

TOP TIPS ON HOW TO TALK TO MEN

Many men find it hard to talk to people if they are struggling with feeling low or blue.

This toolkit has some information, hints and tips about how you can communicate with men that are feeling unhappy.



DON'T JUST TALK – LISTEN

Men may not always want to admit when they are struggling and may not take advice easily. Make contact or reach out to a man who appears to be struggling – just a simple conversation can make his day or help him to open up if he is feeling overwhelmed and doesn't know how to deal with his symptoms. You don't need to be an expert on his situation.

TREAT HIM NORMALLY

Don't patronise or belittle him. Make him feel like he can be himself around you. Talk about what you've both been doing that week or about current events. There's no point trying to tell him to 'snap out of it' or telling him 'it will all get better'. Men need to feel like they aren't being judged and that they have someone who will listen and not make discriminations against them.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Make yourself or someone else readily available to chat if he needs. This shows him that he is not alone in dealing with his issues, and always has someone available to speak to. If he does not feel like opening up straight away, give him some opportunity to talk at another time if he needs to. It's the little things that count – sending a text message to check that he is okay is a huge help and can turn his day around.

BE PATIENT

There is no quick fix when it comes to treating a mental health problem. Slow progress may be frustrating to the sufferer in particular so being patient and helping him to get better in his own time will be more beneficial to him. Make him feel relaxed and don't pressure him.

ENCOURAGE HIM TO JOIN IN

If you think a man is struggling and retreating into himself, try to suggest a few new activities or places to go to keep him active and social. You could even suggest going along with him for support if he seems daunted by the task. This can offer a distraction from his feelings and help him to relax a bit more.

ENCOURAGE HELP

See the HeadsUp toolbox and Happy Man sections or signpost him to the online assessment tools and if needs be encourage and support him to seek appropriate professional help.

EDUCATE YOURSELF

Learn about issues surrounding mental health and the major symptoms of what he is going through. He will appreciate that you have taken the time and effort to learn about how he is feeling, and it can also help you to feel closer to him as well.

Want to know how to identify, understand and help a person who may have or be developing a mental health problem? [Click here for Buckinghamshire MIND Mental Health First Aid Training.](#)

TIPS ON BEGINNING A CONVERSATION:

- *Are you feeling okay today?*
- *I noticed you looked a bit down, is there anything you would like to chat to me about?*
- *You don't seem yourself at the moment, is something bothering you?*

QUESTIONS THAT YOU COULD ASK TO HELP HIM OPEN UP MIGHT BE:

- *Do you know when you started to feel like this?*
- *Has something happened in your life that might have triggered these feelings?*
- *Is there anything I can do for you at the moment?*
- *Have you been in touch with somebody for help?*

Information adapted from Mind, Rethink and HelpGuide.org

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Mind Website
www.mind.org.uk

CALM
www.thecalmzone.net

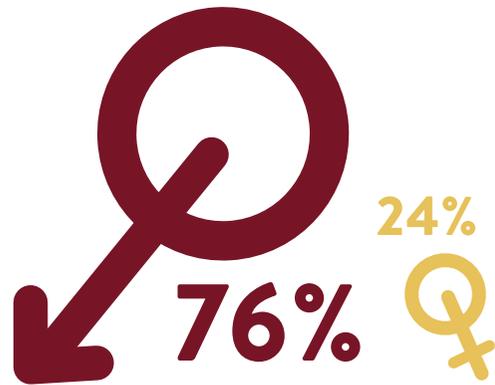
Time to Change
www.time-to-change.org.uk

Rethink
www.rethink.org

70 MILLION

days are taken off work per year in the UK due to some form of mental distress (e.g. depression, anxiety or stress), which makes it the primary reason for work absence.

[Source: Mental Health Foundation](#)



During 2014, **4,623 men** killed themselves in the UK, which accounted for 76% of all suicides.

2,873 of them were aged 30-59.

[Source: CALM](#)

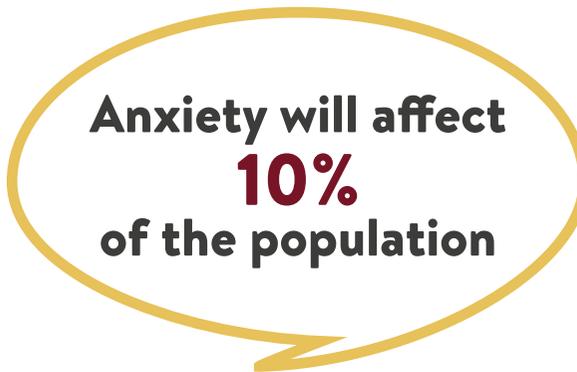
73% of adults that go missing are male.

[Source: menshealthforum.org.uk](#)



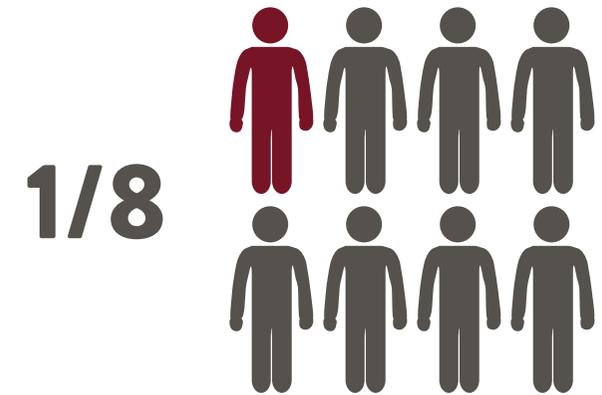
of all people will suffer from depression at some point in their lifetime.

[Source: Royal College of Psychiatrists](#)



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At any given point in time, **1 in 5 women (19.7%)** and **1 in 8 men (12.5%)** are diagnosed with a common mental health issue such as depression, anxiety, OCD and panic disorders.



[Source: C. Deverill and M. King \(2009\)](#)

14% of men (35-44yrs old) would see a GP if they felt low, compared to **37% of women**

[Source: MIND](#)