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To me, toxic masculinity is the twisted idea of what a modern man should be. It is the perpetuation of an outdated gender norm that only allows men to act in one way: macho. Over the years, these gender norms have slowly started to evolve, but toxic masculinity is still a large issue in our society. In South Asian culture, emotions can be a tricky subject to address. There is an expectation that the man in a relationship is emotionless and always in charge. They are never at fault and are always the level-headed partners who are trying to "tame" a woman's emotions. Entertainment and media do not do much to help

us move past this.

Media has continued to show us what a man should really be, and how that relates to the role of a woman in society. If we look at popular television and South Asian "dramas", you can find many examples of this. An angry husband grabbing and yelling at a hysterical wife crying because she's done something so unforgivable and horrible. Anyone who has walked in on their parents watching a drama can probably see this exact scene in their head. What happens after? The woman apologizes to the man for being hysterical, and she probably goes back to making roti's in the kitchen or something. This is normal. It doesn't just happen on TV; it happens in households around the world.

What can be done to combat toxic masculinity? Education and awareness seem to be the two most important things. Similar to race relations in America, and all over the world, discrimination comes from ignorance. A lack of understanding about feminist ideas and human rights causes us to continue to move backwards. Ask any man what they would do to someone if they put their hands on their mothers or sisters. 9 times out of 10 you'll hear a threat of violence. Some of these same men are turning around and emotionally, verbally, and physically abusing their partners and daughters. Toxic masculinity is not only toxic masculinity when it's done to someone you care about; it is an issue that starts from the inside-out.

As a man, it is important to check on your own mental health and how that is effected by certain stimuli. Are we taking the time to understand the struggle of women in society? Or are we too busy comparing ourselves to the alpha male we see in movies and television? We are always told to be the emotionless providers that will lead our households and never crack under any pressure. In reality, we crack every single day, but bury things so deep down that we take it out on the ones who care about us the most. If you've taken the time to establish a healthy, trusting, and open relationship, you'll share each success and failure with someone who has the same vision in mind. There is no reason to hide any emotions, because you are experiencing life together, equally. Doesn't that sound so freeing?