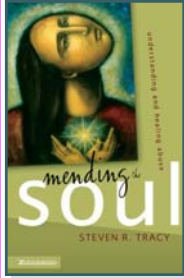


UPCOMING TRAINING - RESOURCES - SUPPORT

Mending The Soul: Understanding and Healing Abuse
Steven R. Tracy

Biblically grounded and psychologically informed, *Mending the Soul* provides a good general overview of abuse, it's devastating impact on victims and outlines a biblical path for restoration.

Mending The Soul is a great resource for pastors, small group leaders, youth leaders, educators and pastoral and clinical counselors.

VICTIM ADVOCATE TRAINING COURSE SCHEDULED FOR APRIL

This 16-hour training is designed to equip church and community leaders to understand and support victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse.

For more information or to make reservations please call or email us at

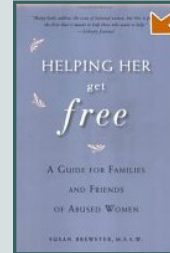
323-2169 or splace@spro.net

UPDATED ADA COUNTY RESOURCE DIRECTORIES AVAILABLE SOON

Cost including binder and tabs is \$35.00. Refills are \$15.00. Call or e-mail the SPM office for your copy.

323-2169 or splace@spro.net

Helping Her Get Free: A Guide for Families and Friends of Abused Women
Susan Brewster



Helping Her Get Free, formerly titled: *To Be An Anchor in the Storm: A Guide for Families and Friends of Abused Women*, is written for the victim's friends and family members who want to understand and support her as she moves through the confusing circumstances and the difficult choices she must make.



Safe
Place
Ministries

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Boise, ID
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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 30
January, 2007

WHY DOES SHE STAY?

"Why do women stay in abusive relationships?"

The pastor who asked the question was kind and compassionate, and was genuinely trying to understand why a woman would choose to stay in an abusive relationship. Many of our clients have asked the question in its more immediate and personal form, *"Why do I choose to stay?"*

In the process of answering this question victims of abuse often find the clarity and courage to make purposeful, life-producing choices for themselves and their families.

These are a few of the reasons women have shared with us as they've searched for answers to the complex interweaving of their circumstances and their faith.

LOVE

Most abuse victims genuinely love their partners. They treasure the good they see in them and remember the love they shared at the beginning of the relationship. They enjoy the times of closeness they experience during the relatively calm days or weeks between abusive incidents.

Many victims express deep compassion for the wounds they know are at the root of their husband's abusive behavior and often believe that if they love him well enough he will seek the help he needs to heal and change. Many women genuinely fear for their husband's mental and physical safety if they leave the relationship, believing that her presence keeps him from self-destruction.

FAITH

Some women's sense of God's love and care remain intact, even in the midst of abuse. (Cont. on page 3)

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COME JOIN US!

Invite a friend and come join us for an evening of fun and fellowship as we celebrate what has been happening in the lives of women and their families this past year.

Connie Werner and a great team of volunteers will be on hand to choose the lucky winner of this year's quilt, the *Posie Patch*. You'll also have an opportunity to bid on a wide variety of silent auction items and enjoy an evening of music and dessert.

**SPM'S ANNUAL
BENEFIT AUCTION &
DESSERT
SATURDAY, FEB. 3, 2007
7:00 P.M.**

**HATCH BALLROOM
BSU STUDENT UNION
BUILDING
Reserved parking is available
behind the Student Union
Tickets are free and available
at the SPM office**



IN BRIEF

TWO NEW GRANTS

We are very thankful to be the recipients of two new grants. A grant from The Children's Fund Foundation will allow us to continue and expand our services to children. We also received a Federal Grant designed to increase services for victims of domestic violence in rural areas throughout Idaho. We will use the funds from this Strengthening Grass Roots grant to expand our contact base in these counties and develop resources to educate, equip and support church leaders in Canyon, Gem, Payette, Adams, Washington and Boundary counties as they serve the families in their congregations and communities.

STRENGTHENING GRASS ROOTS COORDINATOR HIRED

Kapri Walsh is the newest addition to the SPM staff. She is joining us as the coordinator for the new Strengthening Grass Roots project. Kapri comes with a background in administration, business and marketing in the field of senior care and assisted living. For the past several years, Kapri has managed her home-based business in order to spend more time with her four growing children.

CHRISTMAS JOY

If you had visited our offices during the holiday season, you would have seen gifts spilling out of our offices and taking over our project room. Each brightly colored package was donated by a family, church or organization in the Treasure Valley who generously gave of their time and resources to make Christmas special for our clients and their children. This Christmas, their generosity and compassion of these families brought smiles and tears to the faces of 44 women and children.

A SAD FAREWELL

Jackie Thompson, our multi-talented Social Services Director and story teller extraordinaire, is leaving our SPM team to take on a new full-time position for the State of Idaho. Those of you who know Jackie know what compassion and care she brought to her job. We are excited about this new opportunity in her life, but we, along with her clients, will miss her immensely. If you would like to write a note of appreciation to Jackie, you may send them to the SPM office. We will forward them to her.

SPECIAL DELIVERIES

Our office has taken on a new look with the addition of two beautiful little girls, their car-seats, swings, toys, bottles, cots, diaper bags, grandparents and staff members who frequently find excuses to be in close proximity to these two little ones.

Avery Rae, who decided one's birth was a leisurely event, finally arrived on Nov. 5. Dustin and Angela are Avery's proud parents.

Angela can be seen on any given day multitasking: chatting with Avery, answering phones,



Angela, Avery Rae, Rose Elizabeth, Jodi

balancing spreadsheets, and dozens of other tasks, and she does it all with cheerfulness and grace.

Rose Elizabeth was born December 11, to the delight of Rob and Jodi. Rose recently joined us for her first staff meeting, taking lessons from Avery who is a real pro. Jodi, one of our counselors, provides counseling for both women and children. Rose will be sharing her mom's toy-filled office when Jodi returns to work where she will gain great lessons in the gentle art of caring for others.

WHY DOES SHE STAY?

For others, abuse challenges and redefines their faith. But women in both groups say that their faith (and their faith communities) play a major role in their decisions to stay or leave their abusive partners.

Many abusers misuse Scripture in an attempt to confuse, manipulate and control their partners. Some church leaders have not yet grappled with the issue of abuse and God's heart for the differing needs of both victims of abuse and those who mistreat them.

CONFUSION

Women stay because of the confusing nature of abuse. Family members never know how the abusive person is going to respond. The same words or actions that are met with warmth and approval today may be met with name calling and ridicule, or physical pain tomorrow, only to be followed by remorse and pleas for forgiveness or silence the next day. Women may spend years trying to understand their spouses behavior and how to respond to it.

Those outside the relationship, (family members, friends, church leaders) sometimes add to the confusion, offering advice aimed more at avoiding the mess than entering deeply into the struggle in the victim's heart.

ECONOMICS

Economic factors have a major impact on a woman's decision to stay in an abusive relationship. She may have few financial resources available to her in the relationship and absolutely none if she separates even for a short time.

Even women with professional

careers must face the future knowing she and her children must live on half of their former income at best. Many abusive men find creative ways to dodge child support and sometimes abandon their children altogether. Women without marketable skills face the daunting task of survival in our present economy.

Qualifying for programs designed to help (housing, food stamps, health insurance, daycare) takes time and time away from work translates into loss of wages or job loss.

Many women choose to stay rather than ask their children to face the harsh uncertainties of homelessness and hunger.

CHILD PROTECTION

The presence of children increases the complexity and unpredictability of leaving an abusive relationship.

Women stay in order to protect their children from the abuse. Abusive partners seek and get custody of their children even when there has been severe violence toward their partner. By staying, women often believe they can shield their children from their partners' unpredictable behaviors.

Women stay because they feel maintaining an intact family is best for their children. Some, whose own families disintegrated in divorce long to protect their children from the sadness and profound sense of loss they felt.

Women stay because their partners have threatened to harm or abduct their children or vowed to sue for legal custody if they pursue separation. For them, the risks of leaving must be weighed

against the risks of staying.

REDEEMING THE INVESTMENT

Connie Foure, author and abuse survivor, writes, "Investments are always uncertain, and women can only discover after they commit if the investment was worthwhile. . . As a woman's losses mount in an abusive relationship, the desire can become more intense to make it work, to somehow redeem those painful times and make them worthwhile. As abuse increases and becomes more obvious, a woman can become perversely locked into the relationship, trying somehow to make it come out right. Unless the abuser chooses to move into recovery, however, this effort is doomed to failure."

FEAR

Abusers frequently tell their victims what they will do to them or their children if she decides to leave, but that is just the beginning of frightening situations that a woman will need to face. Sometimes, maintaining the status quo is the least fearful option, even in the face of acute violence.

LOSS, LONELINESS, SINGLE PARENTING, DEPRESSION, PTSD, GRIEF . . .

In the end the reason women stay must be narrowed down to "Why does this particular woman stay?" This question helps us slow down and listen, to respect *this* woman's thoughts, to give her the same freedom that God gives each of us to make choices, and to help her find the physical, emotional and spiritual resources she needs to make the difficult choices before her.