

*all the little harmful*

# Ways Women Must Conform

Women experience an immense amount of pressure to fill predestined roles at the cost of their own individual identities. The constant push and pull to appeal to the white-centric wants of men fails to support the backbone of our society.

## 01 Workplace Settings

Women can be terminated, or worse, fail to make it past the hiring point if they do not look and act with delicate features. Women with managerial roles often contradict such characteristics. Case studies have shown that men are 28% more likely to be hired. Not to mention, for every dollar a white man receives, a Latina (the lowest ranking in salary by race) makes 47 cents of the same dollar.

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## 02 Motherhood

During the pandemic, many mothers were simply expected to become the main caretaker of children despite the equal role fathers have in parenting. Mothers must also cater to the fragile masculinity of men when fathers struggle with shortcomings assigned to their gender. There is little regard for the individual woman before childbirth and after childbirth. If a mother tends to her mental health or her occupation, society deems them as selfish with little regard for her children.

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## 03 Online Dating

The correct response when complimented is "thank you". When demanded nudes, women must send graphic photos of themselves or else risk receiving abuse and harassment. The severity of the response can range from "go to hell" to "you deserve to be r\*ped". Women must conform to this response to avoid the violation of men's beliefs of the perfect woman. Sexual assault through vulgar text messages is known to give rise to anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder for women in the dating scene.

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## 04 The Pretty Standard

The social construct of an ideal "pretty" woman is defined by straight white men. Cosmetic procedures have increased by 293% from 1997 to 2003. The exclusionary beauty norm caters to the thin framed yet curvy in the correct areas, large breasted, white woman. It is a form of colonization as a way to remove ethnic features and continues to create an environment that lacks representation of women of color. Women must undergo extreme risks to achieve the beauty norm.

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Men are collectively the reason for the loss of the female identity. It is not women's responsibility to educate men on how to be better allies. Society must value women simply for their individuality rather than placing value on women because they are mothers, sisters, or daughters.

*Women simply value because they are human beings.*

# How You Can Support Women

**Steps to reinforce the female identity.** First, it is important for our male allies to act less and to listen more to the voices being discriminated against. Two, men must hold other men accountable in order to dismantle sexist systems.

## Demand an equal work culture

Close the gender pay gap by putting a stop to the belief that women are less competent compared to men. Women are not weak or less qualified because they require maternity leave and men do not. The gender pay gap exists because of loopholes within hiring practices. The beauty standard has no place when hiring or considering the promotion of an individual. Corporations must review and form a process that is strictly based on the quality of one's work. Ensure that your team of employees are fairly paid compared to one another's work. As coworkers, amplify women's voices by emphasizing their ideas and ensuring credit is given.

## Re-define beauty

Women are not objects. There isn't one ideal shape or form that women are "supposed" to look. There are countless ethnicities that exist and it is impossible for all women to follow the same standard. Research has shown that white men do not face penalties for promoting diversity. Once men disconnect from the beauty norm, women can redefine their work ethic in its true form.

## Call out sexism

Stereotypical remarks against women are detrimental to our wellbeing and success. Create a safe space by calling out remarks like "shouldn't you be in the kitchen?" and "stop getting emotional", when women make valid points. If you witness harassment, speak up and step up.

## Challenge masculinity

We must reframe the conversation to create a safe and open dialogue for men to discuss their role alongside women. The conversation needs to begin within themselves. As a society, we need to crush the male stigma of those who express real emotion. There is a multitude of feelings that exist. Anger cannot be the only feeling allowed to be expressed in male culture.

## Share the responsibility

Consider your strengths in parental settings when designating responsibilities like cooking and laundry. Encourage children of all genders to participate in a variety of chores as a way to tear down gender assigned roles. Lastly, respect the role of the stay at home parent. Raising children and shaping their identity is equally a job just simply unpaid efforts.

*A friendly reminder: I've done the research, but you should, too! Check my sources against your own, and always exercise sound judgment.*

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