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GENDER
RELATIONSHIPS
& **COURAGE**

IRELAND
JULY
2009



- If gender is our primary identity, to what degree can sexist roles then dictate our relationship to anger, aggression and violence?
- How can an appreciation for the different conversational styles common to men and women banish blame and guide us to truly talk with one another and respectfully manage everyday conflicts?
- How can men and women learn to stop arguing and start talking?
- Be prepared for lively and engaged dialogue as we exchange ideas, experiences, and find empowering ways to communicate with greater connection and clarity.

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BARRY MACDONALD is a teacher, consultant and counsellor who is a champion for strong families and strong communities - and gender. A sought-after speaker, he was identified by the *Vancouver Sun* as 1 of 25 *Influential People to Watch*, and is the author of the BC bestselling book, *Boy Smarts—Mentoring Boys for Success at School*.

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“MacDonald’s compelling presentation is one of the best I have ever seen. His keynote address at the National Principals’ Conference was balanced, insightful and presented with perspicacity ...”

Dr. Avis Glaze, Former Ontario Education Commissioner & Senior Advisor to the Minister of Education



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We enter this world not only as infants but as infant boys and infant girls.

Race, age, and appearance are all aspects of our physical identity, but gender is first and foremost a defining factor of how we experience ourselves and how we are perceived. Watch kids of any age at play and you will observe little boys set up wars and play-fights while little girls look for ways to connect rather than fight.

Later on in life women and men often take on specific roles within a marriage, family and society which are largely influenced by cultural stereotypes of gender.

Rigidity within these roles can lead to misunderstanding, anger and even violence between the sexes and deepen gender division. The binary trap of lumping men and women into fixed sexist categories keeps relationships stuck in repetitive patterns of behavior that often don't serve either gender well.

During this 4-day workshop we will explore how to sidestep gender misunderstandings and instead appreciate the varied ways communication unfolds among men and women so that we can achieve genuine connection at home and work.

Beyond Brain-based Theories

While there is strong evidence that the female brain is more likely to process emotional data through more senses and more completely than the male brain, and that women often verbalize emotionally charged data more quickly than men, it is essential that we develop awareness and communication strategies beyond these tendencies as we make sense of our beliefs, feelings and reactions so that we can make way for respectful exchange of ideas.

When we are mindful of our own biases about gender we learn to listen, reflect, and appreciate rather than react, defend or attack. When we understand the different conversational styles common to men and women we can banish the blame and truly talk with one another and steer clear of typical everyday conflicts:





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Status vs. Support

Men grow up in a world in which a conversation is often a contest, either to achieve the upper hand or to prevent other people from pushing them around. For women, however, talking is often a way to exchange confirmation and support.

Independence vs. Intimacy

Since women often think in terms of closeness and support, they struggle to preserve intimacy. Men, concerned with status, tend to focus more on independence. These traits can lead women and men to starkly different views of the same situation.

Advice vs. Understanding

To many men a complaint is a challenge to come up with a solution but often women are looking for emotional support, not solutions.

Information vs. Feelings

Men can hold center stage in a social setting, telling jokes and stories. They use conversation to claim attention and to entertain. Women can wind up feeling hurt that their husbands tell relative strangers things they have not told them.

Beyond Gendered Violence

On planet Earth the sad reality is that husbands and boyfriends perpetrate assault leading to bodily harm among females more than other forms of injury. It is urgent that we learn to live beyond violence.

Men can learn that they don't always have to be aggressive or in charge, and can develop courage to cherish their broad range of feelings, such as tenderness and vulnerability. A man who respects his own vulnerability will be able to respect the vulnerability of others.

Women can learn that valuing vulnerability and emotional connection does not mean that they have to underestimate or hide their desire for power and authority.

We can learn to live, work and nurture each individual's autonomy. With compassion, justice, and respect for interdependence we will learn to strengthen our homes and communities and the generations that follow.



Join us in Clonmel, Ireland July 6 - 9...and discover the arresting beauty of the land, turbulent history of the island, a broad smile that welcomes your arrival and the heartfelt farewell that signals your departure.

For more information about Barry MacDonald's work visit his website...
www.MentoringBoys.com

To register visit
www.Adler.ie



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Details...

Dates July 6th - 9th (Monday - Thursday) 2009

Location Loreto Secondary, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary, Ireland

Early bird fee Before 22nd June

€ 180.00 (members)
€ 190.00 (non members)
60.00 per Child

Regular fee After 22nd June

€ 215.00 (members)
€ 225.00 (non members)
60.00 per Child



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2009 Summer School in Ireland visit

www.adler.ie

Direct email inquiry to

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