The ManKind Project

Executive Director:

Charles G. Heisinger, Jr.

Memorandum

Date: September 1, 1998

To: Center Directors (Please distribute in your communities) Regional Coordinators

Regional Representatives

CC: Executive Committee

Re: Approved Statement on the Practice of Therapy during New Warrior Training Adventure Weekends

The question, “Are we practicing therapy on weekends?” has been posed recently at one center. The following statement addresses that question and has been approved by the executive committee.

Are we practicing therapy? According to the American Heritage dictionary, the definition of psychotherapy is, "The psychological treatment of mental, emotional, or nervous disorders." This is not our intention as facilitators. Our intention is to support men through education as they become conscious of their emotional capacity and their choices. Our work may be therapeutic, as in cathartic, but is not therapy.

A modern-day therapy practice comprises intention, structured assessment, diagnosis (DSM-IV), determination of levels of care ranging from outpatient to hospitalization, treatment planning, creating a therapeutic relationship, engaging in therapy, referral if called for, and formal discharge. All of these under a rule of ethics and rules of law regarding reporting, confidentiality, and certainly not least of all record-keeping in a chart which becomes a legal document. Save confidentiality, we practice none of the above.

If we are not practicing therapy, what are we doing? The NWTA initiatory deep descent process is one of a man identifying situations that are lose-lose for him and creating new possibilities and choices. It is about a man discovering what is true for him, often making that discovery under layers of denial, hiding, and repression. It is not about treating an emotional or mental disorder. In fact, a mental or emotional disorder could limit a man’s participation in this process. Accordingly, we sometimes discourage men from coming on weekends who have certain mental or emotional disorders.

Some states have enacted statutes which license professional practices. The primary intent of these laws is to protect the public from persons who are unqualified to render therapy-type services for a profit. A secondary purpose is to prevent the selling of therapy services by people not fit to render them. The following titles and descriptions comprise some, but not all, of the specific terms that are regulated under these acts:

Marriage and family therapy

Licensed marriage and family therapist

Professional counseling

Clinical professional counseling

Licensed professional counselor

Licensed clinical professional counselor

Licensed Clinical Social Worker (L.C.S.W.)

Licensed social worker

Clinical social work practice

Clinical psychologist

Clinical psychological services

Use of the words psychological, psychologic, psychology, clinical psychologist to describe services rendered.

In no case does MKP use the abovementioned terms to describe its trainings, nor does it represent that staff who may hold these professional titles will be acting in their professional capacity.

Men who hold these professional titles and any other mental health professionals who attend weekends also attended by their clients should make the nature of their relationship during the training clear to the client prior to the training. This should be in accordance with state regulations regarding their professional conduct.