



The Language of Advocacy

The term ‘politically correct’ has on occasion been used as a derogatory response aimed at advocates when they are providing language guidelines for those not familiar with the evolution of domestic violence work. As in, “you’re sooooo politically correct”.

We understand this angst. It’s hard to keep up with an ever-changing lexicon. We worry too that *keeping up* with the lingo may be overwhelming, even paralyzing to allies, preventing them from becoming part of the conversation as they worry about saying the right or wrong thing.

There are no language police and those who work to create language that is more inclusive and better descriptive of the work are advocates for change who recognize that change takes work, time, practice, and patience.

If someone is making the effort to use “they” in place of gender definers, then they are allies. Those who refuse to recognize the critical need for change are not.

Language is an important component in creating greater awareness and ultimately in ending the oppression of domestic and sexual violence. Nuanced shifts in language can open eyes to matters otherwise overlooked but nonetheless critical to change.

For instance, when our cognitive construct and language about domestic and sexual violence is based on analyzing what a woman was doing, thinking, wearing, or where she was at the time of an assault then we are to some

extent inadvertently blaming her for the assault.

The answer to these questions is not helping us to unearth the root of the problem. Because if she hadn't answered back, questioned, gone downtown, or worn a skirt, is not what prevents assault. Only the abuser can prevent assault, and ultimately our society through positive social change.

When the collective transformation of the concepts that support violent behavior is altered then the incidence of domestic and sexual violence will diminish.

When we shift the statement from "Mary is a battered woman" which emphasizes not only that Mary was beaten but that the beating defines her, to the question "why does John beat Mary" or "why do men rape women" then we put the emphasis on the source of the problem, the assailant not the victim. And we make greater space to acknowledge that Mary was a victim of an incident caused by John and not that she has the character of a battering post.

Another example of shifting the language is, rather than asking why women stay with the men who abuse them we might do better to ask, "why does he prevent her from leaving him?" Both are complex, but the answer to the latter will be more instructional in averting the abuse.

In reading this some might ask why we are using the term men for abusers and women as victims when we know that anyone can be a victim of domestic or sexual assault, and anyone can be a perpetrator. This is purposeful on our part.

Starting Point provides services for all victims - women, men, non-binary, queer, trans, - all. However, when the work to end domestic and sexual violence began the focus was on women. "Women's shelters" opened across the country and were filled most everywhere. Starting Point began with language that defines the problem as gender bias. We have worked hard, through the evolution of the work, to remind our community that we are NOT just a women's shelter, we are a domestic violence shelter open to all victims who are in imminent danger.

Although anyone can be a victim and anyone can be a perpetrator it remains true that the vast majority of those who commit violence are men, and those who are victims are women and children. In other words, the crisis persists, overwhelmingly, as a gender-biased crisis. Over the past 20 years or so, in the urge to be inclusive we have softened these truths to the detriment of the work.

It is a small population of men who rape or commit domestic violence. Statistically, in a group of 100 women who have been raped, 25 men were the rapist of those 100 women. It is primarily men who do these acts though, and by using language that defines and highlights these truths we can provide the tools necessary to shift the cultural construct that supports men's violence and in doing so free us all, victims and abusers, from the desolation of gender-bias oppression.

Starting Point

Men's Advocacy Group

Men mobilizing men
to take action against domestic and sexual
violence by raising awareness through advocacy,
education, and volunteerism.

Group meets quarterly on third Tuesday.
Beginning September 20, 2022, at 6 pm
at Starting Point Advocacy Center,
30 Pleasant St. in Conway



Community@StartingPointNH.org

Community Corner

Starting Point is fortunate to have many community partners. In our "Community Corner" section we'd like to highlight our partners and our work together as well as thank those who support us!



The Children's Advocacy Center (CAC), a Carroll County 501(C)3 nonprofit,

serves all of Carroll County. The CAC's mission is to *protect children while promoting justice*, providing services and information for families whose children have experienced abuse. Among other services, the CAC provides expert forensic interviews. When these interviews occur Starting Point is called to sit with the nonoffending parent, providing empathy and support as they navigate difficult times. Together the CAC and Starting Point support families through the process and provide essential resources. Check out the CAC's upcoming fundraiser here: **[Beards for Bucks](#)**



Big thanks to Mike Bielecki and his team at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP once more for their collection of gift cards to the tune of \$650 this time! Team PwC rocks!!

We also want to give a shout-out to our amazing Golf Tournament committee Bobbie Box and Rickie Tibbetts for all they've done to help us get ready for the tournament!!



Stay Up to Date with our Dates!

Sept 15, 2-3:30 pm: First meeting of 6-week, in-person support group. 30 Pleasant St. Conway.

Sept 20, 6 pm; Men's Advocacy Group at Starting Point Advocacy Center, 30 Pleasant St Conway.

Sept 22, 8th Annual Golf Tournament at NCCC, Tee times start at 2pm

October 4, 5-8 pm: Volunteer Training Starts - This session is open to all who are interested in learning more about volunteering and about Starting Point in general.

Oct 17, 6-7 pm, Sexting Forum. Experts in the field will provide information and answer questions about keeping children safe from sexual abuse through texting and internet connections.

Oct 20, 6 pm: Domestic Violence Awareness Month Vigil in Schouler Park, North Conway

As always please check our Facebook page or email community@StartingPointNH.org for updates or changes in scheduled events. We will continue to follow CDC recommendations and do our very best to keep our community safe and healthy.

Starting Point Challenge - September 22
at North Conway Country Club

Our 8th Annual Golf Tournament is coming right up!
Please join us to help raise funds and awareness.
You can register a team or corporate
sponsorship here: [Golf Registration](#)

Don't have enough golfing friends to form a team
contact us at community@startingpointnh.org and we'll
introduce you to our golf friends!

Starting Point

8th Annual Starting Point Challenge
North Conway Country Club
Thursday, September 22, 2022



Schedule/Information & Registration at:
www.StartingPointNH.org

Registration fee is \$85
Includes: Green Fee, Cart,
Meal & Contest Package!
Tee times start at 2pm

\$10,000
Hole-in-One
Contest!!



9-hole, 4-Person Teams, Scramble (Best Ball), Tee Times TBD

Team Name _____ Captain _____

Email _____ Phone _____

**Mandatory for Winners and Prize Announcements*

Golfer #1 _____ Golfer #2 _____

Golfer #3 _____ Golfer #4 _____

Meal Choice: __Burger__ Ceasar Wrap
__Cold Cut Combo __ Strawberry Salad

Register on line at www.StartingPointNH.org
or mail this form, with checks payable to *Starting Point*:
PO Box 1972, Conway, NH 03818

To Benefit Starting Point: Services for Victims of Domestic & Sexual Violence
Serving Carroll County since 1981

Big Thanks to Chris Pacheco
The tournament started 8 years ago as the brainchild of Chris Pacheco,

from CP Golf. Her hope was to honor a dear friend who had been a victim of domestic violence, to bring together a dynamic group of supporters - the Mt. Mamas, and raise money for Starting Point. We are so grateful for her vision and support over the years in putting the tournament on.



Volunteering makes a difference.
Join our Team and be the Change you Believe in!

Volunteering at Starting Point requires an initial commitment of 30 hours of training required by NH RSA. This can seem overwhelming to some. But once the training requirements are met volunteer opportunities abound and can easily fit into a busy schedule. Commitment can vary from a project once or twice a year, to a few hours a month, to a regular shift on our support line.

Volunteering at Starting Point is extremely fulfilling. We like to remind our volunteers that it was volunteers who built Starting Point and that any person with compassion and an ability to share resources has the ability to be a Starting Point volunteer.

"I wanted to volunteer at Starting Point to give back. I knew that the work would be heartbreaking at times. I felt prepared for that. What I wasn't prepared for was how joy-filled the work can be too. Helping someone, sometimes just by listening and believing in them, move from being a victim to becoming a survivor is so rewarding. I've learned a lot about myself in the process too, like how to be a better communicator and listener. The Starting Point staff takes self-care very seriously so I've learned a lot about creating space for myself too.!"

~Past volunteer Robin S.

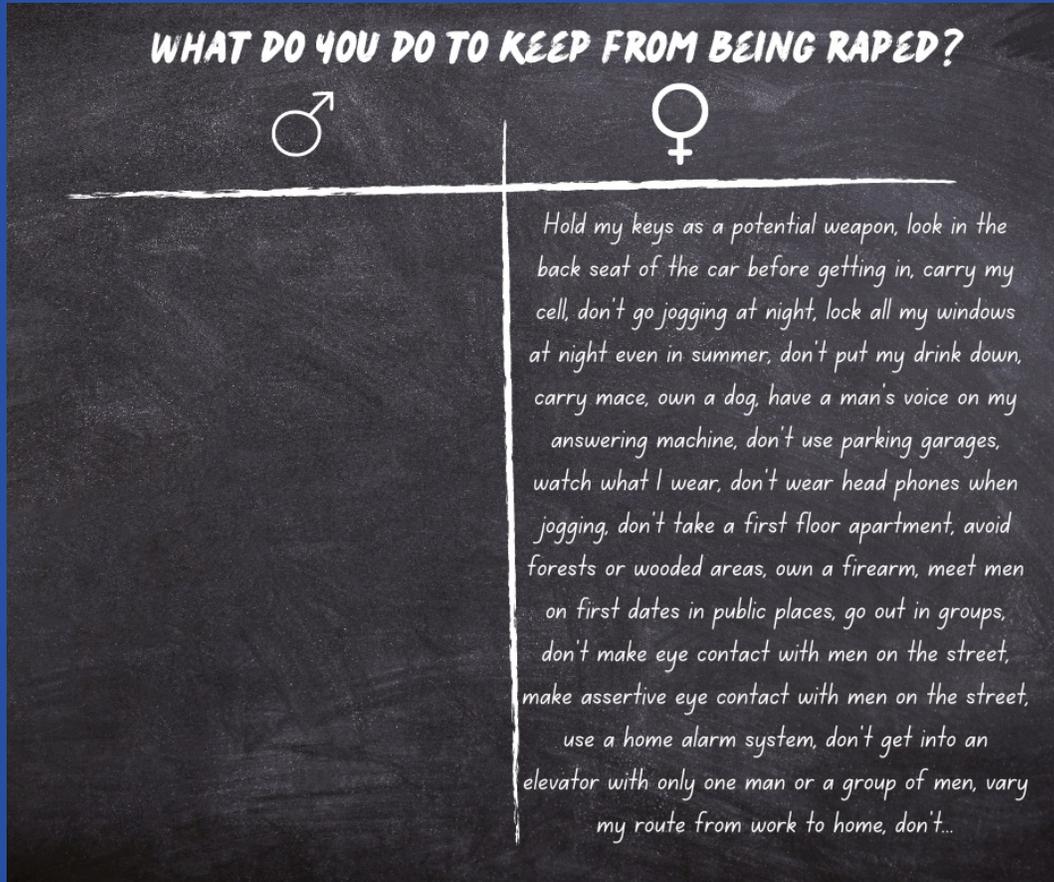
Training begins Oct 4 at the Advocacy Center in Conway, 30 Pleasant St, from 5 to 8 pm. Anyone interested in volunteering or in learning more about Starting Point is welcome to attend.

Email community@startingpointnh.org for more information.

After posting the activity below, in our August enews, that Jackson Katz uses in his training at colleges and universities throughout the country we had a friend question the list with concern that it was a list of things a

woman *should do* to "keep from being raped". We wanted to make it clear that the list is not an instructional list. It is a list devised by young women illustrating the many restrictions placed on them in order to not be raped. The only way to assure that a woman is safe from being raped is to change the culture that believes that it s a woman's responsibility to not be raped.

We love these types of opportunities for conversation. Please contact us at community@startingpointnh.org anytime to engage.

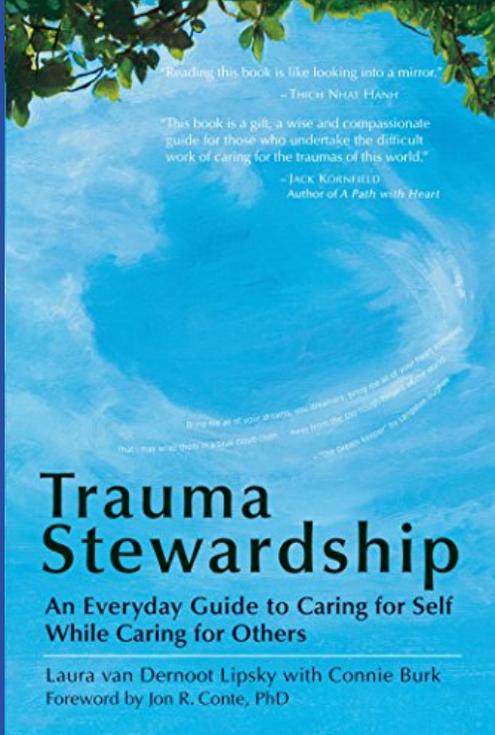


LIBRARY CORNER:

Trauma Stewardship by Laura van Dernoot Lipsky

Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others, is a guiding publication for advocates everywhere.

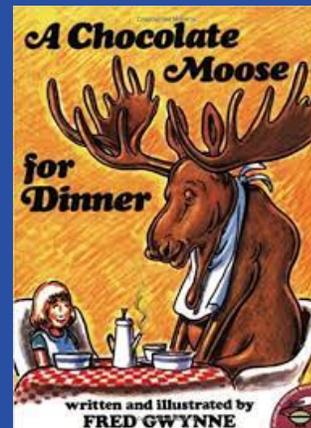
Laura van Dernoot Lipsky shares her insight on providing for others while preserving and refilling one's own tank. She uses humor and poignant examples to illustrate when things have gone awry and professional and personal insight to outline how to step away from the cliff!



Here's her Ted Talk - [Beyond the Cliff](#)

Children's Book Nook

Fred Gwynne, yep the actor who played Herman Munster, wrote a sweet book on wordplay from a child's perspective. It is an excellent reminder for adults to check in with children about what they perceive as opposed to what they hear, like when we say that we are having a chocolate moose for dinner!



Language is tricky!



Don't have a child to buy books for? No worries we do! We are always happy to receive books to enhance our children's library or to distribute to children in our network. Please go to our website for our book list at:

White Birch Books
to view our list and
order online.



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