

Depression in Men: The Sexist Mental Health System Makes it Worse

May 24, 2021 | 188 upvotes | by [Oncefa2](#)

<https://www.wokefather.com/sexism/depression-in-men-the-sexist-mental-health-system-makes-it-worse/>

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Comments

Oncefa2[S] • 85 points • 24 May, 2021 07:14 PM

This should be probably be pretty obvious but it helps to spell it out every now and then.

Whether on purpose or not, a lot of the current social messaging around men's mental health amounts to victim blaming.

The idea being put forward is that there is something inherently wrong with men. We tell them they suck at seeking help, that they don't like being vulnerable, that all of that is very *toxic*, and then it becomes a self fulfilling prophecy.

Men do not like the patronizing tone that is being taken with them. In one study, as many as 88% of men called it offensive (source).

Regardless if it's actually true or false that men are "stubborn" about their mental health, I think it would be beneficial to develop positive messaging and outreach approaches that go beyond, *"men are fragile and hate asking for help"*.

throwra_coolname209 • 43 points • 24 May, 2021 09:35 PM

I think it's a huge indicator that someone cares about male mental health when they recognize that being "stubborn" about seeking help is often not the fault of the individual per se, but is a sign of a larger societal failing.

There's a lot of poor messaging regarding therapy and men hear that. And even more messaging regarding expressing one's feelings at all. Like, why would I talk about my feelings since I'm only ever expected to just deal with them anyway. What good would talking to a therapist do when it won't solve the problem that put me here in the first place. But then I'll get blamed for being stubborn for not thinking therapy is a silver bullet? We need to do so much more work positioning therapy as a skill building exercise, not a catch all for mental health, and then show men that mental health skills might not magically solve things but offer better coping mechanisms and that's important.

Oncefa2[S] • 26 points • 24 May, 2021 10:12 PM

This is actually the direction some researchers are moving in.

The palgrave handbook for men's psychology (published 2019) talked about this some. Depressed men are often frustrated at real problems in their lives that they can't fix. And helping them find the tools to fix those problems will often alleviate their depression.

Whereas for women often just listening to their problems makes them feel better.

In a lot of ways that makes dealings with men more difficult but that's just the way it is. Men are programmed to do things moreso than women (either by society or biology) so there isn't an instinct to complain (so someone else will hear you and come along and fix things for you) as much as there is an instinct to fix things yourself.

Cyb3rd31ic_Citiz3n • 10 points • 25 May, 2021 07:05 AM

Agreed - When I have been to Counseling or therapy there is so much emphasis on talking through my situation and trying to change the way I behave to situations... I was raised by a Relationship Counsellor ffs. Being self aware and critically minded is what I do best - I need TANGIBLE solutions. If I am depressed due to my circumstances its because I don't feel I can DO anything about them.

IMHO - the best way I've found, for me (as I said, I already know self awareness and critical thought) is to have other men physically assist me in some capacity. More often than not I lack some knowledge or physical strength or both in a task and all I need is someone to step in, teach me how to fix it and walk me through it as they assist.

I don't need to cry. I don't need to talk about it. I don't need to assess my contributions to the problem... I. Need. Help.

OirishM • 12 points • 25 May, 2021 07:20 AM

A lot of this is the usual hyperagency attributed to men. I'm sure plenty of men aren't great at opening up, and there may well be gendered social reasons for this. However, the attitudes of men in need are only part of the issue.

The other part is that people need to be willing to listen to men who open up, and that's something that gets talked about far less.

GulchDale • 61 points • 24 May, 2021 08:48 PM

It truly is sexist. When I was a kid I had a lot of anger problems, but counselors and psychologists never once asked me why I was angry. All what they saw was an angry black man and their internalised sexism/racism thought it was my fault instead of circumstances. I need to cope with anger because men are angry, or so they thought.

When I look back it's like 'No shit I was angry'. I got bullied in school, I got bullied at home, I got bullied in church, I got bullied at family gatherings, I got bullied by Gf's. I was quiet and fragile so people took advantage of it. All they had to do was ask why I was angry and they would have been able to suss that out. But like a lot of boys, I was forced to figure it out on my own because belly breathing when you're mad doesn't get you not picked on.

Cyb3rd31ic_Citiz3n • 18 points • 25 May, 2021 07:08 AM

Yup. I was the quiet kid at school, good student... got bullied, became insular, grades fell, started skipping school as associated the place with negative stimulus and stress - no one asked me why. Not once. No one even cared enough to tell my parents. I was literally skipping the same class for months on end and nothing was done. When I was eventually pulled up on it I got a detention and forced into a study class. Again, punishing me got the symptoms and not batting an eye at the cause.

AAKurtz • 9 points • 25 May, 2021 05:09 PM

I once had a female therapist tell me that she had fallen asleep during a session, but that she didn't really care because the client was, "an old white man".

adam-l • 11 points • 25 May, 2021 07:57 AM*

Men are being oppressed at the very bottom of their (Maslow's) hierarchy of needs: sex. No one is allowed to even talk about it, of course, because this would mean more "emotional work" by women.

Most men are so desperate that they spend their lives trying to fuck *their own wives*, ffs.

I remember that story for the guy that decided to kill himself. "Since I'll be at it, it doesn't hurt to go over to Mexico for drugs and hookers." He goes, decides that life is not so bad after all. (*I'd recommend against drugs, though.*)

2717192619192 • 11 points • 25 May, 2021 04:53 PM

(Note before reading: I'm non-binary but born male) I saw an escort recently and it literally changed so much for me. I'd spent years trying to find someone to develop a connection with and have sex - mainly as a way to cope with a lot of sexual trauma throughout my life, including being sexually assaulted at various points and also groomed as a young teen. But in the few times I did begin to develop a sexual connection with another person, it went awry or they ended up becoming abusive.

Everything did a 180 in terms of my happiness and security in myself when I said "fuck the game, I'm paying for it" and saw her. Suddenly, there was not a single power dynamic in play. It was perfectly okay that I was nervous and didn't have a lot of sexual experience. My body was embraced, my insecurities faded away and were soothed, and for the first time in god knows how long... I felt the pure joy that comes with having an intimate connection with another human.

It's sounds almost cringe and cliché, but paying for sex really set me on a happier path. It's such a critical need, and not just "to get a nut in" - no, it's a critical need to have intimacy and touch and have your body and soul accepted in its naked entirety with someone you can trust.

Juhnthedevel • -2 points • 24 May, 2021 09:03 PM

Mmhhh and women from their side have problem with "hysteria". It seems there is two side of the same coins...□...

peanutbutterjams • 19 points • 25 May, 2021 05:29 AM

women from their side have problem with "hysteria".

Hi, 1979 called and would like back their copy of the DSM.

adam-l • 13 points • 25 May, 2021 07:52 AM

No they don't. It's 2021. Women are strong, independent and intelligent. If they complain all day long for problems, it's because these problems actually *exist*, because Patriarchy. It's not that they are *hysterical*.

Juhnthedevel • 2 points • 25 May, 2021 08:07 AM

No no I meant in their diagnostics, they are overpyted or they are often diagnosed around the idea that they are hysteric'

adam-l • 3 points • 25 May, 2021 08:41 AM

I'm not sure your point is clear.

Konato-san • 9 points • 25 May, 2021 12:15 PM

We're not in the 50s anymore.

Oncefa2[S] • 12 points • 25 May, 2021 02:34 PM

Not even really the 50s. This was like the early 1900s. During the 50s it would have been on its way out.

Oh and we do have a modern medically accepted diagnosis for hysteria: PMDD, or premenstrual dysphoric disorder. And you know those crazy treatments like giving women dildos or telling them to have sex with their husbands that people think was super sexist and misogynistic for the time? Well masturbation has been proven to relieve the symptoms of PMDD and is widely encouraged by other women who suffer from it.

It's not quite as clear cut as "people used to think women were inherently crazy". Yes there was a healthy amount of sexism involved (going in both directions) but "hysteria" was a real medical condition, and the

treatments we had for it weren't that far off from what we do for it today.