

DAN GRIFFIN • JONATHAN DE CARLO

HEALING MEN'S PAIN CURRICULUM

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

WILEY

Healing Men's Pain Curriculum

Endorsements for Healing Men's Pain

"As the Founder of White Bison, an organization that provides culturally based programs, resources, and training that are geared towards recovery and prevention of alcohol and substance use, I am pleased to endorse Healing Men's Pain. Our programs focus on healing from the impacts of intergenerational and historical trauma using cultural teachings. White Bison has been working with individuals, families, and communities for over 35 years. This curriculum is the only known example we have encountered that promotes intergenerational healing of men. This program is revolutionary for breaking the cycle and focusing on that root-level, deep healing. We believe it will create a new generation of boys who will grow up to become good men, natural fathers, and committed citizens. White Bison wholeheartedly endorses Healing Men's Pain."

– Don Coyhis, Founder
White Bison

"Perhaps just when we need it most, it's here—a trauma-informed, insight-oriented, skill-building interactive curriculum for men. Men, including young men, are struggling. Many are struggling to succeed in their profession, to discover purpose, or to find meaning in life. Struggling not to have to struggle. We battle demons of mind and matter. Beleaguered by anger, anxiety, and addictions. Depression and despair. Guilt and grief. And, as always, love and loss. Far too many men survive by alternating between enduring emotional pain and mindlessly pursuing soothing, yet self-defeating pleasures. Fortunately, that doesn't have to be the end of our stories. Remarkably, on the other side of despair men are resilient, recovering, and living life at their best. Healing Men's Pain helps men get from here to there. It is turn-by-turn navigation for traveling alongside men as they courageously, yet safely, uncover, discover, and recover; as they rewrite their stories—as it was, as it might be, and most importantly, as it can be—now. The Man Rules creator, author Dan Griffin and Jonathan De Carlo have created what is sure to become an essential resource for anyone helping men heal. And not a moment too soon."

– Terrence D. Walton
Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer
NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals

"I highly recommend "Healing Men's Pain" for its targeted approach to the needs of male clients in behavioral health settings. The curriculum spans crucial topics such as "the man rules," anger, shame, conflict, family dynamics, and societal roles, offering practical exercises for facilitators to engage clients in meaningful exploration and discussion."

The curriculum's strength lies in its blend of interactive elements and evidence-informed content, drawing on the authors' expertise and personal insights. It is written inclusively, inviting all who are interested in the effects of traditional masculinity norms to gain from its lessons, though it is particularly beneficial for group settings with male participants."

For clinicians, this resource is a means to deepen their understanding of masculine-specific issues and enhance their therapeutic skills, addressing a notable gap in behavioral health resources. Clients stand to gain a structured yet flexible framework for treatment that promotes healthier cognitive and emotional patterns."

In essence, Healing Men's Pain is an essential addition to any behavioral health professional's toolkit who aims to support male clients on their journey to recovery. Its comprehensive approach and actionable guidance position it as a cornerstone text for facilitating effective and empathetic care."

– David Dawdy
Mental Health Director, Michigan Dept of Corrections

"Dan Griffin and Jonathan DeCarlo have created a container that holds every aspect of a man's life experience. What makes this work so effective is the respectful, compassionate and holistic way they allow and encourage each man to safely explore their personal experience. Insight and understanding is quickly transformed into daily and long term expressions of healthy personal and interpersonal growth."

– Dr. Larry Anderson, Psy.D. L.P., nationally recognized expert on male trauma

"In 15 years of providing clinical leadership in addiction and mental health, I have never seen a treatment approach so well tailored to the multi-generational pain that men experience. For those working on themselves and those providing care to men in need, you are doing a disservice if you don't include Dan Griffin and Johnathan DeCarlo's Healing Men's Pain in your treatment model. From practical, down-to-earth techniques that anyone can use in the same day to a more in depth and honest exploration of deeper pain, this guide gives you everything you need to walk with a man through the difficult journey of inner healing. The session on Toxic Water alone is the first I've seen that gives men an authentic and interactive encounter with how the toxic culture of masculinity relates to trauma. I strongly recommend Healing Men's Pain for the treatment of trauma-related disorders, substance use disorders, and related mental health conditions."

– Samson Teklemariam, LPC, CPTM - Vice President of Clinical
Services for Behavioral Health Group, LLC. and Southeast Regional
Vice President for NAADAC, the Association of Addiction Professionals

"Healing Men's Pain is a transformational resource to assist anyone working with men. I have spent most of my career striving to ensure world class trauma informed treatment is readily available to those in need. HMP could not come at a more critical time! The terms gender responsiveness and trauma informed are often thrown around without truly being evidenced based or comprehensive in their approach. HMP not only does both but gives the facilitator step by step guidance and support through a

curriculum that encompasses experiential, skill building, family of origin, attachment, and tools to heal relationships. As a man in long term recovery and a trauma survivor, this curriculum helps men like me better understand my trauma, the impact it has on me today, and how I can heal and be the man I desire to be. Thank you Dan and Jonathan for creating a resource that will bring healing to men and change generations to come!"

– Sean Walsh, CEO
Meadows Behavioral Health

Healing Men's Pain is the most comprehensive, compelling program for men I have ever seen. This curriculum covers all aspects of the healing journey so many men are eagerly awaiting. This program provides multiple tools to work with men's traumas – emotional, physical, spiritual, and psychological. This program should be taught in secondary schools and most certainly be a required college course. In other words, this is going to help men in ways that will be revolutionary."

– John Lee author of *The Flying Boy and Growing Yourself Back Up* and
early pioneer in Men's work and Recovery.

"Healing Men's Pain is a comprehensive, easy to follow guide for effectively facilitating trauma groups for men. Each weekly topic builds upon the previous one serving to illuminate the invisible trauma that underlies, and often distorts, most men's lives. With a deft hand, Griffin and DeCarlo teach the reader how to create a safe and consistent container in service of compassionately deconstructing defenses in a group healing process. Men often experience trauma at the hand of other men, wounding their masculinity. This full-circle process of men helping men heal delivers the trauma survivor squarely into his authentic manhood. This is a book whose time has come!"

– Alexandra Katehakis, Ph.D. author, *Mirror of Intimacy:
Daily Reflections on Emotional and Erotic Intelligence*

*"Healing Men's Pain is a dynamic new curriculum that addresses the often-ignored intersection of how men are socialized and the role that this can play in the development of trauma and exacerbation of its impact. I've long been an admirer of Dan Griffin's work with those who are socialized as and/or identify as men, and I'm happy to see him join forces with Jonathan DeCarlo in this new work. An excellent guide for facilitators and settings that are in need of more direction about these sensitive topics, *Healing Men's Pain*, fills a variety of needs in the current addiction treatment, mental health, and healing space."*

– Jamie Marich, Ph.D.
Author of *Trauma and the 12 Steps; Dissociation Made Simple*
Founder and CEO of The Institute for Creative Mindfulness

"Healing Men's Pain is a program that understands what lies in the hearts (and the fears) of men. The group curriculum relentlessly offers hope, respect and—most importantly—safety for men to explore their pasts and envision new futures. Multiple well-designed exercises help men identify the stories they have constructed all these years, and the program guides them in challenging these stories and constructing new ones. This group program offers a beacon of light for all men."

– David B. Wexler, Ph.D., author of *"When Good Men Behave Badly"* and
"The STOP Domestic Violence Program"

"As treatment and psychotherapy have evolved we have realized the importance that both culture and gender identification have on a person's emotional and spiritual development, and therefore on their psychological health and wellness. As we understand and become more informed of these forces, approaches to treatment and psychotherapy are being modified to address these and the role they play in a person's life and in their functioning. Dan Griffin is one of the pioneers in these efforts, especially when it comes to understanding the forces that shape a man's life. Dan's career has been devoted to helping men heal and mature. His new program with Jonathan DeCarlo, "Healing Men's Pain", is powerful and integrates his wealth of experience and research into men's lives and their treatment. Any man who experiences this program will benefit greatly from the topics addressed. I can only give you my strongest recommendation to join Dan and his colleague on this journey."

– Dr. Allen Berger, PhD
Clinical Director of the Institute for Optimal Recovery and Emotional Sobriety
Author of the bestselling book about Emotional Sobriety, *12 Essential Insights for Emotional Sobriety*

"I am delighted to endorse "Healing Men's Pain" by Dan Griffin and Jonathan DeCarlo. Foundry Treatment Center in Steamboat Springs, CO, had the privilege of serving as a pilot site for the program's initial launch. Given our Trauma-Integrated Addiction Treatment model, we were eager to see how the new program would integrate into our existing clinical framework. We were thrilled to discover that "Healing Men's Pain" not only integrated seamlessly into our model, but also provided structured opportunities for men to distinguish between feeling safe and being safe, challenge traditional masculine norms, confront the impact of trauma and addiction on relationships, and address their painful past in present-day treatment. "Healing Men's Pain" can help your program advance from being trauma-informed to trauma-integrated treatment."

– Dr. Michael Barnes
NRT Senior Clinical Advisor and Director
Michael Barnes Family Institute at NRT Behavioral Health

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Jonathan De Carlo

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The process of creating Healing Men's Pain has been an incredible, challenging, enlightening, and thought-provoking growth experience for us. We began with a specific goal, to write a curriculum we didn't see, something that was missing in the approaches to helping men heal and be their best selves. Through the curriculum writing process, we found ourselves inspired to bring forth the curriculum we'd have chosen to invest in if it existed along our own healing journeys. We poured our hearts and souls into this work, and in doing so we were so blessed to have a great deal of support.

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Lastly, we want to thank anybody who reads and uses this curriculum, and more broadly all people who dedicate themselves to helping men along their healing journeys. There are countless individuals and organizations who contribute meaningfully to men and their healing journeys. We are inspired by the commitment, passion, and dedication shown by so many, and hope that the Healing Men's Pain curriculum provides more practical tools to support change and growth.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for choosing to facilitate the Healing Men's Pain curriculum. Your commitment to improving the lives of men is important and something to be proud of. By facilitating this program, you are adding your name to the list of individuals who are willing to step up and support men who are trying to do their best and become the best men, partners, and fathers they can be.

As a facilitator of this program, your biggest strengths will be your authenticity, your commitment to the principles of trauma-informed care, and your ability to be a positive role model to the men who enter this program. We want to clarify that none of this means you are expected to be perfect in your facilitation. You will repeatedly reinforce for the participating men that their goal is to be "conscious" men and not "perfect" men. We ask the same of you: be conscious of your approach and intentional in what you do, both in your good moments and in repairing any mistakes – this is what will have the biggest impact on the lives of the men with whom you engage in this process. Thank you for your commitment to this program and to men and those who love them. We hope your experience facilitating Healing Men's Pain brings you fulfillment and a sense of purpose!

We would ask that you use the following QR code once you have facilitated the curriculum at least one time all of the way through and fill out a brief survey that will help us to improve this curriculum in future editions. Please also encourage all of your clients to take the PRE and POST surveys using the QR codes provided in their workbooks at the beginning and the end. This will enable us to collect important data for not only improving the curriculum, but also moving *Healing Men's Pain* toward becoming an evidence-based practice.



CHAPTER I

What the Facilitator Needs to Know

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research that was used to guide and support the creation of the Healing Men's Pain curriculum. Each of the building blocks of this program will be briefly discussed: the influence that male socialization has on boys and men, the fundamentals of male trauma-informed care, and the importance of values-based services. The authors of this program strongly encourage facilitators to continue expanding their knowledge in these areas as that will greatly serve them in further improving their skills when working with men. This chapter is not intended to be exhaustive in its description of these areas, but rather to offer a window into these topics while encouraging continued exploration on the part of those facilitating the program.

Why This Curriculum

Despite the fact that the majority of people in addiction and mental health services are men, very little attention has been given to developing services specifically for men to meet their unique issues and needs. Yes, the majority of services and attention have

been given to men but those services have not been very thoughtful or deliberately designed. In other words, they have not been gender-responsive. Furthermore, the few services that have been provided for men are remarkably not always developed by men let alone men with lived experience. Finally, while trauma has become a standard element of many programs and services, the vast majority of those services attempt to be gender-neutral thereby ignoring the significant impact that gender conditioning has on individuals and how that can influence an individual's experience of trauma.

Male Socialization

The exploration of cultural and societal influences on how boys and men are socialized throughout the lifespan is the keystone concept for the Healing Men's Pain program. Coupled with the importance of understanding trauma and the impact of trauma on men and boys is critical to effectively facilitating the curriculum. The reason critical is that the path to creating a safe, trusting, and open environment for boys and men requires an ability to address the concept of male socialization in a therapeutic, strengths-based, and solution-focused manner. Given our current social conversations regarding gender and the freedom *and* confusion that so many young people feel, it supports an even greater need for curricula like this to help them navigate exactly how they want their gender expression and identity to fit into their lives.

Perhaps, the most important concepts to consider are those of gender and sex. *Sex* refers to whether one is considered biologically male, female, or intersex. *Gender* is a social construct in which specific messages are given to people regarding acceptable behaviors and characteristics. The role of gender varies from culture to culture and even within cultures and is impacted by many other factors: socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation to name only a few.

Understanding that gender is a social construct, it is important to recognize that masculinity and femininity come with culturally informed "rules." Dan Griffin's work on "The Man Rules," as well as recognition of "The Woman Rules," is the lens through which this socialization is explored throughout the Healing Men's Pain curriculum. What is important to stress in Griffin's work is why they are called "rules." There is little to no choice involved in the creation of rules and even in the following of rules. And the reward for following the rules is: acceptance and even safety which creates an incredible unconscious connection to the rules. Boys are not introduced to the rules and offered choices about which ones they want to adhere to. The younger they are when the Rules first get pressed upon them, the less autonomy they likely feel to push back on detrimental ones. And the Rules are expressed and enforced everywhere so they can easily feel like that is simply "how things are."