

Group Support Meetings for HFL Men Forming

Dear Fellow Heartbeats for Life members;

Social support is one of the four dimensions of the Dr. Dean Ornish program for reversing heart disease. When I joined Heartbeats for Life (HFL) some 14 years ago, I was fully occupied with “giving up food” (I mean the good FAT food). Made some progress! Getting exercise? No problem I’m a ‘sweater’! And ‘stress reduction’ well not so good, but quitting work and launching (jettisoning) the kids, made stress - history! Ha! Ha!

Sooo, what’s left? Oh it’s the **social interaction** thing! Now, I certainly think our monthly meetings and potluck dinners have provided a wonderful opportunity for me to network and ‘connect’ with like-minded fellow HFL’ers! And I do try! But I have this ‘man thing’ about solving my own problems and keeping up appearances. I’m the strong silent type! Meaning small talk is ok but don’t get personal. Ya know?

OK, where’s this going!! Well, I’d like to be part of a men’s small group! That is, a group of men of similar ilk who are willing to share their experiences and wisdom with each other. Using principles espoused by our program we would explore the ‘feelings thing’ and learn how emotional support and being ‘connected’ can help us become, or stay, heart healthy!

Not that this is an original idea; Dr. Bob already has a group meeting running and is providing me advice and materials on the model followed by the Dr. Ornish team during their research.

I have ideas that I think would be fun to explore and we can invent new designs to help us achieve a sense of connection and mutual support for each other. We’ll have some rules, like no talking about latest recipes or cooking, exercise routines, religion, politics or the economy. No, we’re going to talk ‘man stuff’! You know...identifying and owning feelings, overcoming fears and anxieties, dealing with hurt, and golf, and dreams and sources of pleasure. Wow! I can hardly wait! There will be a meditation (or nap) time, some education and maybe some journaling. But primarily we will be sharing with each other and supporting each other through this journey called ‘life’!

Now, I won’t be your ‘leader’. I don’t know anything about this feeling stuff. (Ask my wife.) But I do know how to facilitate a small group experience that is focused and delivers on its goals. I also have a passion for helping others achieve personal growth and I really look forward to this opportunity to apply myself to such a worthy challenge. If you are a man, and think being part of a small support group would be of interest to you, please call me (Jim Parker; aka Maureen’s husband) and we can start developing meeting details. I can be reached at 585-355-5788.

Call anytime...I’m Retired

Wishing you Healthy Hearts

Jim Parker
585-355-5788