Acentra HEALTH

Employee Assistance Program *Tip Sheet*

Being Strong Doesn't Mean Struggling Alone



Men are often encouraged to be strong, dependable, and self-sufficient. Those qualities can be valuable, but when "being strong," or "being a man," means keeping emotions hidden or handling everything alone, it can come at a high cost.

Men may experience mental health challenges differently, with irritability, anger, fatigue, changes in sleep, withdrawing from others, or increased alcohol use. These symptoms can appear alongside, or instead of, sadness.

There's more than one way to be strong. These approaches can help make room for honesty, connection, and support without losing your sense of independence.

- **Notice changes.** Pay attention to your mood, sleep, relationships, work, or usual interests that have been off for a while.
- **Put words to what's happening.** You don't need to have the perfect explanation. "I've been stressed lately," or "I haven't felt like myself," is a place to start.
- **Stay connected.** Make time for a friend, family member, teammate, or colleague. You don't have to turn every conversation into a deep discussion to get the benefit of connection.
- **Treat help as a tool, not a failure.** Talking with a health professional can be a practical step toward feeling and functioning better.
- **Look out for each other.** If someone seems withdrawn, unusually angry, or hopeless, check in on them and listen without judgement.

Using your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is another way to get support. EAP services can provide a confidential place to talk through stress, relationships, work concerns, or other challenges and explore next steps. Getting started is easy. Call the number below to connect with a professional counselor at no cost.

Reference: National Institute of Mental Health. Men and Mental Health: https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/men-and-mental-health

Call 24/7: 1.800.999.1077 **Website: EAPHelplink.com** **Code: EAPNOW**

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