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# 5 ways to Support Men's Mental Health and Raise Awareness

By Dr. Mifrah Sherwani & Ateeq Syed - <https://tinyurl.com/MMHT1222>



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**The discourse around mental health has made huge progress, but men's well-being is still inadequately addressed.**
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**Societal pressures and the prevailing cultural narrative surrounding masculinity often hinders men from addressing their emotional struggles.**
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**We identified five key strategies to help support men's mental health and increase awareness.**

**While** many strides have been made in serious mental health conversations, one crucial aspect remains inadequately addressed: men's mental well-being. The prevailing societal narrative surrounding masculinity often inhibits men from acknowledging and confronting their emotional challenges. Traits like strength, emotional resilience, and stoicism are typically associated with masculinity, and may inadvertently hinder men from seeking help, leading to adverse consequences for their mental health.

Empirical data presents a somber reality. The World Health Organization (WHO) states that depression is the primary cause of disability worldwide. Affecting both men and women but men are particularly reluctant to seek help for mental health issues. Men are 3.56 times more likely to die from suicide compared to women in the United States, according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. This shocking figure highlights the need for immediate action.

Breaking the stereotype associated with seeking treatment is essential to treating men's mental health. Men are discouraged from asking for help because they are told it shows a sign of weakness and weakness is not something a man should ever show, which is reinforced by societal norms. Underreporting exacerbates the stigma, since men may choose to hide their feelings or symptoms to project strength in the face of social pressure.

In addition, men often utilize unhealthy coping strategies, such as substance misuse, to deal with mental health issues. This makes their illness worse and puts more obstacles in the way of getting professional assistance. Mental health problems and substance abuse often coexist, creating a vicious cycle that is challenging to escape on one's own.

Men's access to mental health services is further hampered by a lack of awareness about available resources and financial barriers. Furthermore, the intersectional problems that males from marginalized communities confront about their race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic position have a substantial impact on their experiences with mental health. Therefore, to properly address these complex demands, mental health must embrace intersectional approaches.

### The burden of accountability: monetary stress

Men are frequently expected to provide financial stability in their families as the main breadwinner. Their mental health may be severely impacted by their responsibility, especially in uncertain economic times. One of the biggest sources of stress for males is money, which can lead to anxiety, depression, and other mental health problems. To make matters worse, men are expected by society to quietly carry this weight, which exacerbates the pain.



### Addressing emotional well-being and loneliness

One of the important components of men's mental health is emotional well-being, and loneliness is often overlooked, yet significant. Society's emphasis on stoicism and emotional restraint can leave men feeling isolated and unable to express their true feelings. The pressure to conform to traditional masculine norms can inhibit authentic emotional connections and contribute to a sense of loneliness. Moreover, societal expectations regarding relationships may add additional stress, particularly for those who struggle to meet perceived standards of success in their romantic or familial relationships. Addressing emotional well-being and loneliness is essential for promoting holistic mental health among men. Encouraging open communication, fostering supportive relationships, and challenging stereotypes around emotional expression and relationships are vital steps in promoting men's mental well-being and reducing feelings of isolation and loneliness.



### Breaking the silence: advancing support and awareness for mental health

The rising issues of men's mental health require urgent measures. To offer assistance and increase awareness, the following are helpful strategies:

#### 1. Make help-seeking behaviours commonplace

We can normalize help-seeking behaviours by encouraging open communication. Public education will play an important role in this by opening up the conversation on the importance of men's mental health.

#### 2. Reimagine masculinity

We can help break stereotypes and motivate men to prioritize their mental health by presenting role models that possess attributes such as vulnerability, empathy, and emotional expressiveness.





### 3. Early intervention and accessible resources

Treatment and early detection of men's health problems are essential. Men can get timely support if the treatments are available and made culturally sensitive as well as if options are more widely publicized.

### 4. Embrace interconnectedness

It's critical to understand the relationships between men's experiences with mental health. Interventions designed to address the unique needs of men from a variety of backgrounds, help close care gaps and advance fair access to mental health treatments.

### 5. Take a complex approach

Legislative measures, educational programmes, and public awareness campaigns are all necessary components of a comprehensive strategy for men's mental health by lowering stigma, expanding access to care, and creating supportive environments.

## Global cooperation on men's mental health

Promoting men's mental health awareness is a global issue that requires collaboration. We can build a society where everyone is motivated to prioritize their mental well-being by eliminating barriers to care, acknowledging the challenges faced by men, and promoting strong male role models. Men's mental health needs to be given the consideration and assistance it merits, and the only way we can do this is by cooperating and demonstrating unwavering dedication. 🌍

## Thoughts from Chris on Men's Mental Health & Suicide

I've been at a loss for words since learning about PGA Tour member Grayson Murray, who died by suicide on Saturday, May 25th. Often times, suicide is something that many do not wish to talk about; something that is so obscure and (until it comes into their life) impossible to fathom. The truth is that it is a very real action, taken by those who feel like there may be no other choice, and something that affects families every single day, somewhere in the world.

There is no minimum bar for what you're feeling and whether it's proper to pursue mental health services. None. If you feel like you are not yourself and are dealing with emotions or thoughts that you don't know how to process, you may want to seek a professional therapist to work through those feelings. Sadly, because of our society's perception of mental health, and certainly men's mental health, many may not seek help. No matter what their reasoning may be.

Whether you and I are friends, close or not, or maybe even if you just happened to read this newsletter and are curious about using your EAP to access mental health services and would like to engage in some real talk or discussions about questions you may have, please reach out to me (906.440.3094). I am not a therapist, and I may not have all of the answers, but I do not want you to harm yourself or anyone else because of something you may be going through. There is always a path towards help, but you need to ask for that help first. 🧑