

JANUARY 2024

ISSUE 6


# THE LOOKOUT

THE STUDENT WATCH MAGAZINE


BEATING THE  
BYSTANDER EFFECT



THE STUDENTS' GUIDE TO  
STUDENT ACCOMMODATION



REMOVING THE MASK  
OF MASCULINITY



GUARDIANS OF THE NIGHT:  
HOW DO SPORTS & NIGHTLIFE  
SOCIETIES PRIORITISE SAFETY  
& COMMUNITY?



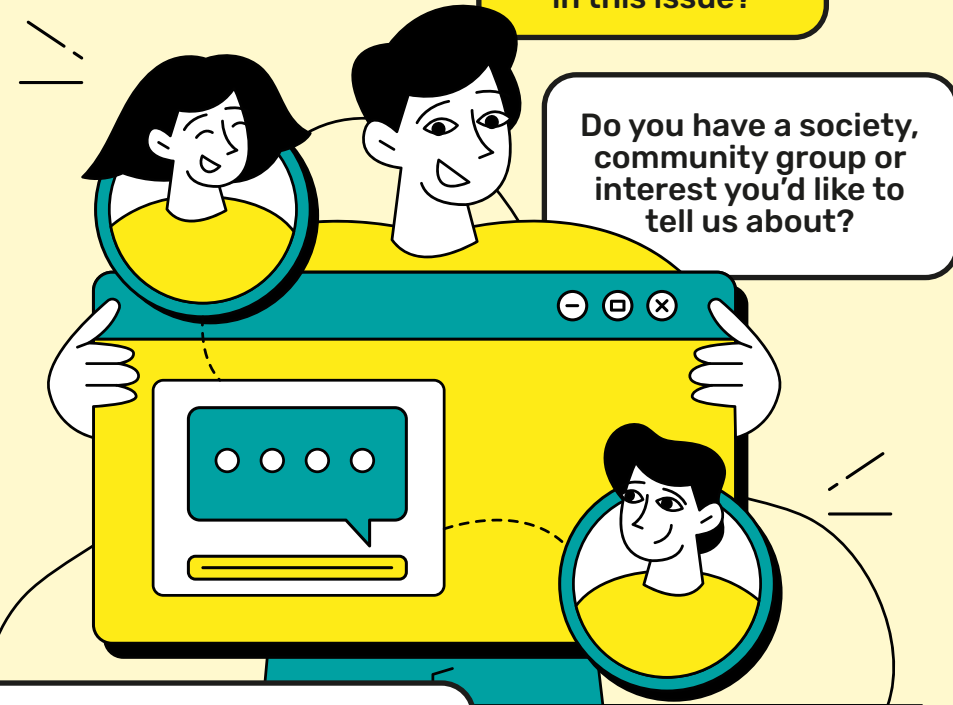


## We want to know your thoughts!

What topics would you like our writers to tackle next?

Do you have an opinion on any of the articles in this issue?

Do you have a society, community group or interest you'd like to tell us about?



Or do you have thoughts of how we can spread The Lookout even further with student communities?



## Let us know here.

## Welcome to The Lookout.

This is a magazine created for students, by students, tackling the topics that young people want to discuss. We provide the platform but you provide the voice – and you've spoken about everything from safe nights out with your mates to checking in with your mental health.

We're looking for even more input from young people with creative ideas for Neighbourhood Watch content. Are you a keen writer? Illustrator? Someone brimming with plans for how The Lookout could be marketed effectively? Get in touch by emailing [youngpeople@ourwatch.org.uk](mailto:youngpeople@ourwatch.org.uk).

And we're also pleased to say that Neighbourhood Watch Network has received funding from a major grant funder for a new national Young People's Worker, who will work closely with youth organisations in local communities, amplifying young voices in crime prevention and communities, and building our Youth Council.

Issue 5 of The Lookout caused a storm on TikTok, so we owe a big thanks to our four influencers:

[@ma.dihah](#), [@idrisaliwastaken](#), [@eeshaanghanekar](#) and [@emtravels](#).

In Issue 6, a quartet of talented writers give us the lowdown on societies, student accommodation, dangerous clichés around masculinity, and how to beat the bystander effect.

A huge thanks to the City Bridge Foundation for funding this issue!

Enjoy!

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**REMOVING THE MASK  
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**CITY BRIDGE  
FOUNDATION**



## HOW TO HELP

## FROM THE SIDELINES.



# BEATING THE BYSTANDER EFFECT

# Spring safely to the rescue by remembering the 5 Ds

Victoria Wilson, University of Birmingham, English Literature and History

Every day, walking around campus or heading to a nightclub, every one of us acts as a bystander – a person present at but not involved in an incident. By actively engaging with the events around us, even if we aren't directly involved, we can positively impact someone's life. It's an underestimated power we wield. Yet psychologists have recognised that bystanders typically choose not to intervene in a situation when other people are present.

The bystander effect is a theory that people are less likely to help a victim if they are in the presence of others than if they are alone. Whether they're expecting somebody else to step in, or afraid of causing a scene, people often don't intervene when somebody is in trouble. Bystanders sometimes feel unsure about what they're witnessing and question whether it's their business to interfere. They may feel afraid for their own safety or reputation, or simply don't know how to help.

So, let's explore what you could do – how you could potentially save somebody from danger – when you notice something isn't right, from noticing hate speech or abuse on the streets to suspecting that a stranger is being spiked or taken advantage of on a night out. Every

situation is different, so it's important to take initiative and adapt to the scenario, but it is possible to intervene safely.

How can you become an active bystander? Remember the 5 Ds. You don't have to enact them all, as these are recommendations rather than a schedule, but you could make a positive difference by using even one or two in the appropriate circumstances.

## 1. Detect

The first step is noticing that something is wrong. Before getting involved, however, assess whether it's safe for you to do so.

## 2. Distract

It's important to separate the victim from the perpetrator. You can do this by striking up a conversation with the perpetrator to distract them, or by creating an excuse for the victim to remove themselves from the situation – find a reason to talk to them, or you could even spill your drink.

## 3. Direct action

If distracting the perpetrator doesn't work, you may need to call out their behaviour and check that the victim is OK. But always use a calm, respectful tone to avoid aggravating the situation.



## 4. Delegate

If you feel unsafe or unable to handle the situation alone, you should always ask for support from your friends, security staff, the venue staff or, if necessary, the police.

## 5. Document

Depending on the severity of the situation, the victim may need support following the incident. This can be difficult if you don't know the person. If appropriate, though, you should encourage them to report it to the venue or authorities, as well as checking in with them and suggesting they talk to friends or family about the experience. Moreover,

if you happen to be in a situation where you can capture what's going on, feel free to film it on the down-low. Just make sure that any footage is only shared with the police and the victim – keep it off social media to respect their privacy.

**Becoming an active bystander helps to build a safe and united university community. By intervening in a hostile situation, you don't just protect the people involved – you create a ripple effect which can counteract the bystander effect. The small actions of a single bystander can inspire others to follow suit and encourage more people, generating a huge, lasting impact.**





# THE STUDENT'S GUIDE TO...

## Student Accommodation

Hannah Robinson,  
Sheffield Hallam University, Journalism



someone had given me reassurance that it was going to be OK. I spoke to many students who were homesick, listening to them and reassuring them."

You can see that it's perfectly normal to feel homesick, so don't be afraid to share your feelings. And there are simple first steps you can take to combat it: arrange a visit from an old friend, and the occasional video call to family.

Research from the National Union of Students (NUS) found that homesickness impacts 50% to 70% of first-year students – but, importantly, that this usually subsides after the first three weeks.

**Hannah, 20:** "I wish someone had told me that it's normal to miss home, and that homesickness doesn't last forever."

**Sophie, RA:** "I was really scared and worried when I first moved, especially coming all the way from India. I wish

Just Google 'student packing list' and you'll be inundated with things to bring – too many things. So, let's get down to the nitty-gritty: what do most students forget?

**Laura, 21:** "Bring a hot water bottle and a cosy blanket or hoodie. It can get cold in the winter. Not wrapping up warm will make you feel rubbish, and it could even impact your health."

**Hannah, 20:** "Don't underestimate the importance of batteries and command strips – they will be your best mates. And make sure to bring more cutlery than you think you'll need. It seems to always go missing and you never know where..."

## The practical stuff



## Student halls or student housing?

Many new undergraduates make student halls their digs of choice for first year, before moving into private housing for the rest of their university tenure. Both have their benefits...

**Mark, 19:** "I prefer student halls as they're a great way to make friends and still have your privacy, especially if you're in an en-suite bedroom or studio. Also, in a lot of student accommodation, you don't have to worry about extra bills as they're included in your rent."

**Laura, 21:** "Student housing is just a lot homier. The shared spaces are usually bigger, and once you've added some fairy lights and photos from home, it's the perfect setting for movie nights and getting closer to your housemates."

**Sophie, RA:** "The independence and responsibility that comes with living away from home changes a person for the better."

The decision depends on what matters most to you: convenience, a busy social life, or a cosy, tight-knit group. Either way, you'll soon learn to be a great housemate.

# Living away from home is a great opportunity to grow and meet new people

*Especially with these tips from students and a Resident Ambassador (RA) from Unite Students.*

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# Making memories

All the while, try to savour each moment. These can be some of the best times of your life.

**Mark, 19:** "One of my favourite memories has to be that me and my flatmate had a ritual called Cereal Talk, where we ate cereal and checked in on how we both were."

**Laura, 21:** "My favourite memories were the organised events that the halls put on for students – a great opportunity to make new friends in the first year!"

Tips, tricks and advice for student living are important, but it's even more important to remember that everyone's experiences differ; what works for someone else may not work for you. Almost every new student is feeling the same mix of nerves and excitement that you are, so just try to get yourself out there as much as feels comfortable, and take it one step at a time.

**As Laura puts it:** "There will never be another time in our lives again to have this much freedom and so much fun."

Illustrations:  
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Nottingham  
Trent University,  
Illustration

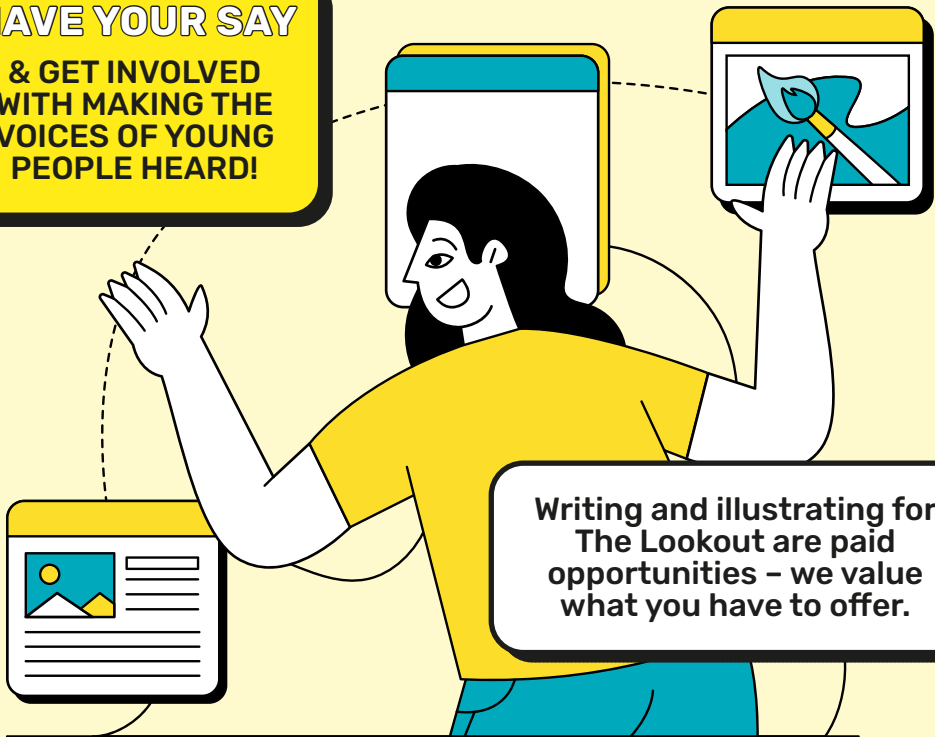


Whether you've got a flair for writing or want to share your unique artistic style, The Lookout has opportunities for you, from authoring insightful articles to bringing the magazine to life with your illustrations.

If you think we're missing something key that would bring The Lookout to the next level, let us know – we want to hear from you.



**HAVE YOUR SAY  
& GET INVOLVED  
WITH MAKING THE  
VOICES OF YOUNG  
PEOPLE HEARD!**



Writing and illustrating for The Lookout are paid opportunities – we value what you have to offer.

**STUDENT  
WATCH**



We're investing more into making a real difference for young people and crime prevention.

If you want to be a part of this vital work, contact us:  
[youngpeople@ourwatch.org.uk](mailto:youngpeople@ourwatch.org.uk)



## Where camaraderie intertwines with guardianship.

**Jasmine Mtengeti,**  
Nottingham Trent University,  
International Law

If the heartbeat of vibrant university life is strongest after sundown, then it resonates within the nightlife and sports societies. Beyond pulsating rhythms and spirited cheers lies a profound commitment to safety, community and wellbeing. We spoke to society leaders to unveil their efforts to foster a secure environment, where camaraderie intertwines with guardianship.

Nightlife societies face the delicate balance of curating an atmosphere that's both thrilling and secure. Guidelines and safe practice may not tick the 'thrilling' box, from crowd control to substance use, but these organisations prioritise their members' wellbeing so they can have a good time.

"Guardianship at night is not just about creating unforgettable moments – it's also about ensuring a secure haven for every reveller," says Michael David, president of The East African Society at Nottingham Trent University (NTU). "We collaborate with like-minded partners to communicate measures, from fire exits to emergency services, and aim to keep our events free from substances that compromise wellbeing. Our members dance under the protective embrace of shared responsibility."

University societies shoulder a great responsibility already, and the unique dynamics of nightlife societies present their leaders with an even more nuanced challenge: creating spaces that are inclusive and electric while also safeguarding their attendees' wellbeing. Guardians of the night, if you will.

For example, numerous nightlife communities integrate initiatives focused on mental health awareness, hosting workshops and offering access to counselling services during their events. In The East African society, gatherings are organised to address mental health issues within an informal atmosphere, avoiding the intensity of therapy sessions that might make participants uncomfortable. Inclusivity and comfort are vital objectives, with activities such as sports competitions or brunches before community leaders facilitate half-hour check-ins by dividing the participants into smaller groups. These initiatives are designed to create a supportive environment for attendees dealing with emotional challenges.

Shifting the spotlight to sports societies, we discover a different facet of community and wellbeing. Speaking to their members revealed the profound impact of team dynamics on mental health.

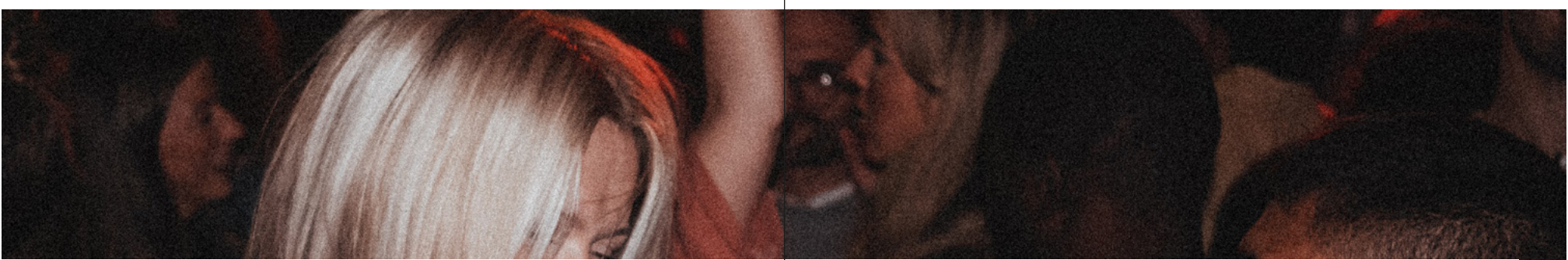
In order to actively prioritise the mental wellbeing of their members, coaches of sports societies assume a crucial role in



# Guardians of the Night

**HOW DO SPORTS & NIGHTLIFE SOCIETIES PRIORITISE SAFETY & COMMUNITY?**





Sports societies are aiming to build a community, where every member feels valued and included.

efforts are also made to address clubs at risk of perceived intimidation or exclusivity, particularly those whose social events are centred around alcohol consumption. Collaborating with NTU Global, NTU Sport encourages international student engagement, as well as organising events like "Girls' Night In." Core values of Pride, Unity, and Respect guide sports societies at NTU, with measures in place to combat harassment, racism, and bullying. Leaders actively address resistance to inclusivity, with support from NTU Sport staff promoting the "Report and Support" system where they're trained to refer issues and students to appropriate support services.

These organisations can be beacons of guidance in the realm of student safety and wellbeing. Weaving guidelines and practices into every event, match and celebration requires a commitment to ensuring that every member can let loose, cheer and forge connections within welcoming surroundings, where safety and community aren't just priorities, but promises kept. In the tapestry of university life, they are threads binding celebration to security, weaving together experiences and memories that remain long after the cheers subside.

"Beyond physical safety, the sport serves as a mental release, helping us to channel aggression constructively. With a diverse and inclusive atmosphere, we leave personal differences at the door, fostering a supportive environment where everyone can thrive, regardless of background. Together, we create a space where competition and camaraderie co-exist, promoting personal growth."

Sports societies' strategies extend beyond the pitch – or ring, in this instance. They're aiming to build a community where every member feels valued and included.

Leaders within NTU's sports societies actively work to prioritise the creation of an inclusive environment. NTU Sport provides extensive training, including the 'Levelling the Playing Field' workshop for club committee members, "which unveils the barriers to participation" and "encourages the committees to develop action plans to ensure their activities – both sporting and social – do not discourage certain students from getting involved" explained Head of NTU Sports, James Hayter. Club committees, through 'Action Packs', emphasise their commitment to inclusivity, targeting women, the LGBTQ+ community, non-drinkers, and foreign students. Special

monitoring and addressing emotional fluctuations. Some sports teams have implemented structured mental health check-ins and support networks, fostering an environment where team members feel at ease discussing their wellbeing.

Samuel Petras, shooting guard for NTU basketball team, explained, "The emotional rollercoaster of sports is managed well by the coach, who checks in on players' emotional and mental wellbeing. Balancing excitement and safety is crucial. Substance use is strictly prohibited, and team bonding through social activities builds chemistry. Our team values unity, addressing challenges together and fostering a winning mentality. We create a community across sports that embraces cultural diversity. Our shared goal extends beyond success on the court to encompass the pursuit of happiness." No lack of ambition, then.

Taran Gill of the NTU boxing team shared that, "In boxing, we aren't just athletes; we're a closely-knit community. We value safety above all – our training environment emphasises rigorous safety measures, from mandatory first-aid training for coaches to on-site medical support.



Unlocking conversations is key to understanding what it really is to 'be a man'

Declan Shinnick, Brighton School of Business and Law, Marketing Management



# Removing the mask of masculinity



Misunderstanding masculinity is primarily to blame for this mess. It's hyper-politicised and often disregarded. But according to the fabulous hive mind of the internet, the perfectly happy, happily perfect man does exist – and there's a simple formula behind his success. You just have to be:

- Assertive, but not intimidating.
- Confident, but not arrogant.
- Fit and active, but not obsessed with being fit and active.
- Masculine, but not toxically so.
- Vulnerable, but not weak.
- Passionate, but not obsessed.
- Intellectual, but not a nerd.
- Also, tall, but not too tall.
- Also, conventionally attractive.
- Oh, and rich.

Easy as that. Men, what are we complaining about?

**Be real.**

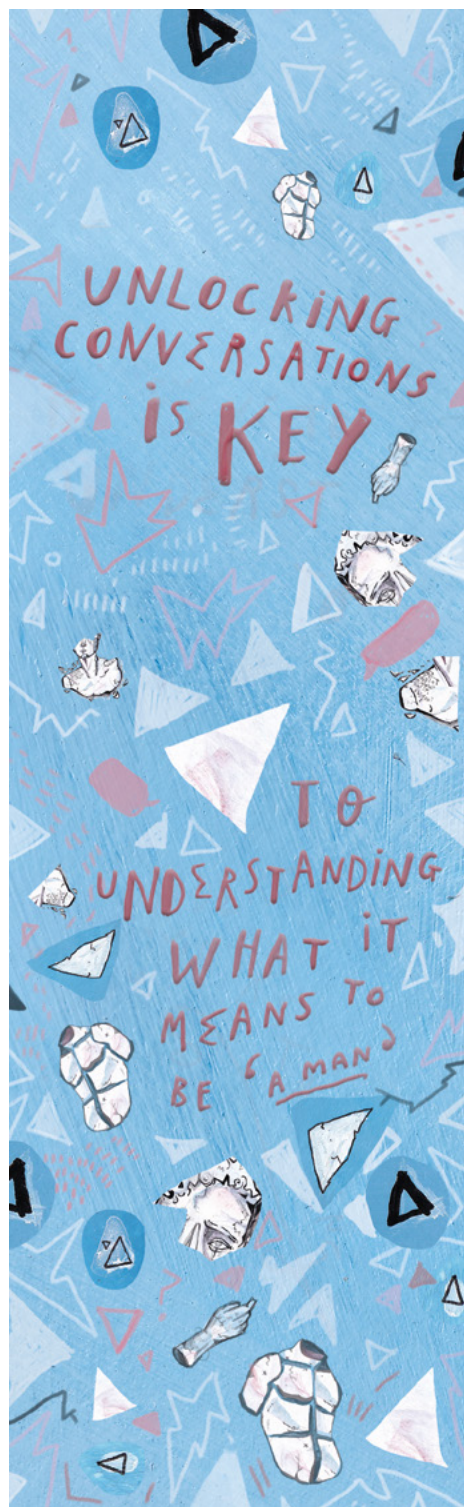
When I was 18, I lost my dad to a brain tumour. Let's look at what happened after. I'll give you a clue: I'm a bloke.

Yep, you guessed correctly. I closed myself off from everyone, hid behind a wall of poor choices and spiralled without telling anyone what I was feeling. I didn't climb out of this pit until I arrived at university a year later.

After my first week there, my best friend messaged to check in and remind me that I was a human, and that he'd be there if ever I needed to let off some steam. I took a moment to think about what he said. Why do I need to be reminded that I'm human? And why did it help so much to hear it?

This experience isn't unique to me – not in losing a parent, nor in facing social expectations of remaining mentally healthy as a man. The perceived need to maintain an illusion of strong masculinity, coupled with a 'superhuman' concept of what it means to be a man, can lead to emotional suppression and the rejection of vulnerability.

*The perceived need to maintain an illusion of strong masculinity can lead to emotional suppression & the rejection of vulnerability.*



We're faced by significant challenges and a fragmented landscape of sources trying to influence the rhetoric. This can feel impossible to navigate, especially with certain ideologues on social media shouting at you for not having a Bugatti (while hiding in one of the cheapest countries in Europe). Not naming any names, of course.

Thankfully, organisations such as [Man Up](#), [StrongMen](#) and [Mental Health UK](#) are spearheading efforts to dismantle these social barriers. I've personally interacted with [CALM](#), whose work is phenomenal.

Ask yourself:  
who do you  
want to be?

Opening up conversations is the key to unlocking doors that lead to progress for everyone. [Movember](#) and [Papyrus-UK](#) do just that, providing support for those dealing with suicidal thoughts. By using these resources and challenging misconceptions, we can foster an environment where men prioritise mental wellbeing authentically, breaking the silence that surrounds their struggles.

And doing this benefits everyone.

Ask yourself: who do you want to be? Not just for yourself, but for the men around you. Choose to be that person who is ready and willing to challenge convention around men's mental health. To talk, to help, to progress. To unapologetically try. Sack off the idea of having to meet certain expectations – it's fruitless.

There's no point in being 'The Man'. Instead, be the greatest version of yourself, to the best of your ability. If we can each do that, we may find that positive change follows closely behind.

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# THE LOOKOUT



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