



Men, Love, Sex & Relationships *A fresh look at male sexuality*

Background Paper

What's going on with men?

Men are well known for loving sex. Men apparently think about sex many times each day and jokes about men and their preoccupation with sex are especially popular among women.

Men are not necessarily as well known for being good lovers. Many women in long-term relationships report that they lose interest in sex. Perhaps some men also lose interest but we don't hear as much about that.

Many men report that they find the inner workings of relationships, particularly marriage, a complete mystery. The differences between the sexes have become a widening gender divide in many relationships.

It's little wonder that men and women are increasingly marrying later in life and separating more often, and in many cases re-partnering several times over during the course of a lifetime. However, a change of partner doesn't necessarily solve the problem.

Perhaps it's also no surprise that many women seem content with singleness or celibacy, while men typically re-partner more quickly after separation.

Men also seem to be more prone to using pornography than women.

Despite much pain and heartache, many men and women still hold a strong desire to partner for life. There is something about the vision of a lifelong satisfying partnership that will not go away.

What's needed?

Many men are asking questions such as:

- What is healthy manhood and what kind of man am I?
- What is love and what does it take?
- How come sex is such a problem?
- How come relationships are so difficult at times?
- How can I improve my marriage?

This workshop offers resources and reflections that address these questions.

For lots of men this kind of workshop is much needed because, in many cases, our fathers and grandfathers were not great role models. Many of us missed out on good guidance and modelling about healthy manhood, intimate relating, the joys and trials of marriage, and sexual integrity and fulfilment. Many of us are now living with the fruits of this neglect.

This is *not* to say that men are the entire problem or that 'if we fix the man we will fix the marriage.' Most relationship difficulties are the result of patterns developed between *both* parties and habits maintained by *both* parties. As the old saying goes, 'It takes two to tango.' Both sexes need to do some soul searching if we are to turn around the incidence of marital and family breakdown.

This workshop equips men to think differently about themselves and their situation, and to take initiative differently and respond differently to their partner or wife.

Some men may feel daunted by the idea of being in a men's group. However, my workshops are non-threatening and in my experience men have much to offer each other and much to learn from each other. Previous participants in this workshop have confirmed that there is great power and benefit in addressing these issues in a men-only workshop.

For many men, there is a growing conviction that it's time to do things differently, in particular our own lives and our key relationships. Many men, deep in our bones, are feeling called to a deeper, richer and more balanced manhood.

*'Childhood is a world of wonder
Boyhood is a land of dreams
And no matter what the grown-ups try to tell you
Everything seems as it seems*

*Then somebody lifts the veil
Somebody parts the clouds
And the light shines onto everything
Dark and light... joy and pain...' (Pathways by Noel Giblett)*

If these issues are relevant to you, feel free to register for *Men, Love, Sex and Relationships*.

Noel Giblett