

# Boys vs emotions

Words: Tanya Curtis

## IN THE CONFINES OF A CLINIC, MANY MEN AND FATHERS REPORT FEELINGS OF ANXIETY ON A REGULAR BASIS, ACCORDING TO TANYA AT FABIC.

While men are open to discussing their anxiety in the sanctity of a counseling clinic, anxiety is rarely what initially brings a man to our clinic. Generally they present to support their children, a friend or a partner. However, I've been interested to observe that when a man feels safe enough to share, they frequently report experiences of anxiety in their daily life.

Why is this so? Why are men not seeking support for their own presenting symptoms? Why are men experiencing this world in a way that has them feeling anxious? Why are men not feeling safe to express how they are truly feeling? At the core of every man is a deeply sensitive and very very tender human. However, the question I ask you is, does our world offer a platform for men to openly live and express their deep sensitivity and tenderness?

If you hold a baby boy in your arms there is no doubt one can feel the absolute sweetness, tenderness and sensitivity that is the essence of this baby boy. There is an exquisiteness that words cannot describe but can only be felt. This

boy then grows into a little boy, a teenager, a young man and an adult. But is the end product, the adult, still expressing the innate sweetness, tenderness and sensitivity that was there at their birth. The answer is typically no.

But why? What happens as this baby grows up? At what stage do these qualities disappear, and are they truly gone or are they just buried? Boys, teenagers and men today are often asked to 'toughen up' or words alike. Before we know it the innate sweet qualities are no longer being expressed and have been replaced with rough play, harsh tones, hard exteriors etc. However, below the surface the essence has not changed, there is always the same sweet, sensitive and tender being waiting to feel safe to express their innate qualities. What if a man's anxiety is related to them not feeling safe to express who they truly are? For example, a man today who expresses his sensitivity is likely to receive many unwanted reactions that would leave him not feeling safe to express. Why? Because it is so called 'not normal'. However it must be noted that a man's natural way is to express his innate sensitivity and tenderness. So what impact is this having on a man's quality of wellbeing to live in a way against his natural way – just to fit the so-called norm?



What if men decided to live against the norm and go back to their natural way? What if we as society provided a foundation and a platform that allows boys, teenagers and men to feel safe to express their natural sensitive, tender way.

What platform do we provide for ourselves and others to express? Do we provide a foundation that allows each boy, teen, man and person to express their sweetness, sensitivity and tenderness that each new born baby innately reminds us is at the core of us all... no matter our age? What if to combat anxiety in men can be started by offering men a foundation where they feel safe to express ... a foundation that allows a man to express his sensitivity and tenderness without fear of reaction from any other person? This is the responsibility of us all!

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