

A warm, golden-hour photograph of a man and a young child. The man, with a beard and short brown hair, is smiling broadly at the camera. He is wearing a light blue t-shirt. The child, a young boy with short brown hair, is sitting on the man's shoulders, also smiling. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with trees and a bright sun low on the horizon, creating a bokeh effect of light spots. The overall mood is happy and intimate.

POSITIVE FATHERHOOD:

NAVIGATING MALE STIGMA TO TARGET PATERNAL WELLNESS

PIERRE N.AZZAM, MD, PC

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PSYCHIATRY

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE – PITTSBURGH, USA

THINK BACK TO A SUCCESSFUL INTERACTION WITH A FATHER.

What made that interaction such a positive one?





AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

APA GUIDELINES for Psychological Practice with Boys and Men

The Man Box:

A study on being a young man in Australia

**the
men's
project**

A Jesuit Social Services initiative



MALE GENDER ROLE STRAIN



- **Assessment of male inadequacy**
- **Lack of connectedness to other men**
- **Limited willingness to seek help**
- **Vulnerability in periods of transition**

POSITIVE MASCULINITY

- **Men's relational styles**
- **Action-orientation**
- **Make ways of caring**
- **Courage and risk-taking**
- **Generative fatherhood**





***What would be possible
if we engaged fathers
more positively?***

ENGAGING MEN



- **Acknowledge strengths and hurdles of masculine norms.**
- **Emphasize uniqueness and commonality among men.**
- **Harness male affinity for action and accountability.**
- **Incorporate coaching tactics.**

COACHING ... VS.THERAPY

- **Natural ... *rather than Neutral***
- **Proactive ... *rather than Non-Directive***
- **Supportive ... *rather than Diagnostic***
- **Questioning ... *rather than Interpreting***
- **Collaborative ... *rather than Hierarchical***

COACHING FATHERS

- **Focus on powerful observations and approachable questions.**
- **Allow the father to define “success” for each interaction.**
- **Partner together in service of dad’s goals and values.**
- **Stay in the present and focus on the future.**

‘VPA’ COACHING MODEL

Vision / Values



Possibilities / Perspectives



Actions / Accountability

***“I’M GOING TO BE A FATHER,
AND I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I’M DOING.”***



VISION

- *When you look into your future as a father, what do you see?*
- *As your child grows, what do you look forward to doing?*
- *Describe an ideal relationship with your child. With mom.*



VALUES



- *What principles or attributes lie at the heart of your vision?*
- *What values are nonnegotiable for you? For your family?*
- *What does [...] say about what matters most to you as a dad?*

POSSIBILITIES

- *What opportunities do you have now to honor [value]?*
- *What if you went even further in your mission to [...]?*
- *How will you measure progress toward your vision as a dad?*



PERSPECTIVES

- *What is your gut telling you about this [possibility]?*
- *You slumped down (or lit up) as we started to talk about [...].*
- *What's holding you back from actualizing your vision?*
- *What do you need in order to turn this possibility into reality?*
- *I heard a few assumptions in that last statement.*
- *What assumptions did you hear as you talked about [...]?*

ACTION

- ***You've named a few things you can do to honor your values...***
- ***What will you commit to doing?***
- ***As you take action toward your goals, what challenges can you anticipate along the way?***

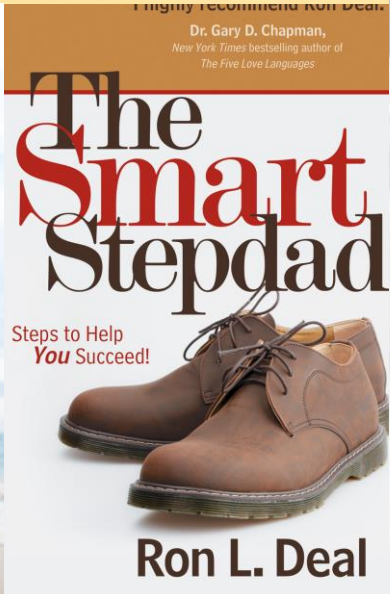
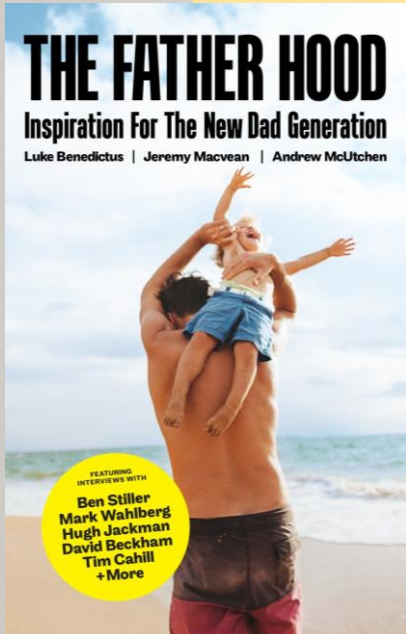
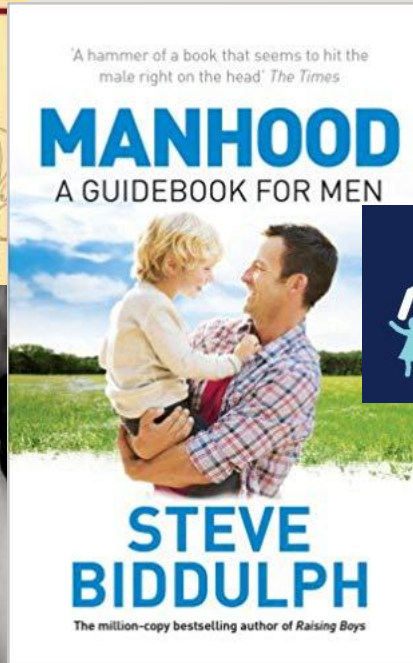


ACCOUNTABILITY



- *How will you stay true to yourself to accomplish [...]?*
- *What resources would help you to succeed?*
- *Who else might you want to involve in this action?*

RESOURCES FOR FATHERS





QUESTIONS?