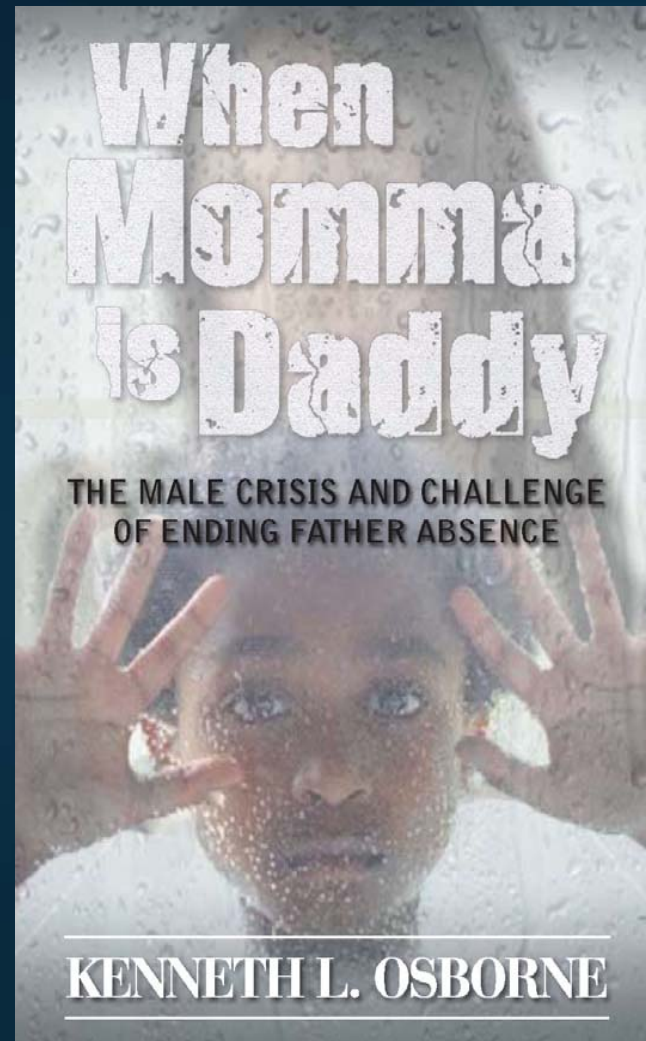


Healthy Families Healthy Communities: Addressing the issue of Father Absence

Presented by
Kenneth L. Osborne



The birth of an idea



Social impact of Father Absence

63% of youth suicides are from fatherless homes.

90% percent of all homeless and runaway youths are from fatherless homes.

85% of children who exhibit behavioral disorders are from fatherless homes.

71% of high school dropouts are from fatherless homes.

70% of youths in State institutions are from fatherless homes.

75% of adolescent patients in substance abuse centers are from fatherless homes.

85% of rapists motivated by displaced anger are from fatherless homes.



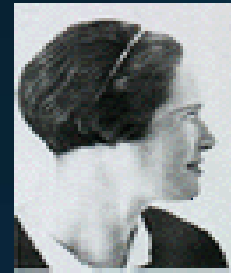
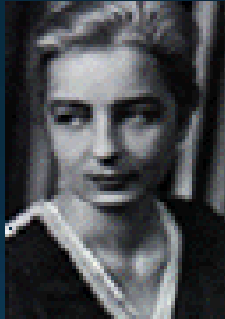
The Vanishing man / Women in control

Is this new news?



- Women are the majority in the workforce for the 1st time in US history
- They make up much of the managerial class
- More of them are college educated, making them better suited for the postindustrial society
- Traditional male roles in society have significantly shifted over the last 20 years

You've come a long way ... baby !!



- "The chief distinction in the intellectual powers of the two sexes is shown by man's attaining to a higher eminence, in whatever he takes up, than can woman." - Darwin (1871)
- "Identical education of the sexes is a crime before God and humanity, that physiology protests against and that experience weeps over." - Clarke (1873)
- "Deficiency in reproductive power . . . can be reasonably attributed to the overtaxing of (women's) brains." - Spencer (1867)
- "The 'woman's rights movement' is an attempt to rear, by the process of 'un-natural selection', a race of monstrosities - hostile alike to men, to normal women, to human society, and to the future development of our race." - Bagehut (1879)

Women as Leaders today...are we really that surprised?



Lessons learned from trying to have it all



- Cleanliness is next to prosperity
- Look but don't touch
- Specialize
- Sit still and stay indoors
- Live by the clock
- Wear the uniform
- Keep your distance, stay your pace
- Desensitize yourself
- Don't trouble yourself with large moral issues



Men's Responses to the cultural shift

- Perceive themselves as Losing Power: Personal vs. Collective
- Pressure to Perform and to Change
- Being Groomed for Violence
- Barren Father-Son Relationships
- Deny themselves emotional skill development
- Not asking for help when it's needed

Father absence is a Global incident


	Children in two-parent family	Children in solo mother family
Sweden	2.2	5.2
Denmark	2.5	7.3
Finland	1.9	7.5
Belgium	3.2	10.0
Italy	9.5	13.9
Norway	1.9	18.4
Netherlands	3.1	39.5
Canada	7.4	50.2
Australia	7.7	56.2
United States	11.1	59.5





Causes of Father absence

- Fatherlessness is a complex phenomenon produced by many circumstances and situations. Some are related to choices people make about fertility, marriage, and cohabitation. But others are the result of unexpected events, illnesses, or incarceration.



Contemporary causes of Father absence

- Having a culture that heavily stresses individualism
- Have an economic system that ignore familial obligations
- Have an educational system that does not stress childrearing as a major adult responsibility
- Sexualizing our society
- Make marriage a very weak institution
- Through the media and social discourse deemphasize the importance of children to the continuation of society
- Overlook the importance of fathering when discussing male gender roles
- Don't mention that fathers are unique and irreplaceable as protectors, challengers, disciplinarians and guides. *Explain that the role of fathers is to be more like mothers: say that it is perfectly possible for "daddies to be good mommies".*




Causes of Father absence cont.

- Paternal choice
- The Fall of the Nuclear family and the Rise of Family diversity
- The Divorce Revolution
- Changing Laws
- Step families
- Non marital cohabitation
- The Sperm Donor Father
- Incarceration

When Mama is Daddy



- The Father's role has shrunk drastically over the years. American fathers have been losing authority within the family and psychologically withdrawing from a direct family role in child rearing almost since colonial times.

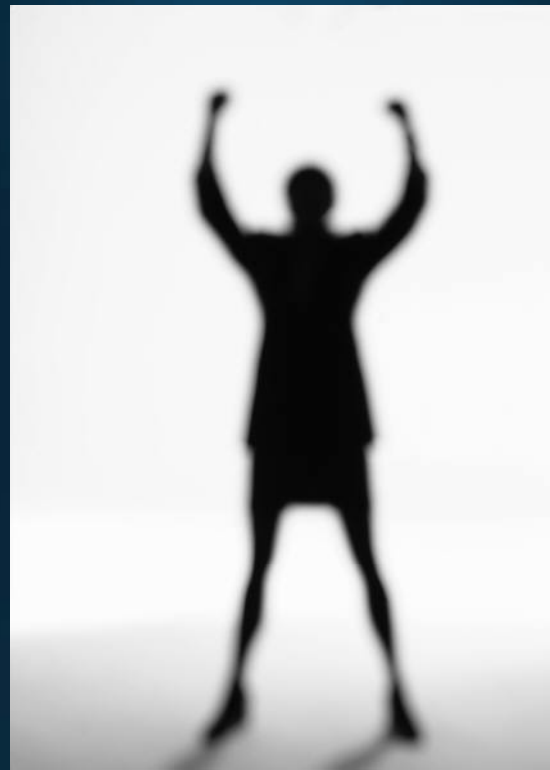



When Mama is Daddy – things for the Single Mom not to do

- Raise him to think he's cute and let him think the world revolves around his cuteness
- Be involved with a steady stream of different men. Let him see how you manipulate men to get your needs met (bills, money, etc)
- Emphasize the importance of sexual rather than intellectual prowess
- Make your son you man. Not sexually but emotionally Keep him away from his father and put his father down

Things not to do cont.

- Let your son talk and act grown
- Let him hear you engage in sexual activity with different men in the next room
- When he gets into trouble make sure its always the other person or the teachers fault





When Mama is Daddy: Challenges for Mom

- Stop talking so much and start doing
- Understanding the “Boy Code”
- The Pillars of the Boy code: the Tough kid, the Hellraiser, the big shot, I Ain’t no Sissy and Silent Bob
- The gender straight jacket
- Getting behind the mask
- The Emotional Disconnect



When Daddy is Home

What Fathers do is different from mothers. Fathers style of parenting tends to be very complementary of what Mother's do and sets a tone for optimum child rearing.

- Play
- Competition, Risk taking and Independence
- Discipline and Structure
- Intellectual competence and academic achievement
- Psychological well being

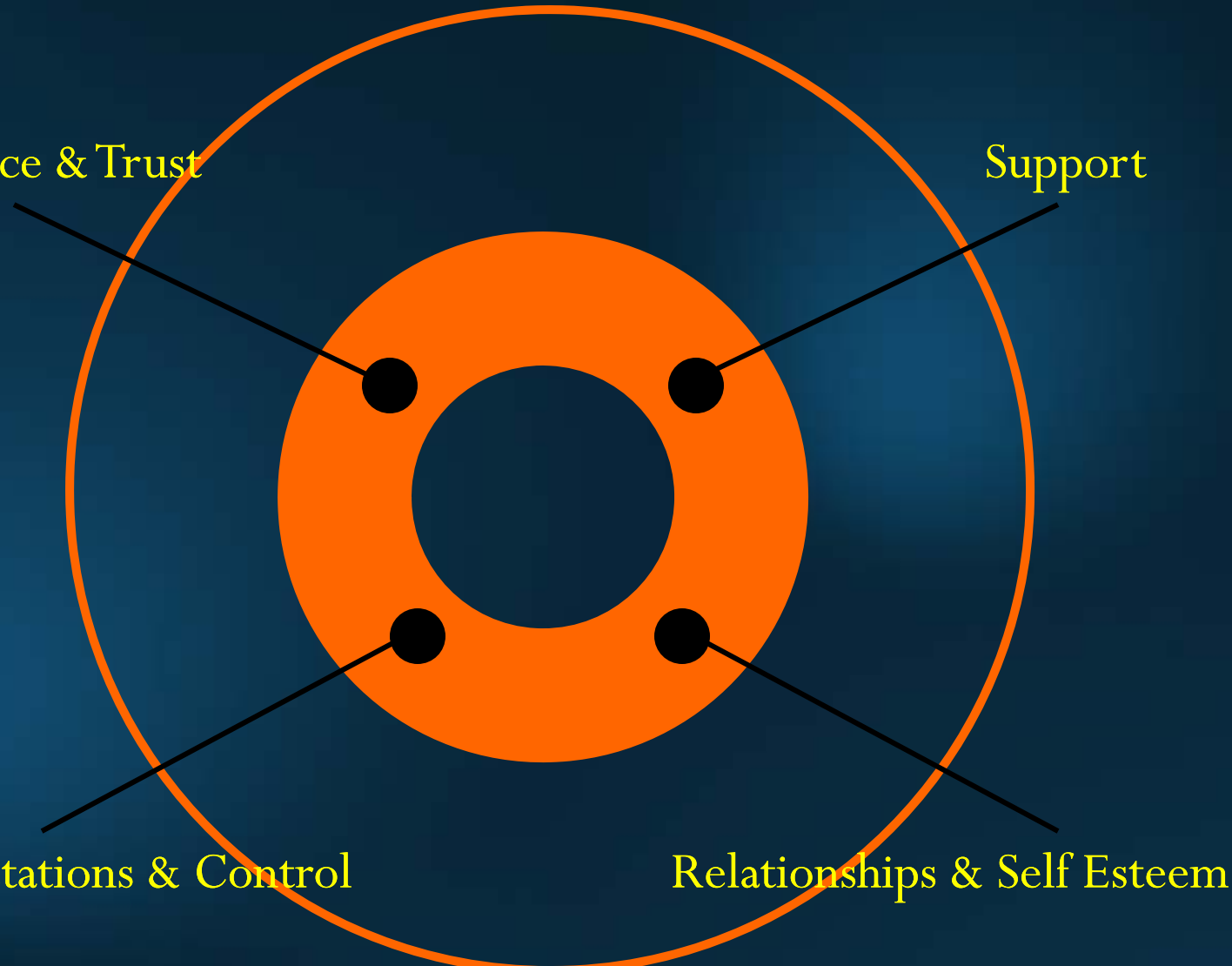
{ Core Healthy Family Themes }

Nurturance & Trust

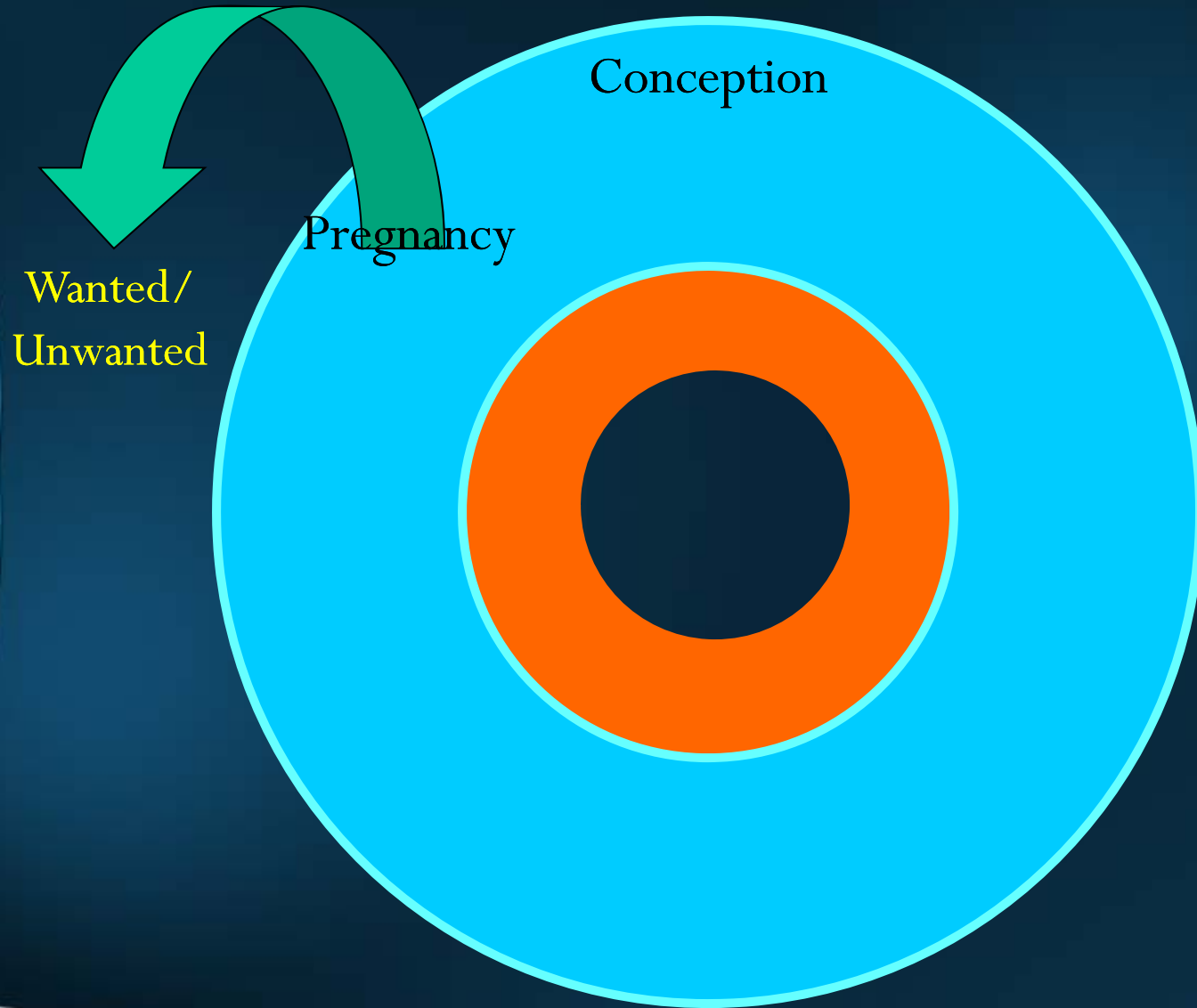
Support

Expectations & Control

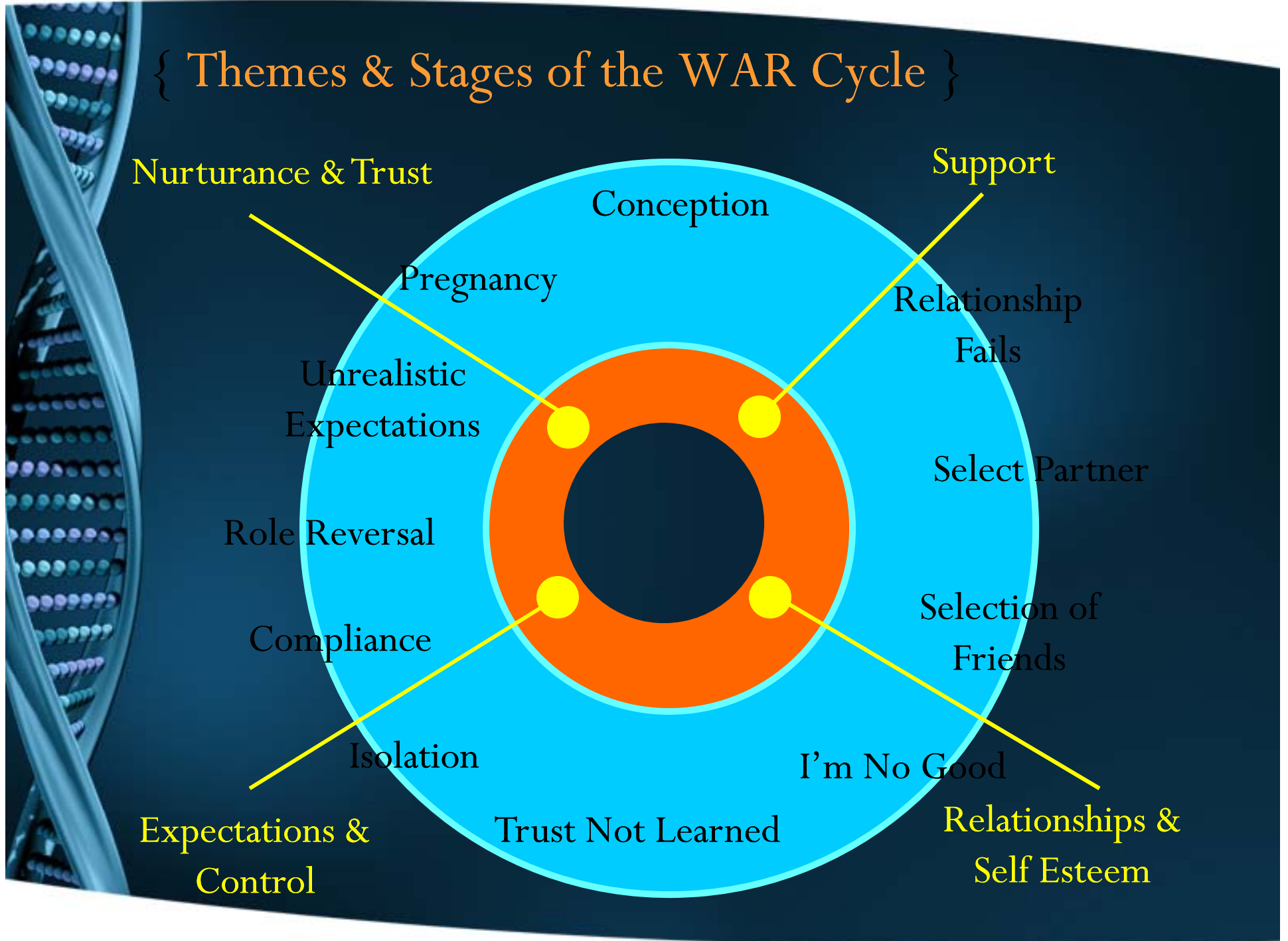
Relationships & Self Esteem



{ Stages of the WAR Cycle }

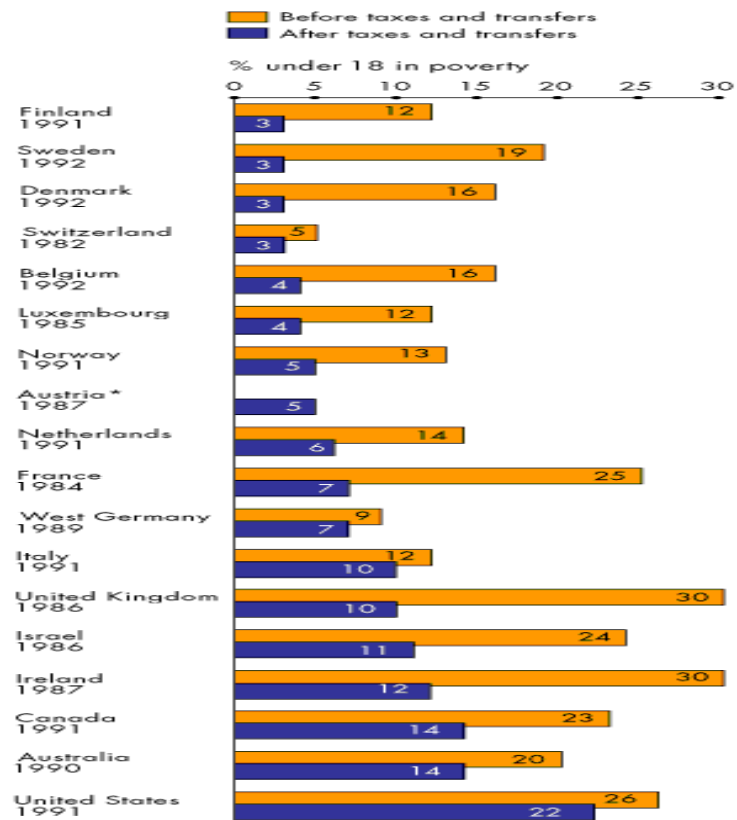


{ Themes & Stages of the WAR Cycle }



The high cost of Father absence

Child poverty before and after government intervention



* Data not available on income before taxes and transfers.

The Criminalization of Father Absence

What we are seeing today are criminal penalties imposed on citizens who have committed no act but are made outlaws through the actions of others. This phenomenon proceeds largely from involuntary divorce and is affected by family courts.

The presumption of guilt pervades child support enforcement where the burden of proof may be shifted to the defendant according to one ruling. In clear violation of the constitution it has been held that “not all child support contempt proceedings classified as criminal are entitled to a jury trial,” even indigent fathers are not necessarily entitled to a lawyer.



The Criminalization of Father Absence

Men are now forced to support children who are acknowledged not to be theirs biologically. Stepfathers are ordered to pay support for stepchildren. Grandparents and second wives are pursued by child support prosecutors. Minor boys statutorily and forcibly raped by adult women must pay child support to the criminals who raped them.

A presumption of guilt also pervades allegations of domestic violence made during custody proceedings, where a father's contact with his children is criminalized through restraining orders that are routinely issued with no evidence of wrongdoing whatever – orders that cannot protect anyone only prohibit a father's contact with his own children.



The Criminalization of Father Absence

No figures are available on how many fathers are incarcerated for “family crimes.” Informal estimates put as much as one-third of the nation’s jail population consisting of fathers on contempt-of-court charges. Some jurisdictions now propose creating forced labor camps specifically for fathers to relieve overcrowded jails. Not since the fall of the Weimar republic has a democracy treated millions of its own citizens in this fashion.





THE ROAD TOWARD ENDING FATHER ABSENCE

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Ending Father Absence: The Treatment Environment

Demands of Self-Help

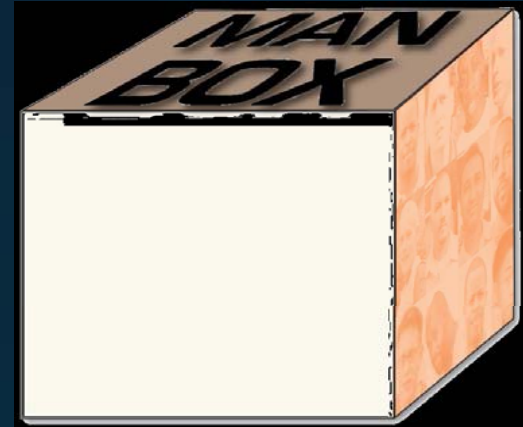
Vs.

Demands of Traditional

Masculinity

Addressing the collective socialization of Men

- Anything associated with being a women
- Anything associated with being gay
- Sensitive
- Being vulnerable
- Being weak
- Showing emotion
- Soft
- Needs to “Man Up”





Male fear and vulnerability:

- Men often experience a disconnection dilemma
- If men are defined by strength, courage, toughness and control there is no room for victimization and fear
- Being a man and a victim are incompatible
- Fear, powerlessness and vulnerability require a disconnect from male gender role expectations



THE COLLECTIVE SOCIALIZATION OF MEN OFTEN RESULTS IN

- **Having Less Value in Women**
- **Treating Women as Property**
- **Objectification of Women**
- **Violence toward Women**



Treatment needs:

- Women's recovery is about Empowerment
- Men's recovery is about emotional Literacy and Relationships





Masculinity Demands

**SHOWING
STRENGTH**

**EXPERIENCING
PRIDE**

**ACTING
INVINCIBLE**

Vs.

Treatment Demands

**SHOWING
WEAKNESS**

**EXPERIENCING
GUILT & SHAME**

**ACTING
VULNERABLE**



Masculinity Demands

**BEING
SELF-RELIANT**

BEING STOIC

TAKING ACTION

Vs.

Treatment Demands

SEEKING HELP

**EXPRESSING
FEELINGS**

**BECOMING
INTROSPECTIVE**



Thoughts on Intervention:

- A key recovery skill for men is the development of a broader range of options for expressing emotions and fear of being in healthy relationships
- Men also need to learn “relational mutuality”
- A key intervention is to build on strengths and “bridge skills”
- Reframing specific problem behaviors as survival skills from the family origin issues



Intervention Strategies: The use of male Archetypes

- Archetypes might be compared to the “blueprints” contained in seeds. Growth from seeds depends on soil and climate conditions, the presence of certain nutrients care and support from the gardeners. Like wise archetypes are like an inner blueprint. They are metaphors for unnameable unconscious forces within all of us. Scientist often refer to it as the neurophysiological components of all human interactions

Male archetypes


King- the center of a man’s world, blessing his psyche with self trust, creative order and a sense of profound mission

Prince – the sacred son, waiting to ascend to king.

Warrior-the part of ourselves that protects emotional boundaries and asserts our needs in the world

Explorer-the curious aspect of ourselves that embodies wonder

Magician- the part of us able to transform things, answer life’s mysteries



Ending Father Absence: other special group topics for Men

- Define 21st Century masculinity: The New Heavy Lifting:
- Knowledge, Wisdom and Understanding of Self
- A Spiritual Center and Focus
- Answer the questions “Who am I” “What do I want out of life”
- Healing family of origin issues
- Practicing sexual responsibility
- End self and other objectification (ATM’s v/s Porn Stars)



Moving from relationsick to relationship

- Talk to men about forming a relationship with themselves first
- Talk to men about what role does spirituality plays in their sex conduct
- Have men closely examine their relationship picker and change it if necessary
- What are his needs v/s her needs



His needs vs. Her Needs

His needs

Sexual fulfillment

Recreational Companionship

An attractive spouse

Domestic Support

Admiration



His needs vs. Her Needs

Her needs

Affections

Conversation

Honesty and openness


Financial support

Family commitment



At intake make sure to assess

- Abuse History
- Resiliency Factors



Create a treatment culture that promotes “Mistakes as wonderful opportunities to learn.”