizations whose generosity makes this program possible. It's much harder to quantify the happiness of a woman moving from physical and mental

WITH THANKS

The lyrics of Ray Boltz's song, *Thank You for Giving to the Lord*, run through my mind each time I think about the transitional housing that now provides hope for two young families. Knowing that many of you who volunteered would not like to see your name in print, we would like to share with our readers instead the wide range of time and talent that went into making this home ready in an incredibly short amount of time.

- ◆ Painting
- ◆ Carpenter work
- ◆ Fence building
- ◆ Landscaping
- ◆ Cups of cold water
- ◆ Meals
- ◆ Furniture repair
- ◆ Furniture movers
- ◆ Appliance movers
- ◆ Locks & doors
- ◆ Property management
- ◆ Loving the children
- ◆ Hugs
- ◆ Plants
- ◆ Electrical work
- ◆ Appliances
- ◆ Laughter
- ◆ Lawn care
- ◆ Sprinklers
- ◆ Prayer
- ◆ Popsicles
- ◆ Tools
- ◆ Financial support
- ◆ Realty services

Our hearts overflow with gratitude to each of you for volunteering your time and expertise. If you visit our office and hear us humming the chorus —

*Thank you for giving to the Lord,
I am a life that was changed.*

*Thank you for giving to the Lord,
I am so glad you gave.*

— you'll know we are thinking of you!

ABIGAIL'S STORY, AN HONEST LOOK

Wisdom and active faith changed her life...

Abigail was a strong, resourceful woman. She was also an abused wife, trapped in a marriage she could not leave. Her husband, Nabal, was a rich, wicked, foolish man. He didn't take advice. His servants couldn't talk to him. He was surly and mean, ungrateful and stingy, harsh and overbearing.

David and his men had provided protection for Nabal's flocks and herdsmen that year. And the herdsmen were grateful. Their growing trust had turned to friendship. After the sheep were back in their home pastures, it was time to celebrate. They assumed that David would be thanked and honored for his part in increasing Nabal's wealth. That was the custom in their land. But when David's men appeared, Nabal hurled insults at them, attacked David's character, and coldly dismissed them.

One of Nabal's servants made the wise choice to travel back to David's camp with his men. Whatever his reasons for going, he quickly realized that David was angry at the injustice and ready to set things right. While David's 400 men were preparing and packing provisions for the trip, the servant set out for the ranch to find Abigail.

Faced with the consequences of Nabal's foolishness, Abigail acted quickly to save the lives of her family, her servants, **and** her husband. She did not hide from the truth. Or run from the truth. Her husband had arrogantly and foolishly put all of their lives in danger.

She faced the truth and made a plan. If her plan failed, she would watch her family be slaughtered. If her plan succeeded, her household would be safe but she would face her husband's wrath.

Abigail called the servants to action, asking them to prepare a feast for David's men. Once the donkeys were loaded and on their way to meet David, Abigail composed herself (is that possible while riding on a donkey?) and thought through what she would say when face to face with David.

I Samuel 25:23-31 records her words. Her words were truthful, honoring, full of hope and faith in God's plan. She appealed to David's good heart. David responded with praise to God for Abigail's good judgment and praised her for calling forth something better in him.

With danger averted and with David's blessing, Abigail returned home to find Nabal oblivious and drunk—not a good time to have a serious discussion. Only after he was sober did Abigail tell him what had happened, exposing the consequences of his foolish behavior, letting him feel the full weight of his own actions.

Abigail's story is the story of one woman's bold, creative choice in response to her husband's abuse. It is not a formula—follow these steps and God will change your husband's heart—but it does provide a different perspective for those committed to thinking biblically and who honestly grapple with how a Christian woman

should respond to abuse.³

Abigail.....

- ◆ trusted God
- ◆ faced the truth
- ◆ refused to hide the truth about her husband
- ◆ moved to limit the damage of Nabal's destructive choices
- ◆ acted contrary to her husband's wishes but with his best interests in mind
- ◆ acted behind his back—without his knowledge or consent
- ◆ took action to protect the lives of those in her care
- ◆ offered Nabal a taste of life—and opportunity to repent—by letting him know the severity of the consequences of his sin
- ◆ was propelled into a time of great change (transition) that she could have neither predicted nor imagined
- ◆ called David to remember God's character and purpose in David's life.

³The complete, richer, non-condensed story is found in I Samuel 25. Alice Matthews masterfully blends the lives of Old Testament women with the choices contemporary women must make in her book, *A Woman God Can Use*, (Discovery House, 1990).