

Through this social media campaign Maitri is starting a dialogue with men in our community to identify and eliminate the root cause of gender based violence and partner violence.

Thank you Nikhil for joining us in this meaningful discussion.

1. How do you feel popular media perpetuates and glorifies toxic partner relationship dynamics; can you think of any examples?

The big one right now is Andrew Tate. He glorifies toxic masculinity and openly degrades women, which normalizes violence. But yeah, toxic masculinity is displayed everywhere; like in the movie Joker, Fight Club, and Taxi Driver. Maybe these movies don't intend to glorify toxic relationships and violence but they can be construed that way and are generally associated with it in the public's consciousness.

2. Define toxic masculinity, and does it impact intimate partner relationships?

It probably influences most relationships, even friendships and family relationships. Toxic masculinity that is, I'm sure there's a bunch of symptoms of this everywhere in how we approach relationships. I think the root is this egotistical masculine belief in yourself to the point where it's unhealthy and dangerous for others. It influences relationships because it can lead to abusive actions, not just physical, but emotionally manipulative behaviors as well.

3. How do you think gender power dynamics impact intimate partner violence?

Gender power dynamics are largely influenced by societal values and norms; gender dynamics in Saudi Arabia are very different than in the US and that can lead to all sorts of problems. This is not to say that things are perfect in the US, far from it. Not just physical abuse but emotional and other types. Well okay, I think anytime there's a large power disparity it creates the probability for violence and not always necessarily physical.

4. What do you think defines a healthy partner/dating relationship?

In the context of... probably trust, but also, a mutual respect for one another, putting each other on equal footing. In America we're getting there, but I feel like in India the gender power dynamics are not always equal. When the two people aren't viewed as equal and that can create problems due to this disparity.

5. What is men's responsibility in building healthy partner relationships?

Well especially... usually, but not always, the power dynamic is mostly geared towards the man. The onus is on them to equalize the power dynamics in order to create healthier relationship dynamics.

About the author: Nikhil Rowland is an economics major at Oregon State University. He enjoys rock climbing and drinking chai.