

Not perfect
BETTER



Better with Yourself

Tips and advice for better men

Why ‘Not Perfect, Better’?

In November of 2024, we began our #welisten campaign where we spoke to men and boys in a series of focus groups and interviews. The focus groups were made up of men from all different cultures, ages, classes and experiences, yet they had a common thread: many **men couldn't tell us what a “good man” or a “good relationship” looked like.**

A lot of them felt disconnected from the issue of violence against women – not because they didn't want to be part of the solution, but because they felt like they couldn't be. They questioned whether they could speak up if they knew they still had room to be better.

The answer to that is **yes** and it's why we started **Not Perfect, Better.**

We need better men, not perfect men.

Let's be real fellas, from a young age, we feel the pressure to be the “perfect man”. We're expected to think and act a certain way and told things like ‘boys don't cry’, or to simply ‘man up’ when times get tough.

Trying to fit into those stereotypes is not only difficult, but can leave us feeling miserable, closed off, or angry at the world. **What we all need is to not focus on being the perfect man, but instead look at being a better version of us.**



Not only will it make us a little better, but it'll make us a little happier and more able to deal with the stuff life throws at us in a healthy and productive way.

Being better is not about aiming for perfection, it's about making progress. It's about being the man you want to be, feeling all your feels, and taking responsibility when you mess up – which we all do from time to time.

The good news is, you don't need to be perfect, just better. And with a low bar to start with in society, it doesn't take much to raise it.

The bar is low. Let's raise it.

Most men consider violence against women unacceptable, but we tend to underestimate how comfortable mainstream society is with sexist, coercive, and derogatory remarks and actions towards women. Thinking of kind, respectful men as 'sims' or 'woke' is an example of how far some people will go to defend behaviour that's pretty crappy and brings us all down.

It doesn't have to be this way.

The good news is that there are things you can do to make a real difference. They're easy, effective, and you can put them into practice at home, work and out in public.



Look inwards

Your partner is her own person, as important as you are. You don't need to have all the power – make decisions with her, not for her. It's so much more fun to do life together, rather than seeing your partner as another problem to be dealt with or to 'make happy'.



Listen

Don't bottle it up like so many guys do. Say how you feel. Share stuff, even the scary stuff. Talk about your worries and how you'd like things to turn out. Don't start with "You make me feel...", start sentences with "I feel", "This makes me feel...", "I'm struggling with..." Try to keep it in your perspective, without immediately complaining or blaming the other person.



Understand

Imagine how it feels to be in her shoes, and if you can do something to make it better, then do it. Remember, they have their own perspective, their own upbringing, and their own goals and dreams. Doing life together is the point of a relationship, don't try to 'win' against each other all the time.



Be accountable

If you value your partner, verbalise it! Notice all the ways she improves your life and makes you a better person, and tell her. Tiny gestures go a long way to showing that you're still there for them, and you want to do better.

Why break out of the Man Box?

Number 1: You'll be happier. When you stop thinking about who you're supposed to be, how you're supposed to act, and what you're supposed to say, you'll instead be able to focus on who you really are.

When you break free of the expectations, you become a far better man – a happier, more peaceful version of yourself. It's about making gains in your emotions, not just in your biceps.

Number 2: You'll be better for everyone else around you. When you stop trying to be who you think others want you to be and start being who you actually are, you let people in and connect with them more.



Be the best damn man you can be. Within reason.

If you're like most men, you know right from wrong. You respect women. You respect yourself. You want to do the right thing by everyone. And when you get things wrong, you own up to it and try to get some help to get them right. Or at least, right-er.

Being a better man isn't rocket science; it's just about setting the bar a little bit higher for yourself and others.

It can be as simple as living your respectful values. This means with your mates, not just in private. Be proud of the respectful man you are! Set standards for your own behaviour and your mates, and stick to them (we know, easier said than done – but worth it!)



Keep scrolling, not controlling.

Technology has made us more connected than ever, but it's also opened up new avenues for men to stalk, harass or degrade women online, control their girlfriends or threaten women.

Being better means checking your relationship with technology and getting real about whether you're using it for the wrong reasons.

Ask yourself if you're:

- Sending inappropriate sexual messages – and be honest with yourself
- Cyberstalking women
- Texting or posting threats of violence
- Online victim-bashing
- Calling or texting abusively
- Threatening to disclose sensitive information to the victim through technology
- Participating in online women-hate groups. If you aren't sure, just ask yourself – is there a common theme where women are the problem?

If you wouldn't say or do something offline, don't do it online.

Try to step outside out of own head and see how your behaviour would feel from her side.

Better you

Being better is not about aiming for perfection, just progress. It's about being the man you want to be, feeling all your feels, and taking responsibility when you mess up. Learn how to level up with some easy, effective things you can put in practice at home, work and out in public.



Want more Better Guides? Head back to **Not Perfect, Better** or stay up to date with upcoming resources by following us on **Facebook**, **Instagram** or **LinkedIn**.