

Manhood

1 - 3 December 2006

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Do you want to make the most of your life?

Could you be a better man?

Men and women are clearly different. They have different values, ways of being, priorities and methods of communicating. John Gray has risen to fame teaching couples to understand and respect the differences. David Deida's work has grown in popularity and he puts it this way: The masculine essence is driven by a sense of mission whilst the feminine essence is seeking the flow of love through family or intimate relationships. Whilst we each have mix of masculine and feminine essences, men tend to express more strongly the masculine essence and women tend to express more strongly the feminine essence.

The three consequences of this are:

1. Men will not be truly happy trying to fulfil a woman's values and expectations (this is largely in regard to men sacrificing their mission for a relationship).
2. No woman will ever fully understand a man's dilemmas (and visa versa).
3. No man is going to fully understand his own nature through the company of women. (A man needs to experience the mirroring of his own masculine essence to know himself as a man [the same is true for woman and feminine essence]).

It seems to me that many men's issues are paradoxical. When it comes to the really important things in our lives men often desire one thing but find they are heading in another direction.

THE CONTRADICTIONS OF A MODERN MAN'S DILEMMA Do You Relate?

- ◇ Are your days are full, but you feel empty inside?
- ◇ Do you have everything going for you, but too little coming together?
- ◇ Do you try and squeeze in lots of fun, but you're not really happy?
- ◇ Are you in a race and not sure where the finish line is?
- ◇ Do you want peace, but find yourself being moody?
- ◇ Do you want a fulfilling sex life, but find yourself being rejected?
- ◇ Do you have a good job, married, healthy kids and a home, but something is still missing?

- ◇ Do you feel trapped and want to break out, but don't know how?
- ◇ Do you work hard, but your wife is not happy?
- ◇ Do you feel like life is going quickly, but your not really living it?
- ◇ Are you a friendly man, but don't have many male friends you are totally honest with?
- ◇ In spite of the many work colleagues, family and friends, do you have a sense of loneliness?
- ◇ Do you feel like there is something holding you back?
- ◇ Are your personal relationships out of whack and you aren't sure why ... but you know you must DO something?

MASCULINE SHAME: The Male Wound, the Father Wound.

Today the most common wound boys (and men) suffer from is shame associated with their masculinity. Shame is a sense of being bad, wrong or inadequate. This masculine shame is mainly created through a lack of intimacy with the nature of masculinity. It is experienced most commonly as emptiness, hollowness, numbness, detachment or frozenness. It is expressed either as superhuman optimism or as defeatist pessimism.

Masculine Shame often occurs during childhood and is predominantly caused by two factors: The absence of healthy male role modelling and the absence of the acknowledgement of the passage to manhood. Masculine shame manifests as:

1. **The unacknowledged man syndrome: weak sense of self**
2. **The superman syndrome: unrealistic expectations**
3. **The macho man image: out of touch with feelings**

MASCULINE SHAME CHECK LIST

Do you relate to the following?

THE UNACKNOWLEDGED MAN SYNDROME

- ◇ A lack of appreciation of the good qualities of manhood leading to poor self worth.

- ◇ A lack of understanding of the differences between men and women leading to unrealistic expectations feelings of inadequacy and frustration.
- ◇ Not feeling strong enough inside to stand up and claim the right to be here, leading to reluctance to take responsibility and a tendency towards lethargy.
- ◇ Tendency to base sense of self-worth on what others (especially women) think leading to very insecure relationships where one is likely to over compromise, have a tendency to please rather than be totally honest.
- ◇ Compulsive competition leading to loneliness and isolation.

THE SUPERMAN SYNDROME: UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

- ◇ Super human expectations to attempt to allay the feeling of shame (the feeling of inadequacy or the fear of being a failure).
- ◇ Inability to acknowledge normal human limits leading to stress and illness due to overworking and feelings of inadequacy and isolation.
- ◇ Unrealistic expectations on self, leading to high blood pressure and a perpetual sense of not being good enough, leading to the inability to relax, have fun, play and enjoy life.
- ◇ Inability to accept failures and mistakes and move on leading to lack of self-confidence and collapsing into hopelessness and depression.
- ◇ Inability to share about troubles with other males leading to isolation and suicidal thoughts.
- ◇ Inability to be present with other males going through life traumas.
- ◇ Being out of touch with feelings leading to difficulty in communication.
- ◇ Difficulty in expressing needs and asking for assistance directly because of not wanting to appear weak.
- ◇ Hiding shame, insecurities and doubts creates a fear of being found out which creates anxiety, more shame and isolation.
- ◇ Physical pain due to the suppression of emotion and driving oneself beyond healthy limits.

