

SENIOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Monthly Newsletter

we're so glad you're here!

UNDERSTANDING MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH AND HOW LOVED ONES CAN HELP

November is Men's Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to highlight the unique challenges that men face in seeking mental health support. In the Senior Behavioral Health Department, we see how crucial it is for all of our patients to feel seen, heard, and supported—and for men, certain cultural and societal norms can make this a challenge. Raising awareness about these biases can encourage more men to prioritize their mental health and empower loved ones to provide meaningful support.

WHY MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Statistically, men are less likely to seek treatment for mental health issues than women. Depression, anxiety, and other mental health concerns often go untreated among men, which can lead to worsening symptoms over time. Many men are conditioned to be "strong" and "stoic," leading them to ignore or downplay feelings of sadness, stress, or fear. This can create a cycle of silence, where struggles are not shared, and support is not sought.

In senior men, these challenges can be compounded by life transitions, health concerns, and changes in family dynamics. Feelings of isolation, a sense of loss, or difficulties adjusting to new life stages can further impact their mental well-being. These issues underscore the importance of open conversations around mental health—especially for men in later stages of life.

COMMON BIASES AND MISCONCEPTIONS

There are deep-rooted biases around men's mental health that can hinder their ability to seek support. Some common misconceptions include:

- **Men should handle problems on their own.** Society often promotes the idea that men should be self-reliant, which can lead them to think that seeking help is a sign of weakness.
- **Talking about feelings is unmanly.** This misconception discourages men from expressing emotions, which can create a buildup of stress, anger, or sadness.
- **Men don't experience depression or anxiety the same way women do.** Men can and do experience these conditions, but their symptoms may appear differently—such as through anger, irritability, or substance misuse.



When these biases persist, men may feel trapped or ashamed to reach out, increasing the risk of mental health issues going unaddressed.

WAYS LOVED ONES CAN SUPPORT THE MEN IN THEIR LIVES

Supporting the men in your life doesn't always have to involve grand gestures. Sometimes, the small, consistent acts of care and understanding can make the most significant difference. Here are a few ways to offer support:



Encourage Open Conversations: Let the men in your life know that it's okay to talk about their feelings. Start by asking open-ended questions like, "How have you been feeling lately?" or "Is there anything you want to talk about?"

Challenge Stereotypes Together: Acknowledge the biases men face and help them see that prioritizing mental health is a sign of strength, not weakness. Encourage them to be open to new perspectives about seeking help, whether it's talking to a friend, family member, or mental health professional.

Be Patient and Understanding: Some men may not open up immediately or may struggle to articulate their feelings. Let them know you're there for them without pressure, allowing them the space to come forward when they're ready.

Model Healthy Behaviors: Show the men in your life that taking care of mental health is important. Whether it's through regular exercise, healthy habits, or seeing a therapist, modeling positive behaviors can be an impactful form of encouragement.

Offer Practical Support: Sometimes, support can mean simply being there. Offer to spend time with them, participate in a favorite hobby, or even join them at a doctor's appointment if they feel anxious about taking that first step.



A minute with Mike

MIKE WILLIS, OUTREACH COORDINATOR, THERAPIST



Our Senior Behavioral Health program offers two tiers of therapy: inpatient and outpatient. Both options are designed to provide a safe, supportive environment where men can address mental health concerns without fear or stigma. In our inpatient program, individuals receive intensive, around-the-clock support, while our outpatient program offers group therapy and medication management services. From individual therapy sessions to group activities, we work closely with each patient to meet their unique needs, creating a space where they feel comfortable and empowered to engage with their mental health.

This Men's Mental Health Awareness Month, let's take a stand against the stigma. By fostering empathy and understanding, we can help the men in our lives lead healthier, more fulfilling lives. Remember, mental health is not a battle anyone has to face alone.