

Kort's Korner



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Joe's practice specializes in sexual addiction, childhood sexual, physical and emotional abuse, depression and anxiety.

He offers workshops for couples and singles. He runs a gay men's group therapy and a men's sexuality group therapy for straight, bi and gay men who are struggling with specific sexual issues.

His therapy services are for gays and lesbians as well as heterosexuals.

Local Therapist Writes Self-help Book for Gay Men

By Ken Marten

Royal Oak psychotherapist Joe Kort has been helping people with marital and sexual issues for nearly 20 years. Gays and straights, men and women, singles and couples.

His new self-help book, "*10 Smart Things Gay Men Can Do To Improve Their Lives,*" isn't just for gay men.

"I don't want just gay men to pick this up," Kort said. "It's written for others to read and learn about dealing with gay men. Families, siblings, friends. People who have to deal with gay men in their professions. I want straight people to read my book and say, 'I never thought of that.'"

Due to hit the bookstore shelves Friday, Aug. 1, Kort gathered material from his therapy sessions and the masters level social work classes he teaches at Wayne State University. Its 10 chapters follow the syllabus for his "Gay and Lesbian Studies" class.

"These things aren't smart because they've worked for me, but smart because they've worked for my clients," Kort said. "It isn't just me saying all of what's in the book, it's my clients and I co-creating these things."

The first smart thing—predictably, Chapter One—is for gay men to take responsibility for their lives. Kort concentrates on gay men not getting caught up in "victimhood," claiming that their surroundings are anti-gay thus making life uncomfortable and difficult. Once a gay man accomplishes the first step, he can move on to coming out, resolving family issues, bettering his professional and social relationships and ultimately committing.

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Like most self-help book authors who use real case studies, Kort protects the anonymity of his clients by using composite characters. That's particularly important for some chapters of the book because some of the ground covered is already controversial within the gay community. For instance, Chapter Five is about avoiding sexual addiction.

"In 20 years since the clinical term sexual addiction was coined, I've never seen anything in book form on sexual addiction in gay men," Kort said. "I'm sure a lot of gay men will say, 'don't pathologize my sexuality.' It's fine if people want to do stuff, but there's a point where it becomes excessive and risky."

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Beyond guiding men and helping their friends understand gay issues, Kort hopes other therapists read the book, too.

“I really believe this book will help therapists to deal with gay clients,” he said. “Therapists may say, ‘I’m gay-friendly, I’m not homophobic,’ and that’s good, but it isn’t enough. They need to know the clinical data.”

The book took two years to complete. Kort is marketing the book on his own, lining up interviews and area book signings while maintaining his therapy practice.

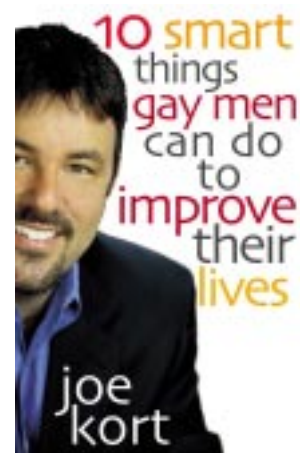
“*10 Smart Things Gay Men Can Do to Improve Their Lives*” is published by Alyson Books. Look for it in area bookstores or at www.amazon.com. The author’s website is www.joekort.com.

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