



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. [#EngagingMenAndBoys](#)

Thank you Tarun Devesetti for joining us in this meaningful discussion.

Q. Tell us your name and a little bit about you.

A: My name is Tarun Devesetti. I recently graduated from UC Davis with a major in Computational Cognitive Science and am currently a DevOps engineer at Experian. I am interested in how we can learn to bolster ourselves and each other with the help of friendly technology like Baymax from Big Hero 6!

Q. Many men think that domestic violence is a women's issue. Do you think that too? If not, then why?

A: I think that domestic violence, while the majority of its impact lies within physical abuse, spans between both genders in the form of mental or psychological abuse. I believe that there are a lot of subtler domestic violence issues that stem from placing too many unrealistic expectations on your partner, which can happen to both genders. While it may be more common for women to face domestic violence and abuse including physical violence, I believe that it is not fully black and white in that sense. Mental aggression is another major issue that both genders face which may also lead to physical violence.

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

A: For as long as we can remember, it is clear that society suggests that since men are physically stronger than women, and women face issues that men don't, men should be the alpha in a relationship. Traditional societal norms prescribe that women should do tasks like household chores and taking care of the kids, labeled as "simple work" while men do the "harder" tasks like being breadwinners, etc. In addition, in certain cultures, women have no say in what they want since if they speak out for themselves, not only their family but their entire community will look down upon them. These practices implemented by the status quo make it extremely hard for women to stand up for themselves and take on tasks/desires that they want to accomplish. Society allows men to do whatever they want and permits them to control their partner which leads to violence and abuse. Society sees men as superior, ignoring the penultimate amount of hardships that women go through and devaluing the efforts they put in by undermining the tasks that society forced them to do in the first place.

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

A: Men should make sure to understand what women (their partners) go through, first and foremost. If a man sees his partner is facing a problem he shouldn't think it's "trivial" and attribute it to her partner being "sensitive" or "childish", he should try to understand why his partner is acting in a certain way. Men should acknowledge what women do for their partners. I think that a lot of men, especially ones who don't have a sister or a woman living with them, fail to see the issues that women face every day. Men should try to understand women's perspectives and work with them as allies to resolve issues and conflicts.