



Workshop: Men as Equitable Partners

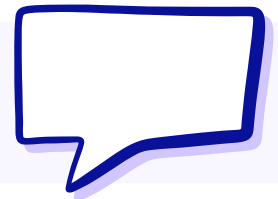
I SAMPLE LEARNING OBJECTIVES



LEARNERS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- ▶ Identify categories and examples of equity and inequity in their relationships.
- ▶ Demonstrate stronger active listening and communications skills.
- ▶ List personal areas of growth around healthy and equitable attitudes and behaviors.
- ▶ Prioritize their partner's feelings, opinions, and experiences in conflict resolution.

II SAMPLE INTRODUCTION



“The way we define the role of men has changed a lot in the last 20 or 30 years. The messages that men get can be confusing: Be a provider, but not controlling; be caring, but not too “soft.” Today’s conversation isn’t about saying there is only one way to have a healthy relationship or one “right” role for men to have. Rather, today is about acknowledging that in every relationship, you and your partners deserve to be treated with respect and fairness. So, let’s get into what role we have as men in creating this kind of foundation in our relationships.”



III SAMPLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



- ▶ What are examples of strong, healthy, or balanced relationships in your life (from our personal lives or the world)? What makes them strong?
- ▶ What are examples of insecure, unhealthy, or unbalanced relationships in your life (from our personal lives or the world)? What makes them unbalanced?
- ▶ Do you think the traditional roles for men and women in relationships are fair? Why or why not?
- ▶ Have you heard the term “emotional labor?” What does it mean to you?
- ▶ What challenges do you have with being a more equal and compassionate partner?
- ▶ What areas of your relationships can you grow in so that your relationships are healthier and stronger (such as communication or regulating emotions)?
- ▶ What are ways that you can support your friends to be the most caring and fair partners possible?



IV SAMPLE TALKING POINTS



- ▶ Strong and balanced relationships include:
 - Honoring and appreciating each other's differences by ensuring both partners feel valued, heard, and empowered.
 - Communicating through differences and conflict with active listening.
 - Checking in about balance and participation in household, childcare, financial, and emotional duties.
 - Self-reflection and taking personal responsibility to always be growing as a person and partner.

- ▶ Unhealthy and unbalanced relationships include:
 - Minimizing and belittling someone's experiences and feelings.
 - Prioritizing one person's wellbeing over another's.
 - Avoiding or escalating conflict. Listening to respond, rather than understand.
 - Deflecting one's responsibilities or the hurtful impacts of one's actions.
 - Shutting someone out of decisions, including finances.

- ▶ None of us are perfect. Everyone has learned unhealthy habits—from family, friends, and media. Our responsibility is to do our best to identify how we need to grow and practice the skills needed to be in caring, balanced relationships.



IV SAMPLE TALKING POINTS (CONT.)



- ▶ There is nothing wrong with roles in relationships so long as they are thoughtful and responsibilities are not unbalanced.
- ▶ However, rigid gender roles hurt everyone. For example, for men to always be the “head of the household” places an unrealistic expectation on men that hurts their physical and mental health while hurting the economic independence of women.
- ▶ Some statistics that demonstrate inequities and their impacts in relationships include:
 - Men average [49 minutes](#) more leisure time per day than women due to women completing more chores and childcare than men.
 - Despite disparities in household duties, a [majority of men](#) report that they perform equal or more household duties.
 - Gender inequities and traditional gender roles are correlated with lower [sexual desire](#) of women partnered with men, whereas gender equality [improves marital happiness](#).
- ▶ It is important for men to be aware of what we are not impacted by. The toll of sexism on women often leads to an “invisible” emotional burden.



V SAMPLE ACTIVITIES



**SNOWFLAKE
ACTIVITY ON
COMMUNICATION**

([Click here for full instructions](#)) Give each participant one sheet of paper. Have one close their eyes and the other give 4-5 instructions such as “fold your paper in half” or “tear off the top right corner.” Pause between each instruction. Ask everyone to open their eyes. Discuss the experience as a whole group and emphasize different communication and listening skills.

Sample Discussion Questions:

- Why don't all the snowflakes look the same?
- What can we learn about communication and listening from this exercise?
- How can communication break down in our relationships?



**FILM SCREENING &
DISCUSSION: “THE MASK
YOU LIVE IN”**

A foundational documentary in the field of masculinities, [The Mask You Live In](#) “follows boys and young men as they struggle to stay true to themselves while negotiating America’s narrow definition of masculinity.” The film covers the fundamentals of how masculinity is created in the United States and through experts across numerous fields, illustrates how to raise a healthier generation of boys and men.



VI WORKSHOP RESOURCE LIBRARY



- **Workshops:** The Power of Active Listening - StoryCorps
- **Video:** Gender Roles within a Marriage | Couch Conversations | S1E1 - Black Love
- **Video:** Switch Gender Roles and See What Happens | Eleonore Pourriat | TEDxAUBG
- **Video:** Overlooked: Economic Abuse among Teen Dating Partners - Futures Without Violence
- **Article:** 4 Signs Your Relationships is Based on Inequality - One Love Foundation
- **Article:** ‘Gender inequities are important’: why couples fall out of love - The Guardian
- **Research:** The Cognitive Dimension of Household Labor
- **Organization:** One Love Foundation
- **Book & Worksheets:** Raising Feminist Boys
- **Book:** Couples, Gender, and Power