



DEFINING MASCULINITY SERIES

The Power of Vulnerability

Purpose: This session will focus on becoming more vulnerable and open to those around us. These discussions are meant to be facilitated with teenage boys and young men, although anyone can use this guide to explore these topics together.

What you'll need:

Pen and paper

Laptop/Internet access

RESILIENCE

ADVOCATES FOR ENDING VIOLENCE™

GUIDED DISCUSSION ON THE POWER OF VULNERABILITY

Check In

Like the last conversation, ease into the conversation with an engaging check-in. Talk about what has made them happy recently, what has been challenging, etc.

What does it mean to be vulnerable?

Watch "The Mask You Live In*" video and discuss.

Video link: https://youtu.be/PaIna_k8Ne0

Questions to consider:

Have you ever had to prove your manliness before? What happened? What were you feeling during that situation?

Like in the video, when things get tough, does it feel like you must figure it out yourself, or do you feel you can ask for help?

Have you ever felt alone, isolated, or like an outcast?

Would you feel ashamed or humiliated if you didn't live into the "Man Box" or what it means to be a "real man" in society's eyes?

Have you ever not said or done something that makes you happy because it doesn't fit into the "Man Box"?

Like in the video, do you ever feel like you wear a mask of masculinity to cover who you truly are?

What we allow others to see

On a piece of paper, have everyone individually label one side "What I allow others to see" and the other side "What I don't allow others to see". Next, take some time to fill out both sides. Have participants think critically about what they allow others to see and what they hide.

Invite participants to read what they wrote aloud if they want.

Explain that they just created their own masks. What they show to the world is a mask that doesn't allow people to actually see the real person underneath. A mask doesn't allow people to help you through your struggles and can make you feel isolated and alone. A mask that confines them into the "Man Box" does not allow them to live into their true authentic selves.

Discuss how we can become more vulnerable in our everyday lives. Discuss examples of how we can realistically stop wearing a mask and live into your healthier more authentic selves.

Additional Resources:

A Call To Men: The Next Generation of Manhood Video (About 3 Minutes)

<https://youtu.be/kicgMlqBh24>

A Call To Men Healthy Manhood Blogs

<https://www.acalltomen.org/news>

*What We Allow Others To See is a lesson adapted from Ashanti Branch in the film The Mask You Live In. Learn more here:

<http://therepresentationproject.org/film/the-mask-you-live-in-film/>

For more information on
healthy masculinity, e-mail us at
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