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MENHEALING

WHO WE ARE

MenHealing is a grassroots, not-for-profit organization that is dedicated to providing hope and healing to men who are survivors of sexual assault.

For many years we have held recovery events for men all over the US, but more recently we have made a commitment to make the messages of healing more accessible to anyone who is interested.

When we discovered that prisons in the US were providing tablets to inmates, we knew we had an opportunity to reach out to you.

We know that it is possible to heal from the impacts of sexual assault.

We understand the healing power of relationships and community.

We believe in the importance of taking care of yourself.

We hope that you will make use of the resources we have provided. We plan to continue updating and adding to those resources on a regular basis.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions and you can contact us at:

MenHealing

1445 South Hoytsville Rd Coalville. UT 84017

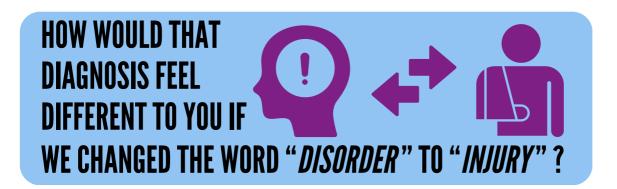
contact@menhealing.org

Please be aware that at the present time we do not have the ability to respond to every suggestion or inquiry, but be assured that we are listening!



THE MENHEALING ORGANIZATION IS COMMITTED TO CHANGING THE IDEA THAT THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA BECOMES A PERMANENT "DISORDER."

HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE DIAGNOSIS PTSD,
OR POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER?
PERHAPS YOU HAVE EVEN BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH PTSD.

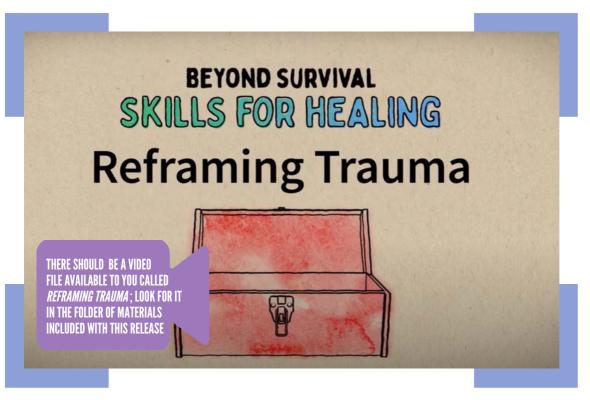


IN OTHER WORDS:

POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS INJURY

A DISORDER IS SOMETHING THAT YOU ARE STUCK WITH.
AN INJURY IS SOMETHING THAT YOU CAN HEAL FROM.

THIS VIDEO MIGHT HELP YOU TO SEE THIS AS A REAL POSSIBILITY.



TRUE FACTS AND COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT MALE SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT PART 1

Here is a sample of what IS true and what is NOT true about boys and men who have experienced sexual assault in their lifetimes.



Boys are as vulnerable to sexual victimization as girls. And no matter how old a man or a woman is perpetrators can be bigger, stronger or in positions of greater power than the person they seek out.





The current understanding is that 1 in every 4 girls and 1 in every 6 boys experience sexual victimization before the age of 18.





There is no evidence that being sexually assaulted has an impact on sexual orientation.



Boys or men who have sexually victimized will become homosexual.



Sexual victimization of boys by an older female is never a rite of passage regardless of how the culture may portray it. It is the responsibility of all adults to protect children from harm.



Sexual acts forced upon a boy by an older girl or an adult woman is "just a rite of passage."

If you were a victim of sexual assault as a child or as an adult, you may find yourself in some or all of these reactions. These are common responses that get created in an effort to protect yourself from the emotional pain of sexual victimization. As time goes on, these responses begin to hurt you, instead. We want to assure you that it is possible to change these habits of responding and replace them with something that will help you heal.

MINIMIZATION

Minimization is a way to cope the event or events of sexual assault by telling yourself that it is "no big deal" and therefore a less important thing that it really is.





EXAGGERATE THE MASCULINE!

Many male victims of sexual assault work hard at creating "macho" attitudes and behaviors to prove to the themselves and the world that they are tough.

FEAR OF CLOSENESS WITH OTHER MALES

Boys and men tend to hide the fact of their sexual victimization history from other boys or men, for fear that they will be seen as weak or as homosexual. Sadly, this keeps shame fixed in place and adds to isolation.





ISOLATION

Many boys or men who have experienced sexual abuse are so certain that they are "the only ones this has ever happened to" and so overcome with shame or feeling that they aren't worth anything that they keep themselves away from other people, fearing that others would reject them if they knew of their past.

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON WAYS THAT BOYS AND MEN REACT TO SEXUAL VICTIMIZATION?

THE FIRST VIDEO WE
WOULD LIKE TO SHARE
WITH YOU IS FROM
ZEKE THOMAS, SON
OF THE NBA HALL OF
FAMER, ISIAH THOMAS
ZEKE HAS BECOME AN
OUTSPOKEN ACTIVIST
FOR RECOVERY AND
WE HOPE THAT HIS
STORY INSPIRES YOU.

MEN WHO HAVE A HISTORY
OF SEXUAL ASSAULT OFTEN
THINK THEY ARE THE ONLY
ONE THIS HAS EVER HAPPENED TO.





MANY BELIEVE THAT THERE IS SOMETHING
WRONG WITH THEM BECAUSE THEY WERE
TARGETED BY AN OFFENDER. OUT OF
FEAR AND SHAME, THEY STAY SILENT
AND FIND UNHEALTHY AND SOMETIMES
DANGEROUS WAYS TO NUMB THEIR FEELINGS.

FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS,

THE MENHEALING TEAM HAS WITNESSED THE HEALING EFFECTS OF MEN SHARING THEIR STORIES WITH EACH OTHER. JUST KNOWING THAT THERE ARE OTHER MEN WHO FEEL THE UNIQUE PAIN OF SEXUAL ASSAULT CHANGES MANY OF THE IDEAS THAT THEY KEEP HIDDEN DEEP WITHIN THEMSELVES.

IT IS

HEALING TO
SIMPLY KNOW
THAT YOU ARE

NOT ALONE!

BECAUSE OF THIS, MENHEALING HAS CREATED A VIDEO LIBRARY OF SURVIVORS TELLING THEIR TRUE STORIES, WITH MESSAGES OF HOPE, HEALING, AND RECOVERY.







TRUE FACTS AND COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT MALE SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

PART 2

(please refer to Vol.01, Issue 01 for Part 1)

For a long time, it was generally thought that boys and men couldn't possibly be the victims of sexual assault. Today we know better, and MenHealing works hard to get the truth out to victims so that healing can begin.



Sexual arousal is a reality of the body, even in situations of trauma or when sex is not consensual; arousal can be mistaken as an indicator of pleasure and create considerable confusion for male victims.



Boys or men getting aroused or was a willing partner or that he enjoyed the experience.



Boys and men CAN be sexually assaulted by girls or women. For boys this may be disguised as care giving or personal hygiene, and older boys and adult men can be emotionally or physically pressured into unwanted sex.





Current research shows that most men who offend boys actually identify as heterosexual ("straight").



Most sexual victimization of

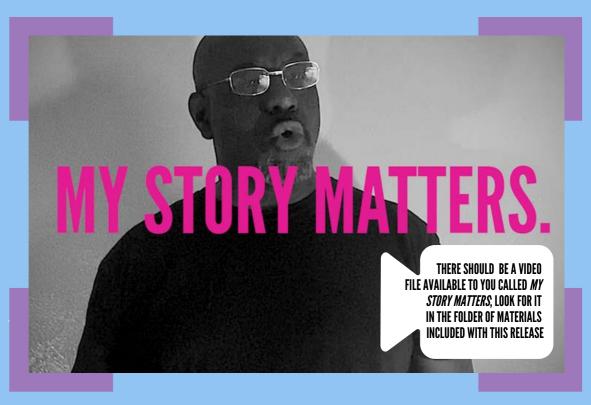


While it is often true that males who are sexual offenders often have a history of having been a victim of sexual assault themselves, most male victims do NOT become sexual offenders.



NOT TRUE

It is NOT true that a boy or man who has been sexually victimized will become sex offenders.



Michael Guinn (he/him/his) is a content creator, poet, actor, community leader, and event organizer located in Texas. He is 57 years old and shares his life with his dog Abby and his cat Tucky.

His story centers around his assault and witnessing his younger sibling's abuse also.

This is a powerful statement about his journey from helplessness to healing!

TRAUMATHE BODY healing approaches

We all know that our minds hold our memories. We can use our minds to recall and even replay recent events. Some trauma survivors have vivid recall of childhood trauma, but some may have trouble remembering the events that created their feelings of deep hurt. Our brains have an amazing ability to create protective walls around the painful things we may remember.

But there's another player in our journey of healing that most of us were never taught to use: your body. Like your brain, your body remembers. These body memories speak through your nervous system, your muscles, your gut and even the ways you breathe. Just like your brain, your body not only remembers but also holds many powerful tools of healing.

Men Healing would like to introduce you to practices that will help you to reclaim your true self from your trauma in a series of instructional videos over the next year. Please watch for them in future releases.

Remember, the truth is, you are not the pain you feel. You are whole, strong and beautiful.





THINKING TRAPS

Thinking traps are ways of thinking that help us tell stories about ourselves or the situation we are in.

We all use thinking traps without knowing it.

The problem is,
this kind of thinking is often
not true or one-sided. It can be
really hard to 'tell it like it is.'
Thinking traps can keep you
stuck and can harm your
relationships.

They allow us to avoid painful feelings, and we hope they'll keep us out of trouble.

THINKING TRAPS

The funny thing about thinking traps is that it isn't just your thinking that is involved. Feelings and emotions come along for the ride, too.

But that's not all!!

Even more surprising
is that by learning how to use
your body and mind together you
can change the way you feel about
something and even be able to
recognize and decide if things
REALLY ARE TRUE!

You may be surprised to find that your body also plays a big part in making the thinking traps

FEEL TRUE!

Try paying attention to what you 'do' in your body when you find yourself using thinking traps.

For example: the actions you might 'do' include...



hands into a fist

Tightening your jaw, your belly, your shoulders or your back



Holding your
breath

Or the opposite!

Maybe you're sagging your head

and shoulders.

Learning about thinking traps
can help you spot them. Once you spot
them you can empower yourself to make
mental, emotional and physical choices, to:

- · Use them or not
- To be more honest with yourself and others
- Change what you are 'doing' in your body so that your feeling and thinking will change along with it.

As you learn how to do this, your wisdom and maturity will help you to:

- Understand yourself better
- Manage other people and situations better
- Decide what YOU would like to 'do' in your body

BE CURIOUS!

If you want, and can, keep a journal.

Track how you're using thinking traps and any feelings or body reactions that go with them.

Try writing

these down
and looking back
on them from
time to time.

BLAMING

Blaming is when you blame other people or circumstances for your behavior or problems.



EXCERCISE -	ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"
My Feelings	Angry? Sad?
My Actions: What am I 'doing' in my body?	Have I tightened my belly? Has my breathing changed? Is my jaw tight? Or loose?
When I "do" these things	Do I feel strong? Do I feel weak? Do I feel safe? Grounded? Do I feel in control of myself?
If I don't 'do' these things in my body I feel	(fill in this box with what you notice when you make these changes)

What happens to your emotions and to your body if you *think* about the situation in a different way?

What happens
to your emotions
and how you feel about
situation if you change

what you're 'doing' in your body?

SELF-BLAME

Self-blame is when you blame yourself for someone else's behavior.



EXCERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"		
My Feelings	Sad? Guilty? Powerless? Angry at myself?	
My Actions: What am I 'doing' in my body?	Do I look away? Has my breathing changed? Is my jaw tight? Or loose? What am I doing with my forehead? My eyebrows?	
When I "do" these things	Do I feel strong? Do I feel weak? Do I feel safe? Grounded? Do I feel in control of myself?	
If I don't 'do' these things in my body I feel	(fill in this box with what you notice when you make these changes)	

What would happen to
your feelings and what would
your feelings and what would
happen to what you're 'doing'
happen to what you really knew
in your body if you really knew
that the other person's
anger wasn't your
fault?

What If you
change something you're
'doing' in your body? Remember
that your body can affect your
mind and your mind can affect
your body!

ALL OR NOTHING THINKING

When you think of someone or something as ALL GOOD or ALL BAD. The truth is, most people and things in life are a combination of good and bad.

When thinking about a friend, you may say to yourself...

are so PERFECT

(or *cool* or *smart*).

They NEVER make a mistake.



EXCERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"

LAGERGIGE	NON TOURDELL. TO THIS TRUE.
My Feelings	Sure of myself? powerful? scared? anxious?
My Actions: What am I 'doing' in my body?	Are my teeth clenched? Is my belly or my back tight? Am I frowning? Is my face blank? worried? Are my shoulders high and tight? Is my head hanging?
When I "do" these things	Do I feel relaxed? Weak? Strong? Confident? Off balance? Ready for a fight?
If I don't 'do' these things in my body I feel	(fill in this box with what you notice when you make these changes)

Think of a time when you used this thinking trap. If you look at it now, is there really a little bit of both good and bad in everyone.

If you change something about what you are 'doing' in your body, does this help change the ALL OR NOTHING thinking?

USING ABSOLUTE WORDS

Absolute words are words like ALWAYS, NEVER, HAVE TO & SHOULD. This is a lot like All or Nothing thinking. Absolute words leave no room for anything else.



EXCERCISE -	XCERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"	
My Feelings	Beaten down? Worthless? Powerless? Angry?	
My Actions: What am I 'doing' in my body?	When I tell myself or when someone else tells me that I always do the wrong thing: Do I pull back? Tighten up? Go limp? Does my stomach feel uneasy?	
When I "do" these things	Do I feel worse? Do I feel in control of myself? Do I feel good about myself? Do I feel bad about myself?	
When I change what I "do" in my body, I feel	How does my body feel when I don't use absolute words?	

Words have power!

The words we use and how we use them can change the way we feel

about ourselves and others. They can also affect how we move and what we can achieve!

Don't let the words you use or hear defeat you before you begin! Remain flexible and powerful in your mind and your body.

DENIAL

When you aren't honest with yourself or others about your choices or behavior. You may even lie to avoid getting called out or caught. You may use denial simply to avoid the emotional pain of telling the truth.







I tell myself, "It didn't hurt at all."

EXCERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"

200	My Feelings	I'm tough! "I can take it!" Angry? Afraid? Defiant?
	My Actions: What am I 'doing' in my body?	Do I avoid eye contact? Stare down my attacker? Change my breathing? Does my heart beat faster? Do I clench my fists? Do my hands sweat?
	When I "do" these things	Do I feel strong? Angry? Sad? Powerful? Safe? In charge of myself?
	If I don't 'do' these things in my body I feel	(fill in this box with what you notice when you make these changes)

REMEMBER

How you think can affect how you feel.

But you're also discovering that your body plays a role as well.

The goal is to discover that by using your mind and body together you can make changes and heal.

MOED SERIES

SOMATIC SKILLS FOR HEALING:

BREATH AWARENESS

Somatic is a word that means "related to the body." Somatic skills are body based. They help you understand yourself. They also teach useful ways to work with your emotions and feelings. You use your body to collect information. You do this by seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. These experiences can seem like they happen only in your body, separately from your mind. But you can learn to use your body and mind together, to help you feel and act in better ways.

The Somatic Skills for Healing videos teach how to do this so you can create an open, caring, relaxed, and powerful "BodyMind" state.

The videos teach different ways of using your body and mind together, so you feel better. With practice you will become able to respond to stress, instead of blindly reacting when things happen.

In the "Breath Awareness" video, you can take the first steps. You can learn to become aware of what you "do" in your body and mind. You learn how the things you "do" affect who you are and how you interact with the world.







LABELING

Calling yourself or other people names. Some examples of negative labels, or names you can call yourself or others are: stupid, dumb, druggie, gangster, redneck, useless, and good-for-nothing. Some positive labels are:

VOU ARE NOT ALABEL
Other people are not labels, either.
We are many things.
WE ALL DESERVE COMPASSION AND RESPECT.

EXCERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"

What are my feelings when I am labeled? When I label myself? When I label others?

Negative Feelings:

Angry? Sad? Hopeless? Stuck? Hateful? Righteous?

Positive Feelings:

Happy? Proud? Calm? Excited? Respected?

What am I 'doing' in my body when I label? Tense my jaw and my forehead?

Tense my chest and belly? Freeze? Slump over?

Tighten my breathing? Or do I loosen up?

Breathe easier? Feel relaxed?

When I 'do' these things, I feel...

Powerful? Safe? Alone? Part of the gang? Sad? Want to hide? Frozen? Peaceful?

What happens if I change what I am 'doing' in my body if I am labelled or if I am labelling someone else

(fill in this box with what you notice when you make these changes)

If you have been putting negative labels on yourself, think of someone you love. Think of someone that you want to be strong and happy and talk to yourself like you would talk to them.

If you are putting negative labels on someone else, look closer and notice good things about them. Do you feel different in your body when you see more of who they are?

REJECTING THE POSITIVE

This is when someone says something nice about you, and you toss it away because you believe it's not true.



EXCERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"

What are my feelings when I reject the positive?

Embarrassed? Shy? Scared? Suspicious? Angry?

What I 'do' in my body when I reject the positive?

Shrink? Look away? Tighten my chest or jaw? Brace? Leave?

When I do these things in my body, like shrink or brace, what emotions do I feel? Safe?
Shut down? Numb? Blank?
Refuse to smile or feel good?
Refuse to let it in?

What happens if I change what I am 'doing' in my body when I realize I am rejecting the positive?

(fill in this box with what you notice when you make these changes)

When you reject a compliment, notice how your body feels.

Next time,
instead of rejecting the
compliment, relax
your body and let the
compliment in...

Thank the person
who said something nice about
you, and see if feeling thankful lessens the
tension in your body. See what it feels like
when you accept that there are
good things about who you are!

MINIMIZING

This means making something smaller than it really is. This is when you tell yourself that what you did was no big deal. It might also be minimizing something that was done to you. You can minimize both positive and negative things.

EXCERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"

What are my feelings when I minimize?

Numb? Empty? Shut down? Not interested? Tough? Who cares? No big deal?

What I 'do' in my body when I minimize?

Shrug my shoulders? Slouch?
Tighten my face and chest? Refuse eye contact by looking away or down?
Walk away like a bad-ass?

When I 'do' these things in my body like walk away or shrug, I feel?

Weak? Vulnerable?
Like I am protecting myself?
Isolated? Untouchable?

What happens if I change what I am 'doing' in my body when I realize I am minimizing?

(fill in this box with what you notice when you make these changes)

Think of something negative that you did or that was done to you that you minimized. Was it really "no big deal"?
Or, did it hurt you or did it hurt the other person?

Now think of something you
did that was really pretty cool
that you have tossed aside.
Pretend you are telling a friend
"Good job! That was solid."
Now, tell this to yourself. Let it sink in.

Notice what you feel and what you learn as you let the truth in.

CATASTROPHIC THINKING

This is when something minor happens, like you drop your food tray, and believe that your whole day is a disaster.



EXCERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"

What are my feelings when I catastrophize?

Scared? Panicked? Doomed? Defeated? Angry? Destructive? Self-Destructive? Out of Control? Shame? I am a failure? I am a screw up?

What I 'do' in my body when I catastrophize: Tighten: my chest? My belly? My arms? My hands? My jaw? Do I shake or sweat? Fidget? Want to strike out? Scream? Go limp and let my whole body sag? Go numb?

When I 'do' these things in my body like tighten or sag I feel like:

I'm trying to regain control? I'm trying to find a way to protect myself? I want to run or hide, or give up? Like I just want to be gone?

What happens if I change what I am 'doing' in my body when I am catastrophizing?

(fill in this box with what you notice when you make these changes)

Think of a time when you thought that something small was a disaster. How does your body feel when you remember this?

Now, remember the world didn't end. Picture it.

What is your
body doing now as you remember that
it really was only a small thing?
What do you feel now?

JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS

This is when you make up your mind before you have all the facts. When you jump to conclusions you believe you can act in certain ways. You might become angry, or outraged. Jumping to conclusions can create false hopes or fears.

This is all my fault

You're you you wrong

You're angry at me

can't



EXCERCISE - ASK YOURSELF: "IS THIS TRUE?"

What are my feelings when I jump to conclusions?

Certain!? Angry? Sad?
A need to take action? Scared? Hopeful?
Excited? Suspicious? Screw it?

What I 'do' in my body when I jump to conclusions.

Hyper-focus? Grind my teeth? Pace?
Clench my hands? Happy?
Agitated? Relaxed?
Or do I shut down, and feel like I am done?

When I do these things in my body, like grind my teeth and clench my hands, I feel like:

I'm safe? I'm right? I'm ready to act?
I want to be gone? I can't move?
I want to curl up on my bunk?
Frozen? Give up?

What happens in my body if I change what I am 'doing' when I jump to conclusions?

(fill in this box with what you notice when you make these changes)

Think

about when you jump to conclusions without all the facts. How do you feel in your body as you think about the conclusion you have jumped to?

Next, challenge yourself to get the facts
and see how they might change your conclusions.
If your conclusions change, how do you feel this
change in your body?

WOED SERVES

SOMATIC SKILLS FOR HEALING:

BODY AWARENESS LOOKING OUT TO LOOK IN

Somatic is a word that means "related to the body." Somatic skills are body based. They help you understand yourself. They also teach useful ways to work with your emotions and feelings. You use your body to collect information. You do this by seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. These experiences can seem like they happen only in your body, separately from your mind. But you can learn to use your body and mind together, to help you feel and act in better ways.

The Somatic Skills for Healing videos teach how to do this so you can create an open, caring, relaxed, and powerful "BodyMind" state.

The videos teach different ways of using your body and mind together, so you feel better. With practice you will become able to respond to stress, instead of blindly reacting when things happen.



In the "Looking Out to Look In" video, we explore and gain new skills to become aware of what's actually going on both around us and inside our bodies as the events in our daily lives play out. This is one of the first steps in helping us gain the power to make the changes we would like to see in ourselves while helping to strengthen the positive qualities we already have.

There should
be a video file
available to you called
"LOOKING OUT
TO LOOK IN."
Look for it in the folder
of materials included
with this release