

Boston Men's Work Network Timeline

Preface:

Coming out of a period of reflection in Fall 2020, the Boston-Area Men's Work Network Core Team decided they needed to restructure the core team and invite new members in. This timeline was created to keep a central, ongoing historical record, which would give new core team members more transparent context into the group they were stepping into, specifically:

- how this group came to be, and how it has continued to evolve,
- what important conversations have been had,
- what relationships exist within & outside of the network,
- the pacing of our work.

This timeline is a companion to our [transition statement](#), which offers a collection of personal experiences of various core team members. While the transition statement is intentionally written from a personal view, and is inherently subjective, this timeline is meant to give a more objective account of this group's history.

The Beginning

April - May 2019

Overview:

In early April of 2019, Ken Sazama emailed Jordan Mudd, having received his contact info from a mutual climate activist friend, and offered to pay him over the summer to bring together different men's groups in the Boston area. After a few phone calls & in-person meetings over the next month to discuss details, Jordan agreed. Their main goals were to 1) build relationships with as many people doing men's work as possible, 2) create a [database](#) compiling information about different groups, and to eventually bring people together for an in-person meeting. Other early ideas about organizing men around the intersection of men's work & climate justice, as well as creating a podcast or [video series](#) about men's work, were eventually dropped.

Timeline:

April 10th - Ken emails Jordan

April 12th - First call between Jordan & Ken

- Summary: Jordan & Ken share about their background, values & vision around men's work. Jordan shares concerns & hesitations around work. They discuss goals & logistics of working together.

5/29 & 6/6 - Early meetings with Jordan & Ken

- Summary: Jordan meets Ken at his office at Sazama Real Estate in Jamaica Plain. They discuss ideas around a mens work gathering, creating a podcast or video series, centralizing information about men's work in Boston in a spreadsheet, website, facebook group, or some digital form.

Planning the First Gathering, Building Relationships

June - September 2019

Overview:

Over the next few months, Jordan reached out within his network and scoured the internet to talk to as many people in the area doing Men's Work as possible. Some of these people joined the group that began to plan the first gathering (Ukumbwa Sauti - *The Men's Work Initiative*, Adam Patten - *MENding Cambridge*, Justin Jimenez - *Brother's Healing Circle*, and Michél Le Gendre and Taggart Wass - *Corporate Accountability Men's Caucus*). Some gave their insight into how to best structure a gathering and build the network (Nadav David - *Kavod Masculinities*, Lawrence Barriner II - *Full Moon Circle for Queer Men*, Martin Henson - *BMEN*, Matt Shuman - *Good Dudes*, Jonathan Barry - *FAMM*). Some were women involved in anti-patriarchy work (Diana Mancera - *Jane Doe*, Stella Panzarella - *Anti-Racism Collaborative*, Miriam Priven - *The Network / la red*) who also gave input into structuring the meeting and network. The new "Gathering Planning Team" met several times to plan the first gathering.

Timeline:

6/5 - Event: ["Is This the Best a Man Can Get?"](#) by Mending Cambridge

- Jordan sees event on Facebook, attends, & meets Adam Patten, one of the event planners.

6/19 - Meeting: Jordan & Ukumbwa Sauti (Men's Work Initiative)

- Having known Ukumbwa from participating in his "Dismantling Patriarchy" Workshop series earlier that year, Jordan and Ukumbwa meet to discuss the possibility of a men's work network & gathering.

7/1 - Meeting: Jordan & Adam Patten

- After meeting at "Is This the Best a Man Can Get?", Jordan & Adam meet up in Harvard Square. Adam invites Jordan to the next MENding Cambridge meeting and expresses interest in joining the Gathering Planning Team.

7/8 - Event: First Better Men Project "Relinquishing the Patriarchy" Call

- [Website Link](#)
- Having been following Gibran's work, Jordan sees his post about the launch of a new virtual men's group. He invites several people to join, and also meets several people on the call (Noah Schoen, Lawrence Barriner) who he would continue to build relationships with.

7/9 - Call: Jordan & Josh Schott (Organizing White Men for Collective Liberation)

- After attending some OWMfCL Internal Liberation calls, Jordan requests a 1-1 with Josh. Jordan volunteers to connect people in Boston who are a part of the OWMfCL network. Josh offers OWMfCL's support in development of larger boston mens work network.

7/10 - Event: Mending Cambridge Meeting

- Upon Adam's invitation, Jordan joins the Mending Cambridge meeting & explains the gathering idea. Mending Cambridge agrees to give money from their budget to pay for food & booking a space.

7/10 - Meeting: Jordan, Michél Le Gendre, & Taggart Wass (Corporate Accountability Men's Caucus)

- After seeing his friend Michél post about men's work on facebook, Jordan meets with Michél & Taggart at Boston Public Market. They both join the Gathering Planning Team and offer the Corporate Accountability office as a meeting space.

7/16 - Meeting: Jordan, Adam Patten, Diana Mancera (Jane Doe)

- Adam reaches out to Diana & sets up a meeting. Diana extends invitation to #ReimagineManhood Symposium, connects him to the Brotherhood of Strength.

7/22 - Call: Jordan & Nadav David (Kavod Masculinities Caucus)

- Jordan is introduced to Nadav through mutual friend Nakhie & sets up a call. Nadav stresses the importance of including visioning time at the gathering, warns against the culture a majority-white gathering will produce, and shares the [Kavod Masculinities Report](#).

7/29 - 1st Gathering Planning Meeting

- The "Gathering Planning Team" meets for the first time.
- [Agenda & Notes](#)
- Attendees: Jordan Mudd, Ken Sazama, Ukumbwa Sauti, Adam Patten, Michél Le Gendre, Taggart Wass
- Summary: Getting to know each other, Identifying goals, naming capacities. At this point, the thought is still to have the [video production component](#) be a prominent aspect of the event.

8/9 - Meeting: Jordan & Justin Jimenéz (Brother's Healing Circle)

- After meeting at a rockin' summer solstice party at Justin's house, Justin sees a Facebook post Jordan made about men's work and reaches out. They meet up outside of Porter Square Books and Jordan invites him to join the Gathering Planning Committee.

8/12 - Meeting: Jordan & Stella Panzarella (Anti-Racism Collaborative)

- Jordan meets with Stella, whom he knew from attending an ARC training and had messaged about the upcoming gathering. Stella stresses the importance of men building trust between each other before taking action, and putting work in ourselves before asking for accountability / labor from women.

8/13 - Meeting: Jordan & Lawrence Barriner II

- After seeing info about the Full Moon Circle for Queer Men on the Old Oak Dojo Website, Jordan emails Lawrence (the circle facilitator) asking to join the next circle and sends information about the upcoming gathering. They meet up before the circle and Lawrence strongly encourages the planners to focus on relationship-building at the first gathering and to not record any video.

8/14 - Call: Jordan, Michél, & Martin Henson (BMEN)

- Michél reaches out to Martin & sets up a 3-way zoom call. Martin advises knowing who we are bringing together, understanding the challenges of bridging across race, class, immigration status, having a shared purpose.

8/19 - 2nd Gathering Planning Meeting

- Attendees: Jordan Mudd, Ken Sazama, Taggart Wass, Michél Legendre (by video call), Justin Jiménez, Adam Patten
- [Agenda & Notes](#)
- Summary: Welcoming Justin; [Video Production component](#) dropped; Pushing date back to October to allow for more outreach; keeping gathering to male/male-identifying people only; donating to TNLR; creation of working groups;

8/19 - Call: Jordan & Matt Shuman (Good Dudes)

- After being connected by Ken, Jordan & Matt get to know each other, share stories about experience at Brandeis, Matt offers support to the Gathering Planning Team.

8/21 - Comms & Outreach Working Group Meeting

- Attendees: Jordan, Ken, Adam
- [Agenda & Notes](#)

8/26 - Facilitation Working Group Meeting

- Attendees: Jordan, Justin, Ukumbwa, Ken, Michél
- [Agenda & Notes](#)

8/26 - Call: Jordan, Justin, & Miriam Priven (The Network / la red)

- Through a connection from the Kavod Masculinities group, Jordan is introduced to Miriam Priven, staff at TNLR, and sets up a 3-way zoom call with Justin. They discuss ways to support TNLR at the gathering - raising money, having a staff member present, handing out pamphlets and volunteer info.

9/13 - 3rd Gathering Planning Meeting

- Attendees: Ken, Jordan, Ukumbwa, Justin, Adam, Michél
- [Agenda & Notes](#)
- Summary: Childcare, TNLR presentation, Food from Jonathan Barry, Reviewing Agenda



Outtakes from 9/13/19 Planning Meeting

9/30 - Meeting: Jordan, Ken, & Gibran Rivera

- Jordan & Ken meet with Gibran over pho. They share personal stories & discuss ideas about building Boston men's network.

Building Trust within the Network: In-Person Gatherings

October 2019 - February 2020

Overview:

Following a successful first gathering, the "Gathering Planning Team" (henceforth referred to as the "Core Team") plans two more gatherings in December & February, with the intention of continuing to build relationships & trust between people. Some new members join the core team!

Timeline:

10/6 - First Men's Network Gathering

- [Agenda](#), [EventBrite](#)
- Summary: 30+ men attend the first gathering at the Old Oak Dojo on a beautiful fall day - featuring delicious potluck food, a group centering exercise, small group conversations, a visioning activity, a [spontaneous song](#), and lots of mingling, hugs, and laughter.
- Following this event, Jordan steps back from his paid role, and reduces his capacity considerably to shift more focus to his senior year at Brandeis. The core team adjusts to no longer having a central, lead organizer, and to having work be more distributed.



Left: the full group (missing: Ken Sazama & Martin Henson). Right: The facilitation team celebrates with a selfie after the gathering.

12/7 - Second Men's Work Network Gathering

- [EventBrite](#)

- 30+ men attend the second gathering at Spontaneous Celebrations. Ken & Justin lead opening activity, then pass to Gibran who facilitates a series of partner sharing exercises.

12/13 - December Full Moon Circle for Queer Men

- After the circle, which included a very profound review-of-your-decade journaling exercise, Jordan decides to step back from the Core Team, and Lawrence expresses interest in joining the Core Team!

1/14 - Call for More Organizers

- In response to a call for additional organizing help, Chris Page and Kevin Heaton join the Core Team. Both men met Jordan and Ukumbwa at Ukumbwa's "Dismantling Patriarchy" workshop, and attended the first two men's work network gatherings.

2/29 - Third Men's Work Network Gathering

- [EventBrite](#)
- 30+ men attend the third gathering at Spontaneous Celebrations. In the first half, Jon Barry, Sam Ellison, and James Vamboi (FAMM) lead a partner massage workshop. In the second half of this gathering, participants were split into 4 groups and travelled around to 4 different flipcharts in different areas of the room, each flipchart lined with a different question. The groups wrote down their thoughts on the flipcharts and then rotated to a different question. These [Group Flipchart Notes](#) are a verbatim transcription of what was written down.

Period of Reflection

April - August 2020

Overview:

After having organized three in-person gatherings, the core team recognized that 1) they needed a break from the logistics of large event planning, and 2) they needed a period to reflect on what had been accomplished and how to strategically move forward with the network. COVID & Quarantine arrived shortly after the February gathering and communication cut off temporarily, resuming in late April, when the core team facilitated a "pulse check" on different groups and 1-1 conversations between different members of the network. Jordan rejoins core team, Lawrence Barriner II joins the core team and helps to facilitate a visioning process that culminates in a few important realizations:

1. The purpose of the core team is to steward the vision of the greater network.
2. The current core team is not a democratic representation of the greater men's work network (ie. the process of forming this group was very ad hoc, many groups are not represented), which hinders our ability to live out that purpose.

3. There is some tension between the core team functioning as both an organizing space and a quasi-men's group itself. A number of core team members do not have their own active & engaged men's groups, and thus are looking for emotional support & accountability from the core team itself.
4. If we want to invite more men into the core team who are active in their own groups, we should not invite them into another quasi-men's group, but into a more defined organizing space.

These realizations resulted in the following decisions:

1. For some core team members to form their own mens group which would fulfill their need for emotional support & accountability *outside* of core team meetings.
2. To undergo a transition process where some current core team members would step back from the group and an open invitation would be sent out to other members of the network to join the core team.

Timeline:

- **4/25 - 6/6: Core Team Meetings**
 - [4/25 Agenda & Notes](#), [5/9 Agenda & Notes](#), [5/23 Agenda & Notes](#), [6/6 Agenda & Notes](#)
 - Summary: The group brainstorms ways to engage the network during quarantine, as well as ways to start a deeper reflection process about the structure & goals of the network & core team itself. Lawrence joins the core team!
- **5/9 - Quarantine Update Email**
 - Core Team emails network listserv, inviting people to participate in intergroup 1-1s, to contribute to the [Quarantine Pulse Check Document](#) (which details how different groups have been adapting to quarantine), and to support various Domestic Violence Prevention Orgs.
- **6/20 - 8/22: Visioning Process:**
 - **6/20 - First Meeting**
 - [Agenda & Notes](#)
 - Summary: Introduced visioning process structure & goals.
 - **6/27 - Second Meeting: Collective History Story-Telling**
 - [Agenda & Notes](#)
 - Summary: In order to move forward, we recognized that we needed to all be on the same page as to how this group came to be, how it has evolved, and what our experience with the group has been (especially considering that different members joined the group at varying different points in time). Each member had around 10 minutes to share about their history & experience with the group.



lawrence leads a breathing exercise during the Collective History Story-Telling Session, 6/27/20

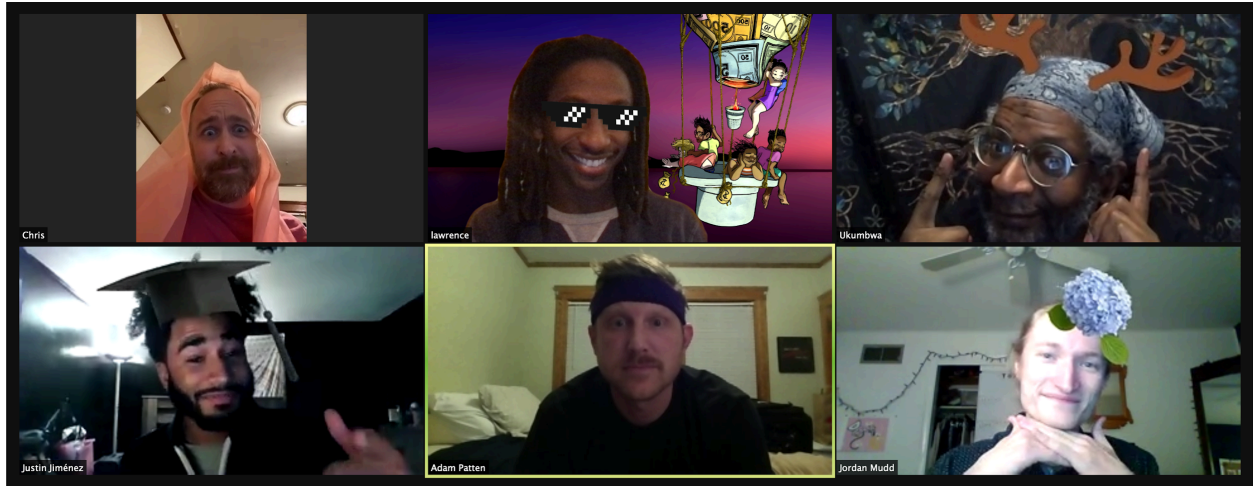
- **7/11 - Third Meeting**
 - [Agenda & Notes](#)
 - Summary: Journaling activity & break-out room discussions about individual & group needs and how to meet them. Justin & Chris agree to work on written proposals for how to move forward based on these stated needs.
 - [Values & Proposal Document](#)
- **8/1 - Fourth Meeting**
 - [Agenda & Notes](#)
 - Summary: Reviewed the [Values & Proposal Document](#), voted to create separate men's group for those who want to take part, discussed next steps for bringing new core team members in.
- **8/22 - Fifth Meeting**
 - [Agenda & Notes](#)
 - Summary: Decided who will be in each group (new men's group, ongoing core team, & transition team); created next steps for each group.

Period of Transition

September 2020 - Present [March 2021]

Overview:

The newly formed men's group meets on September 14th and continues to meet every two weeks. The transition team (lawrence, Justin, Jordan, Chris, & Adam) meets and makes a plan around creating this timeline, the transition statement, and reaching out to and onboarding new core team members.



Outtakes from 1/9/21 transition team meeting