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# New masculinities

## Theory and definition

Have you ever wondered why people say that a man "shouldn't cry" or that he "has to be strong and decisive"? For a long time, society has imposed a specific model of masculinity: the tough guy who doesn't show weakness, who is always in control, and who doesn't let emotions get to him. But does this view really make sense? And more importantly, is it the only way to be a man? This model, aside from being rigid, has often made it difficult for men to process their emotions, build relationships, and connect with themselves.

Today, however, things are changing. People are increasingly talking about **"New masculinities"**, a concept that doesn't propose a single model to follow but rather encourages breaking free from stereotypes and living one's male identity in a more authentic and peaceful way. This shift is thanks to gender equality movements (including feminism) that have opened up spaces for men to reconsider their roles and challenge traditional expectations.

**New masculinities** refer to a progressive and evolving understanding of what it means to

be a man, moving beyond traditional, restrictive, and often harmful patriarchal norms. This concept emphasizes the importance of gender equality, empathy, emotional intelligence, and respect for all individuals, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation. It promotes a masculinity that is not defined by dominance, aggression, or emotional suppression, but by authenticity, vulnerability, and a commitment to justice.

This involves:

**Challenging traditional gender roles:**

Actively questioning and dismantling the rigid expectations historically placed on men, such as the pressure to be stoic, aggressive, or solely focused on providing.

**Embracing emotional expression:**

Encouraging men to acknowledge, express, and manage a full range of emotions, moving away from the idea that emotional vulnerability is a sign of weakness.

**Promoting empathy and respect:**

Fostering genuine understanding and consideration for the

experiences and perspectives of others, especially women and marginalized gender identities, and rejecting misogyny, homophobia, and transphobia.

**Active engagement in care and domestic responsibilities:**

Encouraging men to take on an equal share of household chores, childcare, and caregiving roles, recognizing this as a fundamental aspect of partnership and equality.

**Rejecting violence and aggression:**

Actively working to dismantle harmful notions of

masculinity that equate strength with violence or control, promoting peaceful conflict resolution and respectful interactions.

**Building healthy relationships:**

Fostering relationships based on equality, communication, and mutual respect, free from power imbalances or control.

**Supporting feminism and gender equality:**

Recognizing that the liberation of women and other gender identities is intrinsically linked to the liberation of men from rigid patriarchal constraints. New masculinities are inherently allied with feminist movements.

In essence, new masculinities propose a more liberating, inclusive, and equitable vision for men, which benefits not only men themselves by allowing them to live more authentically, but also society as a whole by fostering greater gender equality and reducing gender-based violence and discrimination.

## **Theoretical foundations of new masculinities**

The concept of new masculinities is rooted in various theoretical frameworks that critique traditional masculinity and advocate for more equitable and flexible expressions of maleness. These foundations draw heavily from feminist theory, gender studies, critical masculinity studies, and psychology.

**Feminist theory:** This is the most foundational influence. Feminist scholars have extensively analyzed how patriarchy structures society

and limits the roles and experiences of both women and men. They argue that traditional masculinity, which often relies on dominance over

women and the suppression of emotions, is a product of patriarchal systems. New masculinities arise from the recognition that dismantling patriarchy is not only beneficial for women but also liberates men from the rigid and often harmful expectations imposed by traditional male norms. Key feminist thinkers like **Bell Hooks** (e.g., in "The will to change: men, masculinity, and love") have explored how patriarchal conditioning prevents men from fully experiencing love, connection, and emotional intimacy, thus advocating for men's active role in dismantling patriarchy for their own liberation.

**Critical masculinity studies:** Emerging largely from feminist critiques, this field specifically focuses on examining the diverse constructions of masculinity across cultures and historical periods. It critiques hegemonic masculinity, which is the dominant and idealized form of masculinity in a given society (often associated with power, heterosexuality, and aggression). Scholars like **R.W. Connell** (e.g., "Masculinities") have highlighted

that masculinity is not a monolithic concept but is plural, relational, and often contested. New Masculinities can be seen as a counter-hegemonic form, challenging the established norms and advocating for more inclusive and non-toxic expressions.

**Gender as a social construct:** Like gender itself, masculinity is understood as a social construct rather than a purely biological one. This means that traits, behaviors, and expectations associated with "being a man" are learned and perpetuated through social, cultural, and historical processes, rather than being innate. This understanding allows for the possibility of redefining and changing what masculinity means, paving the way for "new" forms

**Psychological perspectives:** Psychology contributes to understanding how the pressure to conform to traditional masculinity can negatively impact men's mental health, leading to emotional suppression, higher rates of suicide, substance abuse, and difficulty forming healthy relationships.

New Masculinities offer a psychological liberation by allowing men to be more authentic, express emotions, and seek help without feeling that it compromises their "manhood".

**Intersectionality:** This framework, pioneered by **Kimberlé Crenshaw**, is crucial for understanding that masculinity is not experienced uniformly by all men. Race, class, sexuality, disability, and other social categories intersect with gender to create diverse experiences of masculinity. For example, the expectations placed on a Black man might differ significantly from those on a white man, and thus, "New masculinities" must be inclusive and attentive to these diverse experiences, challenging all forms of oppression, not just sexism.

In summary, the conceptual background of new masculinities emphasize that masculinity is a learned social construct, not a fixed biological reality. They draw from feminist critiques of patriarchy, sociological analyses of power and gender, and psychological insights

into male well-being, all converging on the idea that dismantling traditional, harmful male norms is essential for creating a more just, equitable, and humane society for everyone.



# How to promote new masculinities in communities

Promoting new masculinities within communities is a crucial step towards achieving gender equality and fostering healthier societies. Youth workers are ideally positioned to facilitate this change, given their direct engagement with young people and their influence on social norms. Here are key actions and approaches:

## Education and awareness:

- **Workshops and discussion groups:** Organize sessions for young men and boys to discuss what masculinity means to them, identify harmful stereotypes, and explore alternative ways of being a man. Use interactive methods like storytelling, role-playing, and critical media analysis.
- **Media literacy:** Help young people critically analyze media portrayals of masculinity (in films, video games, advertising) to understand how they perpetuate stereotypes and to identify more diverse and positive representations.
- **Parental engagement:** Offer workshops for parents to discuss positive parenting strategies that challenge gender stereotypes from an early age, encouraging emotional expression and shared responsibilities for boys.

## Role modeling and mentorship:

- **Highlight diverse male role models:** Showcase men who embody new masculinities – those who are emotionally intelligent, actively involved in caregiving, challenge homophobia, and advocate for gender equality. This can include public figures, community leaders, or older youth.
- **Mentorship programs:** Establish mentorship programs where older male youth or adult men who exemplify new masculinities can guide younger boys, offering practical advice and support for navigating gender expectations.

### Creating safe and inclusive spaces:

- **Encourage emotional expression:** Create environments where boys and young men feel safe to express their emotions without fear of judgment or ridicule. This can involve structured activities or simply fostering an atmosphere of acceptance.
- **Promote healthy communication:** Teach and model effective communication skills, including active listening, expressing needs, and resolving conflicts non-violently.
- **Support for LGBTIQ+ Youth:** Ensure that initiatives for new masculinities are inclusive of and supportive of LGBTIQ+ boys and young men, addressing homophobia and transphobia that often target non-conforming masculinities.

### Challenging harmful behaviors:

- **Bystander intervention training:** Equip young people with the skills to intervene safely and effectively when they witness sexist comments, harassment, or aggression from peers.
- **Disrupting "Bro culture":** Address and challenge group dynamics that normalize sexism, misogyny, or aggressive behavior among young men. Encourage peer accountability and mutual respect.
- **Advocate for comprehensive sex education:** Promote sex education that includes consent, healthy relationships, and challenges gender stereotypes regarding sexuality.

### Policy and structural change:

- **Advocate for parental leave:** Support policies that encourage men to take parental leave, normalizing their role as active caregivers and challenging the idea that caregiving is primarily a female responsibility.
- **Promote gender-neutral language:** Encourage the use of inclusive language in all community materials and communications.
- **Collaborate with local institutions:** Work with schools, sports clubs, and community centers to integrate principles of new masculinities into their programs and policies.

By implementing these strategies, youth workers can empower young men to embrace more authentic, equitable, and respectful forms of masculinity, contributing to a more just and inclusive society for everyone.

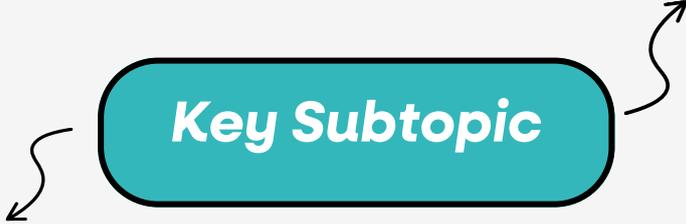
## **Key Subtopics Related to New Masculinities**

To fully grasp the concept of new masculinities, it is essential to explore its intersection with various aspects of life and society. These subtopics illustrate how the shift towards more equitable male identities influences individual well-being and societal structures.

### Emotional intelligence and expression:

**Relationship:** Traditional masculinity often discourages emotional expression in men, promoting stoicism and the suppression of feelings other than anger or dominance. New masculinities emphasize the importance of emotional literacy, enabling men to recognize, understand, and express their full range of emotions in healthy ways. This involves moving beyond the "boys don't cry" mentality.

**Contribution:** This subtopic highlights a core tenet of new masculinities: fostering emotional authenticity in men. It is crucial because emotional suppression can lead to various mental health issues and hinders the formation of deep, meaningful relationships. By promoting emotional intelligence, this subtopic shows how new Masculinities benefit men personally and contribute to healthier relational dynamics.



### Key Subtopic

### Shared domestic and care responsibilities:

**Relationship:** Historically, domestic chores and caregiving (childcare, elder care) have been overwhelmingly assigned to women, reinforcing the "double burden." New masculinities advocate for men to actively and equally participate in these responsibilities, challenging the notion that care work is inherently "feminine" or less valuable. This includes taking parental leave and contributing daily.

**Contribution:** This subtopic directly addresses the practical application of gender equality within the home. It illustrates how new masculinities translate into tangible changes in daily life, leading to a more equitable distribution of labor and supporting women's professional and personal development. It underscores the idea that true equality requires men's active participation in all spheres, including the traditionally "private" one.

### Positive relationships and consent:

**Relationship:** Traditional masculinity can sometimes foster notions of control or entitlement in relationships, contributing to issues of power imbalance and lack of consent. New masculinities promote relationships built on mutual respect, open communication, empathy, and enthusiastic consent. This involves challenging concepts like toxic jealousy, possessiveness, and the idea that "no means convince me."

**Contribution:** This subtopic is vital for promoting healthy, respectful, and safe relationships. By focusing on consent and mutual respect, it directly counters harmful aspects of traditional masculinity and helps prevent gender-based violence. It shows how New Masculinities contribute to safer environments and more fulfilling interactions for everyone.



## Key Subtopic

### Men as allies in feminism and gender equality:

**Relationship:** Historically, feminism has been seen as a "women's issue," sometimes leading to men feeling excluded or even defensive. New masculinities positions men as active and indispensable allies in the fight for gender equality. This means understanding and acknowledging male privilege, listening to women's experiences, challenging sexism among peers, and advocating for feminist goals.

**Contribution:** This subtopic emphasizes that gender equality is a shared responsibility, not just a struggle for women. It outlines the active role men can play in dismantling patriarchal structures and promoting a more just world. By highlighting alliance, it shows how new masculinities are not just about personal transformation but about collective social change.

### Critique of hegemonic masculinity:

**Relationship:** Hegemonic masculinity refers to the dominant, idealized form of masculinity in a given society, often associated with power, heterosexuality, physical strength, and emotional stoicism. New masculinities actively critique and deconstruct this singular, rigid model, recognizing that it is limiting and harmful for men who don't fit it, as well as for women and other gender identities.

**Contribution:** This subtopic provides the theoretical foundation for why new masculinities are necessary. By analyzing and challenging the dominant form of masculinity, it clarifies what new masculinities are moving away from and why this shift is beneficial. It helps to understand the systemic nature of gender expectations.

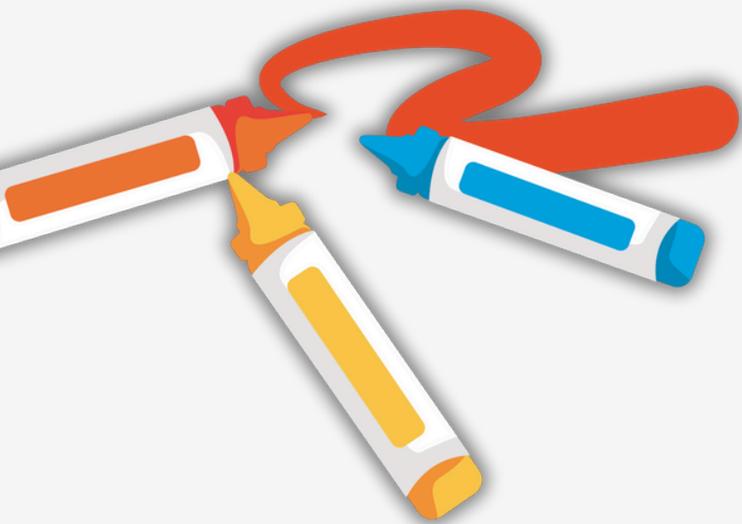


## Key Subtopic

These subtopics collectively contribute to a holistic understanding of new masculinities, demonstrating their relevance not only to individual identity and well-being but also to the broader goals of gender equality and social justice.

# NON-FORMAL EDUCATION (NFE) ACTIVITIES

These activities are designed to facilitate reflection and dialogue on new masculinities among youth workers, promoting a shift in perspective and the adoption of more equitable practices.



**Real men don't do housework... or do they?**

**Duration: 90 minutes.**

**ACTIVITY 1**

**\* Objectives:**

Stimulate critical thinking about concepts of masculinity and femininity.

Explore the relationship between gender, power, and social roles.

Deconstruct stereotypes through personal experiences and social representations.

Promote inclusive language and attitudes.

**\* Subjects involved:** Civic education, citizenship studies, gender studies, contemporary history, sociology, social psychology, visual arts, communication.

**Number of participants: 15-20**

**Materials and resources:**

- A3 paper or flip chart sheets.
- Markers and post-its.
- Magazines, newspaper articles, printed ads, social media images.
- One copy per group of the updated Activity Texts (1–5) – you can find them below in this module.
- A suitable group work space (classroom, study hall, workshop room...).

# 1

## Introduction (5 minutes):

- Present the topic: gender roles and stereotypes today.
- Ask the question: "What does it mean to be a man or a woman today?"
- Explain that participants will work in groups to analyze texts and visuals and create a critical, creative product.

# 2

## Group formation & material distribution (5 minutes):

- **Divide participants into three types of groups:**
  - Women-only groups.
  - Men-only groups.
  - Mixed-gender groups.
  - (If needed, use only mixed groups while ensuring diverse perspectives).
- **Distribute:**
  - Texts 1–4 to same-gender groups.
  - Text 5 + visual materials (magazines, social images, ads) to mixed groups.

# 3

## Group work (30 minutes):

- **Same-Gender Groups (Texts 1–4):**
  - Read and analyze the assigned text.
  - Reflect on personal, family, and cultural experiences.
  - Create a visual summary: mind map, poster, or creative storytelling.
  - Title the work with a provocative phrase.

- **Mixed groups (Text 5):**

- Create a visual collage representing gender roles, expectations, and stereotypes in:
  - Work.
  - Relationships.
  - Media.
  - Daily life.

Include positive elements or disruptors: alternative models, inspiring examples, counter-narratives.

4

**Group presentations (25 minutes):**

Each group presents in 4–5 minutes:

- A summary of their discussion.
- Key points and reflections.
- The message behind their visual product.

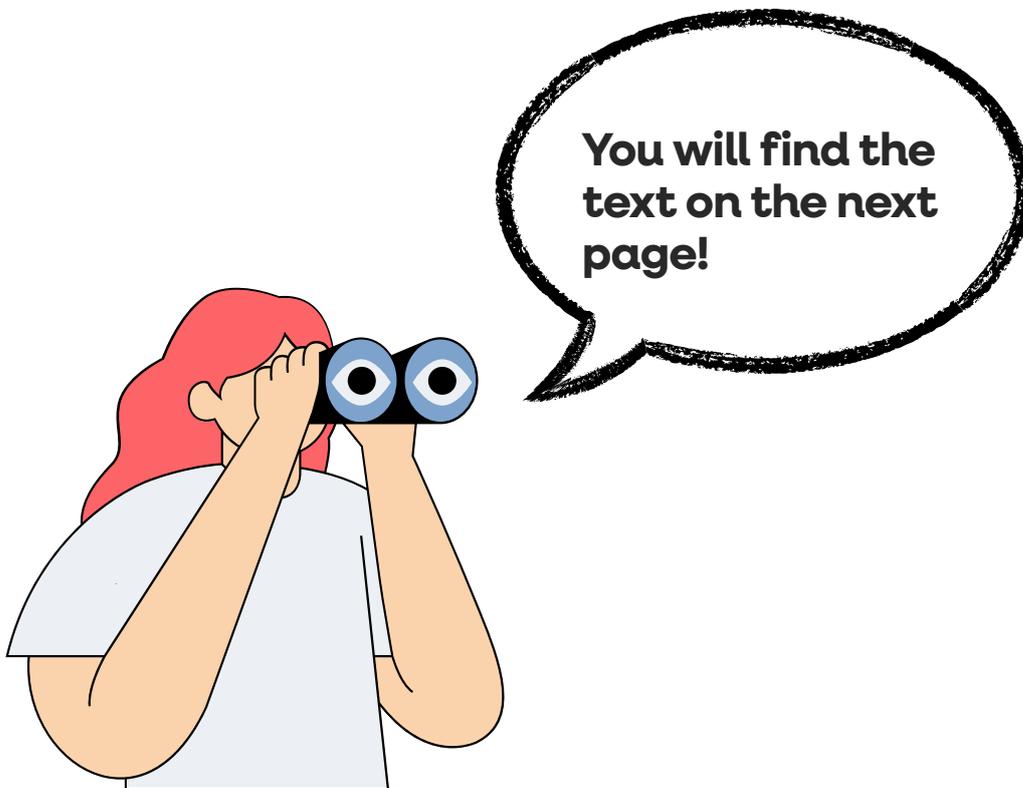
All posters and collages are displayed to create a "Critical Gallery" in the room.

# 5

## Phase 5 – Final debate (20 minutes):

Facilitate a closing discussion using these guiding questions:

- What kinds of gender models did you internalize growing up?
- Which stereotypes are still present in your daily life?
- In what spaces do you feel free to be yourself beyond gender expectations?
- How do media, social networks, or family shape your view of gender roles?
- What can we do to build a more equitable culture, free from rigid roles?



### **Text 1 – 'Don't Be a Girl!'**

How many times have boys been told not to cry, not to be a 'sissy (p\*\*sy)'? As if showing emotions was something to be ashamed of. As they grow up, many men learn to suppress sadness, fear, vulnerability. But at what cost? Bottling up emotions can lead to difficulties in relationships, emotional isolation, and mental health struggles. The truth is, emotions aren't gendered. They are human. So why is ignoring your feelings seen as 'more manly'?

### **Text 2 – The Breadwinner Myth**

Even today, even though many women earn well and are financially independent, there's still a widespread idea that men should be the 'providers'. This puts pressure on men to achieve financial success at all costs, and many feel inadequate if they don't meet this standard. At the same time, it's often used to justify why men do less at home or in emotional care. But is this really what being a man is about?

### **Text 3 – Good Girls Don't Raise Their Voice**

Girls are often taught early on to be polite, sweet, patient—not to make noise or cause problems. As they grow older, many women keep these behaviors at university, at work, or in relationships. But what happens when a woman speaks up, asserts herself, takes the lead? She's often labeled 'aggressive', 'too much', 'emotional'. Why is male independence seen as strength, and female independence as a threat?

#### **Text 4 – The Invisible Mental Load**

Young women today study, work, and are independent. Yet, in couples or family life, they often take on most of the daily 'management': remembering appointments, planning meals, sending birthday messages, organizing social events. This is called the 'mental load'—a silent, unpaid job that's usually expected of women. But who decided it should be their job?

#### **Text 5 – What Kind of Image Is This?**

Look through magazines, social media, and advertising. What do they say about what it means to be a man or a woman? Men are often shown as strong, confident, leaders. Women are portrayed as polished, sensual, kind—often in support of others (as mothers, partners, assistants). But where are the real bodies? The non-binary people? The sensitive men? The ambitious women? And most importantly: who sets these standards?

**Man enough?  
rethinking  
masculinity today**

**Duration: 60  
minutes.**

**ACTIVITY 2**

**\* Objectives:**

Recognize key elements of toxic masculinity.

Reflect on social pressures placed on boys and men.

Explore new, healthier models of masculinity: emotional, empathetic, inclusive.

**\* Materials and resources:**

- A3 sheets, markers, post-its.
- Provocative quotes (provided below).
- Space for small group work.

**Number of participants:**

10-20 (Ages 18–30).



# 1

## Opening brainstorm (10 min):

**Question:** "What comes to mind when you hear the word 'masculinity'?"

Each participant writes 1 word on a post-it.

Words are read aloud and posted on a wall or board.

Quick reflection: Are the words mostly positive or negative?

Repetitive? Surprising?

# 2

## Critical stimulus (5 min):

Read one or more of the following quotes:

- "Real men don't cry."
- "Be a man."
- "A man must always be strong."
- "Men don't talk about feelings."

## Discussion prompts:

- Have you heard or said things like this before?
- How do they affect men and boys?

# 3

## Group work (25 min):

Split into small groups (3–5 people). Choose one of the following:

### Option A: Critical poster

**Title:** "What Being a Man Means to Us Today"

Groups create a visual poster with alternative, positive messages about masculinity.

### **Option B: Short storytelling**

- Title: "The Time a Man Was Different..."
- Groups write a short (real or fictional) story that breaks a masculine stereotype.

4

### **Sharing and final discussion (20 min):**

Each group presents briefly (3–5 minutes).

Lead a final discussion with these questions:

- Did anything resonate personally with you?
- What surprised you or challenged your thinking?
- What would you like to change in how masculinity is talked about or shown?

## "The journey of the new man"

**Duration: 60 minutes.**

## ACTIVITY 3

### \* Objectives:

Stimulate reflection on traditional and alternative models of masculinity.

Deconstruct gender stereotypes through dialogue and creativity.

Promote healthier and more inclusive identities and relationships.

### \* Materials and resources

- A3 sheets or flip chart paper.
- Markers, post-its, glue, scissors. Magazines, printed ads, social media images.
- Space for group work and a final "Gallery".
- Blank paper for the final "Identity Card".

### Number of participants:

15–20 young people (ages 18–30). Organized in mixed-gender or single-gender groups, based on context and comfort level.

# 1

## Introduction and icebreaker (5 minutes):

- Ask participants: "What does it mean to be a man today?" "What behaviors are rewarded or punished in society?"
- Write keywords on a board or collect them on post-its.
- Explain the concept of the workshop as a "journey" through different themes.

# 2

## Group work – journey stops (30 minutes):

Divide participants into 3 or 4 small mixed-gender groups.

Each group is assigned one of the following Journey Stops:

- **Stop 1 – Strength and Emotion:**
  - (Exploring the myth of the strong, emotionally detached man).
  - Guiding question: Which emotions do you feel free to express? Which ones do you hide? Why?
- **Stop 2 – Respect and power:**
  - (Power dynamics in gender roles).
  - Guiding question: In what situations is power used to exclude, dominate, or protect? How could power be used to create fairness?
- **Stop 3 – Healthy relationships:**
  - (Care, friendship, intimacy).
  - Guiding question: What does it take to build a fair and non-toxic relationship?

### Each group:

- Analyzes the topic using the guide text (provided below).
- Shares personal experiences.
- Creates a visual product: poster, collage, slogan, or visual storytelling.
- Titles their work with a provocative or poetic phrase.

# 3

### Sharing and final discussion (25 min):

Each group has 3–4 minutes to present:

- Their process and key reflections.
- The message behind their creative product.
- One critical point or question to share with the others

All works are displayed to create a “Critical gallery” in the room.

Lead a final discussion with these questions:

- What gender models did you internalize as a child?
- What stereotypes still affect your daily life?
- In what spaces do you feel free to be yourself, beyond gender expectations?
- How do media, family, and social networks shape your view of gender roles?
- What kind of culture do we want to build? What do we need to change?

## Guide texts for the journey stops

(Each group receives one short, thought-provoking text along with a guiding question. These are used to spark discussion and create a visual or symbolic output (poster, collage, slogan, drawing...))

- **Stop 1 – Strength and emotion:**

**Guide text:** "From a young age, many boys are told: 'Don't cry,' 'Be strong,' 'Don't be soft.' But what happens when someone is taught to suppress pain, fear, or vulnerability? Maybe true strength also means asking for help and showing empathy."

**Guiding question:** Which emotions do you feel free to express? Which ones do you hide? Why?

- **Stop 2 – Respect and power:**

**Guide text:** "Male power often hides in plain sight: in the voice that interrupts, in the silence that dominates, in the joke that diminishes. Sometimes, those with power don't even notice they have it. But respect starts with listening and being aware of the impact we have on others."

**Guiding question:** In what situations is power used to exclude, dominate, or protect? How could power be used to create fairness?

- **Stop 3 – Healthy relationships:**

**Guide text:** "Many emotional or romantic relationships are shaped by fixed roles: the man is strong and protective; the woman is caring and sensitive. But the most authentic connections are those where both people can be strong, soft, messy, and human. Balance comes from mutual care—not control."

**Guiding question:** What does a fair, non-toxic, healthy relationship look like to you?

# Identity card: the new man / the ally i want to be:

Symbolic Name: .....

Values i want to stand for (select from the list in the next page):

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Qualities I want to grow (select from the list in the next page):

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Behaviors or beliefs I want to leave behind (select from the list in the next page):

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Things I want to carry with me on my journey:** (e.g., healthy relationships, trust, critical thinking, new role models...)

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**Who I want to support:** (e.g., friends, partners, siblings, coworkers, young people...)

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## list to complete the identity card:

### VALUES

Empathy, Honesty, Respect, Vulnerability, Kindness, Courage, Compassion, Self-awareness, Authenticity, Patience, Humility, Collaboration, Equality, Love, Non-violence, Trust, Support, Gratitude, Listening, Fairness, Growth, Openness, Justice, Inclusivity, Understanding, Accountability, Self-care, Resilience, Creativity, Curiosity, Confidence, Forgiveness.

### QUALITY

Emotional Intelligence, Self-Confidence, Courage, Empathy, Active Listening, Compassion, Vulnerability, Assertiveness, Resilience, Patience, Kindness, Openness to feedback, Humility, Self-awareness, Flexibility, Gratitude, Curiosity, Creativity, Integrity, Adaptability, Honesty, Accountability, Generosity, Optimism, Collaboration, Emotional resilience, Fairness, Self-discipline, Respect for diversity, Trustworthiness, Forgiveness, Leadership.

### BEHAVIOR/BELIEF

Toxic competition, Fear of vulnerability, Need to control others, Superficiality, Fear of being judged, Toxic masculinity, Emotional suppression, Gender stereotypes, Dominance over others, Aggression as strength, Disrespect towards women, Objectifying others, Avoiding accountability, Emotional immaturity, Hyper-competitiveness, Selfishness, Perfectionism, Insecurity, Dependency on others' approval, Shaming or blaming, Pride in ignorance, Disregard for emotions, Fear of asking for help, Closing off to new ideas, Rigid gender roles, Disconnection from feelings, Misogyny, Entitlement, Denying empathy, Fear of change, Dismissing others' experiences, Lack of self-care, Withholding affection or support, Deflecting responsibility, Being dismissive or insensitive, Apathy or indifference

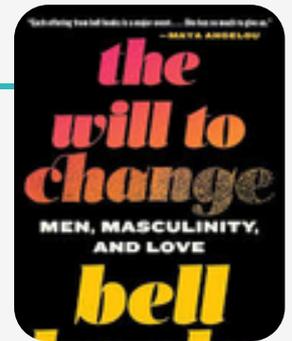
## Resources

The resources presented here are in English to ensure global accessibility and offer valuable perspectives for training and practice.

## Books

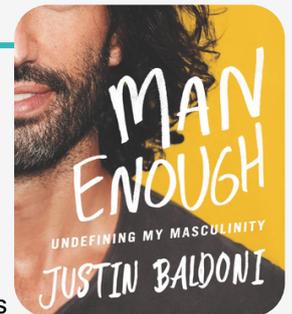
### "The will to change: men, masculinity, and love" by Bell Hooks.

As mentioned in previous sections, this book is fundamental for understanding how patriarchal culture limits men's emotional lives and their capacity for love. Hooks argues that men's liberation from these restrictive norms is essential for their spiritual and emotional well-being, and for achieving true gender equality. It's a powerful call for men to embrace a more expansive and authentic masculinity.



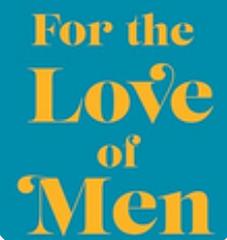
### "Man enough: undefining my masculinity" by Justin Baldoni.

Actor Justin Baldoni explores his own journey with masculinity, vulnerability, and challenging societal expectations of what it means to be a man. Based on his popular web series "Man enough," the book invites men to reflect on their own experiences and to redefine masculinity in a way that allows for emotional expression, genuine connection, and a commitment to equality. It's an accessible and personal account for young men struggling with traditional norms.



### "For the love of men: a new vision for mindful masculinity" by Liz Plank.

This book argues that patriarchy harms men as well as women. Liz Plank offers a refreshing perspective on how men can reclaim their true selves by embracing empathy, kindness, and vulnerability, challenging the destructive aspects of traditional masculinity. It's a well-researched and engaging read that provides practical insights into creating a more positive and equitable future for all genders.



## Videos

### **"The mask you live in" (2015) – Documentary by Jennifer Siebel Newsom.**

This film explores the damaging impact of rigid masculine norms on boys and men in the United States. It delves into how society's definition of "man box" masculinity (tough, aggressive, non-emotional, hypersexual) contributes to issues like violence, depression, and difficulties in forming healthy relationships. It is a powerful tool for prompting discussion on the need for new masculinities.

### **"A better man" (2017) – Documentary by Attiya Khan and Lawrence Jackman.**

This unique documentary follows a woman who meets with her abusive ex-partner years later to discuss the violence he inflicted on her. It's a challenging but important film that explores accountability, healing, and the potential for men to change their behavior and embrace non-violent masculinities. It offers a powerful case study for conversations about responsibility and transformation.

## Articles

### **"What masculinity means to me" (The New York Times).**

- This series of short essays and reflections from various men explores what masculinity means to them personally. It provides diverse perspectives on modern manhood, encompassing struggles, joys, and evolving definitions, offering a rich tapestry of contemporary masculine experiences.
- *Note: Specific URL may vary, search "The New York Times What Masculinity Means to Me" for updated links.*

### **"Men's roles in achieving gender equality" (UN Women).**

This article from UN Women highlights the critical importance of engaging men and boys as partners in achieving gender equality. It outlines various ways men can challenge harmful gender norms, advocate for women's rights, and contribute to building more equitable societies. It reinforces the idea that new masculinities are essential for global progress on gender issues.

**Note: Specific URL may vary, search "UN Women Men's roles in achieving gender equality" for updated links.**

## Podcast

### **"Man enough"** (Hosted by Justin Baldoni, Jamey Heath, and Liz Plank).

Based on the book and web series, this podcast features honest and vulnerable conversations with celebrities and experts about masculinity, mental health, relationships, and societal expectations. It's a great resource for hearing diverse perspectives on what it means to be a man today and how to live more authentically.

### **"Hidden brain" – "The problem with a perfect man" (NPR).**

This episode explores how traditional masculine ideals can be detrimental to men's well-being and relationships. It delves into the psychological pressures men face to conform to societal expectations and offers insights into the benefits of breaking free from these rigid norms.

## Key Organizations

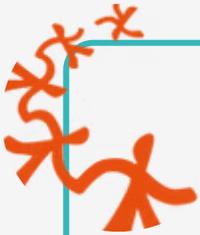
These organizations are dedicated to promoting healthier masculinities and engaging men in gender equality efforts, offering valuable resources and programs:



**MenEngage Alliance:**

A global alliance of NGOs and UN agencies that works with men and boys to achieve gender equality. They advocate for gender-transformative approaches, promote human rights, and challenge harmful masculinities.

**Website:** <https://menengage.org/>



**Promundo:**

A global leader in promoting gender equality and preventing violence by engaging men and boys. They conduct research, develop programs, and advocate for policies that foster positive masculinities, shared caregiving, and non-violence.

**Website:** <https://www.promundo.org.br/en>



**The good men project:**

An online platform and community that explores the changing roles of men in the 21st century. It features articles, discussions, and resources on fatherhood, relationships, ethics, and challenges traditional notions of masculinity.

**Website:** <https://goodmenproject.com/>



**Next gen men:**

A Canadian non-profit that works with boys and men to redefine masculinity, promote gender equality, and prevent gender-based violence. They offer educational programs and workshops for youth and educators.

**Website:** <https://nextgenmen.ca/>

## Glossary of key terms:

**For clear understanding and common language, the essential terms of this module are presented:**

**New masculinities:** A progressive and evolving understanding of what it means to be a man, moving beyond traditional, restrictive, and often harmful patriarchal norms. It emphasizes gender equality, empathy, emotional intelligence, and respect for all individuals.

**Hegemonic masculinity:** The dominant and idealized form of masculinity in a given society at a particular time, often associated with power, heterosexuality, physical strength, and emotional stoicism. It serves as a benchmark against which other masculinities are judged.

**Toxic masculinity:** Refers to the harmful aspects of traditional masculine norms that encourage dominance, aggression, emotional repression, and violence as signs of "manliness." It's not about being male, but about the harmful societal expectations placed on men.

**Emotional intelligence:** The ability to understand, use, and manage one's own emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges, and defuse conflict. A key component of new masculinities.

**Shared caregiving:** The equitable distribution of domestic chores and care responsibilities (e.g., childcare, elder care) between partners, challenging the traditional assignment of these roles primarily to women.

**Male privilege:** The unearned social, economic, and political advantages that men typically receive in patriarchal societies due to their gender, often without being aware of them.



**Allyship:** The practice of supporting and advocating for a marginalized group to which one does not belong. In the context of new masculinities, it refers to men actively supporting women and other gender identities in their fight for equality.

**Vulnerability:** The capacity to be open to emotional experiences, including fear, uncertainty, and emotional risk. New masculinities encourage men to embrace vulnerability as a strength, rather than suppressing it.

**Bystander intervention:** The act of safely and effectively challenging inappropriate or harmful behavior (e.g., sexist remarks, harassment) when one witnesses it, rather than remaining silent or inactive.

**Gender-transformative approaches:** Strategies and programs that actively challenge and change restrictive gender norms and power imbalances, aiming to achieve gender equality. New Masculinities are central to such approaches.

**Emotional labor:** The effort required to manage one's own emotions and often to manage the emotions of others, particularly in social and professional contexts. Traditionally, this burden falls disproportionately on women. New masculinities encourage men to take on an equitable share of emotional labor.

**Patriarchal bargain:** The strategies, often unconscious, by which individuals (including women and men) adapt to and even support patriarchal norms in exchange for certain benefits or to avoid negative consequences, even if those norms ultimately limit them.

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gender  
gap

**THANK  
YOU!**

This document was drafted with the participation of :

