

Inspire

Spring 2012

www.centerfornv.org

Dear Inspire Readers,

Three decades—a milestone achieved by a small group of men and women taking a leap of faith, quitting their day jobs, and working tirelessly to end violence in all its forms. We asked two of the founders, Beth and John Beams, who continue to work alongside us, to write short reflections about this thirty year evolution. They humbly agreed...

“We weren’t looking to create a “Center for Nonviolence,” much less a non-profit organization.

I was a lawyer. My partner, Beth, was a social worker. We were comfortable in our professional lives.” -John Beams

“The women’s program began in the back of John’s law office. We’d prep for an hour; then the old bell on the front door would begin to ring as women in twos and threes would filter in, expanding the circle until all the chairs overflowed the small room. We began at 6:30, and often did not end until 10:30. We wanted to give everyone a time to speak, ask questions, get support... I can still hear that bell; its wonderful sound told us that we were a community of women moving beyond victims in shelters, emergency rooms, and court rooms. Eventually a series of women’s groups took form and evolved into the Center’s Women’s Collective. We still lean upon this body of real women’s voices to structure our programs and make sure our work provides valid responses for those who feel the effects of violence. It was an amazing beginning.”

-Beth Beams

“The men’s program began as a couple of guys meeting in each others’ homes discussing the ways in which we could change from the “patriarchal norms” of the time, what was expected of us as men. We talked about injustice toward women and about our role in changing it. We began to read and notice that we truly believed that men could find the language of emotion, equality, and partnership—and even approach this from a place of tenderness, love, and vulnerability. This starkly contrasted with our male-conditioned practices of competition and learned violence that were harming and isolating us from our life-partners and children. Some local judges, who became aware of our meetings, asked if we well-intended male volunteers could talk a little sense into men arrested for misdemeanor battery. Not knowing what we were getting into, we said “Yes”. I will never forget the trust and connection we forged in those living rooms, just before our founding in 1981.”

-John Beams

Through these gatherings with the men and women we felt such a powerful atmosphere of safety, acceptance, wisdom, harmony and purpose that it spurred a moment of clarity when we knew that this was what we were meant to do - facilitate the work of nonviolence. We took a leap of faith, not knowing exactly where our passion and vision would take us. Thirty years later, we are overjoyed and continually excited by the evolution of the Center for Nonviolence. Even after all these years, we continue to be touched and humbled by the clients, staff members, interns, and family members who also serve as our inspiration to continually refine and develop best practices to end violence in all its forms.

Center for Nonviolence - 30th Anniversary Edition

Men's Intervention Program

*Only ICADV certified nonprofit in
Northeast Indiana*

Groups Offered: Batterer's Intervention; 29
week Program

Clients Served: 461

"I believe that by attending this group I've been changing my ways. I truly wish that all the guys that come here would take what they learned and use it in the world. I'm very grateful that the facilitators work hard to help up really see that our actions brought hurt and sadness to the people we say we love. They do an amazing job. I give them a A++++++"

"I was very skeptical at first. But hopeful I'd get the tools I wanted and needed. The Bluffton group has had a major impact and helped me extraordinarily! I have less negativity and am completely more positive. This was a true learning experience that has changed my life"

"Overall I love this class. No one in your everyday working life tells you this stuff, its changed all my relationships."

Men for Nonviolence
1981

Official Name Change:
Center for Nonviolence
1984

Youth Program
1987

"I want to say thank you all and I appreciate all the ears that listened and all the hearts that cared. The way I was down for so many years this class has brought to the surface about myself and why I was feeling so much pain and animosity. Again thank you all and hope the classes help you as much as they helped."

"I plan on never being in a relationship with a man who is an alcoholic, drug-addict, who puts me or my kids down, and who makes me feel worthless.

Since I've started group, I've realized that I'm not alone. I have learned so many wonderful things about how to deal with my anger and with my child's, I plan on working on these techniques because I want my children to realize they are important and deserve to have healthy relationships without physical and mental abuse."

Women's Program
1983

Women's Intervention Program

*Only program of its kind in
Northeast Indiana*

Groups Offered: Mother's Group, Women's
Intervention Group

Clients Served: 136

"My thinking about myself has changed in such a positive way. Abuse I learned throughout my childhood and my past brought me to where I am now, and I know now that I have the power to be in control of myself and my emotions. I know now that I do not have to react to anything that stresses me out by yelling, hitting, or feeling out of control and losing my mind."

“I loved the Center because they took time to notice my problem and help me with it with open hands and they took the time to know me and didn’t label me by what they heard like so many people have and I would like to thank my facilitators I was truly blessed to have that much care for me for once.”

Purchased:
235 W. Creighton Ave
1993

FACES: Leadership Program
2010

Latino Program
1994

Mother’s Program
1995

“I learned a lot by coming. I learned how to walk away and control myself and I shouldn’t really talk about others because I really don’t know what that person goes through in their life.”

“Group time has really made me change the way I think before I blow up, and react to problems or situations. I have even changed my circle of the people I used to hang out with”

“To the Center for Nonviolence, I give thanks for always having a response, an answer, or a solution, to the problem that one can face in any moment. By having childcare available, we are able to learn about our experiences of others and listen to ways to avoid violent situations.”

“I have the greatest admiration and respect for the Nonviolence group. I am grateful for the personal support from the people who were there for me in those moments when I really needed it. I have so much respect for the staff who have supported me during the times that I didn’t know what to do. Kind words made me feel so grateful and glad they guides this group of women united and continue to help many. We hope the program keeps supporting us and hope there are many more people like them”

Youth Program

Kindergarten– 12th Grade

Groups Offered: FACES: Transforming the Image of Leadership, Youth Intervention Program

Clients Served: 149

“The center has helped me to be a better person. All the information has been very valuable to me when it comes to education, immigration, etc. It is very supportive to listen to the stories of other people that have rose above so many problems thanks to the Center. Moreover, the Hispanic community has united with other races for a good cause.”

Women’s Support Program

Groups Offered: Support groups in English and Spanish; Free childcare during groups

Women Served: 180

Children Served: 188



Coordinating Panel

- Kim Miller
- Susan Minke
- Sherwin Kepes
- Barbara Linden
- Laura Boyer
- Jennifer Mabe
- Trish Fox
- Christine Marshall

Center's Wish List

- Digital camera
- Instrumental CDs
- Laminator
- Diapers & Wipes
- Bubbles
- Markers
- Clay
- Construction Paper
- Playground balls
- Office supplies
- Boxes of Kleenex
- Gift Certificates to...
 - ◇ Lowes
 - ◇ Home Depot
 - ◇ Meijer
 - ◇ Target

*Mission: To provide education, support, and advocacy to
end domestic and other forms of violence while modeling
equality and power sharing*