



The MISSION of GRE, Inc. is to improve the health and quality of life and relationships for men and their loved ones.

The Man Rules®

Are you beginning to see how the Man Rules show up in your life? Do you see the pressure you feel at times to be a certain kind of man? Think about your day-to-day experiences and look at how many Man Rules you follow. Think about how you may judge yourself as less than manly if you don't follow them. For instance, there is the Rule that real men do not ask for help. This rule contributes to many men remaining lost – in numerous ways - for much longer than necessary, among other problems. You may be pretty good at asking for help, but how do you feel when you do it? It's still hard for me to ask for help, and when I do it is frequently accompanied by some sort of self-criticism. If you are anything like me, every time you ask for help it is a struggle just to get to that point, and once there you probably have at least a twinge of shame around feeling or appearing weak or incompetent or stupid. But with time and practice, it gets better.

Now, I would like you to take some time to write every Man Rule you can think of. Before you do the exercise I want to reiterate this one point: I am not suggesting that the Man Rules are good or bad. They simply are. *You* especially are not good or bad despite what others have said, what you tell yourself, or even some



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of your worst behavior. You are much more than the sum of your worst behavior. You certainly are *not* your behavior. Men are not good or bad either. Even though we can exhibit some pretty terrible behaviors the vast majority of us are not bad men. Some of us have been deeply wounded and out of those wounds can do some pretty terrible things to other human beings. Yet, some of the greatest gifts we have to give this world come out of our deepest wounds. That is why some people refer to them as “sacred wounds”.

Let’s do the list. This is the beginning of truly seeing The Water.

Your Man Rules

In the spaces provided below write down all of the Man Rules you can think of. If you get stuck remember these tips:

- Think about the Rules you learned from your parents/caregivers, school, neighborhood/community, the media, and workplace. If you are having trouble, think of them in the following areas: **Self, Relationships, Activities, Power, Sexuality, and Spirituality.**
- Think of Rules that reinforce a healthier idea of masculinity. While the majority of the Rules are neither inherently bad nor good, how they tend to be enforced can be rigid and restricting. However, there are Man Rules like integrity and self-discipline that seem to be inherently healthy traits.



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