



Women in Modern Society



By Diana
Al Shaer

It is no secret that being a woman is a challenge. Feminist movements are fighting for equal rights, and a lot of work must be done before we finally achieve this goal. In this article, however, I would like to look at this topic from another angle and focus on a more positive outlook.

I was lucky to have had the chance to live and work in various countries. Born in the USSR into a cross-cultural family with a Palestinian father and a Russian mother, I have trained and worked in Europe and am now spending much of my time working in the MENA region.

I am a professional athlete and the founder of various media projects in public diplomacy that focus on culture and sports. For the last ten years, I have served as the chairwoman of various NGOs, working with men and women in Europe and the Middle East. During this journey, I have had to learn to think outside the box of one culture, one country, or even one gender.

I believe that the mainstream media can powerfully influence people's minds, and when we are repeatedly told that because we are women, we have fewer job opportunities and fewer chances at success, it becomes a way of programming. Yes, gender inequality exists everywhere and we must work towards a change, but if girls and women are exposed to such messages over and over, they will subconsciously expect these challenges to happen, right from the beginning of their journey. Our subconscious programs are developed at an early age and strongly affect us and how we live our lives. Detecting these programs is the first step to making a change.

My father used to take me along to some of his meetings when I was a young child. These experiences made me confident when interacting with men, which affected my future outlook. Working with both genders became normal for me, and it made

no difference anymore whether I worked with women or men. Family and society play an important role in developing this attitude, and I admit that I was lucky because my family gave me confidence and freedom.

It is important to acknowledge that cases of gender-based violence exist everywhere, and legal systems based on justice and equal rights should be implemented in every country.

Diana Al Shaer representing Palestine.





Synchronization.

So rather than dwell on the lack of equal rights, I prefer to spread confidence by sharing my journey with women who doubt their ability to follow their dreams. Change has to start in our minds, and we must believe in ourselves.

Living in various countries, I have come to the following conclusion – positive and negative aspects can be found everywhere, and no perfect model exists as yet. European standards of freedom and tolerance are frequently cited as examples for other countries to follow. But it is important to remember that nothing is black and white. I like the work ethic and punctuality common in Western European countries, for example, but I cherish the strong family values that are beautiful features of Middle

Eastern culture and believe that they must be preserved. As we point to the differences that exist between cultures, we should highlight the ways that countries could learn from each other – if only they focused on dialogue instead of conflict.

I am convinced that countries can learn from each other, but I also believe that they should not try to copy each other. Each country has its own authentic journey with its particular cultural codes. Uniformity is not the solution. In my opinion, this is also true regarding gender roles. As women, we should celebrate our own identity rather than try to imitate men. We can make this world a better place in so many ways by acknowledging our incredible natural capabilities, among them our power to create and give birth.



Harmony.

So on International Women's Day, I would like to celebrate women while acknowledging the challenges and problems that we face in today's world. Women should be inspired to develop their capacities to the highest levels in both their professional and private lives.

Access to education plays a major role in this. Girls and women must be enabled to find their path and obtain an education. Knowledge gives confidence, and successful people, whether men or women, share this common feature: they radiate confidence and have faith in their journey.

I have dedicated more than 20 years of my life to equestrian dressage, an Olympic discipline. In this international sport, women are the majority of champions and historically have competed together with men in the same classes. This discipline is based on harmony, sensitivity, detail, perfection, and elegance, and in this field of play, women have a very strong position – statistics and results prove this point.

So with this article, I wish to send my love to all the women who struggle to find their way. I would like to encourage you to first acknowledge the incredible creative power you have, and I implore you not to hesitate but to trust and stand with confidence on your feet, walking your own authentic path.

As we run the marathon that aims to achieve global gender equality, please, remember your nature, your source of strength, because your source is your treasure, the feature that makes you unique. Don't let our different cultural backgrounds divide us as women. Diversity is beautiful! If we learn to celebrate our nature, we will be able to develop on a deeper level in all the fields of our lives. I am convinced that such a journey is rooted in acts of creating rather than fighting.



Capturing the media.

Diana Al Shaer is an athlete, a sports and cultural diplomat, and the founder of the media platform PaliRus. She has represented Palestine as a dressage rider at the International Grand Prix and is the first Arab woman to compete at the World Equestrian Championships in dressage. She currently serves as president of the International Amateur's Equestrian Association, chairwoman of the dressage committee in the FEI Group 7 (MENA region), and board member of the Palestine Equestrian Federation (department of foreign affairs).



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