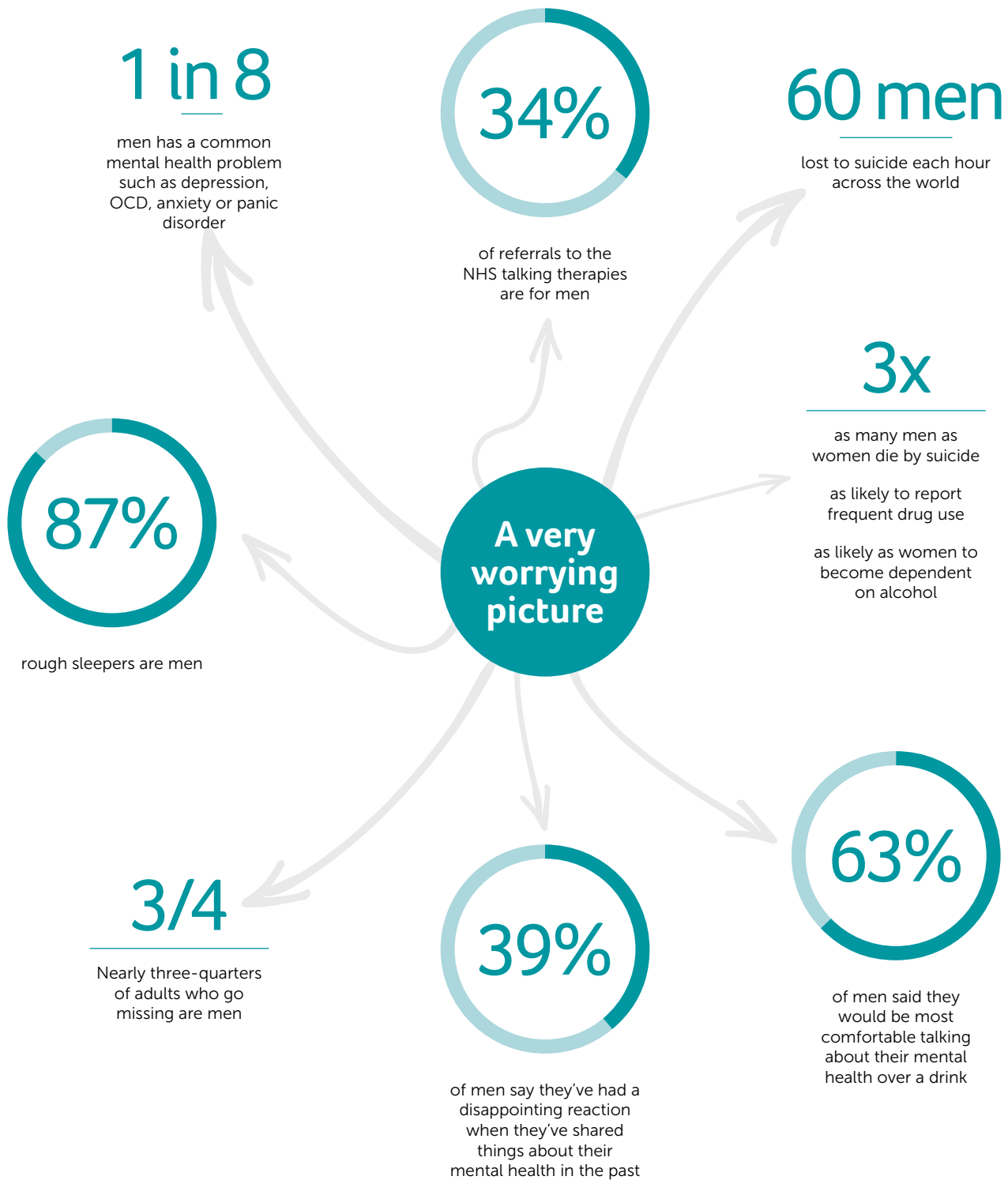




Men's Mental Health

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Men's Mental Health, here is a very serious issue at stake here. Let's look at the facts...



The data paints a concerning picture, doesn't it?

Men's Mental Health

In short, men are less likely to access mental health support and generally tend to ask for help far later than women. This is a worry.

This partly stems from how we treat boys at an early age. For instance, boys are often taught to internalise their issues and aren't schooled in being open about their emotions. Men are often told to, 'man up' or made to feel weak because they are causing a fuss.

We need to do all we can to help men and boys open up about their mental health, here's how to help them do so in just a few simple ways:



Find the time to talk: Whether it's sitting down in the pub or even next to each other on a long journey, find time to truly talk to one another. It's fine to do activities with your male friends, but make sure you find the time to talk too.



Question 'fine': We've all done it; we say we're fine when we're not. To really find out, ask twice and don't take 'fine' as your final answer.



Read between the lines: We don't always say exactly how we are feeling, so often you will need to read between the lines when speaking to men about their mental health. For instance, **31% are more likely to say they are stressed** and **30% that they are not feeling themselves**. Whilst **35% of men** said if they wanted to talk to a friend about their mental health, they would ask how their friend is doing and hope that friend would reciprocate the question.



Know when to end the banter: It's easy to misread a situation especially when everyone is throwing the banter around. But know how to spot when someone's not in the mood or when they want to talk about something serious. If you notice something is different about your friend, or your jokes aren't going down so well, ask them how they are doing and then ask again.



Avoid toxic language: Be clear that 'grow up', 'man up', 'get a grip' or 'grow a pair' are incredibly unhelpful phrases and can be ever so damaging. Avoid them at all costs.



Support them: All your friend, colleague or family members wants to hear is that you're there for them and your feelings towards them will not change if they open up. You don't have to try and give advice; they just need to know they are being listened to.

If you need support, want to help a friend or loved one, or want to learn more about men's mental health, contact the below organisations:

Calm

SAMARITANS

MEN'S
HEALTH
FORUM

Men's Mental Health

Here are three ways we can all support the health of our male co-workers at work all year long:

1

Find the right space: Face-to-face, conversations can often feel intense and intimidating and actually our new normal of video calls may well be beneficial to those men struggling to open up. The key is finding an environment that's slightly more relaxed for them to talk. Going for a walk or car journey can also be helpful. Once they do start to open up, let them, listen and be there to support.

2

Role model behaviours all year round: We should all look to use terminology that demonstrates compassion and care in our workplaces. It is essential to try to create an open dialogue and this will only happen when that person feels safe. Likewise, role modelling these behaviours amongst leaders, both with the language they use and by demonstrating that it is safe to be vulnerable, will help build a culture where men can open up.

3

Celebrate vulnerability: To tackle the inequality that exists with male mental health in the workplace, it is important that organisations ditch harmful standards of work-life balance and give men space to express their vulnerability. If you are a manager, then don't be ashamed to speak up. By you coming forward, you may just help someone else.



And finally; the one thing we ask you to do today if you do nothing else...

Stop and take note of the impact toxic language is having on men and those who identify as male. We should look to consciously change our approach to how we talk about male mental health. Irrelevant of gender, societal status, or identity, it is critical men are not made to feel ashamed to look after their mind. It is never O.K. to tell someone to 'man up'. Now is the time to give men a voice, normalise conversations around mental health and take down the barriers that so often prevent men accessing life-saving support. And we all have our part to play in making that happen.