

Dad claims cuddling sessions with men saved his marriage to wife of 30 years

[mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/dad-claims-cuddling-sessions-men-14579311](https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/dad-claims-cuddling-sessions-men-14579311)

April 24, 2019

Kevin Fitzenberger puts blankets on the floor in a friend's living room and cuddles up to 15 men at a time - and while touching below the waist is banned, 'some level of arousal is normal'



Kevin with his wife, Gina (Image: Kennedy News and Media)

A dad-of-three claims he saved his 32-year marriage - by snuggling up to 15 men at an all-male cuddling group.

Creative director Kevin Eitzenberger, 58, set up the Therapeutic Men's Cuddle Group two years ago after his wife Gina begged him to sort out his anger issues.

Upset by the way he had treated his family, Kevin knew he had to do something to save his marriage - and decided he needed the physical touch of men to feel content.

So three decades after marrying Gina, Kevin set up the group, run from his friend's living room and it has grown in size ever since.

Now each fortnight around 15 men meet up and cuddle for two hours - before returning to their families and carrying on with everyday life.

He believes his 'many tear stained shirts' prove the effectiveness of the sessions.



There is no sexual component to the group (Image: Kennedy News and Media)

Kevin enforces strict rules, including no touching below the belt, above the thigh or under clothes.

But the group's website claims 'some level of arousal during cuddling... is completely normal'.

Kevin, from Plymouth, Pennsylvania, US, said: "We never cuddle in a bed. We put blankets on the floor in my friend's living room.

"Many guys are scared to death the first time. Some have told me they've driven up to the house then sped away because they were so nervous.

"But at the beginning of each session we demonstrate the 'safe touch' and read the rules.

"One man does the holding and the other is the person being held.

"The holder sits on the floor with his back against the sofa.

"The other sits motorcycle-style in front of him and rests his back on his chest and head on his shoulder.

"The man who's holding just puts the arms around the chest of the other man.

"After the man relaxes and gets used to it, they can ask for signs of affection.

"So they might say 'can you stroke my hair' or 'can you rock me back and forth?'"

"The rules state that you cannot touch below the belt or above the thigh. We make sure that's clear."

"We also say no-one can touch anybody under any item of clothing."

"This is non-sexual touch and that's hard for some men to understand sometimes because of the culture we're in."

Kevin attributes his need for male touch to struggling to bond with males when younger.



His wife Gina is happy with him meeting up with other men for 'cuddles' (Image: Kennedy News and Media)

From a young age he didn't fit in at school because he often found himself with more female friends due to his creativity.

As his own father was a sports coach he says they struggled to see eye to eye, which he believes also led to difficulty forming relationships with men.

These problems even led Kevin to question his sexuality - until he discovered the power of cuddling.

Kevin said: "When I was a little boy, I was shunned by the boys because I didn't kick the football the right way or I didn't run fast enough."

"I'd hang out with girls and that made it worse because then I got ridiculed.

"There was some masculinity there that was either taken from me or I rejected.

"When I was 11, my brother died. The way I see it, that was another masculine entity taken from me.

"And my dad was, although a fantastic dad, a sports guy.

"I was an artist. I was more cerebral - more of a thinker. I didn't connect with him.

"I know that affected me in my healthy development into a man. All those things, I believe, caused me to have same-sex attraction."



Kevin Eitzenberger says the group has saved his marriage (Image: Kennedy News and Media)

He began dating Gina but always felt like he needed acceptance from men - and when they got married he had a "lot of anger".

Kevin admits to being verbally abusive to his wife but they hung on, and now have three daughters - 30, 27 and 23.

Prior to launching his own cuddle group, Kevin met a friend who introduced him to ManKind Project - a non-profit organisation that helped men set up groups for other men.

Over time the pair started to 'hold each other' and form an emotional attachment, though Kevin soon realised the attachment wasn't sexual, but out of a need for male comfort.

Kevin said: "That weekend with them is where I learned what I really needed from men.

"With that, myself and a friend started to hold each other for an hour.

"It wasn't in a sexual manner. I needed acceptance, affirmation and affection. I needed to be held."