

Lesson 2.

Becoming A Real Man – Taking care of yourself and your responsibilities

“Go Away Little Boy” ~ title of a song by Marlena Shaw

GROWN BOYS vs. GROWN MEN

So many boys and young men in today's world grow up to be nothing but bigger boys. Too many of today's men are imposters. They look like men, but they act like boys. That's not what I want for you and I certainly hope you don't want that for yourself. There are few things worse than seeing grown men; acting like little boys; throwing temper tantrums, wearing sagging pants, being financially irresponsible, or not taking care of their children. Many can't even take care of themselves and depend on their parents, women, or others to do it for them. When I was growing up, real men didn't depend on others to take care of them. They took care of themselves. They were raised to do so, and it was expected.

My idea of fulfilling your duties as a man isn't becoming one and still conducting yourself like a little boy. Nor is it being taken care of by the prison system. This isn't to say every man in prison is there because he didn't grow up to be a man. What I am saying is many made decisions that allowed them to get caught up in the judicial system, ending in imprisonment. Others got in situations where the judicial system abused them. Although, from my view, there **are** a number of men who are in prison because they never bought into taking care of themselves, or they became content with just letting the system do it. I have more respect for a man working in a low wage position, paying his own bills, working his way up, than I do for a man who has someone else paying his way.

Sometimes, when you put a working man next to a man who is taken care of, you can't tell the difference. The one who's taken care of may even be better dressed and have a nicer car. Despite this, there is a staggering difference between the two! For example, someone else may have bought those clothes or car for the first guy. For this reason, when a woman looks at both, side by side, on one hand she sees the real deal but on the other, what she's actually seeing is an illusion.

Please understand this; real women will not be interested in taking care of any grown man and a real man won't allow it; at least not for very long. Remember that. There are a number of unrealistic, juvenile, and emotionally immature, young ladies and women, who are okay with taking care of men. Nevertheless, real women want independent, strong, self-assured men who are capable of providing for themselves. Son, this is why I'm raising you the way I am. I want you to learn the difference between being a boy and being a man. I want you to understand the importance of using skills you've learned as a child and as a teenager, and the knowledge shared by other men, to make your own way in life. Put your life in your hands and manage it, don't leave it up to someone else.

Being a man can be difficult and challenging. But, I firmly believe that being a man starts with having or developing very specific character traits. Real men are: giving, loving, firm yet flexible, good listeners, compassionate, emotionally healthy, and mentally sharp. Real men do: take care of their children's emotional and financial needs, take care of their parents, and help their families. Real men aren't: liars, moochers, thieves, schemers, drug dealers, pimps, crybabies, losers, obnoxious or greedy.

Real men don't: abuse women, disrespect others, think only of themselves, avoid responsibilities, financially depend on others, or treat others with uncaring, ruthless attitudes.

Real men are respected by their families and perhaps by the public. Their actions reflect their words and consistently show they respect themselves. You cannot be a real man if you are doing negative stuff and demonstrate negative character traits. If you want to be a real man, you must demonstrate that you have character, style, and a sense of responsibility. You must also show you have a strong work ethic, follow through on your commitments, and are a productive member of society.