



Healthy
Masculinity Forum

MEET UP HANDBOOK

A guide to starting a healthy masculinity
discussion in your community

Healthy Masculinity
means men caring for
themselves and others,
recognizing when others
need help, and
contributing to a more
respectful culture for all

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MASCULINITY

The man box is a term coined by organizations such as the Oakland Men's project and A Call to Men to describe rigid definitions of what it means to be a man. The box is a way to describe these attributes and the pressures men experience trying to live up to these unrealistic expectations of manhood.

Self-Sufficiency

Acting Tough

Desirable by
Women

Disrupting The Man Box

Heterosexuality
& Homophobia

Hypersexuality

Aggression &
Control

Ridged Masculine
Gender Roles

Promundo has reported on the harmful mental, emotional and physical effects as a result of men trying to live in the box. The goal of healthy masculinity is to move outside and break this box.

HEALTHY MASCULINITY

Healthy masculinity is men being emotionally available to nurture and support themselves and others; create instead of destroy; empathize and understand other's thoughts, feelings and experiences through listening and validation. Healthy masculinity also means recognizing our social, political and economic power and privilege in order to advocate for others. The definition of healthy masculinity is evolving through the voices of men and in solidarity with the voices of women and marginalized populations.

In recent years, and with the rise of the #MeToo movement, the term "Toxic Masculinity" has emerged to describe the ways that men are socialized to adopt a narrow and repressive type of manhood that is violent, sex-driven, and legitimized by status and aggression. It's through toxic masculinity that men cause physical, emotional and psychological harm to themselves, other men and women. As language has developed to describe toxic masculinity, we simultaneously are creating the language to define healthy masculinity.

The journey to healthy masculinity isn't linear and is an ongoing process- the community is here for every man, any and all male identifying . We support and encouraging all men, wherever they may be, in their journey towards healthy masculinity.

FROM FORUM TO MEET UP

The Healthy Masculinity Forum was created as a place for men to connect with other men in order to question, reflect and ask what it means to be a healthy man at any time and place. Our lives are increasing online and the forum serves as a dedicated community platform, however we aim to take these conversations offline and foster community in person. This guide is an essential tool for forum community members to bring the conversations and connections on the forum into their local communities by meeting up.

COMMUNITY INTENTIONS

The strength of the community comes from its members. The following is a list of our approaches to community participation:

- Call members in, instead of out
- Aspire for personal and community accountability
- Acknowledge mistakes are growth opportunities, not sources of shame
- Practice active listening
- Speak from personal experience using “I” statements
- Encourage growth by acknowledging that we are all in different stages of moving into healthy masculinity
- Support individual and community growth by understanding healthy masculinity requires ongoing work and maintenance
- Amplify all voices; ensure there is room for all to participate and contribute

GETTING STARTED

The first step towards launching your local healthy masculinity meeting is deciding on the following:

- 1 How often you'd like to meet and when- we recommend once a month
- 2 Group participant size- we find 15-20 max is best for intimate conversation
- 3 Meeting length - we recommend two hours
- 4 Location- you may find local free sites, such as the library or community centers or paid space, such as coworking meeting rooms
- 5 Outreach

OUTREACH

To promote your meeting to men outside of the forum consider the following free and paid options:

FREE

- Register your group with the Healthy Masculinity Forum
- Share to social media friends and groups
- Send press release to local media
- List group in local event listings

PAID

- Register your group with platforms such as MeetUp
- Social media paid/promoted ads
- Paid event listings
- Posters/flyers

FACILITATION

As a facilitator, your main goal is to amplify all voices by ensuring all feel empowered to speak, feel listened to, and are encouraged to reflect. This may be achieved through the following best facilitation practices:

Set the room/chairs up in a circle

- In the event announcements, encourage people to bring snacks to share
- Start the meeting by going around the circle with introductions and a prompt. A strong prompt is to ask what brought the person to the group today.
- After intros define healthy masculinity according to the HMF
- Share community participation intentions
- Decide on a topic of discussion
- Conversation moderation- strong moderation skills encourage participation
 - Be mindful of those speaking a lot or a little- encourage quiet voices to speak up and loud voices to soften
 - Repeat back what you're hearing from participants to signal listening as well as ensure what is being communicated is being understood correctly
 - Look for segues to introduce supporting conversation topics
 - Don't feed the trolls
 - Read the temperature in the room for energy, mood and engagement from individuals and group

BRANDING RESOURCES

The following include links to the Healthy Masculinity Forum branding materials, including logos, fonts and color palate:

- Header Font- Fjala (70pt)
- Body Font- Nunito/Avnir normal and light (20pt and 16pt)
- Logos
- Color Palate

DOWNLOAD

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