

WHY MARRIAGE MATTERS FOR MEN

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THE MAN

This section delves into the complexities of modern masculinity, exploring issues of loneliness, loud cultural voices like the online “manosphere”, and evolving societal expectations, while revealing the counter-cultural keys to genuine male fulfillment.”

THE MYTHS

This section challenges prevailing misconceptions surrounding marriage, refuting the belief that marriage offers no benefits in the modern age and debunking the soulmate myth that a romantic “spark” is the most important part of a marriage.



THE LEGENDS

This section highlights marriage’s positive impacts on individuals, couples, families, and communities alike.



The MAN



- Evolving masculinity norms amid cultural shifts challenge men's societal roles, scrutinizing traditional traits like stoicism, competition, and toughness, and causing identity confusion (1).
- In the ongoing search for positive masculinity, there's a need for positive role models in a post-feminist world and assistance for men to adapt to the changing landscape of gender roles without compromising the ideals of gender equality (2).
- Progressives often focus on preserving gains for women, failing to address the evolving needs of men (3). This has allowed the far right to capitalize, offering toxic role models like Andrew Tate, whose promotion of aggression and dominance perpetuates outdated notions of masculinity (4).

- **The Online "Manosphere":** This internet ecosystem combines self-improvement advice with casual misogyny, also portraying marriage as a "trap" for men (5). "Incel" or involuntary celibate culture takes this a step further, perceiving women as unattainable objects and marriage as an institution that excludes them (6).
- **Media Messages:** Popular media portrayals criticize marriage as outdated or oppressive institution, despite its prevalence among the individuals that promote it. This presents a paradox where those influencing public perception do not always reflect the values they promote (7).





- **Declining Social Connections:** 15% of men report having no close friendships (5x increase since 1990); even higher for unmarried men (20%) and men <30 (25%) (8).
- **High Rates of Singleness:** In 2022, 63% of men under 30 were single (up from 51% in 2019), compared to 34% of women (9).
- **Health Implications:** Loneliness is linked to increased risk of depression, suicidal ideation, cardiovascular illness, and premature death; increases mortality rates by 29% (10, 13).

- **Protector, Provider, Procreator:** Cross-cultural study found that every society had a concept of successful masculinity that involved protecting those they love, creating surplus and sharing that with others, and having a family of their own.
- **True Happiness:** Men report that they find true happiness by embodying healthy masculinity through emotional intelligence, leadership, persistence, responsibility, and strength, acting as confident protectors and providers, finding purpose, and respectfully caring for women both emotionally and physically. (11, 12).
- Marriage provides significant benefits aligned with men's unique needs and desires, such as increased access to fulfilling relationships and emotional expression, reduced loneliness through stable companionship, and a structured environment that regulates passions, which helps anchor men and significantly lowers the risk of depression and suicide (12).

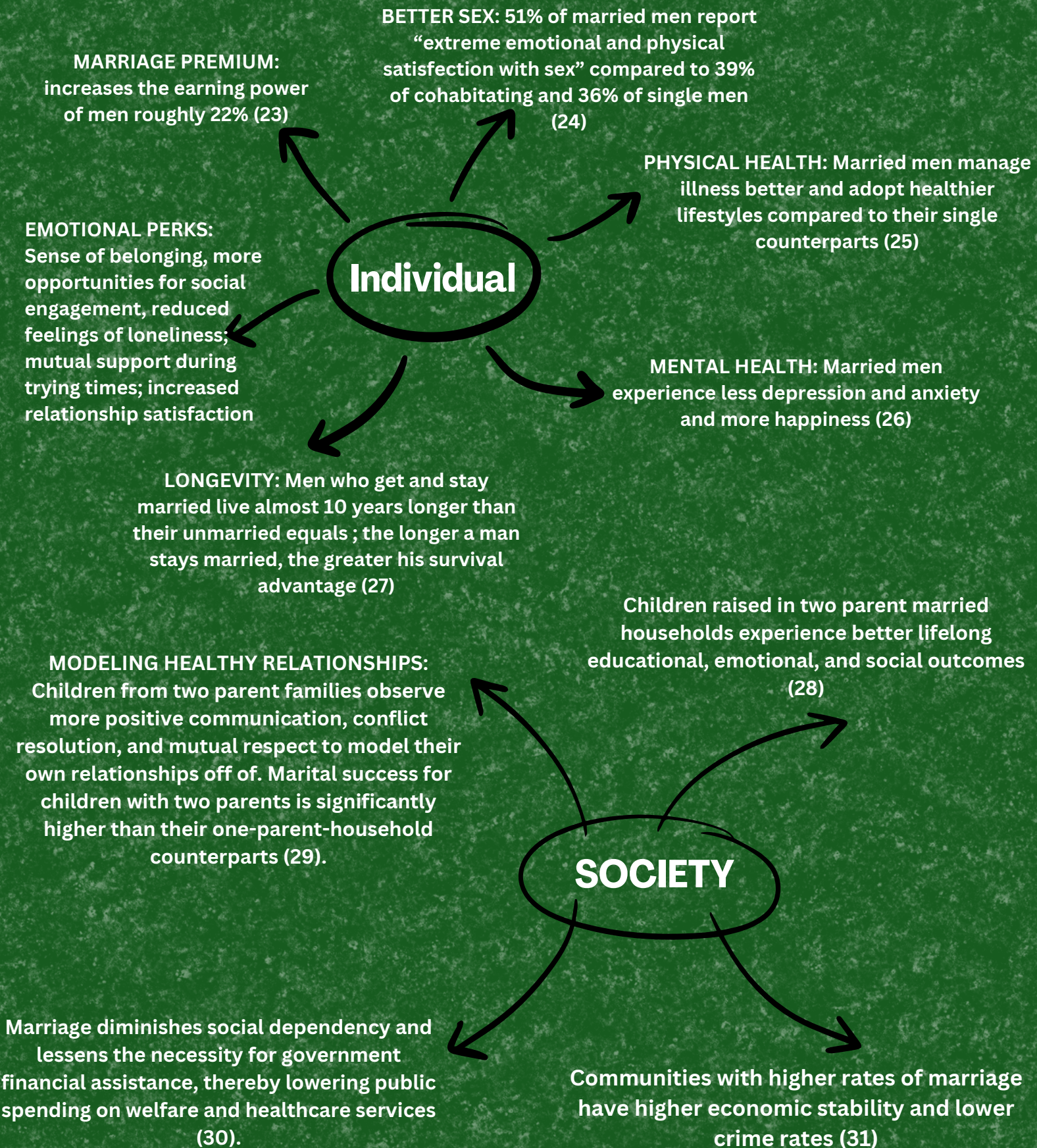


The MYTHS

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- **“MARRIAGE LIMITS FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE”** Married individuals actually achieve greater economic stability through marriage; married men typically earn 10–20% more than their single peers from similar backgrounds and couples benefit from pooled incomes and resources. Married men are four times more likely to avoid poverty by the time they reach their thirties and possess ten times the median assets of their single peers (14, 15, 16).
 - **“MARRIAGE IS NOT WORTH THE FOREGONE PERSONAL FREEDOM”** Rather than limiting social connections, marriage significantly enhances social and emotional well-being. Married individuals are less likely to experience loneliness & despair or engage in harmful behaviors than their single peers (17). Single adults report more than double the rates of loneliness compared to married adults.
 - While it may be true that married men spend less time with friends, this reflects a natural shift towards more meaningful connections with a spouse, providing an enriched layer of social interaction and support not typically found in other relationships (18).
 - **“MARRIAGE IS UNNECESSARY, UNDESIRABLE, OR BEST DONE LATER IN LIFE”** Sharing meaningful experiences within a stable marital union correlates with a remarkable 151% increase in happiness odds and an estimated annual happiness value of \$100,000, underscoring its transformative impact on individual well-being and life satisfaction (19,20).

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- **“MARRIAGE REVOLVES AROUND FINDING AN INTENSE EMOTIONAL CONNECTION WITH “THE ONE:” (7)** Over 90% of single young adults aspire for their spouse to be their “soulmate” first and foremost (7). This “soulmate” model, one that assumes if a connection loses the spark, it’s okay to seek a better soulmate, comes from the expressive individualism of the 1970s. The divorce rate surged by over 50% during the 1970s as the popularity of the soulmate model increased (21).
 - Love is more than the initial hormone driven infatuation. Unrealistic expectations of constant emotional highs can lead to disappointment when challenges arise in married life. Couples prioritizing mutual well-being over personal gratification often find more stable and satisfying marriages, emphasizing the importance of a “family-first” mentality over self-centered pursuits (7).
 - 2022 State of Our Unions Survey found that couples following the soulmate model were twice as likely to report that they were divorcing or likely to divorce in the near future versus those following the family first model (22).

The LEGENDS



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