GRIFFINRECOVERY ENTERPRISES

Amazing Dads: Finding the Father Within

by Dan Griffin & Harrison Crawford

This is the first gender-responsive, trauma-informed curriculum designed specifically for fathers. Fathers have different needs, face different challenges, and want different guidance with parenting than mothers do. Building upon a decade of work by Dan Griffin including his groundbreaking book *A Man's Way Through Relationships* and his pioneering treatment program *Helping Men Recover*, this curriculum addresses the complex intersection of male socialization, childhood trauma, and relational struggles that often create disconnection between fathers and their children as well as in their other relationships. The primary goal of this curriculum is to help participants create a vision of the fathers they want to be and to provide them with the awareness, tools, and confidence to achieve that vision.

Each of the fifteen, two-hour co-facilitated sessions includes activities, exercises and experiential opportunities enabling each father to connect with the content on a personal level. The program is wide-ranging and encompasses a variety of topics to help fathers develop increased self-awareness to enhance their relationships with their children and other family members. The material will stretch both participants and facilitators alike. The sessions are designed to take a deep and comprehensive look at everything that blocks them from being the best fathers they can be.

As a trauma-informed curriculum to build trust and group cohesiveness and create an atmosphere of open and honest interactions between fathers and facilitators, each session has:

- consistent openings and closings to foster safety among participating fathers and those facilitating the sessions.
- various techniques throughout the curriculum to help fathers better understand when they are being triggered, skills for regulating the impact of stress, and how to develop understanding in themselves and with others about the impact of past experiences on their ability to be safe and loving parents.
- small group activities, grounding exercises, and interactive lectures (where the dads lead the teaching of some of the most emotionally challenging material to help mitigate the impact of shame and defensiveness).

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The curriculum speaks to all learning styles using kinesthetic, audio, and visual engagement through the use of art, physical movement and role plays. Fathers are given additional learning opportunities in the form of assignments to complete between sessions. These assignments build upon the role plays and in-session practice that the fathers receive in order to help them translate the material directly into their own lives.

Topics covered in this program include:

- The impact of male socialization on a father's identity (a core theme that guides the context of the whole curriculum)
- Skill-building and practical tools fathers can use with, and teach to, their children
- A comprehensive and unique look at relational skill development
- Developing emotional fluency particularly as relates to anger and shame
- Enhanced communication skills for healthy conflict resolution
- Understanding trauma, the specific ways that men experience and respond to trauma, and its effects on fathers
- The influence of family of origin experiences on fathers
- Understanding and meeting the changing roles and expectations of men and fathers in the 21st century

This curriculum is also designed to be a compliment to *Helping Men Recover,* especially for men with identified addictive disorders.

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About the authors:

Dan Griffin, MA - Dan's work and life are dedicated to exploring and redefining what it means to be a man in the 21st century. Dan has over two decades of experience and is an international speaker and trainer helping programs develop gender-responsive services for men. Dan is the author of *A Man's Way Through Relationships*, the first trauma-informed book dedicated to helping men create healthy relationships while navigating the impact of male socialization or what he calls, The Man Rules. Dan is also the author of *A Man's Way through the Twelve Steps*, and co-author of *Helping Men Recover*, the first comprehensive gender-responsive and trauma-informed curriculum for addiction and mental health professionals. Griffin earned a Master's degree in Sociology from the University of Kansas where his graduate work was the first qualitative study centered on the social construction of masculinity in the culture of Alcoholics Anonymous. Dan grew up in the DC area and lives in Los Angeles with his wife, Nancy, and his daughter, Grace, and has been in long-term recovery from addiction since he graduated college in May of 1994.

Harrison Crawford, LPC LISAC - Harrison has worked in the field of mental health for 10 years and is a Licensed Professional Counselor with additional licensure focused on addictive disorders. Harrison has a passion for working with fathers through direct services and helping systems implement gender-responsive and trauma-informed programming. Harrison completed his graduate work at Argosy University in Phoenix, earning Master's degrees in Mental Health Counseling and Sport-Exercise Psychology. Harrison lives in Gilbert, Arizona with his wife, Jenna, and two children, Grayson and Kinsley.