

# LEARN TO LIVE BULLETIN

*Your guide in wellness and mental health*

## Men's Mental Health: Breaking the Silence

Imagine a world where your brother, father, husband, or best friend feels too ashamed to ask for help when they're hurting. For many men, this is not something they need to imagine – it's their reality. Men's mental health has long been a topic clouded by stigma, misconceptions, and silence. Although some work has been done to break down the traditional norms of masculinity, there are still messages in our society telling men they need to be "tough" and that they should not show feelings. As a result, many men stay silent and internalize their struggles, viewing mental health challenges as a sign of weakness or failure.



The consequences of this silence are profound. It's been shown over the years that men are less likely than women to seek help for mental health issues. They are more likely to turn to unhealthy coping, such as substance abuse or aggressive behavior. Men are at a higher risk of suicide, with rates as much as 4 times higher than women in the US. Breaking the silence surrounding men's mental health is incredibly important, yet there are several factors that contribute to the reluctance of men to seek mental health support.

## Barriers to Seeking Help

Stigma plays a significant role, as many men fear being judged or perceived as weak if they admit to struggling. Some men confuse being a strong provider and protector with ignoring their own emotional needs. Also, some men are unaware of their own symptoms of mental health problems. These barriers can play a role in creating that silent struggle that goes unaddressed.

## Giving Voice to Men's Mental Health

Addressing men's mental health requires us to challenge existing norms and take steps to create awareness and better access to mental health resources. Here are some steps that can help:

- 1. Education & Awareness:** Increasing awareness about men's mental health issues is crucial. This includes educating about the signs and symptoms of common mental health conditions, including gender differences, and encouraging them to seek help early.
- 2. Open Conversations:** If a man doesn't speak about his mental health, it tells other men in his orbit that talking about mental health isn't important. This perpetuates the problem. One man can break the chain by being open to discussing his own mental health and encourage others to do the same.
- 3. Access to Care:** Identifying what mental health services are available can be a critical first step. These can be augmented with support groups, mental health campaigns, and initiatives that encourage open dialogue about men's mental health.

## Get Started Today

We can take meaningful steps toward men feeling empowered to seek the help they need. Investing in mental health is not a sign of weakness; it is a crucial part of overall well-being. To learn more about how Learn to Live can help break the silence with men's mental health, consider taking a quick mental health assessment by scanning or visiting [learntolive.com/partners](https://learntolive.com/partners) and enter access code **MMHG**. Learn to Live is available to you and your family members, ages 13 and older at no cost.

