

As a Clinical Psychologist and Leadership Consultant, I agree with Jon Krug. Men and leaders in particular hide. They do so because of the pressure to be omniscient, know the right answer, and to never show weakness. The only way, as a mere mortal, to do this is to hide. This hiding pays the dividends of isolation and loneliness. Jon's exploration of this issue based on his own story and working with me for decades is groundbreaking. A must read."

Harvey Powers, PH. D.
Licensed Clinical Psychologist
Denver, Colorado

I have had the privilege of knowing and working alongside Jon Krug for more than 40 years, through the good and the bad, through the joys and sorrows of his personal and ministry journey. One thing I can say without reservation is that his life and his words ring with genuine authenticity...this is not a work of theory, it is a gift to us born out of Jon's personal experience of the radically transforming grace of God. For any man who finds himself in a dark place along the path, here is light to show the way home.

Tim Lusk
Founder/Executive Director
Redemptive Leadership International
Jacksonville, Florida

Since the fall men have been hiding in a prison of fear; fear of failure and condemnation. If you want to break out into freedom I heartily recommend this book written by a man who knows what it's like to live in fear—and freedom.

Dr. John R. Hutchinson
President, Redeemer City to City,
New York, New York

I love this book. A real bullseye on this topic. Jon has truly got to the heart of the matter with *Men in Hiding*. As a sports professional for 20 years, I've seen men lose their path and live in crisis with the lie of no hope for the future. Over the years, Jon has helped me with living in freedom and truth and *Men in Hiding* is the perfect roadmap to redemption, hope and being real. This is a must read for any man who wants to seek a new way to live.

Alan Verlander
Executive Director, JaxSports
COO, Gator Bowl Sports
Jacksonville, Florida

MEN IN HIDING

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*Why Men
Go Where They Go
and
Do What They Do?*

Jon Krug

 **ENCORE**
DIRECT TO PRINT

Men in Hiding

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An Invitation

Stating the obvious: Most often the most obvious is most often the unseen.

Allow me to just say it.

As never before, *men are in hiding*.

Would you not agree? Is it not an understatement? Seriously. Is it not truly obvious?

Maybe that's why we don't *see* it for what it really is?

Or even worse, we really do see it and *deny* it and decide not to talk about it.

What do I mean? I mean that all around us today, men are hiding not only from *what* they have done and *where* they have been, but most tragic of all, from *who* they truly are and were meant to be.

They always have; but today, it's epidemic.

Turn on the news tonight. Pick any station, local or national. Purchase any supermarket tabloid while paying

for your groceries. Listen to the late-night talk shows. There it is again! Yet another story about another man having had another “moral” collapse. He’s been exposed, and no matter what “label” we choose to describe it, it’s a mess.

In less than one day, the *secret life* of another well-known and respected figure has come out of the dark and into the light. A mistress has come forward with accusations. Hidden e-mails are discovered. Cell phone records are traced. A suspicious wife, having been in denial, has had her deepest fears confirmed. The evidence is undeniable. Now she knows the truth: *Her husband is not the man she thought she knew*. Whether he be a public official, a stand-out athlete, a wealthy business tycoon, or even a pastor or priest one thing has become clear to the whole world—*the man has been in hiding*.

Specifically, in the case of those men involved in an extramarital affair, we are shocked to think that he has ruined his reputation and destroyed the trust of all those around him. Eventually it strikes us that in reality, he has actually ruined his *life* as well. Maybe not physically, but at least *his life* as he once knew it. No matter what happens from here on, his world, his marriage, and his family will never be the same. King Solomon knew firsthand the consequences of this *counterfeit intimacy* as he stated centuries ago in the Old Testament text we call the Proverbs: “So he does not know that it will cost him *his life*” (7:23, New American Standard Bible, emphasis added).

We sit and shake our heads in disbelief. We ask the same questions over and over. What in the world was he thinking? How could he have gone there? How did he hide this? Did he ever stop and consider what might happen? What lures a man to risk everything he has for a temporary intimate encounter outside of his marriage?

All of these questions are what we in counseling refer to as *core questions*. Meaning what? Meaning, they should lead us to *core answers*. But therein lie the problem. Have they done that? Have they really led us to a clear concise explanation of what lies behind *the hiding*? Regardless of the “category” of hiding, whether it be an extramarital affair, financial corruption at the Wall Street-level, or simply illegal conduct, we seem to merely have *suggestions* from the professionals. Today, as never before, random guesses from the world of mental health are abundant. Weekday TV “therapists” suggest, “It’s an addiction. It’s a personality disorder. It’s a temporary midlife crisis that will pass.” I read about one noted Mayo psychiatrist who admitted, after reading all the latest research compiled by his colleagues, “Now I know *where* men hide and *how* men hide, but I still don’t know *why*?”

You may be surprised where we will find *the answer* to that question. The pages that follow will explain how secret affairs, pornography, prescription painkillers, and all the other “male” dysfunctions we see today are not only common *hiding places* but are fueled by a deeper *longing* than

we ever imagined. Allow me to use *a single word* to identify that longing that all men possess but never want to discuss.

It's the word *intimacy*. You read that correctly. A longing in the heart of every man for one thing: intimacy.

I invite you to read this book from cover to cover. It's a quick read. I did that on purpose. Why? Because men don't like to read, especially about certain issues. Don't misunderstand what I'm saying. In a minute they will pick up *Sports Illustrated*, *Men's Health*, *Esquire*, or *ESPN* and read from cover to cover in a two-hour flight. What I meant is this: They don't like to read *about themselves*. More specifically, *why* do they go where they go and do what they do? I didn't like it either. But that's exactly why I wrote this book. Because it's first and foremost about *me*.

My objective is not to point a finger or present a critique of any other man. Lord knows, we have had enough of that as men. What we haven't had is *grace*. My desire is to share one-on-one with you what I saw for years each morning in the mirror when I was shaving. And I long to share it with more grace, not more judgment.

In my opinion, the topic of *men-in-hiding* has been a well-kept secret for far too long. A secret that, for some strange reason, I too had missed. It was right in front of me my whole life. Now after forty-plus years as a pastor and counselor, traveling and teaching in the United States and "undercover" behind the Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe, I am compelled to share about my *own journey*. I call it my *journey out of hiding*.

Each chapter maps that journey in succession exactly as it unfolded in my life. But you know what's amazing? I have discovered it is the same journey of many men who sit with me in counseling each week. As those men have shared with me their deepest, darkest moments, I continue to be amazed that it is as if they have been invisibly following me for years. Or to be more honest, more than once I thought, *They must have been talking to my wife!*

I believe deep in my core as a man that it's now time (change that!—it's past time) that I share what lies recorded in my private journals. Why would I do that? Because I am convinced that others whom I may never meet might find clarity, direction, and fresh hope from the path I have traveled. That is my heart's passion. That is why I write. I gratefully offer these pages as a personal guide and journal to each man who is willing to read further. I do so because I know that there are men everywhere who desire the same thing I was longing for: To *come out of hiding* and to *come home*. Home to where they were meant to be.

This book has been designed with three goals in mind. First, to *unveil and define* the hiding. Second, to help a man *identify* his own personal hiding strategy. And third, to *set a man on a new path* of healing, lasting change, and restoration. As mentioned, it has been written by one who has traveled before you and now would like to travel beside you. It is my prayer that it will enable you *to see yourself* as I now see myself—a man who *learned how to hide*.

It's time we pause and take a deeper look at what has been right in front of us all along.

It's time we pause and take a deeper look at *men in hiding*.

I invite you to come now, if you will, as we journey together. I want to introduce you to *the first man* in hiding and *where* his hiding began long ago. To do so, we must return to *another time* and *another place*. We must travel back to *a garden with one man and one woman* that changed our human condition forever.

But first, allow me to begin with an “image” of my own journey. The image is based upon a Russian painting given to me by a dear friend many years ago. The painting is that of a large tree that has been broken in a storm and has fallen across an impassable river. It forms a strong, safe crossing or bridge over which all men may travel on their journey home into a beautiful plush meadow with the sun rising early in the morning. He wrote these words on the back: “Jon, without a ‘breaking’ there can be no ‘bridge’.”

The image of my journey is that of this *bridge*. A bridge that now has *a name*.

1

My Own Journey

A Bridge Named “Broken”

*In the middle of the road of my life,
I awoke in a dark wood,
Where the true way
Was wholly lost.*

—Dante

I have been on a journey. A journey *home*.

Like the journey of any man, mine has had many *paths* and crossroads. The path of family, growing up, and leaving the nest; the path of education, training, and jobs; the path of romance, marriage, and children. All of these “sections” on my life’s map have had unique treasures and trials. For many years, they are all I have known. Living out on my strengths and my successes, my gifts and my abilities, I had found what I thought was “the true way.”

But little did I know that in the middle of the road of my life, I would step on to a “hidden path” off the main road. I call it a *hiding place* where my true way was lost. A

path I never would have ever chosen or even imagined. A path I never knew existed before. But still, I chose. Why? Because I was looking for something.

And there, I would discover—after being led out of hiding by those who loved me well, after much damage and much healing—this new path I was on would become *a redemptive path*. A path over a bridge—a bridge I now called *broken*. The path led to another place; a broad safe place to stand, a place I now call *home*. My friend Harv called it “the road ahead.” He wrote these words in an e-mail to me years ago: “Jon, the road ahead, a redemptive path, will mean crossing over to another place.”

The next morning, after a very long dark night, I recorded these words in my journal:

The *path* that I am on today has been
formed by a “failure.”

A huge wrong choice that resulted from many
little wrong choices.

A major mistake that came simply from a refusal
to walk into the Truth.

And then it led to a failure in my marriage,
A failure in my ministry,
A failure in my mission.

It was a failure that ultimately came from being
A man in hiding.

I now embrace that failure as the doorway to “my train wreck.” That’s my best title for it. It was large. It devastated

many lives. It resulted in many endings and many farewells. But therein lie the mystery, and the hope, as George Betts said so well in his poem “Moments of Truth”:

Within each of us there are Moments of truth,
 Times of decision,
 Crossroads.
 They affect the entire direction of our lives.
 Surprisingly, they are “Farewells.”
 Farewells that are only “Beginnings.”

And so, through the *farewells* of my own choosing, I’ve been given a new *beginning*. On this path that resulted directly from failure, I have begun another journey. A journey of the heart. A journey into places, as a man, I would have never gone. Places where men are afraid to go. Places of *truth*. Truth about me and who I am and who I am not. Truth that sets me free. Truth that turned me in a completely new direction with my focus, my friends, and my future. Truth, as Richard Rorh has said so well, that came from *falling upward*.

So what has really changed? For me, the change was huge. It revolved around four major reversals that all began with the words, *I no longer*.

I no longer want to speak to men from a public platform but rather listen to men in a private setting.

I no longer want to shame men in large crowds about *accountability* through checklists and rules to follow but

rather encourage men in small groups about *responsibility* to themselves and to each other as a band of brothers.

I no longer want to see men as *weak* but rather to see men as *wounded*.

I no longer want men to discover life “in the fast lane” but rather to discover life *in His lap*.

I now desire to walk down this redemptive path *beside* men, not *in front*. I want to walk shoulder-to-shoulder and share with them that there is a future and a hope that will rise “out of their ashes.” I want each man to see his own “redemption story” unfold *through* his failures, not *in spite of* them. I want them to hear what one man said to me in the darkest moment of my life long before the smoke had cleared and the ashes had settled:

Jon, here's the good news.
You never have to hide anymore,
you can come out of hiding,
come back into freedom,
and come home.

More than anything else, that's what I want men to hear today. Why? Because it's the most important message for such a time as this. This is my moment and this is my place. It's a time for men to come out of hiding and come home. It's time for men everywhere to discover “my bridge”:

A Bridge Named "Broken"

There in the forest for years it had stood
Tall and strong and proud and all alone
So very much alone.
Hiding among the other trees
Hiding its weakness.

But over time, that weakness formed a crack,
A crack in the very core of the tree.
A crack that formed a fatal flaw
that remained for years.

A flaw that said,
"Don't ever be needy. Refuse to admit it.
If you do, they will see you as weak and small, and
they will leave you."

And so this tree remained a lonely tree,
Learning yet new ways to hide,
To hide behind a Grand Façade.

The crack grew large and wide,
And finally,
With the winds of opportunity
and selfish desire,
It snapped...and fell.
It fell hard and loud.
It fell for all to see.

All who saw were astonished.
Some sat silent, with heads bowed.

Some wept.
Some stood in disbelief.
And a few—just a few—stayed away,
Not wanting to watch for fear
they would see themselves.

How could this happen to this tree?
This tree, who for so long had
weathered the storms,
The drought, and even the fire itself,
Only to remain and give shade and sanctuary,
Thinking the whole time that this was what gave
meaning and purpose to life.
Duty, obedience, discipline,
only these mattered.

Operating out of its capacities
Confident, focused, organized.
While all along, yearning down
deep inside for something else,
For only *one* thing,
Wanting to belong...wanting an *intimacy*
it had never tasted before.
And then, after the fall,
While on a separate “journey of the heart,”
an amazing thing happened:
This yearning, a deep yearning to belong,
would be found!
For this tree had fallen and formed a bridge,
A bridge across a dangerous gorge.

And there as it lay broken and wounded,
 For all to see, would it finally know WHERE and
 to WHOM it belonged?

And there, in that dark brokenness,
 it would discover what it was
 designed for all along.

Designed to be “a safe passage”
 for others to cross over.

But first, had to come the breaking.

And only then and there,
 it would learn that HE ALONE is enough
 That He, the God who made him,
 is alone sufficient.

Not wife, or sons, or ministry, or things.

HE ALONE is all he needs.

HE ALONE is his portion.

No one else, nothing else

But CHRIST ALONE.

And so there, lying naked and exposed,
 This broken tree, now a broken man,
 would discover

That only in his brokenness and wounds
 would come a healing

A healing through which he could live and give,
 To breathe and share and work.

A healing through which other men could now
 walk—walk over—like a bridge,
 a bridge HOME,

Home to where they belonged.
A bridge that led to a path
A path that led to a light
A light that led to a healing
A healing that led to
THEIR Redemptive Story.
A Story about a Romance
A “Sacred Romance”
that they had been looking for all their lives
but could never find—until now.
Until, like this one man, they crossed over...
over a bridge...
A bridge named “BROKEN.”