



CHECK IN ROUND

THIS IS ALL YOU NEED TO GET STARTED

You can use this simple structure to hit the ground running with your own men's group.

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WHAT IS A MEN'S GROUP?

A men's group is a group of men, sitting in a circle, hanging out and getting real.

We share our experiences, thoughts and feelings as we learn to respectfully challenge one another to be better, more authentic men.

We are accepting, accountable and we want more out of life.

We explore whatever the men present bring into the room.

We acknowledge who we've been and we test-drive who we want to be, taking the best of ourselves out into the world.

START YOUR OWN MEN'S GROUP:

1. Get together with at least one other man.
2. Amend and agree to the Ground Rules to suit your own needs, so everyone in your group can commit to them.
3. Take it in turns to answer the questions in the Check-in Round (below) and the topics for your men's group will soon emerge.
4. Explore common themes, or discuss whatever you, or anyone else is sitting on.
5. Listen, learn, laugh, live a better life and share the goodness as you all grow.

People use our MenSpeak men's groups structure as a therapeutic tool, a communication opener, a drinking game and everything in-between. Simply amend it to suit your own needs and support the men in your community to **"MAN-UP ...and talk about it!"** Pass it on...

CHECK-IN ROUND

- 1 "My name is..."
- 2 "I feel..."
- 3 "What I want from this group is..."
- 4 "My age is... / My Chinese sign is... / My Western sign is..."
- 5 "My sexuality is..."
- 6 "I am single / with a partner / married / divorced / a widower / a player / on the market / a father / confused / other..."
- 7 "The last time I cried is..."
- 8 "The last time I ejaculated was..."
- 9 "My greatest fear, right now is..."
- 10 "I hate..."
- 11 "I love..."
- 12 "I am..."

Want to know the thinking behind these questions?
Go to: www.themanwhisperer.co.uk/about-the-questions

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GROUND RULES

1: CONFIDENTIALITY

What is said in our men's group stays in our men's group. Phrases like "I saw this on TV..." or "My friend said..." are fine, as long as no one can be identified. This is often referred to as the Chatham House Rule, and we take this very seriously.

2: RESPECT

Respect yourself, everyone's truth, boundaries, feelings, perspectives and stories beyond judgement and projection. **Respect the space when others talk, and listen.** Respect of other people naturally follows on from self-respect.

3: TAKE PART

Authentically take part in the group with words and in silence. **Better to say "pass", for whatever reason,** than to resort to banter, put up a smokescreen, perform, or use any other tactics to hide from what you might be feeling, thinking, or whatever might be triggered inside you. We practice authentic presence and connection.

4: BE HONEST

Be honest with yourself and the group. That way you can **own your feelings and work them through**, rather than quietly internalise, suppress, then dump them on someone else down the line. We get to know our shadows, we consciously break limiting patterns and we set ourselves free. What a relief!

5: OWN WHAT YOU SAY

Use "I" statements, rather than "you", "one" or "we". What you say may not be true for any other man. Depersonalising avoids ownership of feelings, experiences, opinions and issues, making change an uphill battle. **The word "we" seeks validation and acceptance of other men.** "My" puts your truth before your need to fit in.

6: STAY IN THE PRESENT

Be clear about **what is true right now and what was true of the past.** Words like "always" and "keeps on" limit present opportunities to past outcomes, whereas "sometimes" and "used to" make space for change.

7: DON'T BULLY

This is a safe, inclusive space. Neither aggressive, nor passive-aggressive behaviour is an option here. **No one's safety will be compromised.** Men can learn how to better question, challenge and disagree when their buttons are pressed. Be aware of when you feel vulnerable and your defences come up.

8: DON'T DRAMATISE

When someone speaks, give him space with his story without commenting on how good, bad or ugly you think it is. **Hijacking, or making a drama of another man's story might limit him.** Let him name it, have it witnessed, learn from it then let it go.

9: EXPERIMENT WITH WHO YOU ARE

If you've survived life by clowning about, appearing aggressive or passive, this is a space where you can experiment with hidden parts of yourself and feel what fits. **Test-drive the more authentic you and take him out into the world,** beyond old playground or professional personalities.

10: NAME WHAT'S TRIGGERED

One man's story is another man's emotional reaction, so best name the issue triggered, talk it through and let it pass. Carrying it home and allowing it to get a hold of you feeds it and keeps it alive. **We name it; we don't shame it or blame it. Then we live beyond it.**

11: LIVE BEYOND THE RULES

Playing small to be 'safe' or 'liked' may keep you small and stuck. **Exploring the edge of your comfort zone may bring challenges and help you grow.** Live beyond your fears, fantasies and old restrictions to express a more authentic you in daily life.

12: ALWAYS TALK ABOUT MENSPEAK MEN'S GROUPS

This is not *Fight Club*. The first rule of MenSpeak is you tell everyone about MenSpeak. **Tools, techniques and tips picked up in a group are best shared far and wide.** The more men we support, the better our world.