Healthy Masculinity

Rethinking Approaches to Engaging Men

- Jonathan Grove, jkgrove@gmail.com -
A Framework...

Created by Jonathan Grove, image by Bobbi Hughes, and drawn from the work of Dr Erin Casey, Rus Funk, Dr. Dorothy Edwards and Dr. Keith Edwards.

# Aspiring Ally Identity Development

(Partial Summary)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspiring Ally for:</th>
<th>Self-Interest</th>
<th>Altruism</th>
<th>Social Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation</strong></td>
<td>Selfish – for people I know and love</td>
<td>Other - I do this for them</td>
<td>Combined Selfishness and Altruism – we do this for us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ally to...</strong></td>
<td>A person</td>
<td>target group</td>
<td>an issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship to system</strong></td>
<td>Not interested in systems – just stopping the bad people</td>
<td>An exception from the system, yet ultimately perpetuates it</td>
<td>Seeks to escape, amend, and/or redefine the system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Privilege</strong></td>
<td>Doesn’t see privilege – but wants to maintain status quo</td>
<td>Feels guilty about privilege and tries to distance self from privilege</td>
<td>Sees illumination of privilege as liberating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Power</strong></td>
<td>I’m powerful - protective</td>
<td>Empower them – they need our help</td>
<td>Empower us all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Admitting Mistakes</strong></td>
<td>I don’t make mistakes – I’m good, and perpetrators are just bad people</td>
<td>Difficult– struggles with critique or own issues – highly defensive about behavior</td>
<td>Seeks critique and admits mistakes – has accepted own isms and seeks help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus of the work</strong></td>
<td>Perpetrators</td>
<td>Other members of the dominant group</td>
<td>My people – doesn’t separate self from other agents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The PLU Men’s Project

**Strategy:**
To provide low “threat,” high-impact opportunities for young men to start along a process designed to deepen their engagement in challenging oppression.

**How?:**
A series of activities that describe and demonstrate a positive maleness that increasingly require deeper participation.

**Why (does it work)?:**
Being a “man” has lots of negative associations and changing that story is empowering.
First Steps...

1. Assemble influential partners
2. Define terms and use them
3. Program to support the process
The PLU Men’s Project

Mission:
“To foster a cross-campus brotherhood of male-identified students and professionals, within which to develop and model the standard of responsible, engaged manhood to which we aspire.”

Men’s Project Goals:
1. **KNOW**
   Identify what positive masculinity looks like and language to describe it, which can then begin to replace the negative images of masculinity in the culture.

2. **SPEAK**
   Mentor and talk to other guys about what it means to challenge stereotypes and live a life of positive impact - creating community and a path for others to follow.

3. **SHOW**
   Put it into practice and demonstrate to the wider community what it looks like when men foster positive masculinities and support those around them.
Applying the Framework - Step 1

Focus: Men’s Project
1. Entry Point
2. Masculinity
3. Self-Interest

Strategy: Bridge (entry point & activism)
1. Interest and relate-ability
2. Easy, high reward, first step
3. Avoid Barriers
4. Clearly defined (active) positive role

Next Steps:
1. Learn
2. Connect

Goals: Know
- Attend Men’s Retreat
- Speakers/presentations
- Mentee-ship
- Oppression connections

Speak
- Healthy masculinity modeling activity
- Bystander education

Show
- Mother’s Day Brunch*
- Take Back the Night solidarity
- White Ribbon Campaign
Next Steps…

They only need to take one (more), so ensure they can!
A Framework... in 4 Steps

**Focus:** Men’s role
1. Violence Against Women & children
2. Connections to Masculinity
3. Further education and community

**Strategy:**
*What can I do?* (self-application)
1. Leverage chivalry
2. Clear next step & **Engage Barriers**
3. Educate about men’s role
4. Provide community of support

**Next Steps:**
Own it and reach out

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**Goals:**

**Know**
- Men’s Retreat (**Participant**)
- Speakers, programs, & class presentations
- Mentee-ship & introduction to student men’s group

**Speak**
- Ultimate/Mentorship
- Tabling
- Bystander training
- Engaging with friends

**Show**
- Mother’s Day Brunch
- White Ribbon Campaign
- Take Back the Night
- Fundraise for anti-violence and/or equity organization
A Framework... in 4 Steps

Focus: Men’s accountability
1. Connections to gender roles
2. Further education and community
3. Teaching others as a student

Strategy: Connecting dots (broader social justice)
1. Share and speak to others’ Barriers
2. Educate about intersections
3. Build broad community of support

Next Steps: Own it and lead

Goals: Know
- Men’s Retreat (Recruit & plan)
- Program & presentation requests and organizing
- Mentoring & Men’s group
- Understanding of connections between systemic oppressions

Goals: Speak
- Mentorship
- Tabling and Recruiting
- Bystander and peer education
- Intersectional program ie Tunnel of Oppression

Goals: Show
- Mother’s Day Brunch
- Organize smaller events ie: White Ribbon Campaign and Take Back the Night solidarity
A Framework... in 4 Steps

**Focus:** Learning to lead
1. Provide education and community
2. Challenge self to be accountable
3. Build coalitions

**Strategy:**
*Connecting dots* (broader social justice)
1. Educate about systems and strategy
2. Facilitate community of support
3. Share journey and knowledge widely

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**Goals:**

**Know**
- Men’s Retreat *(Concept & plan)*
- Program concept & plan
- Mentorship partner
- Involvement with other social justice initiatives; ie racial, economic, & gender justice, first generation and ability access

**Speak**
- Ultimate/Mentorship leader
- Tabling organizer
- Bystander education recruiter
- Vocal about intersections systems of domination
- Describe role of *aspiring* ally

**Show**
- Brunch, White Ribbon organizer
- Men’s group leadership
- Peer Educator
- Lasting impact on community (local & region) ie: Host community event or program, or share work at conference
Beyond the Gender Binary

Start at how patriarchy affects people.

- Move beyond female = victim & male = perpetrator

- Those outside the binary are further marginalized beyond the "lesser" status of female.

- A feminism that prioritizes power over oppression is bankrupt. So we must learn from - and center - marginalized voices.

- We all pay a price and have a vested interest in undoing the system.
Tip 1: Rethink & Re-center

Start at how patriarchy affects people.

- Move beyond female = victim & male = perpetrator

- Those outside the binary are further marginalized beyond the "lesser" status of female.

- A feminism that prioritizes power over oppression is bankrupt. We must learn from & center marginalized voices.

- We all pay a price and have a vested interest in equity

- Low risk, high reward
Tip 2: Be intersectional

- To fix problems, you have to see it in full.

- Oppressor v/s oppressed is dangerously situational

- A feminism that prioritizes power over oppression is bankrupt.
  - Learn from, and center the most marginalized voices.

- Oppressions don’t take turns; there is no checklist.
Resources

• Men’s Project model
  ○ https://tacoma-washington.academia.edu/JonathanGrove

• Accountability
  ○ *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love*, bell hooks

• Intersectionality
  ○ “Report from the Bahamas,” June Jordan

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