

Masculinities and Men's Mental Health: Evidence, Engagement, and Clinical Practice

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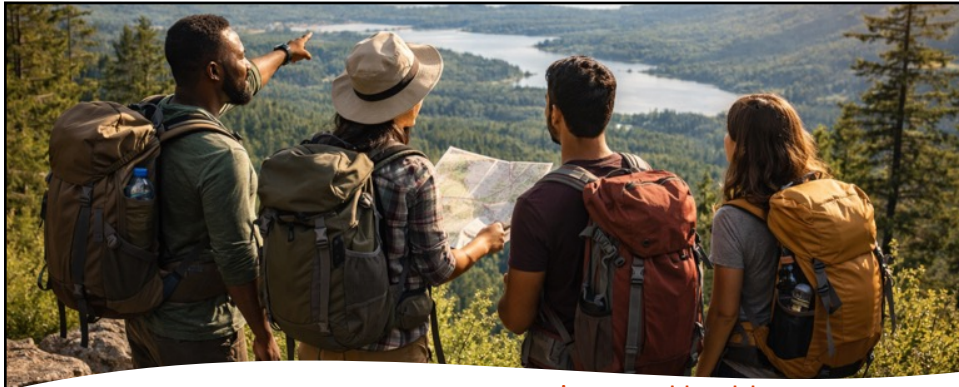
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A Little About Me

- 16 years at Boise State U
- Licensed psychologist
- Working on men's mental health since 2002
- Husband and father
- Grew up in West Texas/Texas Panhandle
- My Nebraska connection
- My goal(s) today...



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Where are we Going Today?

1. Progress on men's mental health
2. What does it mean to be a man?
3. Health disparities
4. Suicide in men
5. Barriers to help-seeking
6. Men's experiences online
7. Social connections and relationships
8. Supporting men's mental health



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The new crisis of masculinity
What's the matter with men — and how do we fix it?

By Sean Illing
Aug 1, 2023, 4:30 AM EDT



OUTRAGE
DAVID BECKWITH

The Crisis of Men and Boys
JULY 19, 2023



THE CRISIS OF MEN
Opinion | Men are lost. Here's a map out of the wilderness.



The Current Conversation?



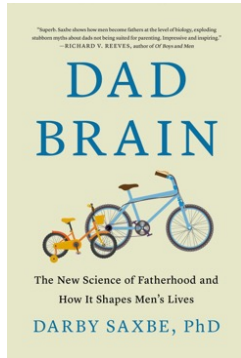
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The Current Conversation

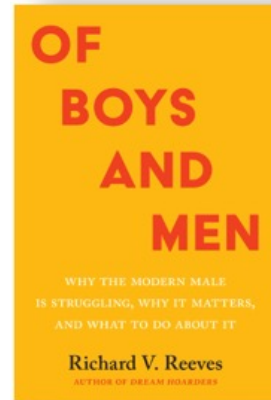
BOOKS WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH MEN?

They're floundering at school and in the workplace. Some conservatives blame a crisis of masculinity, but the problems—and their solutions—are far more complex.

By Idrees Kahloon
January 23, 2023



OPINION JESSICA GROSE The 'Boy Crisis' Is Overblown July 23, 2023



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Progress on
Men's Mental
Health

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Progress on Men's Mental Health

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Progress: Research on Men's Health

RESEARCH — MENTAL HEALTH

Male suicide: Patterns and recent trends

Nov 17, 2023 | by Richard V. Reeves, Will Secker

State of American Men
2025

equimundo



The Real Face of Men's Health

2025 UNITED STATES REPORT

NOVEMBER INSTITUTE
OF MEN'S HEALTH
PIONEERING LIVING RESEARCH

RESEARCH — MENTAL HEALTH

Data Spotlight: Suicide deaths among young men

Sep 10, 2025 | by Ravan Hawrami, Richard V. Reeves

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The State of Men & Masculinity

What does it mean to be a man right now?



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The State of Masculinity

What does it mean to be a man in 2025/2026?

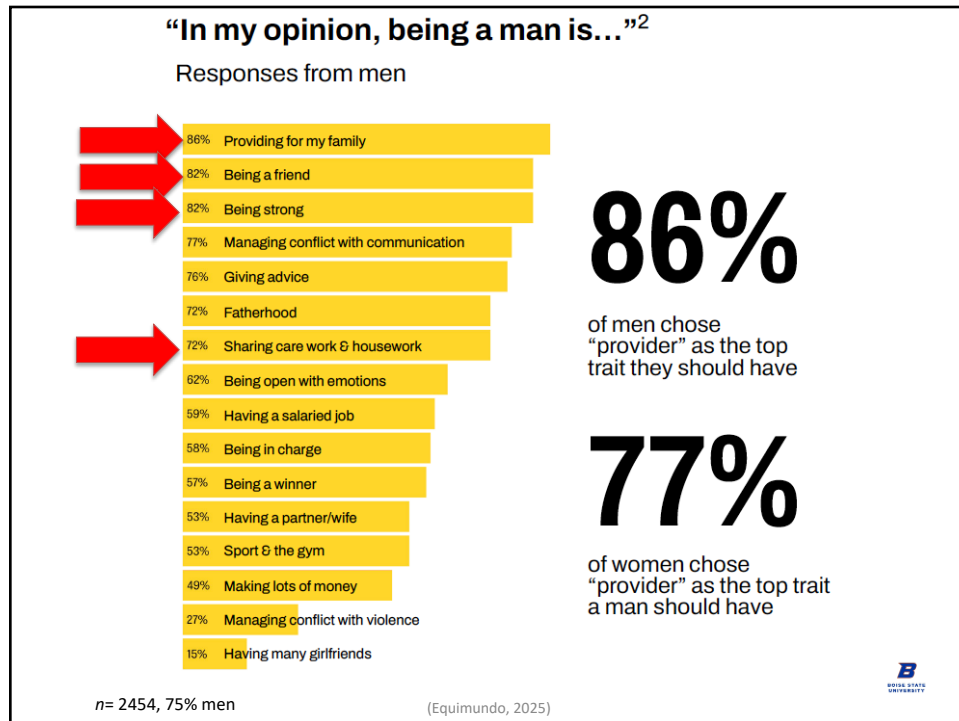
Exercise: (2 minutes)

Write down a few thoughts on your answer to the following question:

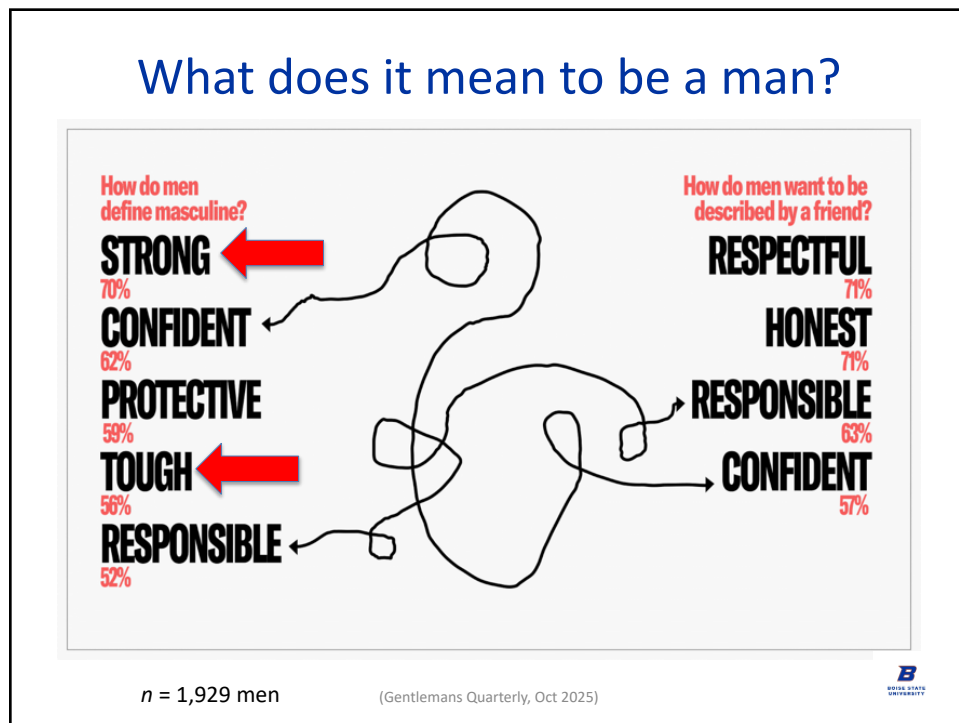
What does it mean to be a “good man”?



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Positive Attributes Expected More of Men

- Physically Strong/tough ←
- Being assertive
- Being athletic
- Being direct and straightforward
- Using strength to protect loved ones ←
- Being a hero
- Being a leader
- Being confident ←
- Being brave
- Daring to take risks
- Having street smarts

(McDermott et al., 2019)

n = 1077 men and women

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Health Disparities

- Largely preventable and measurable differences in health that exists between specific population groups (NIH, 2026)
- Largely preventable health differences that contribute to adverse health outcomes, especially among populations who experience greater challenges to optimal health (NIMH, 2026)
- Not “zero-sum” though (Reeves, 2022)



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Some of the Largest Gaps

Men's Mental Health Disparities

- Suicide death
- Drug overdoses
- Other accidental deaths
- Homicides
- Help seeking for mental health care

(CDC, 2024)

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Men and Early Death

Take a quick moment and write down your guesses for the top 5 leading causes of early death for men in the US. (1 min)



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Men's Health: Premature Death

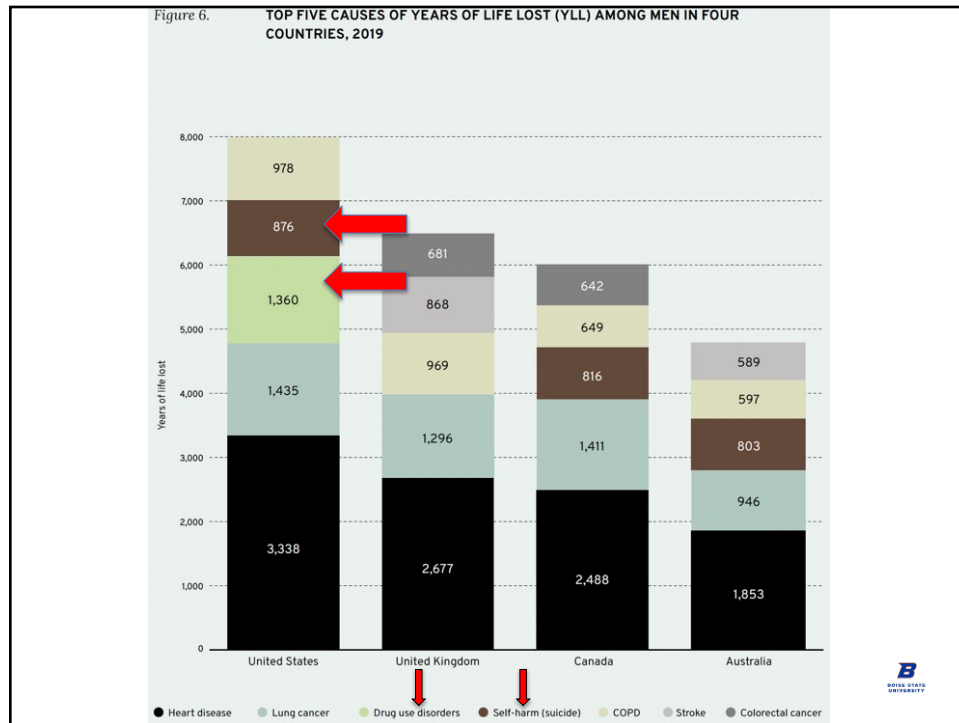
Leading Causes of Premature Mortality:

1. Heart Disease (223.9/100,000)
2. Cancer (193.5/100,000)
3. Accidents (unintentional injuries/ODs, 77.1/100,000)
4. Cerebrovascular diseases (43.5/100,000)
5. Chronic lower respiratory diseases (40.3/100,000)
6. Diabetes (32.1/100,000)
7. Suicide (23.2/100,000)

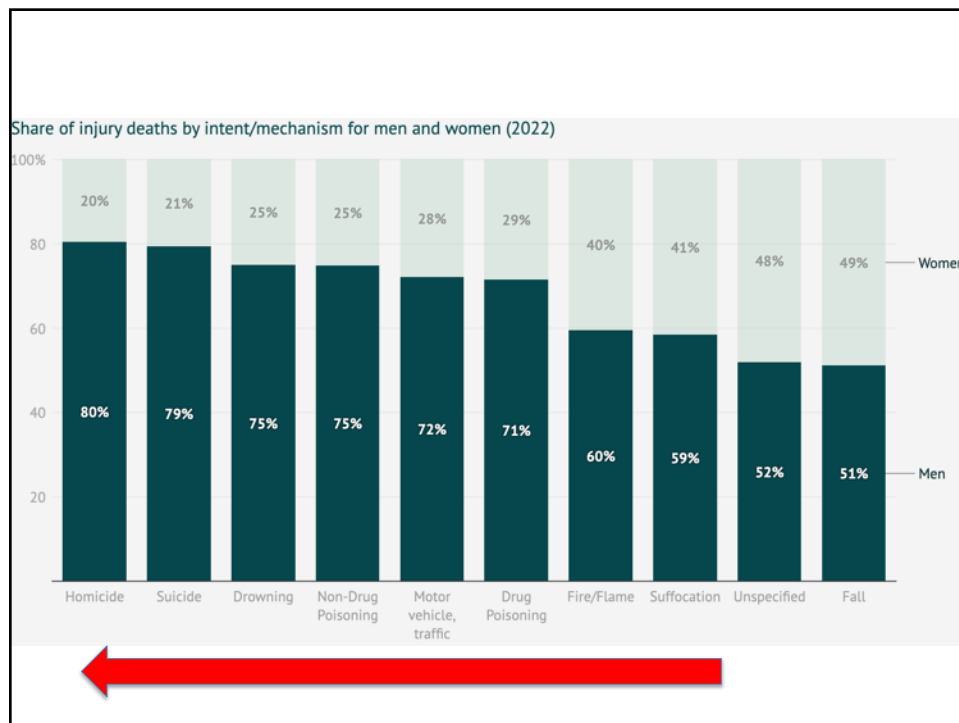
(CDC, 2026)



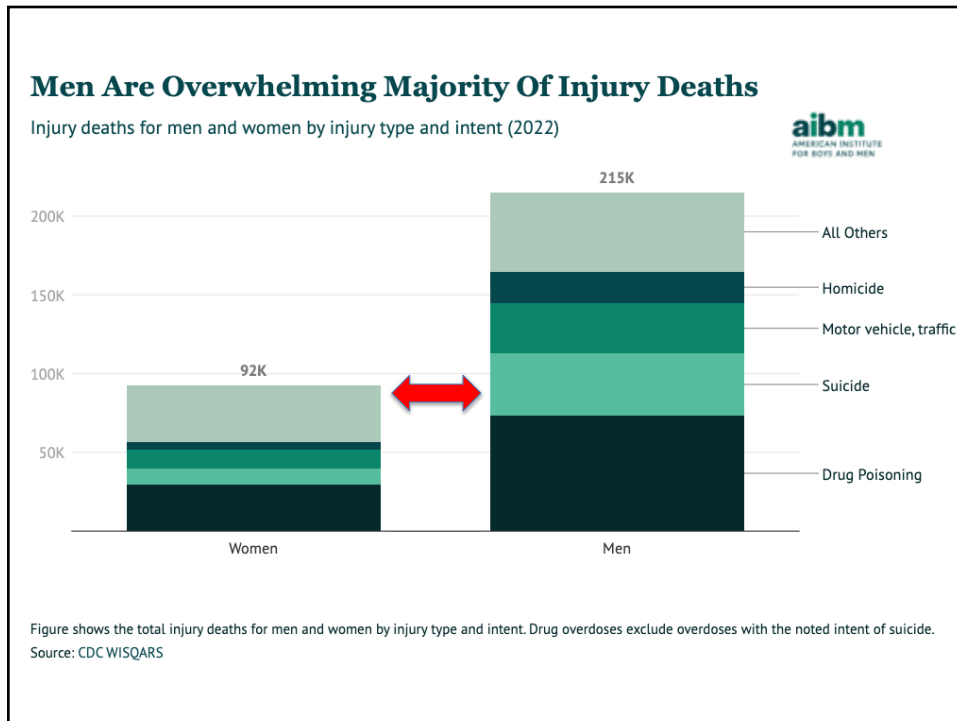
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A Men's Mental Health Crisis: Suicide

4x women (Garnet et al., 2022)

4th leading cause of premature mortality (Griffith et al., 2025)

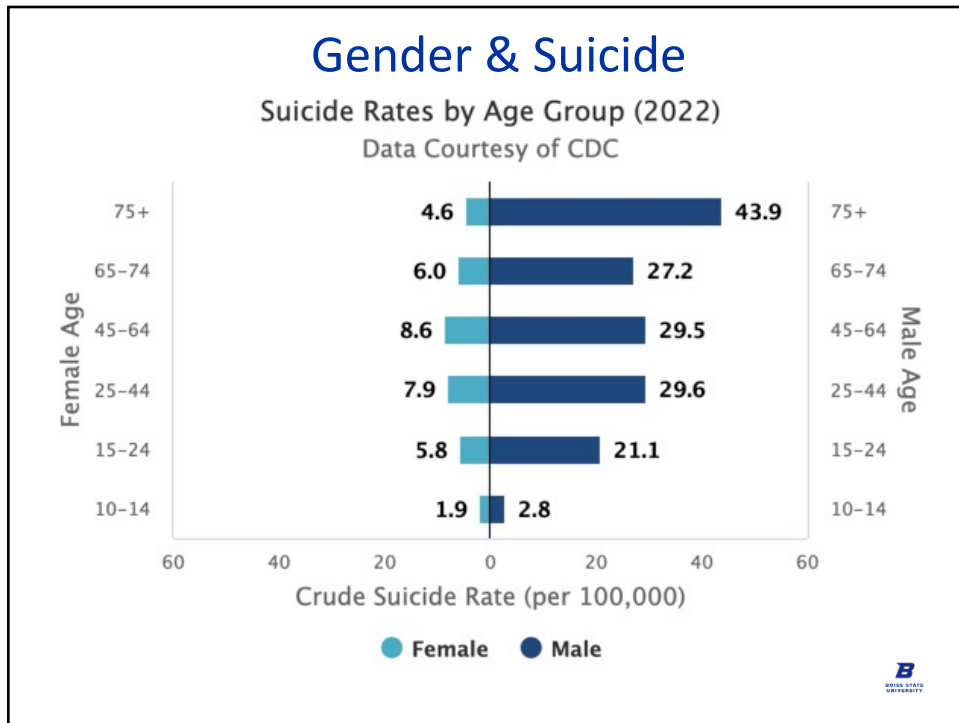
729,898 deaths from 2001-2023 (CDC, 2026)

39,000 men died each year in 2022/2023 (CDC, 2023)

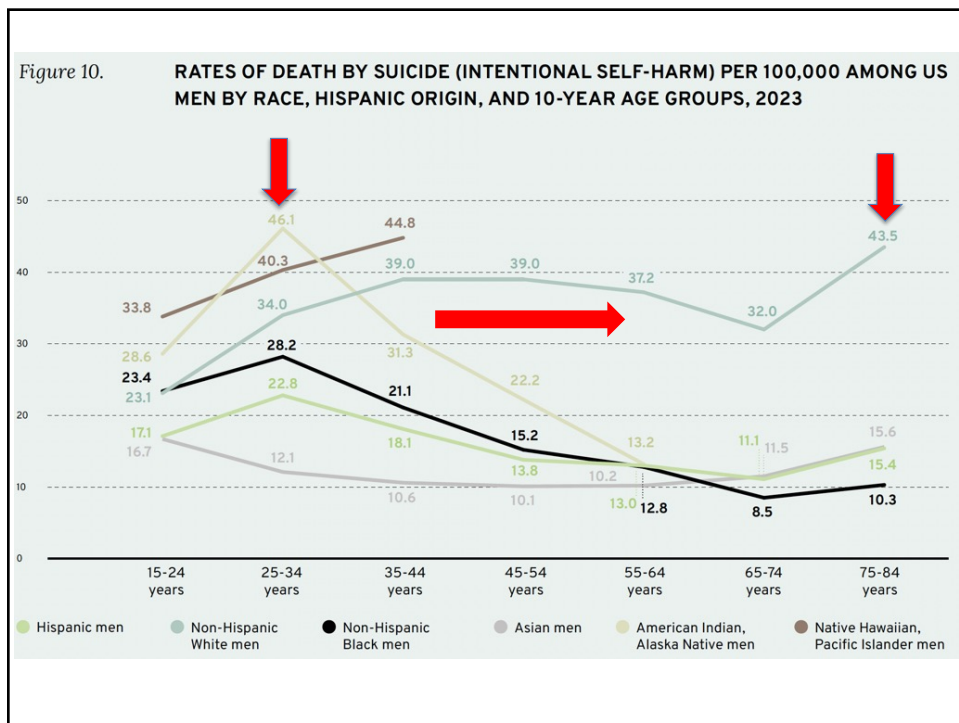
17,715,407 (2001-2020) years of premature life lost prior to age 75 (CDC, 2026)

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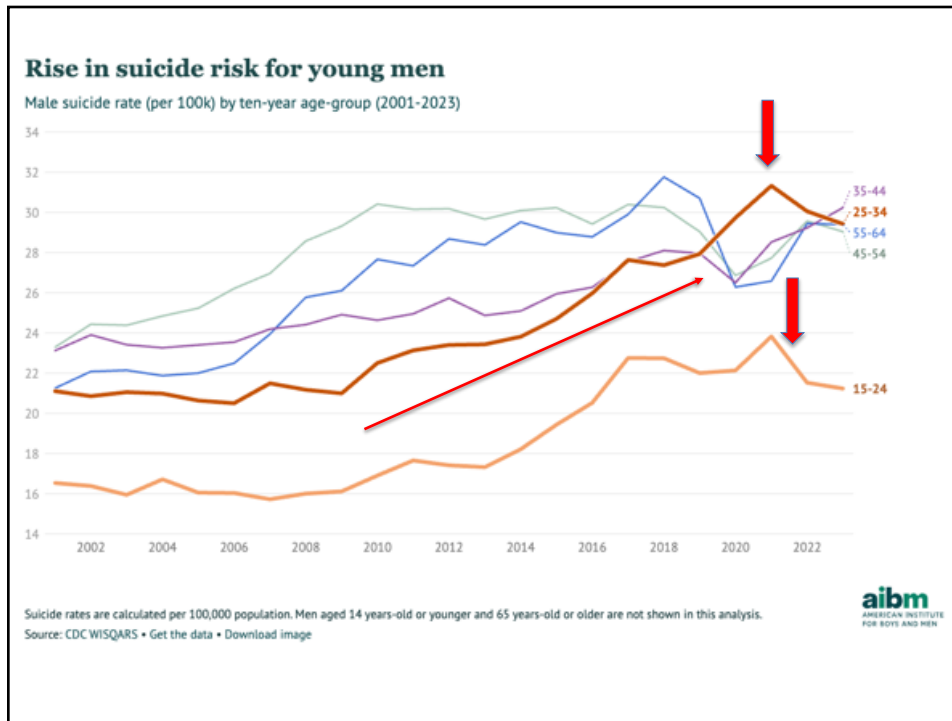
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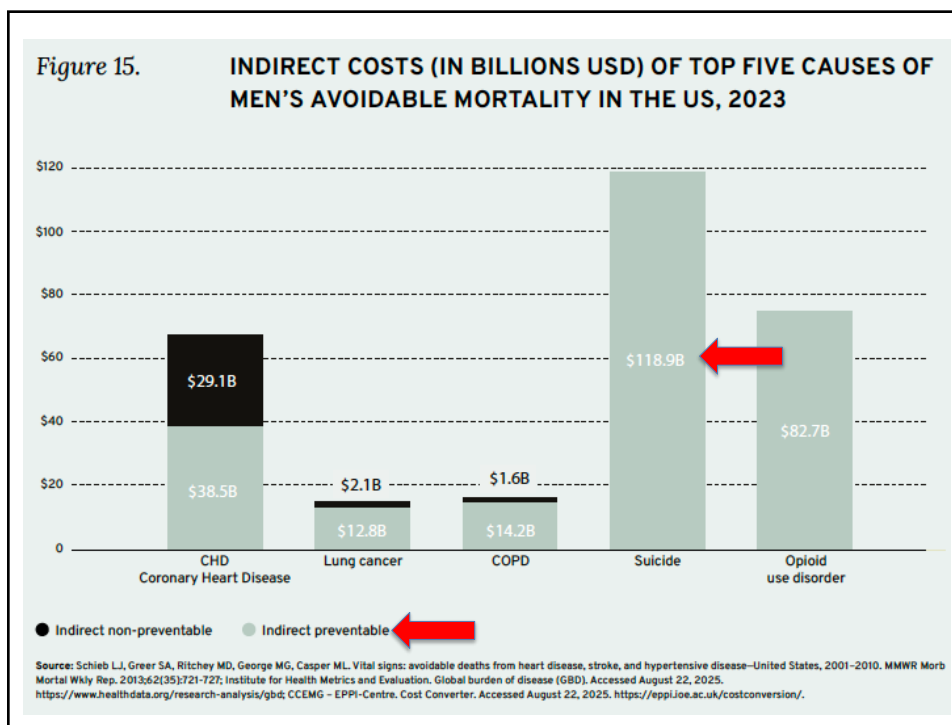
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Men's Mental Health

25% of men aged 18-34 & 35-39 reported mental ill-health in last year

Rates of mental ill-health go down with age, 40-64 (12%), 65+(8%)

Rates of mental ill-health have *increased* in young men, 18-25 (73%), 30-34 (85%), 18-39 (60%)

Seek out mental health care at lower rates than women, though rates have *increased*

(Griffith et al., 2025)



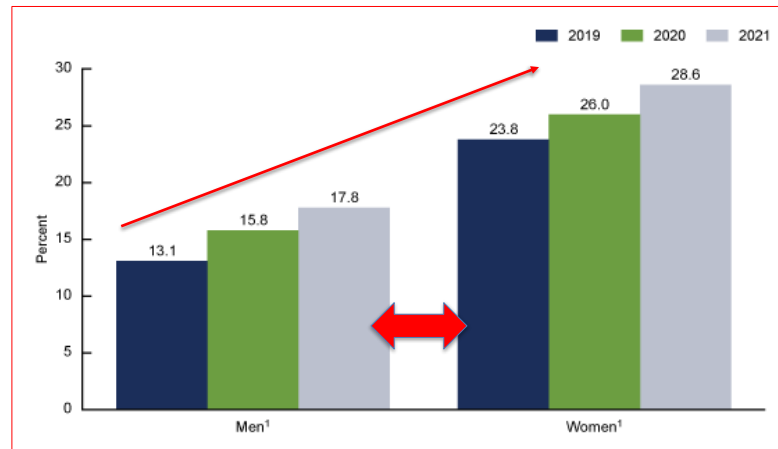
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Help Seeking: Landscape and Barriers

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Adults 18-44 Who Received Any Mental Health Treatment (2019-2021)



The Gap

- Effective treatments exist
- BUT Men seek out mental health care less than women

Terlizzi & Schiller (2022), National Center for Health Statistics, CDC



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Barriers to Help Seeking

Take a quick moment and write down an example or two of possible barriers that prevent some men from seeking out mental health care.



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Men's Help-Seeking: Barriers

Concerns: perceived stigma, judgment from others, mental health literacy (Lynch et al., 2018; Seidler et al., 2016)



A number of men who *do seek out help* report that care is not designed to meet their needs (Seidler et al; 2022)



Men report feeling misheard, misunderstood, underestimated (Griffith, 2025)



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Men's Help Seeking Experiences



Healthcare systems don't take their needs seriously (52%)

Feel a sense of stigma in engaging with health education (33%)

Resources are not tailored to their needs (28%)

Health information is overwhelming (45%) and confusing (37%)

Distrust of treatment or dissatisfaction with past treatment (32%)

(Griffith, 2025)

$n = 4,125$ men 18-69 who saw a provider in the past year



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Men's Social Connections

- 25% of men (vs. 18% for women) 15-34 feel lonely "a lot" (Gallup, 2024)
- 38% of men "would lean on a friend" (vs. 54% of women), (Pew, 2025)
- Men reporting "no close friendship" (SAFS, 2021)
 - 3% in 1990
 - 15% in 2021
- Young men report lacking companionship and isolation (Fisher et al., 2025) but also a strong desire to have more close friendships (Griffith et al., 2025)



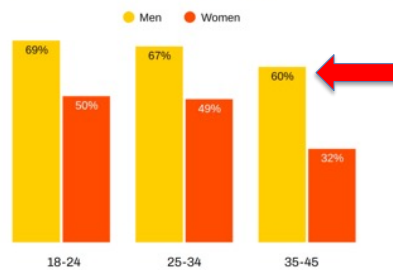
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57%

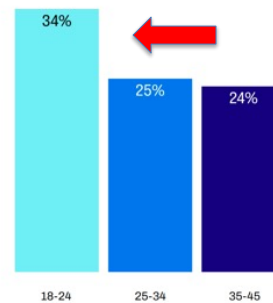
of the full sample reports that
"no one cares if men are okay."

The youngest men agree with this the most.

Percentage of respondents by age who agree with the statement "No one cares if men are okay"



Percentage of men and women by age who agree with the statement "I don't think anyone can fall in love with me"



"No one really knows me."

53%

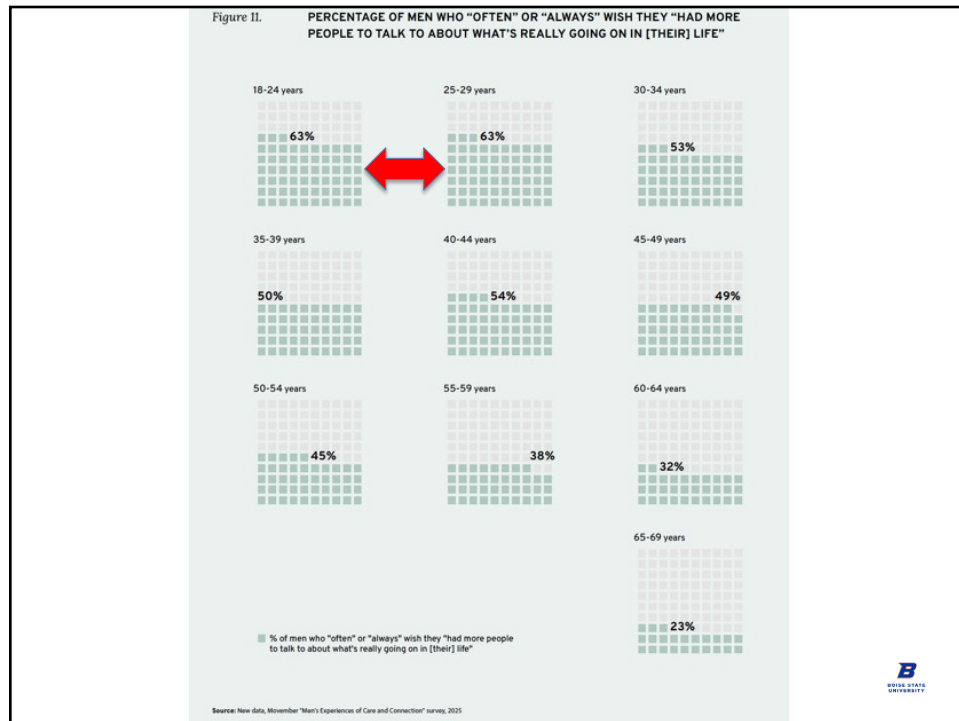
of men agree

52%

of women agree



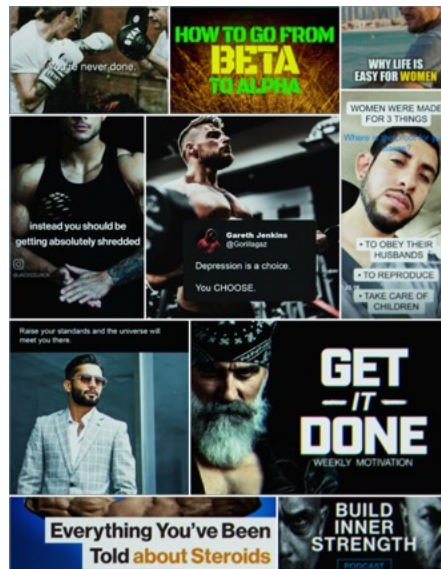
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What about the "manosphere"?

- Many young men have turned to social media for social connection and guidance on masculinity
- Has become mainstream and easily accessible in the age of social media
- Masculinity influencers play a significant role in this space



(Fisher et al., 2025)

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What kind of content are young men watching?

Write down 1-2 ideas on how engagement with manosphere content might affect certain attitudes and behaviors in young men?

1 Minute

(Fisher et al., 2025)



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What kind of content are young men watching?

- Young men (13-19) spend approx. 4.4 hours/day on social media (Rothwell, et al., 2023)
- 60% watch masculinity influencers (US)
 - Politics
 - Sports/Fitness
 - Self-improvement
 - Relationships/dating
 - Money and finance
 - Wealth
 - Gender

Young men's health
in a digital world

2025 REPORT

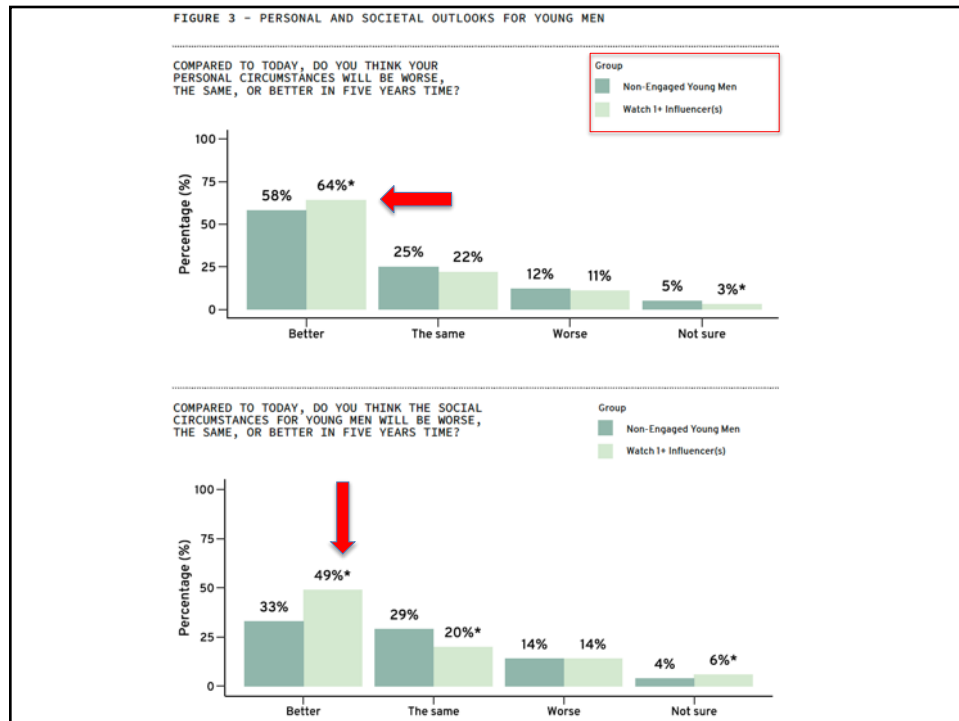


$n = 3,000$ men aged 16-25 from US, UK, Australia

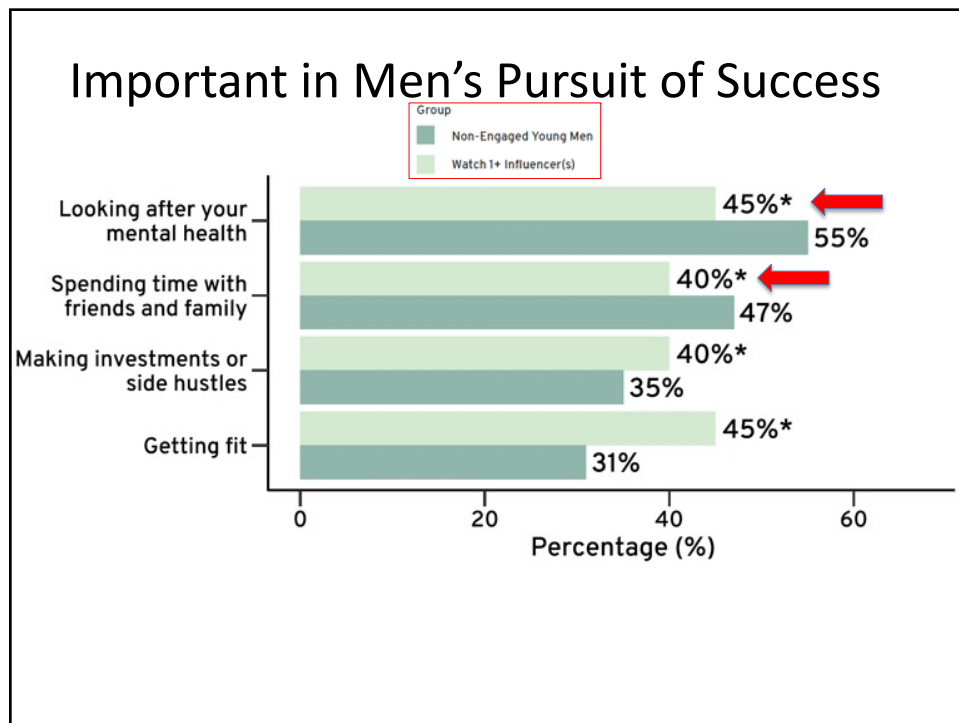
(Fisher et al., 2025)



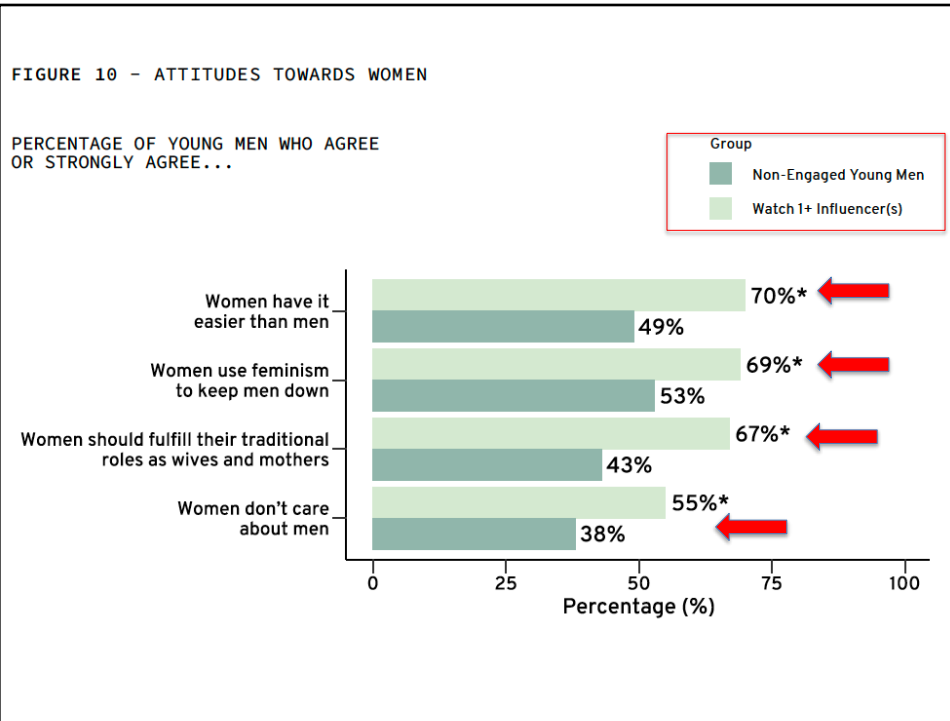
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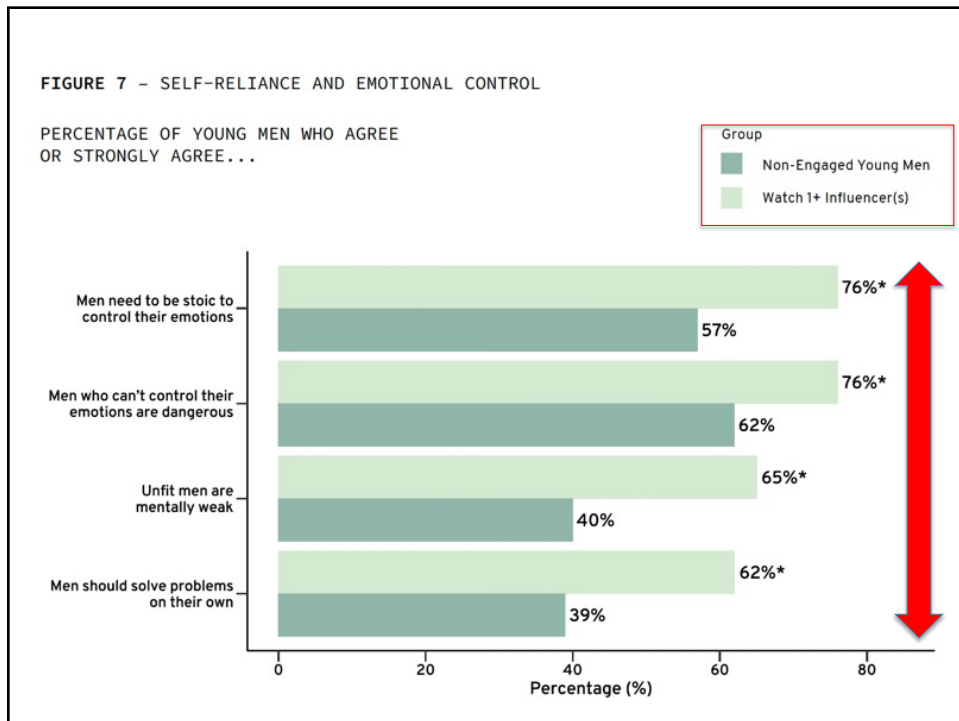
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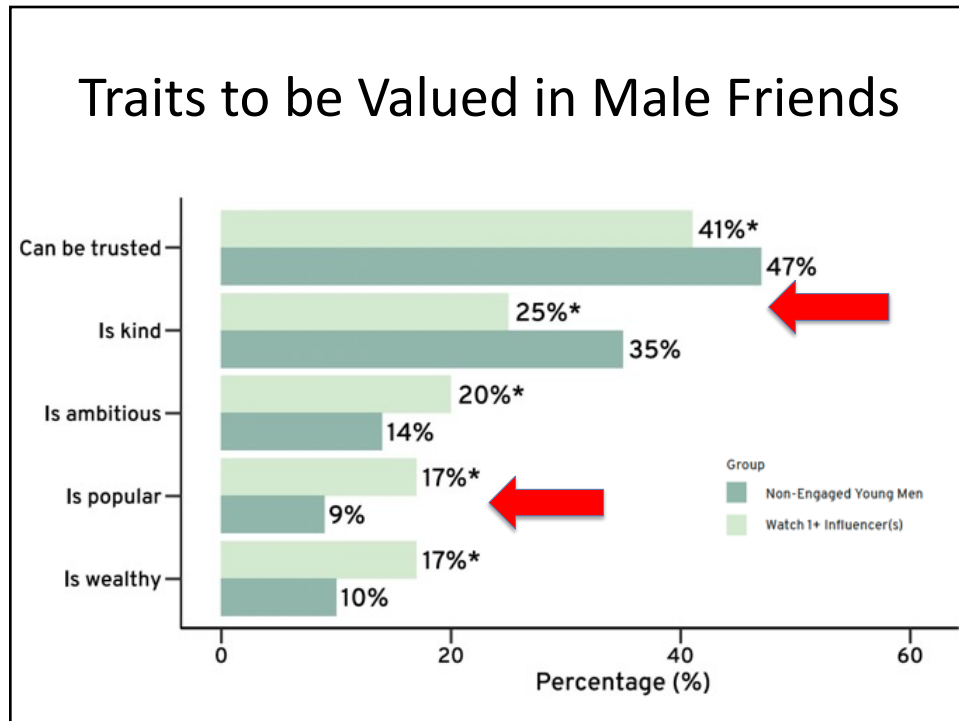
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Developing Mental Health Care that Meet the Needs of Men

NOW GENTLY PULL, AND SEE IF ANY TEARS COME OUT.

DR. ANNE SPECIALIZED IN HELPING MEN GET INTOUCH WITH THEIR EMOTIONS.

How to Get More Men to Try Therapy

Mental health experts say that many American men are in crisis. One solution is to convince them that asking for help is a strength, not a weakness.

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How do we Help Men?

1. *Man Therapy* (suicide prevention/help seeking)
2. *What is Therapy?* Video Series (help seeking)
3. *Men in Mind* (clinician competence)



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Suicide Prevention: Man Therapy



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Man Therapy

Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior

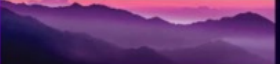


The Official Journal of the American Association of Suicidology
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SUICIDOLOGY

ORIGINAL ARTICLE | [Open Access](#) | 

Effectiveness of man therapy to reduce suicidal ideation and depression among working-age men: A randomized controlled trial

Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior



The Official Journal of the American Association of Suicidology
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SUICIDOLOGY

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Help-seeking and Man Therapy: The impact of an online suicide intervention

[Jon N. Gilgoff MSW](#) ✉ [Fernando Wagner ScD](#) [Jodi J. Frey PhD](#) [Phillip J. Osteen PhD](#)

First published: 22 November 2022 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/sltb.12929> |

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Destigmatizing Mental Health Care: Movember “What is Therapy” Series

- Movember “What is Therapy”:
 - Ep. 1: *What is therapy?*
 - Ep. 2: [How to Overcome any barriers?](#)
 - Ep. 3: *How to get therapy.*
 - Ep. 4: *What happens in a therapy session?*
 - Ep. 5: *First therapy session done and dusted. Now what?*



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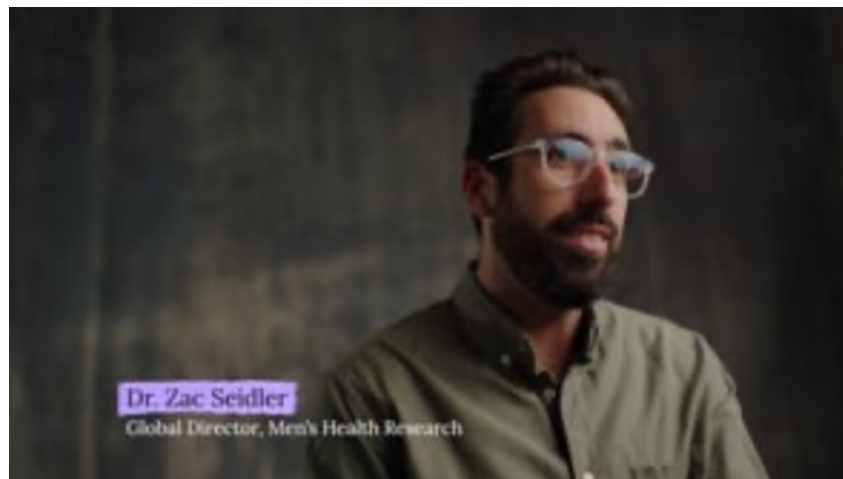
Gender-Responsive Care: *Men in Mind*

- Men are at increased risk to drop out of mental health services early (Seidler et al, 2021) and report dissatisfaction with services that result in them not returning (Seidler et al, 2018)
- Are men “bad clients”?
- Should we consider “gender-responsive” care that is adapted to the needs of men that are at risk for disengagement with services? (Genuchi, 2017)

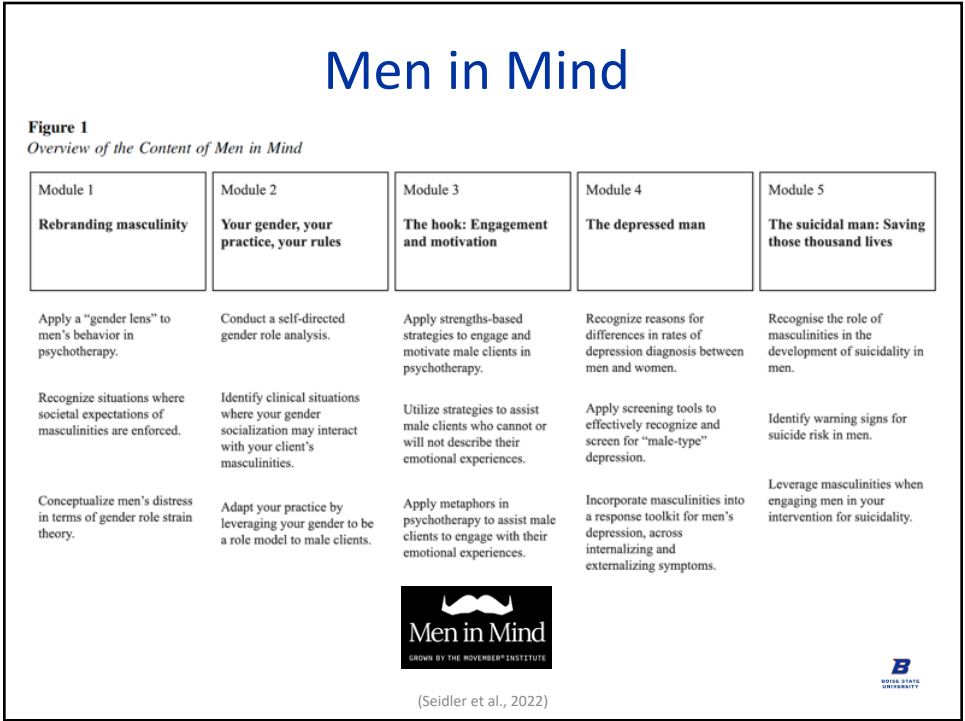


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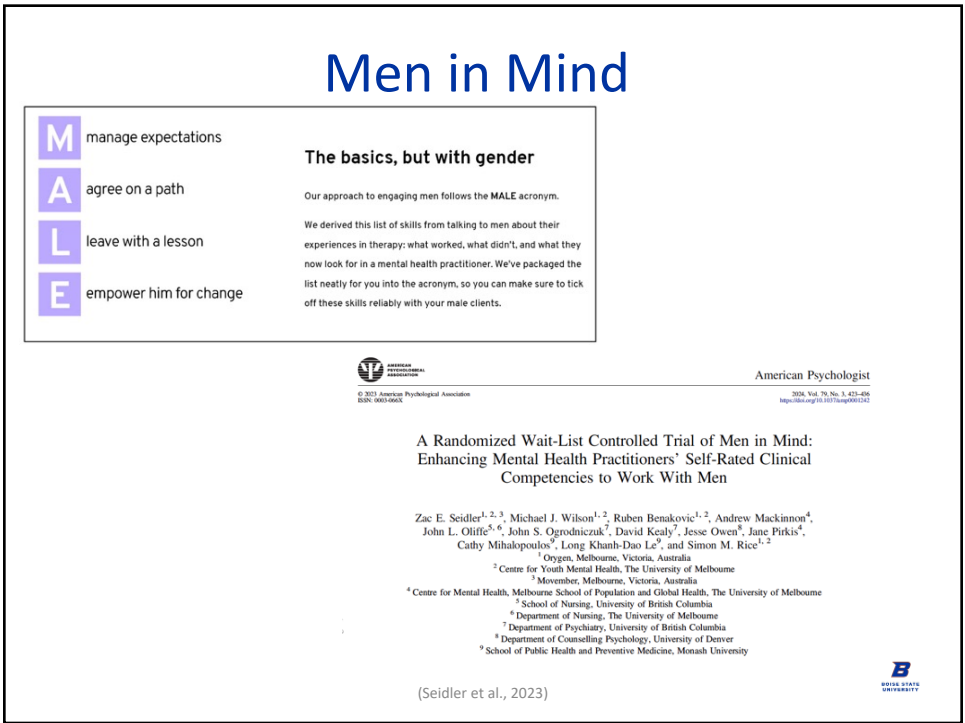
Men in Mind Overview



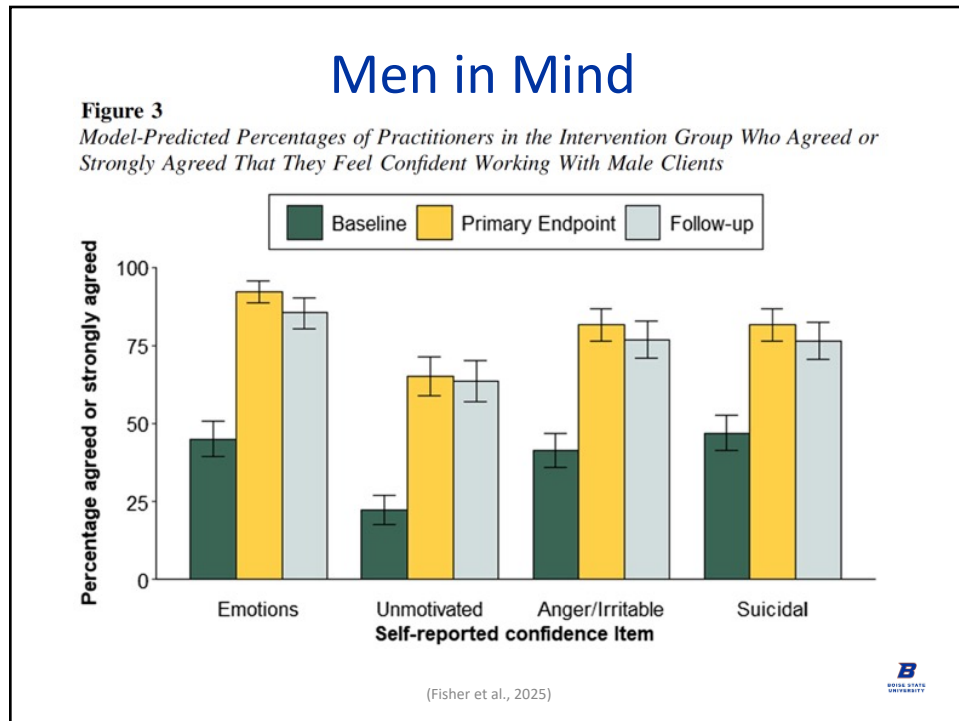
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Thank You & Questions!

Please reach out with questions!
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Connect with me on *Linked In!*

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