

Takeaways for those who lead adults

Supervisors, HR leaders, faith leaders, military, community organizers



Your role in the ecosystem

Professional and community environments become a long-running classroom for many men, and supervisors/leaders shape the norms around stress, respect, honesty, and repair.



WAYS TO EXPAND POSSIBILITY

Normalize small resets. Model repair out loud. Be the one who goes first. Treat belonging as essential infrastructure, not an optional benefit.

WHAT MEN LEARN HERE

Who gets to ask for help, how mistakes are treated, whether composure is required, and whether emotional safety is possible in shared spaces.

PLACES TO LOOK FOR INSPIRATION

Trauma-informed practice, A Call to Men's work with companies and organizations, and faith and community traditions that hold accountability with dignity.

The State of Masculinity 2025 is a project of A Call to Men. 25 years of violence prevention, healthy manhood, and culture change. Get the report and free resources at acalltomen.org.

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A Call to Action

Two invitations from the report to try at home

A CALL TO CONSIDER

REFLECT ON THE PROMPTS BELOW AS THEY RELATE TO YOUR EXPERIENCE OR CONTEXT.

- Where do the men in my community go to experience belonging that doesn't depend on performance, productivity, or emotional restraint? What happens to that belonging when they transition out of school, sports, work, or service?
- When men in my community express loneliness or struggle, do we treat it as a personal problem to manage, or as a signal that connection infrastructure may be missing?
- What relational skills are we assuming men already have: initiating friendship, naming needs, repairing after conflict, staying present through discomfort? Where are those skills actually being taught and practiced?
- Who is currently carrying the work of emotional connection and repair in our community? How are we supporting them rather than relying on their unpaid labor?
- Where could I help create or protect a space where men are allowed to be honest, uncertain, and in the process of learning how to connect?

MAP YOUR CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE

- **List the containers.** Where do the men in your community already gather: services, teams, shifts, meals, recovery rooms, barbershops, group chats, mentor circles?
- **Name the transitions.** Which of those containers fall away at a predictable point: retirement, graduation, divorce, injury, deployment, reentry, parenthood, relocation?
- **Find the gap.** Where do men in your community go when the container disappears? Where is that handoff missing?
- **Build one bridge.** Pick one transition and design one small bridge: a phone call, a check-in ritual, an open door, a buddy system, a returning-members table.

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From the Field: What We Heard In Our Interviews



"The first time I saw another man cry, I felt empowered to be brave."

— Teacher, 30

"You don't realize how much the locker room holds you up until it's gone. Suddenly, you're building connections from scratch."

— Retired NFL Player

"I have people I talk to, but nobody I'm honest with."

— College student, 21

"If we make care a practice, imagine how many people we'll catch before they fall."

— Therapist



"I've seen tough men soften instantly when someone gives them permission."

— Veteran, late 30s



"The economy... the grind... it shapes what people can offer at home, even when the love is there."

— Lawyer, D.C.

"Leadership sets the emotional temperature of the whole place."

— Tech professional, early 30s

"I had a single father growing up, but I was always able to be affectionate with my father. I lived in a very privileged and safe household with my dad."

— Data Analyst, TX



"If I want [my children] to respect women, they gotta see me respecting my wife."

— Faith Leader, LA