

Feel Well

Man to Man – Talking mental health

Traditionally, men don't talk too much about their health to each other. It's a habit they get into from a young age. Talking openly about health can have many benefits. It can help reduce stigma, increase awareness and education, provide support and encouragement and foster a sense of community. By encouraging men to talk openly about their health, it can help to lead healthier and happier lives now and in the future.



Early conditioning

As young men navigate the complexities of growing up, they face a myriad of health challenges. From physical health issues like acne and sports injuries to mental health concerns like anxiety and depression. In particular, it's not uncommon for young men to struggle with their health.

Unfortunately, it's a fact that many young men feel uncomfortable discussing their health with others, which can lead to a lack of support and potentially negative health outcomes. This could mean missing something that could have been acted upon earlier. Keeping things bottled up or sweeping things under the carpet has been proven to be an ineffective route to good health.

Normalising health talk

When men talk openly about their health, they help to normalize discussions around wellbeing issues. Traditionally, it seems normal to encourage self-sufficiency, and independence which is good of course, but particularly when we are younger we don't always have the experience to find solutions and when older may have built barriers we may not wish to admit to.

By talking about their own health and encouraging others to do the same, men can help to break down barriers and reduce the stigma surrounding discussions about mental health and other sensitive health topics.

Support and encouragement

Talking openly about health can also provide younger men with support and encouragement. When we share our experiences and struggles, by default we offer advice and support to each other. For example, if someone is struggling with anxiety, another may be able to offer coping strategies or suggest a therapist to talk to. When men feel supported by their peers, they are more likely to seek help more generally and take ongoing steps to improve wellbeing.

Foster a sense of community

Discussing health can also help men build a sense of community and belonging. When they come together to share their experiences and concerns, they can feel less isolated and more connected.

This sense of community can be especially important for young men who may be struggling with mental health issues or other health challenges. By connecting with others who are going through similar experiences, they can feel less alone and more understood.

Starting a conversation

Encouraging men to talk openly with each other about their health can be a challenge, especially if they are not used to discussing personal issues. Here are some tips to help foster open discussions around health:

Make the first move. Share your own health experiences and encourage others to do the same. Make sure you create a safe and non-judgmental environment where men feel comfortable sharing their health concerns.

Confidentiality. Assure your peers that their health concerns will be kept confidential and that they won't be judged for sharing experiences. If you have experience in a particular area from your own experience, make sure you share solutions and help others know where to go for help and support if they need it.

So, let's open-up and start a conversation today with a fellow human about health and wellbeing matters. It's good to talk!