

HeForShe Journal

Your four-week diary
on privileges, stereotypes, and equality

The document can be accessed at heforshe.de

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HeForShe Journal

What is it about?

We are glad you decided to fill out the HeForShe Journal! It's a brave step and we hope the experience will enrich you personally.

The HeForShe Journal is intended to help you reflect on gender stereotypes, sexism in everyday life, your own behavior and your ideas about gender equality and masculinities. You will find some definitions of the terminology used in this journal at the end.

You will have the opportunity to answer questions three times a week, over the duration of one month. The questions are to guide self-reflection, you don't have to show the answers to anyone.

If you realize during the process that you need to talk to someone, please do look for counselling or support services for boys and men in your country.

If you would like to get involved further, please visit www.heforshe.org.

What three characteristics do you think strangers attribute to you (based on your appearance/gender)?

What would you like to try out but are unsure how your environment will react?

When was the last time you had a conversation with a man about sexism?
How did the conversation go?

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Week 1
Day 2/3

How do you define care work?

How was care work divided up in your childhood and how do you handle it today?

How do you help people feel comfortable around you?

What books by women have you read recently?

What films or series have you seen recently in which women play an active role? How were they portrayed?

How diverse are the perspectives you engage with? For example, on social media?

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Week 2
Day 1/3

In which situation did you become particularly aware of discrimination against women?

Where have you encountered the topic of gender equality recently and what has it made you think about?

Where have you noticed a clichéd portrayal of gender roles lately? What about it has bothered you?

Masculinity for me is ... (3 words)

Which person has shaped your image of what manhood is and how would you describe this person?

Which representation of masculinities struck you positively lately?

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Week 2
Day 3/3

When was the last time you talked to someone about your feelings? Is that easy for you?

Are you a person of trust for someone else? Is the relationship mutual?

What form of care work have you taken on today without being asked?

What is good for you, but you do not do it often enough?

What have you done today for your well-being?

Do you pay attention to a balanced lifestyle?

Describe your behavior in the last confrontation with another person in three words.

Looking back, what would you like to do differently?

In which situations do you often lose your self-control? Why?

When was the last time you thanked someone for his or her work?

Do you give compliments that are not related to appearance? What do you often notice positively about others?

How do you respond to criticism of your behavior?

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Week 4
Day 1/3

Have you rid yourself from any gender roles? If so, which ones?

Are there situations in which you feel the need to prove that you are "a man"? If so, what are they?

What role does alcohol play in your personal environment?

When was the last time you went to the doctor for a preventive health-screening?

When was the last time you cried and why?
How did you feel afterwards?

With whom would you like to check in today?

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Week 4
Day 3/3

What have you learned about yourself throughout the last few weeks?

Which topic was most difficult for you to answer?

What resolution do you want to make?

Explanation of terms

Gender

„Gender“ means the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. „Gender norms“ are ideas about how men and women should be and act, within a range that is defined by a particular society, culture or community at that point in time. We internalize and learn these “rules” early in life. This gender socialization begins early and continues throughout the life-cycle. „Gender identity“ refers to a person’s innate, deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the person’s physiology or designated sex at birth. Non-binary people have identities that are outside the gender binary, they might for example identify with more than one gender, no gender, or have a fluid gender identity.

Masculinities

The term refers to the social meaning of manhood, which is constructed and defined socially, historically and politically, rather than being biologically driven. There are many socially constructed definitions for being a man and these can change over time and from place to place. The term relates to perceived notions and ideals about how men should or are expected to behave in each setting. These often result in pressure to fulfill these roles. Unhealthy behavioral patterns can develop from this pressure, which is often called toxic masculinity.

If you are interested in this topic, we recommend the work of Raewyn Connell.

Care Work and Mental Load

Care work refers to unpaid and paid activities of caring and looking after. This includes activities that are interpersonal (e.g. the care for, upbringing and supervision of children or the home care of family members) but also household tasks (e.g. cooking, cleaning and repairs) or in the social environment (e.g. getting gifts, organizing meetings, being a person of trust). The responsibility and burden of organizing and delegating these tasks is called mental load. These concepts are helpful to illustrate how unevenly unpaid care work is distributed between men and women.

This unequal distribution influences the remaining use of time - among other things for voluntary work, further education and paid work - and therefore also has negative consequences for women's financial and professional situation.

[This comic](#) by French comic artist Emma perfectly illustrates the term mental load.

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Congratulations for completing the journal!

The HeForShe Journal is a good starting point for questioning one's own patterns of behavior and thinking. Of course, change does not happen overnight. It is a continuous process of (un-)learning, which isn't spared from potential setbacks. This makes it all the more important to keep going.

You should be proud of yourself for taking this step! So we suggest that you take it easy today and make time for self-care. Take a look at what you answered to the question "What is good for you, but you do it too rarely?" and see if you can fit some of it into your day today.

We hope it was an enriching experience for you! If you have any feedback, please feel free to contact us at HeForShe@unwomen.org.