



Great Lakes (HHS Region 5)

PTTC

Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

# Substance Use and Other Risk Factors for Gun Violence: Prevention and Intervention Strategies

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# Our Path for Today

- Drug use as a risk factor for gun violence
- 21 additional risk factors for gun violence
- Prevention and intervention strategies



# Drug Use and Gun Violence

- The majority of individuals arrested in Cook County, Illinois, including gun related offenses, were under the influence of drugs at the time of arrest.
  - Five hundred annual homicides, 3000 annual shootings
- John Hopkins University's School of Public Health reveals that alcohol plays a significant role in firearm fatalities. The study indicated:
  - 33% of homicides perpetrators were under the influence of drugs at the time of the homicide
  - 30% of homicide victims were under the influence of drugs at the time of the homicide

Source: John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, 2023

# Gun Violence in Urban and Rural Areas



"Gun violence in urban areas has been declining the past several decades. The one type of gun violence that remains constant is suicide by gun in rural America when jobs go away. These suicides often involve a combination of alcohol and firearms."

- Jonathan Metzl, MD

# Driving Under the Influence and Gun Violence



Two or more alcohol-related driving under the influence convictions increases the risk of gun violence, including intimate partner gun violence.

Source: Violence Prevention Research Program,  
University of California, Davis



# 21 Additional Risk Factors For Gun Violence

# Risk Factor: Male Depression

Unique features of male depression:

- Lack of capacity to feel
- Externalization of pain
- Feelings of inadequacy without hope

Source: I Don't Want to Talk About It: Overcoming the Secret Legacy of Male Depression,  
Terrence Real, PhD



# Masks of Male Depression

- Anger
- Rage
- Violence
- Heavy substance use
- Destructive peer group affiliation
- Suicide that looks like a homicide



Source: [I Don't Want to Talk About It: Overcoming the Secret Legacy of Male Depression](#),  
Terrence Real, PhD



# Risk Factor: A “Killed” Spirit

- Abuse
- A lack of love
- Rejection
- Stability constantly threatened



# Risk Factor: Father/Son Pain



- The absence of a caring father
- The presence of an abusive father

Source: Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them, James Garbarino, Ph.D.

# Risk Factor: Parental Rejection



Source: [Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them](#), James Garbarino, Ph.D.

# Risk Factor: Abandonment



Source: [Iron John: A Book About Men](#),  
Robert Bly, Ph.D.

# Risk Factor: Invisibility

- Big cities
- Small towns



Source: Listening To Killers: Lessons Learned From My Twenty Years as a Psychological Witness in Murder Cases, James Garbarino

# Risk Factor: Rage

- My family let me down
- My community let me down
- The larger community let me down
  - Shipping jobs abroad
  - Low wages
  - Discrimination
  - Societal mixed messages



Sources: Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them, James Garbarino, Ph.D.  
Teens Who Hurt, Kenneth Hardy, Ph.D.

**Dehumanization + Ignored Losses =  
Rage and the potential for heavy substance use and  
violence**

Source: Teens Who Hurt: Clinical Interventions to Break the Cycle of Adolescent Violence,  
Kenneth Hardy, Ph.D. and Tracey Laszloffy

# Dehumanizing Experiences

- Police stops
- Police brutality
- Arrests
- Followed while shopping
- Poor to no customer service
- Left to die by paramedics
- Community humiliation

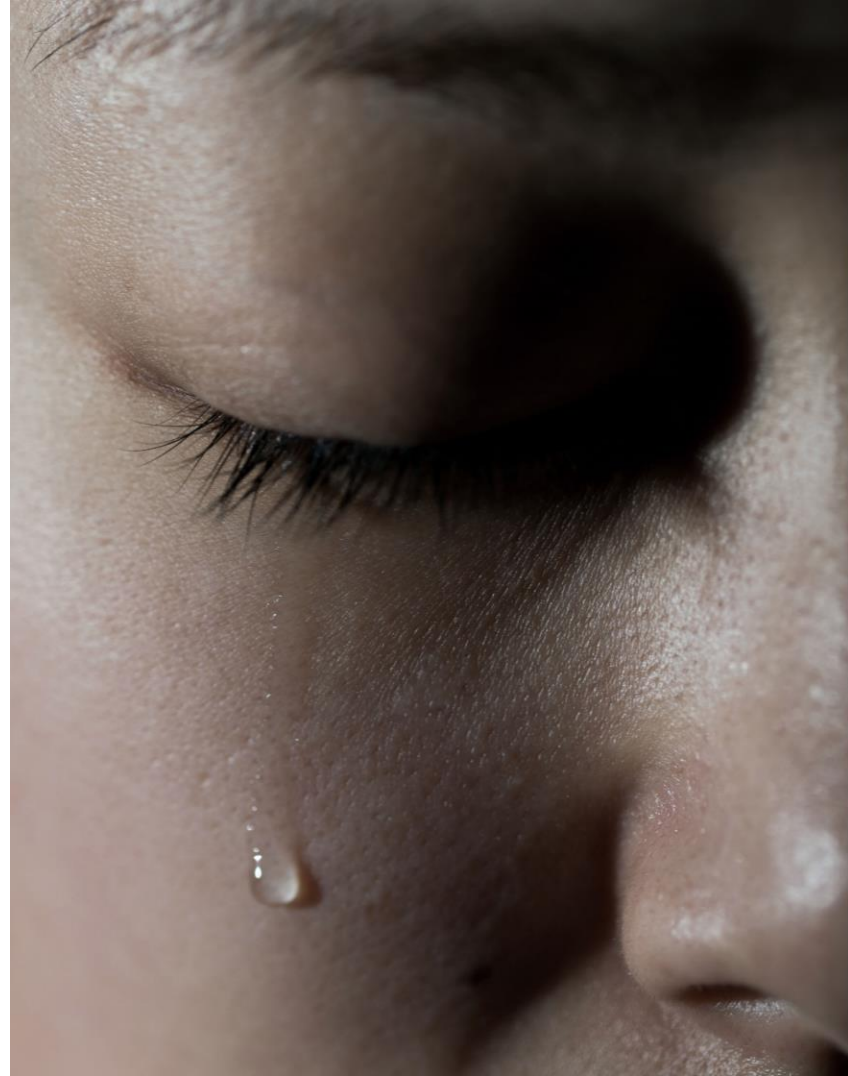


Source: Teens Who Hurt, Kenneth Hardy, Ph.D.



# Ignored Losses

- Death of close relatives
- Friend(s) murdered
- Father or mother hunger
- Parent deported
- Parental divorce
- Frequent relocations



Source: Teens Who Hurt, Kenneth Hardy, Ph.D.

# Impact of Dehumanizing Experiences and Ignored Losses

Dehumanizing experiences + ignored losses =

Rage and the potential for heavy substance use and violence



Source: Teens Who Hurt, Kenneth Hardy, Ph.D.

# Risk Factor: Absence of Rites of Passages

Source: Iron John: A Book About Men, Robert Bly, Ph.D.

# Risk Factor: Limited Role Models

Limited role models on what it means to be a “Whole Man”

- King
- Warrior
- Lover
- Magician

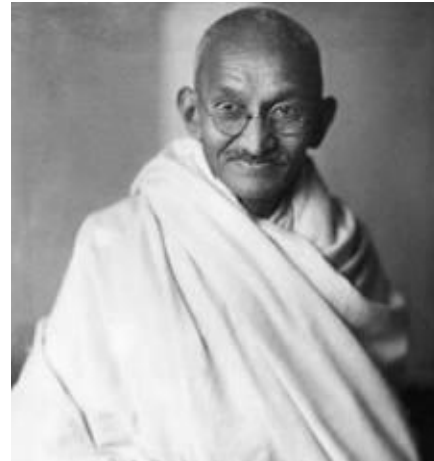
Source: King, Warrior, Lover, Magician: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine,  
Robert Moore, Ph.D.

# King

Noble, leader, the man who blesses others. He sacrifices his needs for the good of the group.



Winston  
Churchill



Ghandi



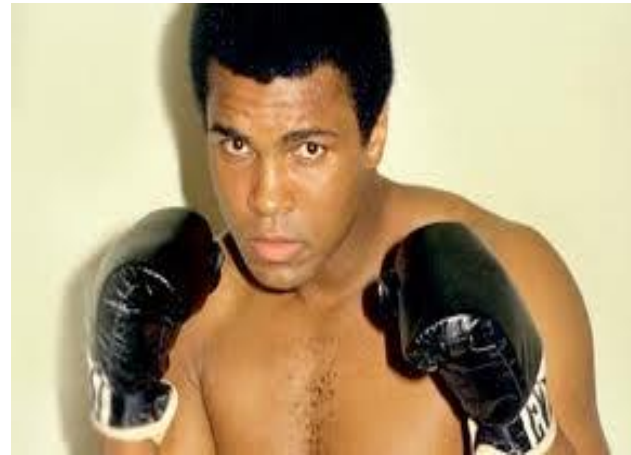
Nelson  
Mandela

# Warrior

- Protector, demonstrates courage
- “Courage is not the absence of fear...” - Mark Twain



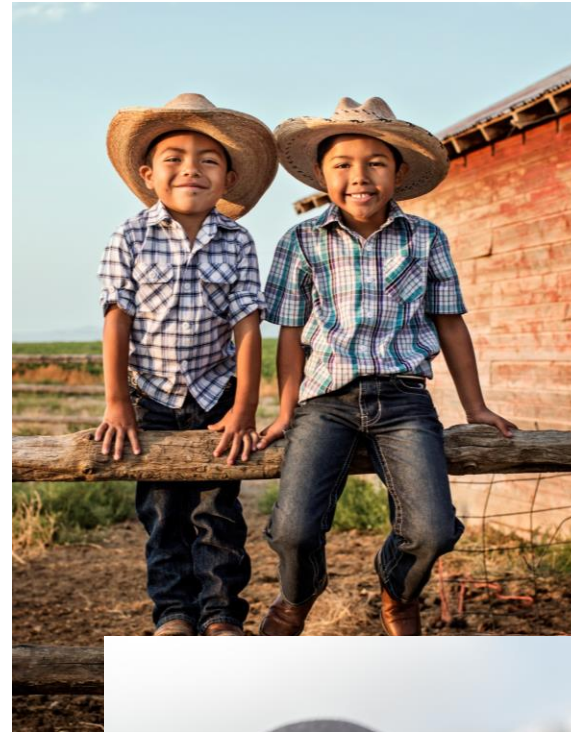
Norman  
Schwarzkopf, Jr.



Muhammad  
Ali

# Lover

- Emotionally open, vulnerable, intimate
- Relationship builder




# Magician

The man who pulls a rabbit out of a hat, negotiator, creative problem solver







“All four of these archetypes are present within one man. Each has a shadow. A less mature version of the archetype.”

King, Warrior, Lover, Magician: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine,  
Robert Moore, Ph.D.

# Shadow King

Corrupt leader, dictator



# Shadow Warrior

- Bully, gang member, rage-a-holic
- Quick temper, violence prone



# Shadow Lover

- Serial affairs
- Hurtful without consideration of other's feelings



# Shadow Magician

- Con artist
- Manipulator



# Risk Factors #10-14

10. Difficulty expressing feelings
11. Educational frustration
12. Gang or hate group affiliation
13. Lack of future orientation
14. A history of trauma

Source: Listening To Killers: Lessons Learned from My Twenty Years as a Psychological Expert Witness In Murder Cases, James Garbarino, Ph.D.

# Risk Factors #15-16

15. Discrimination

16. Economic recessions

- Big cities
- Small towns

Source: Listening To Killers: Lessons Learned from My Twenty Years as a Psychological Expert Witness In Murder Cases, James Garbarino, Ph.D.

# Risk Factors #17-21

17. Excitement about guns
18. History of incarceration
19. Heavy substance use
20. Retaliation
21. Dropping out of school, being bullied at school

Source: Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them, James Garbarino, Ph.D.





# Gun Violence Among Adolescent Girls and Women

# Research on Gun Violence Among Adolescent Girls and Women

- Girls involved in gangs are rarely perpetrators of gun violence. They are more likely to buy and stash guns for male gang members. ([Thousands of Girl Gang Members are Trapped in a Cycle of Violence and Abuse](#), Darcy Jimenez, 2019)
- 6,000 American women die each year from gun violence. More than 50% are suicides. ([Women Impacted by Gun Violence: “We Don't Have To Live Like This”](#), Jennifer Gerson, 2024)
- 80% of homicide victims of intimate partner violence are women ([11 Statistics That Remind Us Gun Violence Is a Women's Issue](#), Jenavieve Hatch, 2017)
- Women who experience intimate partner violence are most vulnerable to gun related homicide the first two years after they leave their partner ([The Battered Woman Syndrome](#), Lenore Walker, EdD, 2016)

# Research on Gun Violence Among Adolescent Girls and Women, Continued

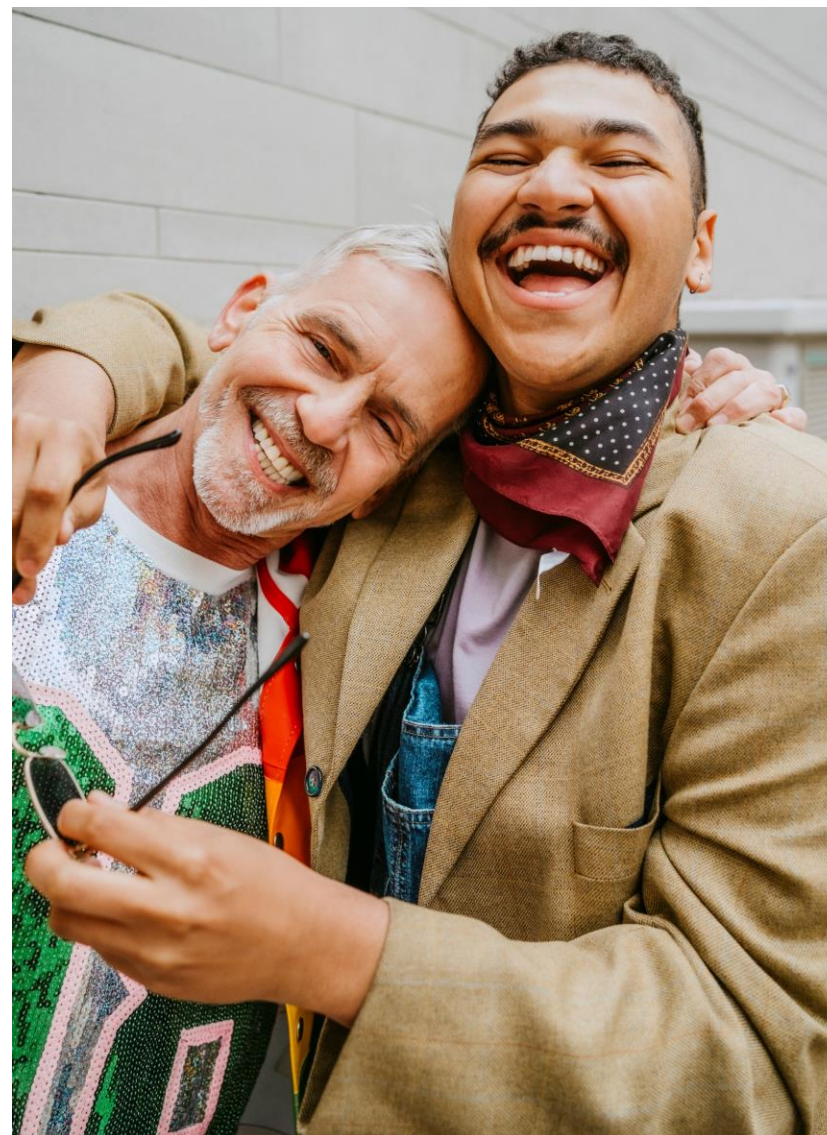
- When women believe they cannot stop the violence and previous efforts to escape were unsuccessful, some will commit homicide against the perpetrator ([The Battered Woman Syndrome](#), Lenore Walker, EdD, 2016)
- Women in the U.S. who are pregnant or have recently given birth are more likely to die of intimate partner gun violence than from hypertensive disorders, hemorrhage, or sepsis ([Homicide Leading Cause of Death for Pregnant Women in U.S.](#), Harvard School of Public Health, 2022)

# Prevention and Intervention Strategies



# One Good Relationship

Source: Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them, James Garbarino, Ph.D.



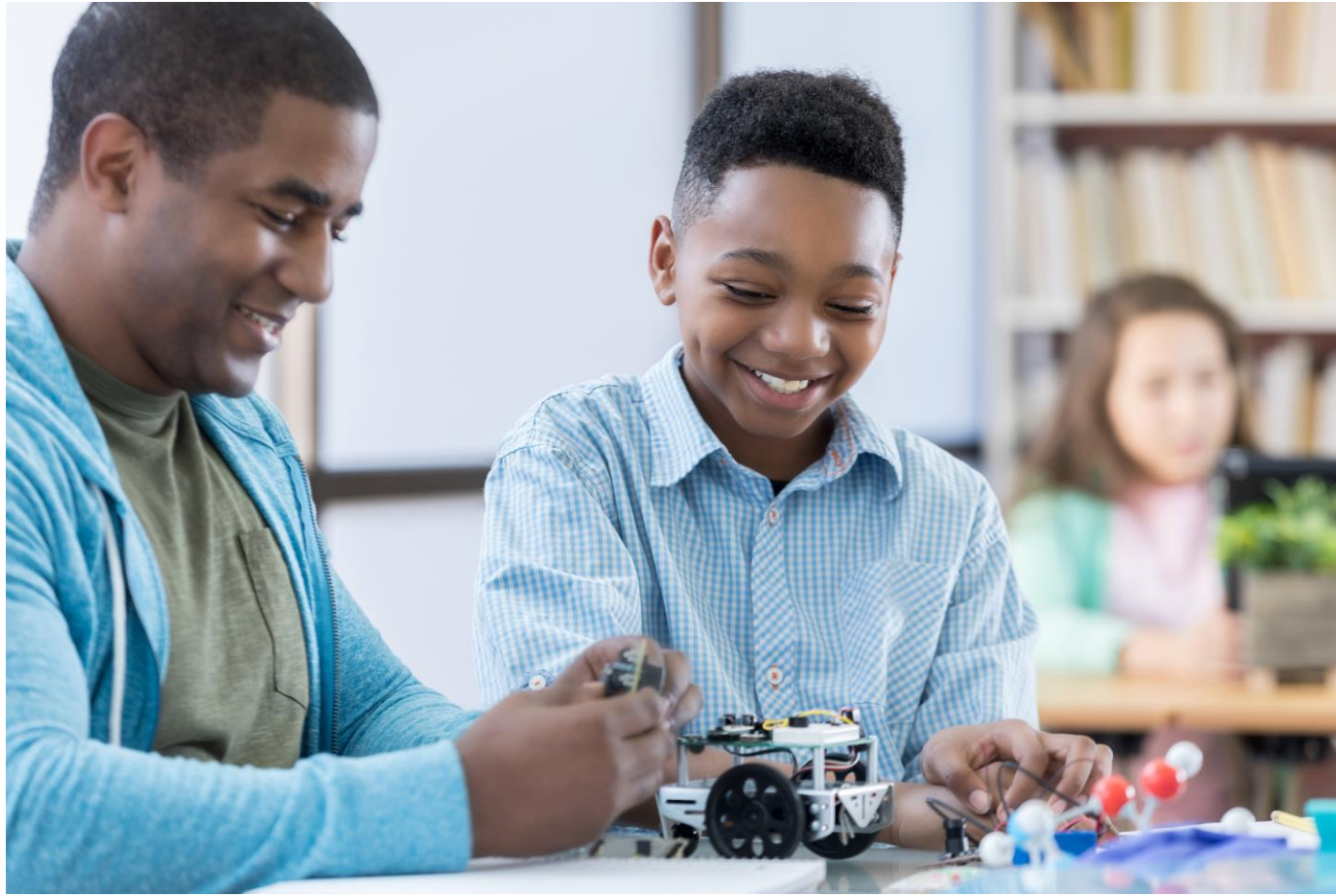
# Orientation and Purpose

Future orientation and a purpose that is larger than their current circumstances



Source: Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them,  
James Garbarino, Ph.D.

# Mentorship and Memberships



Source: [Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them](#), James Garbarino, Ph.D.

# Rites of Passage

- Group name, LOGO Mission Statement
- History of your own name
- Family tree
- Obtain social security card, voter registration card, and state ID
- Community project
- Personal growth work to address rage

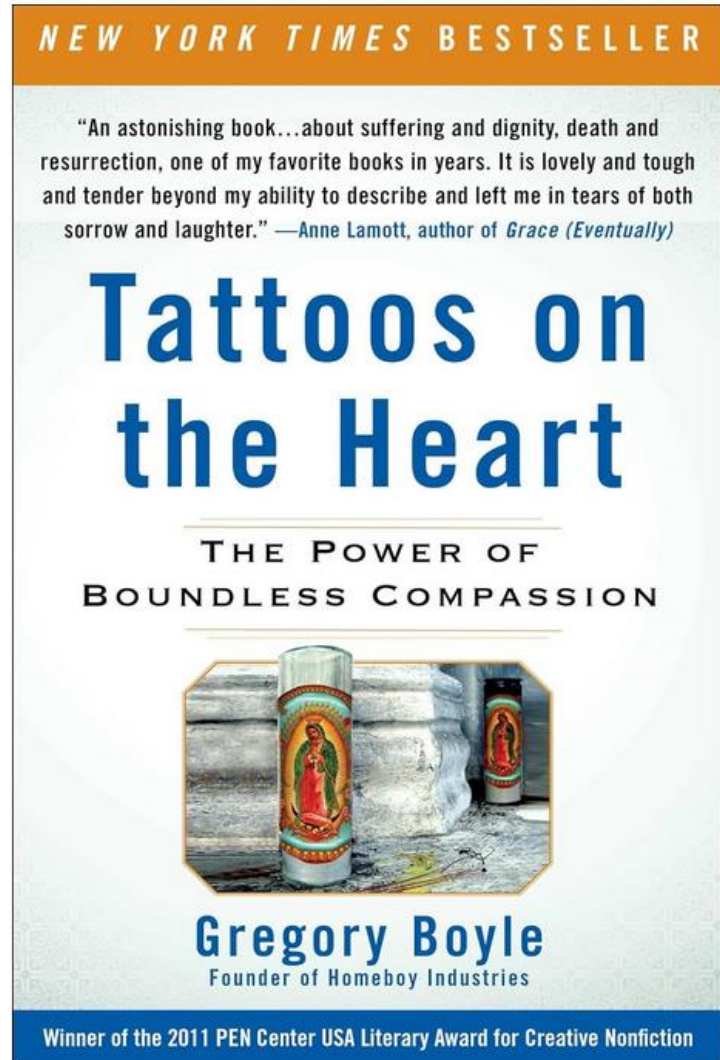
Source: Rites of Passage for the Young Black Male in America, Li'a Petrone and Nathan Hare, Ph.D.



# Advocacy Around Gun Laws



# Jobs



# Jobs + Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

- Meditation and mindfulness practice exercises dealing with high-risk situations without weapons, positive vision for the future
- Chicago's Rapid Employment and Development Initiative (READI) Program
- Martin Luther King, Jr. non-violence training

Sources: READI Chicago Firearm Violence Curriculum; Institute For Non-Violence Chicago

# Community Mobilization



HOW SISTERHOOD,  
PRAYER, AND SEX CHANGED  
A NATION AT WAR

# MIGHTY BE OUR POWERS

A MEMOIR

LEYMAH GBOWEE  
WITH CAROL MITHERS

WINNER  
*of the*  
NOBEL PEACE  
PRIZE



# More Prevention and Intervention Strategies

- Outlets for anger and rage  
(Teens Who Hurt, Kenneth Hardy, Ph.D.)
- Help males develop a feeling vocabulary  
(I Don't Want to Talk About It, Terrence Real, Ph.D.)
- Therapy to address issues of abandonment and rejection  
(Lost Boys, James Garbarino, Ph.D.)
- Address dehumanization and ignored losses  
(Teens Who Hurt, Kenneth Hardy, Ph.D.)

# Intervention Strategies

- Group processing of dehumanizing experiences
- Rituals to honor losses
- Experiential exercises to address rage
- Help with substance use
- Violence interrupters and truce negotiators

# Additional Prevention and Intervention Strategies

- Relaxation techniques and mindfulness practices
- Take seriously all threats of violence in schools
- Help develop consequential, critical thinking and problem-solving skills





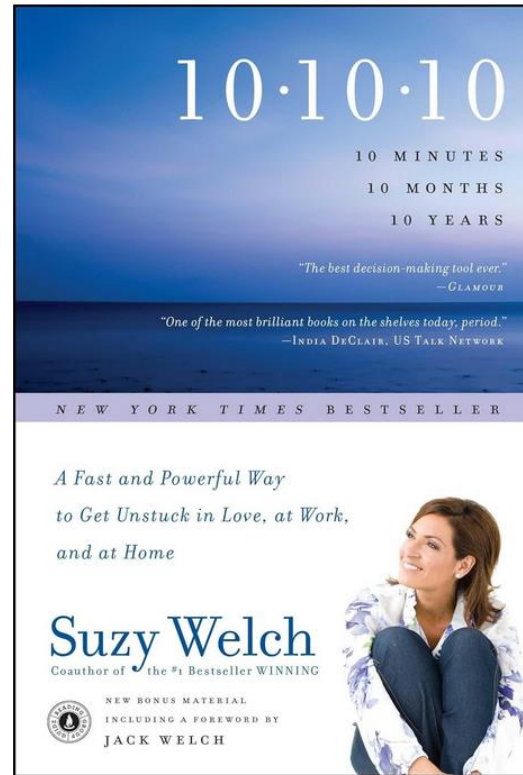
# A Problem-solving Approach

- What is the problem?
- Whose problem is it?
- What are your feelings about the situation?
- What are the options for solving the problem?
- What are the plusses and minuses of each option?
- Which option is best?
- What will you do?

# 10-10-10

If you choose this option, what would be the consequences in:

- The next 10 minutes?
- The next 10 months?
- The next 10 years?



Source: 10-10-10: A Fast and Powerful Way to Get Unstuck in Love, at Work and at Home, Suzy Welch

# Head and Heart Alignment

- When making decisions, it is often helpful to use your head and your heart:
  - What is your head telling you to do in this situation?
  - What is your heart saying?
- You can tell when you are making a good decision because your body is often calm.
- As soon as you realize you are making a bad decision, reverse it as soon as possible and make a good decision.

# Contact Information

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*That's all Folks!*