

Men & Mental Health

Stats

Approximately 6 million men in the U.S. suffer from depression. An estimated 1 in 5 males will develop alcohol dependency issues in their lifetime. More men than women die by suicide, and suicide is consistently one of the top 10 leading causes of death for males in the United States. (Sources: Mental Health America / National Institute of Mental Health.)

Despite these sobering statistics, males still represent an underserved population in terms of mental health treatment. According to Mental Health America, men are less likely than women to seek treatment for behavioral health issues such as depression and substance abuse due to a reluctance to talk, social norms, and the downplaying of symptoms.



Like diabetes or heart disease...

One way to destigmatize mental health treatment is to regard mental health issues, such as depression or anxiety, as analogous to physical health conditions such as diabetes or heart disease. In fact, leaving mental health issues untreated can have an adverse impact on one's overall physical health.

- Severe, chronic mental health issues can lead to decreased life expectancy.
- Chronic conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease, can lead to increased risk for mental health issues.
- There is a correlation between negative emotions and heart attacks, as well as other potentially fatal physical problems.

Why it's tough to talk

We are all products of our environment and upbringing, and for a long time and even to this day, the cultural messaging that men receive is "be tough." "Rely on yourself because there's no one else you can rely on." "Don't air your laundry in public." "Never ask for help." "Pull yourself up by your bootstraps."

The truth is everyone experiences difficulties in life from time to time. We all have setbacks, disappointments, fears, and insecurities. The problem with not acknowledging or refusing to talk about these issues is that, when you repress something, it almost invariably comes out in other, possibly harmful ways: isolation, self-harm, angry and/or violent outbursts, alcohol or substance use ("self-medicating").

Giving voice to our struggles and finding productive ways to cope with them always lead to better outcomes – maybe not instantly, but eventually, as more is revealed. To do this, one has to ask for help.

Imagine pulling yourself up by your bootstraps. Think of all the effort you'd have to put in to achieve this. But guess what? You *can't*. Pulling yourself up by your bootstraps is physically impossible – in fact, the original meaning of this phrase referred to impossible tasks. But it only takes a moment to accept someone else's hand and to begin the process of lifting yourself up, improving not only your life, but the lives of others around you as well.

10 ways to get back in the zone

1. Take a walk.
2. Call a friend.
3. Volunteer.
4. Work out.
5. Make a playlist.
6. Cook a healthy meal.
7. Watch a movie that inspires you.
8. Read a book that motivates you.
9. Take care of a project you've been putting off.
10. Do something nice for yourself.



Athletes need coaches

Just as a world-class athlete still needs a coach to provide motivation and point out blind spots, we all sometimes need outside support. Even if we have a lot of insight, knowledge, and awareness, having that objective third party listener as a sounding board and an ally is invaluable.

If you've never worked with a counselor or a life enhancement coach before, you might be surprised how incredibly beneficial such a professional relationship can be. When we talk to friends or loved ones, there is a "give and take." We might also feel an unspoken pressure to be positive, take the lead, and mask our true feelings about a given situation. With a counselor or a coach, it's all about you – the real and unfiltered you.

This is where your Ulliance Life Advisor comes in handy. Free and confidential assistance is always available for any and all work/life issues. You have this tool at your disposal, why not put it to some use?

**For more information, tools, resources, or app information, call your
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for you & your family.**

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