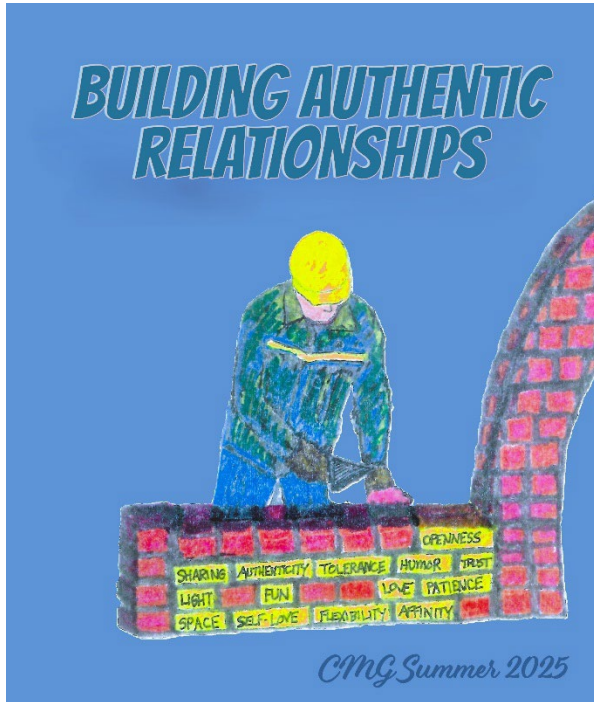


# California Men's Gatherings

The invitation to our 111<sup>th</sup> gathering – Aug 29 - Sept 1, 2025

This gathering's theme:



## “Building Authentic Relationships”

A sweet Friday-Monday getaway  
with warm, wonderful men!

AT ENCHANTED HILLS CAMP  
IN NAPA, CA

### *What is California Men's Gatherings and what is a “Gathering” all about?*

California Men's Gatherings (CMG) is a non-profit, all-volunteer group that produces local events and extended weekend retreats called “Gatherings.” Held three times a year at summer camps in northern and southern California, each Gathering brings together men for fun activities and serious personal development work. They are ideal places to try new things, be a kid again, make new friends, reconnect with old friends, and grow as people. The Gatherings provide a safe, supportive, empowering environment for building community, healing past wounds, challenging old limitations, taking new risks, expanding consciousness, and exploring fresh new ways of looking at life.

The primary purpose of the CMG is to challenge men to rethink their role in society, to liberate men from oppressive misconceptions of what it means to be a man, to educate men in healthy, responsible, generative ways of embracing adult masculinity.

**Read this invitation for theme info and weekend details,  
then [click the button at the very end to register](#)**

# ***“Building Authentic Relationships”***

## ***A Gathering for Men Eager to Connect More Fully***

Building truly authentic relationships means embracing vulnerability, letting go of the need for perfection, and openly sharing your experiences—thoughts, joys, fears. Emotional openness isn't a sign of weakness—it's the foundation of meaningful communication that creates lasting bonds, shared values and mutual support.

When people commit to being real with each other, pain becomes less isolating and moments of joy more profound. With life experience comes the capacity to navigate tough conversations, honor boundaries, and co-create relationships defined by trust and fulfillment rather than surface appeal. That is the heart of authentic connection—where safety meets growth, and companionship becomes a transformative journey together.

Join us for an empowering event where men will come together to explore what it actually means to be Building Authentic Relationships. In today's America, many of us feel overwhelmed by the negativity and divisiveness surrounding us. But real strength doesn't come from hiding who you are; it comes from holding on to your values, authenticity, and faith.

Through open discussions, guided reflections, and shared experiences, we'll uncover the barriers that keep us from being real and the steps we can take to thrive in challenging times. This isn't about putting up a good facade, or showing your best face to the world; it's about embracing who we are, both individually and collectively, and standing firm in our truth while being open to change and grow and learn different ways of being human.

Whether you struggle with self-doubt, feel disconnected from your heart-felt values, or simply want to deepen your relationships by being more honest and open, this event will provide the space and support to do just that.



*Expect real conversations, genuine connections, and a sense of relief as you step into the freedom of being who you were meant to be. We aim to be a port in the storm for men who are searching for their footing and looking to rediscover the foundation they once thought they had.*

*No facades. No pressure. Just real men, real talk, and real transformation.*

*Join us at this stimulating event, and together, let's navigate these challenging times by beginning to "Build Authentic Relationships" Secure your spot today and be part of the journey towards authenticity.*

*Come join us for Labor Day weekend 2025 in the hills above Napa Valley.*

## *What will I find at a gathering?*

The event spans Labor Day weekend (Friday – Monday), and includes lots of activities and events for all:



- ♂ Workshops hosted by anyone with an idea
- ♂ Socials to meet old and new friends
- ♂ Open time for a little peace and quiet
- ♂ Variety show to see/show our talents
- ♂ Outside time for hikes, pool, and more
- ♂ Late night games and movies with snacks
- ♂ Massage room to get/give relaxation
- ♂ Late afternoon “tea party” in dining hall
- ♂ Cuddling with warm men in the puppy pile
- ♂ The evening “Wear Anything” dance
- ♂ A play space for the frisky boys

## *Where... and when...*



**Enchanted Hills in the mountains near Napa, CA** is a serene and picturesque retreat which is owned by Lighthouse for the Blind and has been in operation for many years. They did suffer damage in the fire season in 2018, but have completely rebuilt, adding to some of the best pieces, which survived!

This is actually our 4th time there since 1997 [1998, 2019 right after the fire and now] and it is like a “whole new camp!”

See all the lovely images they have of it at

<https://enchantedhillsnapa.org>

**FRI, August 29th (arrive between 4 pm and 6 pm if you can) through MON, September 1st at 2 p.m.**  
**[No later! We say that because we know how HARD it is to LEAVE!]**

If you can't arrive until late Friday or even Saturday, that's okay. Likewise, some may need to leave Sunday...just let us know if you leave early so we don't worry! Better to come for much of the event than none, right?

But to answer that common question: the rate is the same even if you can't attend all of it.

***RETURNEES: The next couple of pages (sections with purple headers) are more for first time attendees. However, it may be worthwhile for you to read these pages to remind yourself of what a Gathering is like, especially if it's been a while since you've joined us.***

### ***Who comes and who is welcome?***

CMG'ers come from across California, other states, and even internationally. The men who attend CMG Gatherings (and our numerous local events state-wide) are a diverse group, varying in age, backgrounds, traditions, and spiritual practices. While CMG'ers are predominantly gay or bisexual men, ***all persons 18 years or older who self-identify as male are welcome***, including transgender and straight men. Most areas of Pathfinder Ranch are ADA-accessible, so we gratefully encourage and welcome all!



### ***What happens at the Gathering?***

The weekend features concurrent elective workshops on a variety of topics as well as social events (which include a variety show, a dance, heart circles, puppy piles, yoga/meditation, massage exchange, and much more.) The wide choice of activities allows each man to create his own personal experience. It's a weekend to try new things, make new friends and reconnect with old friends.

For some, a Gathering is like the fun of going away to summer camp, especially for those who may not have had a chance to go as a kid, or who would like to do it all over again in a safer, more supportive space. For others, it is more about personal growth and self-exploration in our workshops and assemblies. Or maybe it's just a chance to get away from everyday life and enjoy nature. It's your Gathering!

In addition, we all come together four times through the weekend (besides meals) at our assemblies.

The environment of a Gathering allows for deeper connections with other men. It is a special and safe place where men can let down their guard, open their hearts, and just have fun in an environment where the focus is not on alcohol and recreational drugs.

CMG strives to create a space for all men, regardless of sexual orientation, age, race, religion, physicality, or background. We know we can find better ways to connect – more openly, more honestly, with less fear, and with a lot more fun.

We are committed to offering the opportunity for all men to learn, grow, unite, and support one another through our organization motto: "Connecting Men at the Heart."



## *The Buddy program*



We know that it can be intimidating to come to CMG for the very first time.

The **buddy program** gives first timers someone they can reach out to if they have any questions, concerns, or just need to talk.

After you register, you will receive a [First Time Attendee Video](#) (or you can watch it now via that link) to help you prepare for the weekend. There will also be a Friday evening **first-timer orientation** for you and, if you like, your buddy.

## *How do I get to camp? What should I bring?*

Information about Enchanted Hills will be included in your “Glad You’re Coming!” email. For those immediately curious, here’s a link to the Ranch’s website: <https://enchantedhillsnapa.org/>.

Around two weeks before the Gathering, you will receive a Glad You’re Coming letter email with necessary information about the Gathering, including a tentative schedule of all activities, directions to Pathfinder Ranch, and a recommended list of what to bring (and not bring). If you have questions, please e-mail [SummerInfo@theCMG.org](mailto:SummerInfo@theCMG.org).

Oh, and if you need (or can offer) a ride, there’s a place to say so during registration.

## *Will I get a camp map?*

Yes, the map will help you find the bunk rooms, meeting spaces, and other locations at camp.

## *Cell Phone & Internet Service*

Cellphone service may be spotty, depending on which provider you have. The camp has Wi-Fi available in some areas, but it’s not super reliable. Electronic devices are welcome, but please be *present* for the weekend, and primarily leave the rest of life out in “that other world.”

## *Accommodations and meals*



The base registration fee includes a bed in a shared bunkroom, with a communal bathroom with individual showers [bathrooms for these bunkrooms are in a separate but adjacent building].

For anyone staying indoors (all those other than tenters, Rvers, and Van-sleepers), this camp provides sheets, blankets, a pillow, and pillowcase.

Nine meals are served from Friday Dinner to Monday Lunch, with vegetarian and vegan options always available. If you want to bring more for yourself (non-refrigerated), feel free! In addition, snacks are available 24/7. Want to add to our snacks? We’d love that! Regardless, you will not go hungry! :-)

## Smoking Policy

We expect that there will be a designated location on the property where smoking will be allowed. More details to follow on where that will be. The issue isn't so much your smoke; it's the potential for fire. Gummies/gum are safer and more convenient ways to get nicotine or THC if you need those.

## You Must Be on our Actual Mailing List to Register

Strange as it sounds, registering for the *gathering* doesn't put you on our *mailing list* for anything in the future; that's a separate CMG database. By new policy (June of 2025), **you must be on our mailing list to attend a gathering**; it's just too hard to keep you aware of what we're up to if you're not. If you're not yet on our free mailing list, please go immediately to [www.TheCMG.org/join](http://www.TheCMG.org/join) and sign up.

## Housing Upgrade Options

For details on how to upgrade to more private accommodations (hint, they go fast!), click to [thecmg.org/summer-housing-options](http://thecmg.org/summer-housing-options) NOTE: If you accept returnee financial aid, you may not also opt for upgraded housing.

## The CMG Variety Show!

This is your opportunity to step out on stage and show us your talent(s), which might be singing, dance, poetry or...? As with everything else at the Gathering, the audience is supportive, so think about fulfilling that stage dream. If you wish to perform (five minute maximum), [create your Variety Show submission form here](#) and bring it with you. Otherwise, have a seat in the audience and enjoy the show! Questions? We'll ask our show coordinator if you write us at [SummerInfo@theCMG.org](mailto:SummerInfo@theCMG.org).

## Present a workshop!

Do you have a passion, gifts, wisdom, experience, or interest you'd like to share with us?



Workshops are led by you all - the men who come to the weekend on a volunteer basis. It could be a presentation. Or a group discussion. Or an activity you want to lead. This creates a wonderful sense of discovery throughout the weekend.

Workshops can be almost anything! Consider ideas like interests, exploring new subcultures, meditation, discussing lessons learned from a recent experience/book/class, dance, outdoor/active fun, art exploration, storytelling, fantasy, and more.

Submit a proposal at check-in or, even better, [create a neat, pre-printed workshop form to bring by clicking here](#). Spending time now will allow for more thoughtful, accurate descriptions, make it more legible, and allow us to plan ahead.

You needn't feel that you must have a mastery of something to create a workshop; if you have interest enough to give something a try, no matter how basic, CMG is a great place to give it a whirl! Some of the

most requested repeat workshops came from people who initially didn't feel totally sure about leading it. If you have questions, write [SummerInfo@theCMG.org](mailto:SummerInfo@theCMG.org).

### ***New Alcohol and Marijuana Policy***

**Our policies on alcohol and marijuana have changed since last year.** Read more about the current plans related to these at [www.TheCMG.org/alcohol-marijuana](http://www.TheCMG.org/alcohol-marijuana). This is still new to us as a committee and the Spring Gathering needed to adapt to it *at camp* during the gathering. We will say more about it in the "Glad You're Coming!" letter.

### ***The "Wear ANYthing" Dance!***

What sounds like fun to you? Drag? Leather? Jockstrap? Toga? A giant panda? Whatever feels fun to wear is welcome. And for those who crave some **clothing-optional** events, remember that this party is fully indoors! So-o-o, while the *theme* does say to "Wear Anything," that *could* mean just a bow tie, cat paws, or go-go boots! Just remember a robe for the trip from your cabin!

### ***The Sing-Along Movie***

Can't legally say what it's gonna be, but if we do it, it's always fun...

### ***The Mocktail Party***

A festive pre-dinner get-together where we don't process anything or learn a darn thing...just fun together!

### ***The Pool Party / Fashion Show***

We always create a runway around the pool area for our fashion show which could be anything from high drag to your favorite harness or other costume wear.

By the way, we pool area will be swimsuit optional, so you can wear anything from your favorite swimsuit to your birthday suit.

### ***The Play Room***

Since we don't want guys getting it on in the public cabins, we have a special place to go for this. This popular spot is expected to be in Cabin L[lakeside]11. Late night is likely to be its prime time (rumor has it that 10:45pm is a good time to cruise in), but you can hang there anytime to see who else is feeling the vibe.

Our coordination team has a lot on our plate, so if you love the idea of us having a great looking Play Room, what could you contribute? Erotic décor? Lighting? A portable glory hole? As of now, we don't have someone stepping up to help coordinate turning a camp room into something more...unseemly. The room will exist, décor or not, but if you would enjoy that role, drop a note saying so to [SummerInfo@theCMG.org](mailto:SummerInfo@theCMG.org). Coordinator or not, if you have ideas or items to bring; you can also add your touches at the last moment!



## Registration

Attendance is through an online registration process prior to the Gathering weekend via the green button at the bottom of this document; there will be no on-site registration or “day pass” option.

Registration pricing will update automatically as we transition from 7/31 to 8/1 in Pacific Daylight Time and could close when we reach "full" status. We will take a waiting list if this happens.

## Cancellation policy

Until midnight on August 14th, you can apply for a refund; all will be returned, minus a \$50 cancellation fee. For our policy beyond that date/time, see [www.theCMG.org/cancel](http://www.theCMG.org/cancel).

## What does it cost to attend?

- **Early-bird rate (\$465)** will apply **through July 31st at 11:59pm** to encourage you to commit early!
- **Standard rate (\$500)** will be available from **August 1st through August 29th or until we “sell out”** for those who do not commit during early-bird.



We have give the camp a FIRM number that we're paying for on 8/15 so that's why that's also the “cancellation date.” However, we do have a minimum number we must hit. If, for some reason we have not hit that number by that date, expect us to tell you to “bring your friends” [we'll still need to get paid if at all possible!].

## Financial Aid

**RETURNEES:** \$100 in Financial Aid is available for any returnee for whom the rates are a personal challenge; It is our intent that every man who wants to attend be able to. As such, limited financial aid is available. Note that **early and standard registrations fees apply to all**, so if you're applying for financial aid, we REALLY encourage you to jump on the lower early rate! Click [here](#) to request. Financial Aid attendees must take Basic accommodations including Upper Bunks [if they are able] or Standard accommodations.

**FIRST TIME ATTENDEES:** We have an optional **\$150** discount, if that would help you make the decision that you could come to this gathering. This option is built into the registration form so **first timers shouldn't fill out the additional Financial Aid form above; this is instead.** Use the code **1STCMG** if you're a first timer wanting that. If you don't need the discount, we greatly appreciate your contributing the full fee!

**NOTE:** Those requesting a “First-Timer Discount” *CAN* request housing upgrades. You could look at it like we're paying for your upgrade, but we look at it as we're encouraging you to “give us a try”.

In return for these grants, recipients are encouraged to volunteer a little more during the weekend than others might, as a way of giving back and supporting our efforts to include all. However, you won't be singled

out for this. EVERYONE is a volunteer at CMG. Our only paid position is Lifeguard at the Pool, for obvious reasons. Otherwise, CMG is “all volunteer” so everything you see being done and the many, many MORE things you do NOT see being done, are done by men “giving back”, or they are simply not being done at all. Maybe one of those will be the thing that YOU give back to the Gathering this time or in the future.

### *Donations to Financial Aid*

Please consider making an additional, tax-deductible contribution to the Financial Aid Fund. Your donation helps make the gathering available and affordable to men from all walks of life.

### *Ready to sign up???*

Great! If you've already created a profile with us, click the green button below to sign in to register for the event (if you've forgotten your password, it's easy to reset there).

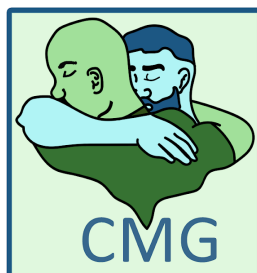
If you HAVEN'T yet created a profile with us, you'll still use this green button, but you'll need to do that one-time step first and *then* sign in.

*Okay, on your mark, get set, click!:*

**I'm clicking here to register!!!**

**(You may have to tell your computer to “allow” the button above to access our registration site; please do...we promise it's safe!)**

**We can't wait to see you there for the fun!**



California  
**Men's Gatherings**  
Connecting Men at the Heart