

## ***The Weekend Quest Project: A Group Experience for Adolescent Boys***

The ***Weekend Quest Project*** is a positively-oriented, goal-focused weekend program designed to develop and enhance emotional growth in adolescent boys.

***Why:*** Adolescence is a time of rapid growth and great turmoil. It is believed that adolescent boys respond to structured group experiences that allow them free expression and personal exploration. Cultures throughout the ages have provided such experiences when transitioning adolescent boys into early manhood (examples: Native American VisionQuests, African initiation ceremonies, Buddhist monastic rites, etc.). It has been noted that our culture is unique for not providing similar opportunities, causing many of our male adolescents to seek identities in drugs, gangs, and other unhealthy outlets. The ***Weekend Quest Project*** aims to fill this gap by providing a safe and positive environment for exploring personal growth.

***Aims*** to help young men:

- Identify personal strengths and weaknesses
- Manage and release anger
- Build self-confidence
- Develop maturity and self-esteem
- Learn constructive communication with peers and adults
- Practice conflict resolution skills

***Participants:*** The program is designed for groups of boys aged 11-13 and 14-17 and the most significant adults in their lives.

***Structure:*** The weekend program involves approximately 16 structured hours divided as follows:

- 2 hours intake
- 12 hours of guided experience for boys focused on the goals described above
- 3 hours of guided experience for adults focused on promoting an environment supportive of each boy's growth
- 1 hour graduation ceremony
- Optional follow-up session(s)

***When:*** The first weekend of September, December, March, and June (Next page →)

***Documented Benefits:*** The *Weekend Quest Project* uses the Behavioral Evaluation Scale III (Home Version Rating Form) before and approximately one month after the program to evaluate significant adult's perceptions of their boy's learning problems, interpersonal difficulties, inappropriate behavior, unhappiness, and physical symptoms/fears. In addition, subjective evaluation forms are filled out by both boys and adults at the end of the program. While there is no guarantee that any particular boy will benefit from participating, evaluations collected to date have demonstrated improvement and satisfaction for most.

***Facilitator:***

- ***Samuel J. Marwit:*** Sam is a licensed psychologist and Diplomate in Clinical Psychology with the American Board of Professional Psychology. He has a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the State University of New York at Buffalo. He has worked with adolescent boys for much of his 40 year professional career

***Cost and Cancellation Policy:*** The cost for the 16 hour program is \$650, paid in advance. A full refund will be made if cancellation is received in writing a month prior to the start of the program, or if the program itself is cancelled at any time. Half (\$325) will be refunded if cancellation is received between two weeks and one month of the start of the program. No refund will be made if cancellation is within two weeks of the start of the program, or if parents/guardians or youngster chooses to withdraw after the start of the program.

***Risks and Benefits:*** As with any similar program, every attempt will be made to screen for boys who might benefit, but benefits cannot be guaranteed. Also, there is always the risk that any boy may experience negative emotions and behaviors as a result of participating. By signing a Participation Agreement, both parents/guardians and boys acknowledge that they understand this, that their questions have been answered, and that they are voluntarily entering into this program. In the event that a boy needs to be discontinued for risk-related reasons, his significant adult(s) will be provided with a list of mental health providers and facilities, and half of the cost of the program will be refunded.

***Confidentiality:*** Success for the *Weekend Quest Project* requires that boys feel free to express themselves without worry that their expressions will be monitored, recorded, or transmitted back to authority figures, including parents. For this reason, we seek parents' and/or guardians' agreement, via signing the Participation Agreement, that boys participating in this program can be assured of confidentiality, except in instances where they express a danger to themselves or to others. In those cases, we will notify parents and/or guardians of our concerns and let the boy know that we are doing so. Similarly, if we learn of child/adolescent abuse by adults, we are morally and legally required to report this and will inform the alleged offending party, if possible, before taking action, except where it is deemed that informing the alleged offending party first might cause further harm to the youngster. Signing the Participation Agreement constitutes an understanding and agreement with the terms set forth in this section.

***For Information and Registration:***

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