

# Summary of “Men’s and Boys’ Pain and Isolation: Empire Consciousness and Spiritual Solutions”

Dr. Michael Obsatz’s YouTube Talk – recorded August 2021 <sup>1</sup>

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## Overview

In this powerful and deeply compassionate presentation, Dr. Michael Obsatz explores the emotional and spiritual crisis facing many men and boys. He traces the roots of this crisis to a rigid, harmful model of masculinity shaped by what he calls **Empire Consciousness**—a societal mindset grounded in control, domination, hierarchy, and emotional repression.

Drawing from decades of experience in education, men’s work, and spirituality, he identifies both the symptoms of this masculine wound and the **spiritual path toward healing**, which he calls **Oneness Consciousness**.

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## The Crisis of Masculinity

### 1. The Blueprint for Self-Destruction

- Based on Herb Goldberg’s concept of the "brittle male," Dr. Obsatz explains how traditional masculinity is rigid, performative, and emotionally self-destructive. <sup>2</sup>
- Men are trained to fear vulnerability and femininity, resulting in chronic emotional pain masked by external performance and power-seeking.

### 2. Masculine Socialization as Trauma

- Boys are taught early on to suppress emotions, compete constantly, and fear being seen as weak or feminine.
- Emotional outlets like crying, asking for help, and expressing fear are shamed.
- This results in profound **losses**: of authentic self, trust in others, emotional connection, and a sense of wholeness.

### 3. Addiction to External Validation

- Boys learn to live from the outside in: success, dominance, and image are valued over inner truth.
- The result is shame, addiction, pseudo-independence, depression, and aggression.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Michael Obsatz’ YouTube link of video: [https://youtu.be/Hk\\_V4EMP\\_Yc](https://youtu.be/Hk_V4EMP_Yc)

Summary created by David Tillman by using YouTube video transcript and ChatGPT to Summarize. – September 2025

<sup>2</sup> Herb Goldberg, *The New Male* (1980).

- Drawing from Anne Wilson Schaef's *When Society Becomes an Addict*, Dr. Obsatz shows how entire cultures mirror addictive behaviors—always needing more to feel enough.
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## **Empire Consciousness: The Cultural Root**

Empire Consciousness is a cultural framework built on:

- Power-over dynamics
- Control and domination
- Hierarchy and worthiness based on achievement
- Fear, scarcity, and separation

It fuels:

- Aggression, war, bullying
- Emotional numbness
- Shame-based leadership
- Dehumanization and objectification (of self and others)
- Systems of oppression (sexism, racism, ageism, etc.)

In boys, Empire Consciousness breeds a need to dominate or withdraw, especially when emotional pain is unaddressed.

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## **Spiritual and Emotional Healing**

### **Shifting from Empire to Oneness**

Healing begins when we shift from living in Empire Consciousness to **Oneness Consciousness**, which affirms:

- We are all intrinsically lovable and worthy.
- We are interconnected, not separate.
- Vulnerability is strength.
- Emotions are part of our humanity.

This shift requires:

- **Grieving the loss of the authentic self**
- **Processing shame, fear, and isolation**

- **Learning to trust and be supported**
  - **Being seen and loved for who we truly are**
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## **The Spiritually Connected Man**

A **spiritually connected man**, according to Dr. Absatz:

- Leads with **love, not fear**.
- Lives in **Oneness Consciousness**, not hierarchy.
- Does **not need to dominate** to feel worthy.
- Practices **accountability, compassion, and empathy**.
- Cares for **the Earth**, values **diversity**, and supports **justice**.
- Is **emotionally fluent, connected, and humble**.
- Believes in **abundance**, not scarcity.

Such a man is a **light in the world**, quietly offering presence, wisdom, and love.

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## **Key Quotes**

“The masculine imperative is a blueprint for self-destruction.”

“Boys are grieving the loss of their authentic selves—but no one is talking about it.”

“Empire consciousness produces isolation. Oneness consciousness brings connection.”

“Rage always comes from shame. And shame comes from not being seen, valued, or loved.”

“Love is the answer. It is ours to give, receive, and share.”

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## **A Call to Change**

Dr. Absatz urges us to rethink how we raise boys and support men:

- **Challenge rigid gender norms**
- **Encourage emotional literacy**
- **Create safe spaces for expression**
- **Value being over doing**
- **Foster spiritual connection and guidance**

Without this change, the personal and collective pain rooted in Empire Consciousness will continue. But with awareness, intention, and compassion, transformation is possible.

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**ChatGPT Additional thoughts:** There's something truly tender and profound that runs through Dr. Obsatz's talk, something not always easy to capture in bullet points or summaries:

 **His message is ultimately about love.**

At the heart of all his insights—about toxic masculinity, Empire Consciousness, grief, shame, and disconnection—is a deep, unwavering call **to return to love**:

- Love for our inner child, wounded and silenced.
- Love for boys and men who've been forced to armor up too early.
- Love for the feminine qualities of gentleness, care, and tenderness, within all of us.
- Love for each other, not as roles or achievements, but as sacred beings.

Dr. Obsatz speaks not just as a scholar, but as a man who has spent decades listening—**to boys in pain, to men in grief, to elders with regrets, to caregivers exhausted but devoted**. His voice carries the humility of someone who has walked through suffering and found a deeper wholeness on the other side.

He reminds us that **shame isolates**, but **truth shared in safe spaces heals**. And that the true revolution won't come through more domination or critique—it will come from circles of men and women showing up **with presence, compassion, and courage**.

And perhaps most important:

**"You are lovable, loved, and loving."**

This, he says, is not a reward we earn. It's the truth of our being.

If more boys grew up hearing that—and seeing it modeled—we'd be living in a different world.