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What does it mean, to be a man?

Narrator:

What does it mean to be a man in the twenty-first century?

Perhaps traditional ideas about what makes a 'real' man still apply, ideas that associate masculinity with physical and emotional strength. After all, tough guys never need to ask for help or show their feelings, or so they say.

But if those traditional ideas are no longer relevant – what new ideals of masculinity have replaced them, and how are these ideas formed?

Beliefs about what makes a 'real' man will differ from person to person, depending on how they were raised, and will be influenced by different aspects of our upbringing, including our social class, nationality and culture.

The term Toxic Masculinity is frequently used in the media, but what does it really mean? Does it indicate that some ways of being a man are actually harmful to others – and especially women?

With such high suicide rates for men compared to women, it could be that the expectations imposed on men, such as the taboo and stigma around displaying emotions or seeking help, are partly to blame. And it may suggest that some kinds of masculinity are harmful to men themselves.

And finally - in this age of gender equality, do we even need a separate definition of what it means to be a man?

To understand the many nuances of this topic, explore this interactive quiz to learn more about the changing and diverse ideas of what it means to be a man.