

All that Jazz.

Women Will Have Their Say at Sun-Times Forum

Two updates:

A women's forum: In a recent column, I printed a letter from a woman who was getting no companionship from her husband. "He spends all his free time with his buddies," she wrote. "My female friends all have normal relationships with their husbands. They don't understand what I'm going through."

She asked about forming a support group for women who are divorced, never married or in her situation. "Those of us who are lonely inside our marriages need to take charge of our lives. I'd welcome people in my group who want to 'get up and go' rather than sit home and curse their situation."

Scores of female readers quickly contacted me, excited by the prospect of meeting and socializing with other women. Many asked me to host such a forum.

So on April 25, from 2 to 4:30 p.m. in the Sun-Times Building, we'll be holding an "Afternoon for Women." It's a chance for women of all ages—married, divorced and single—to learn and share ideas.

The moderators will be Elaine Levy-Kopf, a well-known women's support group leader, and Sharon Mier, a psychologist with the Chicago Counseling and Psychotherapy Center.

"Women have been geared to be nurturers," says Levy-Kopf. "We're not geared for self-fulfillment. Men can't be the only people in our lives. We need other women, and we need male relationships that aren't sexual."

The women's forum won't be just a gripe session, Mier promises: "Women are looking for support and companionship, and we hope they'll leave the room that day feeling connected to another woman, or a group of women."

Attendees can then start support and social groups in their own communities.

The women who wrote to me asking for a forum described feelings of isolation and a need to find direction in their lives. A sampling:

- "I am being forced into a divorce I do not want. My friends are happily married, so I have to start a new life for myself."

- "I am a prisoner of my husband. I probably will divorce him, and there will be no remorse when I do. For now, I need friends."

- "The loneliness on this enormous planet should not exist. I am single and a teacher, and all of my co-workers have families. I would welcome the chance to meet other women."

- "My mother recently died, leaving a great void in my life. I'd like to meet new people."

- "Who knows? Maybe when our husbands see we want to take charge of our lives, they'll change."



**Jeffrey
Zaslow**

To attend our program, send a check for \$6 payable to the Sun-Times Charity Trust to: An Afternoon for Women, c/o Jazz, Box 3455, Chicago 60654. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope so we can mail you tickets. Proceeds benefit the Charity Trust. Questions? Call (312) 321-3010.