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Nonprofit, The MEND Project Seeks to End “Double Abuse”

Often far more harmful than actual physical or emotional abuse, “Double Abuse” can be prevented by listening, empathizing, and never blaming

Orange, Calif. (July 5, 2017) – The M3ND Project, a nonprofit organization who focuses on ending “Double Abuse™,” announced today the launch of its website and curriculum. It is designed to educate, equip and restore all those impacted by Primary and Double Abuse. This secondary layer of abuse, which The M3ND Project has coined “Double Abuse,” occurs when a person who is experiencing “Primary Abuse” physically, emotionally or sexually, reaches out for help. Instead of being received with compassion, empathy and acceptance, victims are often judged, not believed and ostracized by family, church or professional communities. Double Abuse™ can also be used to describe incorrect therapeutic treatment and spiritual abuse.

Double Abuse often leads victims to feeling hopeless and alone. This learned hopelessness and despair can contribute to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Complex PTSD. “After my own experience with Double Abuse, in which untrained spiritual advisors and a marriage therapist undermined me I felt isolated and depressed. I was traumatized,” said Annette Oltmans, Principal Founder, The M3ND Project. “After I finally received the correct treatment and invested time into my healing process, I made a commitment to help others. The M3ND Project is the result of four years of personal research and working with experts on the “Healing Model of Compassion” as well as curriculum. I am excited to equip others with tools on how to respond appropriately,” Oltmans added. Created to affect a movement to help victims of abuse, as well as those who are marginalized, so they can move from merely surviving to thriving, The M3ND Project seeks to end “Double Abuse” with education, awareness and training through:

- A comprehensive website that describes groundbreaking protocols.
- Speaking/training presentations to schools, churches, and community groups.
- A media campaign to help people understand the devastating effects of Double Abuse and how to correctly respond to admissions of abuse.
- Curriculum developed for clinicians, spiritual leaders, teachers, NGO’s and/or anyone in an authority role.

It’s important to understand how our words may be worse than merely hurting someone’s feelings. For victims, incorrect interactions can cause significant harm. If we slow down enough to listen, accept, be present and show compassion to those experiencing trauma, we can help diminished symptoms of trauma. If an abuse victim can connect with others early in her process there is a pathway to hope where her mindset can shift from despair and self-doubt to connection and restoration.

Annette Oltmans founded The M3ND Project in 2016. She suffered from Primary Abuse (domestic violence) and Double Abuse when she reached out for help from church Bible Study leaders and community. The determination to get help and heal led Annette on a path of discovery and a desire to help others. The M3ND Project offers a comprehensive pathway for victims in their various communities to access empowering tools while supporting alleged perpetrators in finding proper accountability. For more information, please visit: themendproject.com.