



# Supporting Men's Mental Health in Your Workplace

Strategies to promote men's well-being in your organization

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# The Current State of Men's Mental Health

Throughout this guide, we use the term men to indicate gender expression, which includes all people identifying as men.

Men's mental health isn't commonly discussed or top of mind, but should be taken more seriously. Men have fallen behind in critical areas of well-being, and the consequences can be severe:

## Men's Mental Health in the United States

 **4x**

Men are almost four times as likely to die by suicide as women

 **2x**

Men are almost twice as likely to binge drink than women and three times as likely to die from alcohol abuse

**49%**

of men feel more depressed than they admit to people in their lives



Men are less likely to voice struggles with mental health or seek help



# Key Contributors to Men's Mental Health Concerns

## Masculinity stereotypes

Traditional masculinity is often associated with leadership, independence, stoicism, and bravery. There's a perception that men should be able to push past their feelings and be independent, which often prevents them from seeking care when needed. Unfortunately, there's also a persistent stigma that speaking out about mental health is a sign of weakness. Stigma falls into two categories:

**Self-stigma:** Internalized and often unconscious ideals of courage, leadership, and assertiveness that men believe are core to their identity.

**Social stigma:** Societal expectations that strength involves self-sufficiency (not needing help) and being action-oriented (not talking about mental health) for men.

## Family and financial responsibilities

While more women than ever are family breadwinners, men still feel pressure to be providers, protectors, and heads of their households. Men often face financial stress and prioritize job security and stability over well-being. This intense feeling of responsibility makes it much more difficult to admit concern, express vulnerability, and seek support.

## Childhood experiences

In many areas of the world, boys are socialized to downplay symptoms of distress, punished for expressing vulnerability, or aren't given the tools to recognize and verbalize their feelings. Common societal messaging includes:

- Dismissal of emotional expression from boys who try to communicate their feelings, or recommending that they "toughen up" or take action rather than validating feelings.
- A greater acceptance of short-term self-management strategies like substance use, aggressive behavior, or isolation from others.



# Experiences of Men in the Workplace

Work can boost men's mental health by providing a sense of purpose, an opportunity to support others and important initiatives, social connection, and improved confidence. Forward-thinking organizations prioritize employee well-being by creating policies that [support work-life balance](#) and [reduce burnout](#). However, work can be intense by its very nature, and a large number of men report feelings of stress. According to a [Men's Health Forum survey](#) of 1,112 employed men in the United Kingdom:

**34% agreed or strongly agreed** that they were "constantly feeling stressed or under pressure.

**11% reported** they were prompted to take time off to go to the doctor because of prolonged feelings of sadness.

**38% would be concerned** that their employer would think badly of them if they took time off work for a mental health concern.

## Workplace factors that impact men's mental health

Some aspects of work can lead to reduced well-being in all genders, including fast-paced careers, high work volumes, or limited resources. Certain factors, however, are more likely to predict poor mental health in men:

- A lack of opportunity for job or career growth
- Low job security or short-term contracts
- A lack of clarity about job responsibilities
- Inadequate training and the expectation to "figure it out" independently
- Poor communication with team leaders or coworkers

## Signs of distress in the workplace:

Managers should be trained to spot signs of distress in employees and understand how they may look different for men and women. For men, signs of distress are more likely to include:

- Overworking or underworking
- Changes in communication
- Increased absenteeism
- Decreased performance
- Irritability, aggression, or lower frustration tolerance
- Reduced time spent with coworkers



# How To Support Men's Mental Health at Your Organization

## Normalize Men's Mental Health at Work

### Challenge outdated stereotypes by having male role models talk about mental health

- How often do male leaders at your organization openly discuss their experiences with stress or depression? These men have the power to frame mental health care as normal behavior and display that vulnerability is a strength. **Consider having male senior leaders or managers speak about their mental health journeys.** Leaders can deliver these messages in all-hands, team, or one-on-one meetings or via email, internal chat, or your company blog.
- Ensure male leaders promote health and well-being benefits like Modern Health by sharing how they use them. Male employees will be more inclined to use Modern Health and participate in mental health conversations when they know their organization is a supportive space to do so.

### Create community spaces

Experiencing a sense of connection and social support may improve men's well-being at work. Create supportive spaces, such as employee resource groups (ERGs) or internal chat channels, where male peers can go to support each other.

### Be creative with your mental health messaging

A strategy that may help combat stigma is to be clever with messaging around mental health topics. Men are more likely than women to tune out when hearing terms like "mental health," "well-being," or "wellness." However, men are also more likely to take action if they have a practical issue to solve. For example, using terms like "burnout" or "overload" in the context of work-related stress may be beneficial in helping men acknowledge potential issues.



## For men seeking further support, share links to these leading men's mental health organizations:

[Movember](#) — A leading charity that funds projects to help men live happier, healthier, longer lives.

[The Face It Foundation](#) — Empowers men to face depression, take control of their recovery, and get their lives back.

[Men's Health Network](#) — A non-profit organization with a mission to promote men's health awareness and disease prevention.

[HeadsUpGuys](#) — Health strategies to help men manage and prevent depression.

## Promote All Benefits and Acts of Self-Care

### Encourage men to use paid time off

By not using allotted PTO, men put themselves at greater risk of experiencing the potentially serious consequences of stress and burnout. Paid time off provides an opportunity to take a break, relax, and recharge. Using PTO has its benefits:

- **Decreased burnout:** Men who take time off are less likely to experience burnout and will be more productive than their overworked, under-rested coworkers. Avoiding burnout and stress reduces the risk of medical concerns.
- **Improved mental health:** Time off can improve mood and reduce feelings of depression and anxiety by providing a break from potentially stressful activities and environments.
- **Happiness and contentment:** Time off allows men time to do other things that make them happy. Doing enjoyable activities activates critical reward pathways in the brain that stimulate the hormones and neurotransmitters that provide a sense of well-being.



### **Facilitate opportunities for self-care**

Self-care can be challenging, given that men often prioritize the needs of family or loved ones over their own. During work, encourage all employees to take 5-10 minute breaks throughout the day to engage in healthy behaviors such as:

- Exercise and healthy eating
- Self-monitoring and pacing
- Regular check-ins with colleagues, family, and friends
- Brief relaxation or stress management breaks
- Time-outs for basic bodily care and refreshment
- Mindfulness or meditation breaks

### **Ensure parental leave benefits are equitable**

Soon-to-be parents often feel pressure to provide the best possible start for their little ones. Benefits like parental leave can provide much-needed time away from work to care for and bond with a new child. Unfortunately, paternity leave is less likely to be offered by employers than maternity leave — and men are less likely to take it when available. If your organization offers parental leave, benefits should be equitable for both genders, and men should be empowered to take time off when starting a family.

### **Offer flexible work schedules**

It can be helpful to provide flexible work schedules to support men who are caretakers or have family obligations. Flexibility could mean having the ability to work from home part-time or full-time or take time off during the day for appointments or childcare. Flexible schedules can also improve the ability of men to access mental health care. Be sure to acknowledge that flexible schedules benefit all employees.

## **Make It Easy for Men To Get Mental Health Support**

### **Help men identify potential mental health concerns**

Men in the workplace may be curious about potential mental health issues but reluctant to ask questions or seek help. To help men get further support when needed, provide confidential self-screening materials for symptoms of depression, anxiety, and risk of self-harm via email, common areas throughout your workplace or other internal communication channels.



In addition, men who sign up for Modern Health take a **well-being assessment**, which serves as a checkup for mental health. The assessment is chosen based on rigorous evidence showing it can effectively estimate a person's well-being at that time. Results provide a brief snapshot of well-being and help Modern Health create a personalized wellness plan to address individual needs.

### **Harness the power of mental health coaching**

Modern Health coaching is the process through which a certified coach uses evidence-based methods to help clients gain a deeper awareness of a non-clinical situation, identify growth opportunities, and create action plans to move toward their goals.

**Men may respond favorably to coaching, which takes an action-oriented approach to addressing specific concerns.** Men can work with coaches to tackle crucial areas of well-being:

- Building healthy habits
- Reducing stress
- Financial well-being
- Burnout, productivity, and professional skills
- Anxiety around relationships

Share these resources to help your employees get started with coaching:

- [Your Guide to Coaching](#)
- **Video:** [How Can Coaching Help Me?](#)

### **Learn how to create psychological safety within your team**

Psychological safety refers to an individual's belief that their environment is safe for risk-taking, without worry that they will be seen as incompetent, negative, or disruptive. Fostering a psychologically safe environment starts with creating norms that enable employees to raise concerns and be vulnerable about their challenges (including mental health). Men who experience psychological safety at work may be more likely to reach their optimal level of well-being, which ultimately contributes to better mental health.

Share with your employees Modern Health's [Creating Psychological Safety program](#), where they'll learn about psychological safety and explore ideas for building it at work.



# Modern Health Resources for Men



## One-On-One Care

Modern Health can match employees with a certified coach or therapist trained in evidence-based methods to support their unique needs. Modern Health's network includes providers who specialize in addressing issues that men commonly have concerns about. Additionally, all appointments can be held virtually through the Modern Health app. Your employees can access care anywhere with a secure online connection and some privacy. They can work one-on-one with a provider to:

- Discuss financial stress or receive financial coaching
- Recognize and improve professional skills and career planning
- Navigate balancing the demands of work with other life domains like relationships and maintaining overall wellness
- Receive evidence-based therapy for symptoms of anxiety, depression, substance use issues, and burnout

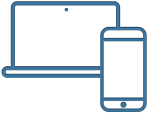
[Get matched with a provider today!](#)



## Circles

Circles are live group sessions led by Modern Health therapists and coaches. Your employees will walk away from each session with skills to navigate challenges that may impact them at work, at home, or in their relationships. Circles help employees proactively improve mental health, and they have unlimited access. We host recurring and on-demand Circles on topics that support men's mental health. Check out our [Circles page](#) to sign up for a session!





## Self-Guided Digital Resources

With Modern Health, your employees have access to digital resources on-demand 24/7 with self-serve care options they can engage with at their own pace. These resources include digital programs, guided meditations, and courses, including our:

- [Sharing Thoughts & Feelings audio program](#)
- [Timeout for Self-Compassion audio program](#)
- [The Reset: Managing Stress audio program](#)
- [Understanding Communication Patterns in Relationships program](#)
- [Building a Strong and Safe Support System program](#)
- [Building Relationships course](#)
- [Skills for Navigating Intense Emotions course](#)



### Modern Health Pathways

Modern Health Pathways is a premium one-on-one care offering designed to accelerate outcomes across specialized areas of need in a matter of weeks. Each Pathway is structured to drive targeted growth in a specific focus area through a series of modules that combine one-on-one sessions with a dedicated Pathway Specialist, evidence-based exercises, and tailored assessments.

Our Workplace Well-being Pathways collection is a great resource to help you prioritize mental health at work. This collection supports managers and employees through targeted work-related challenges — like resolving conflicts, managing mindfully, or tackling imposter syndrome. If you are interested in including Pathways in your existing Modern Health benefits, [schedule a call with our experts](#) to learn more.

