

More winter options for women to find their tribe

By Jill Sanford, Moonshine Ink

“I travel and ski with guys all year round, so it’s amazing when I get to experience the mountain with a posse of women. There’s this female energy and support that’s so powerful. I push myself more when I see other girls out there challenging themselves and shedding some of the self-doubt that comes with skiing with guys.”

Pro skier Michelle Parker isn’t alone in this sentiment. Women who are involved in winter sports are gravitating toward female-only organizations like the SAFE AS avalanche clinics, Tahoe Backcountry Women, and SheJumps; places where they can find the support and energy of female companionship.

“The general trend is for women to feel more comfortable speaking up in an all-women’s group,” said local sports psychologist Robb Gaffney. “There could be cases in which a woman feels more comfortable disclosing a difficult issue to a man or to a group of men, especially if the group is safe and non-judgmental, as opposed to sharing the same information with a woman who could be perceived as an intimidating figure. But yes, in general, there is likely safety through similarity, and same-gender groups offer that.”

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