

# Men's Mental Health

*Restoring Healthy Balanced Men: Through Balancing  
Thinking, Feeling, Being and Doing.*



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“When you plant lettuce, if it does not grow well, you don't blame the lettuce. You look for reasons it is not doing well. It may need fertilizer, or more water, or less sun. You never blame the lettuce.

Yet if we have problems with our friends or family, we blame the other person. But if we know how to take care of them, they will grow well, like the lettuce.

Blaming has no positive effect at all, nor does trying to persuade using reason and argument. That is my experience. No blame, no reasoning, no argument, just understanding. If you understand, and you show that you understand, you can love, and the situation will change” ~Thich Nhat Hanh

# Why Listen to Me?

Don't. Listen to yourself. Listen to the men in your life.

What is the first question that people ask when a woman is pregnant?  
Gender matters.

My story as one example.

What is your story?

## **Acknowledgements and gratitude**

Thank you to the men who have been in my life and the men who were not

Family, Teachers, Mentors, Friends, Clients, Men's Groups I've Led, and Sat in Myself

And my own son, nephews, daughter, and nieces

# Assumptions and Disclaimers

**Sex:** There are biological differences in male bodies and female bodies. And there are biological differences in every human, sometimes including traits we attribute to sex such as genitalia, reproductive organs, hormones, etc.

**Gender:** Masculinity and femininity are gender identities and social roles that often get prescribed by sex, but vary greatly by culture and individuals. It is not that binary.

For the purposes of our discussion, I will be using the terms men/women, male/female, masculine/feminine to aid with communication. We all express traits that have been labeled masculine or feminine. Let's not get stuck on labels recognizing there are as many differences in expression of these terms as there are creatures on the planet.

Ultimately, my hope is you find and fully live your own unique expression reaching your fullest and healthiest potential.

# Why Focus on Men's Mental Health?

Men are “just fine.” They (still) earn more than women.

There are more men in leadership positions in government and private sector.

Yet, men are still suffering. Often alone and silently.

Your mind is one of the most important parts of you. Yet few people receive training on mental and emotional processes. Men are less likely to seek this out.

Relationships are important to our mental health and women are generally better equipped and supported in maintaining relationships. Men need to be too.

Gender stereotypes exist and are extremely limiting, sometimes impairing men's mental health.

# American Psychological Association Guidelines

“Masculinity ideology... [has] held sway over large segments of the population... including anti-femininity, achievement, eschewal of the appearance of weakness, and adventure, risk, and violence.”

“... conforming to traditional masculinity ideology has been shown to limit males’ psychological development, constrain their behavior, ... and negatively influence mental health.”

“...less likely to be diagnosed internalized disorders like depression, ... more likely to be diagnosed with externalizing disorders like conduct disorder or substance use disorders.”

Source: APA Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Boys and Men, 2018, p.3.

# Some Numbers

152 million men in the US

1 in 5 men experience alcohol dependence

6 million men suffer from depression each year

Diagnosed Anxiety - 24% women, 14% men

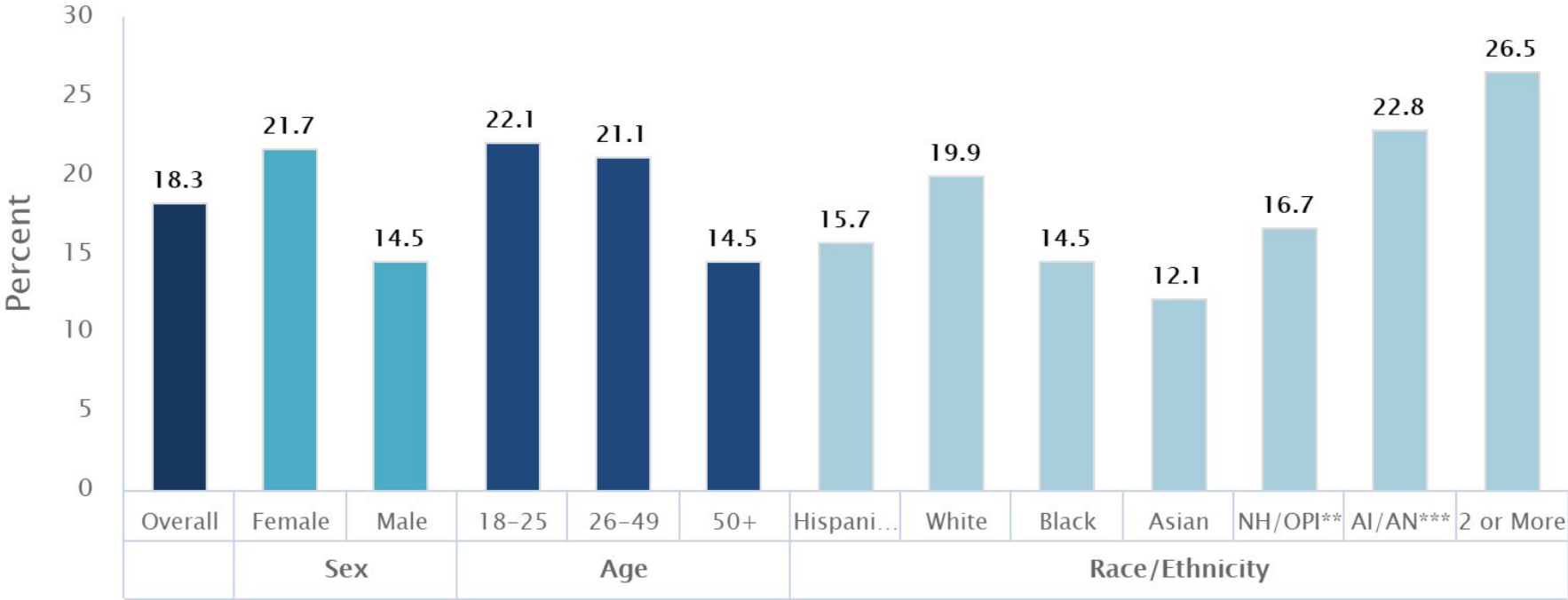
Diagnosed Depression - 8.5% women, 4.8% men

Any Mood Disorder - Female 11.1%, Men 7.7%

Sources: [NIMH](#) and <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/infographic-mental-health-men>

# Past Year Prevalence of Any Mental Illness Among U.S. Adults (2016)

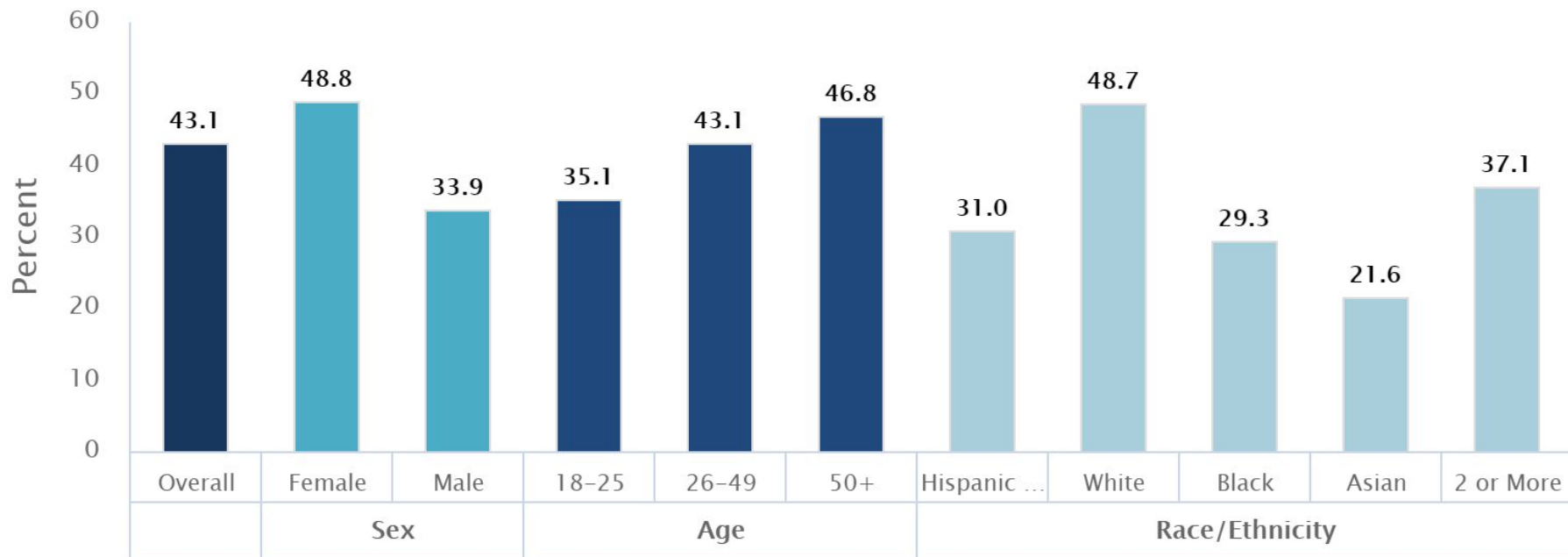
Data Courtesy of SAMHSA





# Mental Health Treatment Received in Past Year Among U.S. Adults with Any Mental Illness (2016)

Data Courtesy of SAMHSA



# Some Indicators of Depression

**Mood:** anxiety, apathy, general discontent, guilt, hopelessness, loss of interest, loss of interest or pleasure in activities, mood swings, or sadness, irritability, anger

**Sleep:** early awakening, excess sleepiness, insomnia, or restless sleep

**Whole body:** excessive hunger, fatigue, loss of appetite, or restlessness

**Behavioral:** agitation, excessive crying, irritability, decreased sex drive, reckless activity, or social isolation

**Cognitive:** lack of concentration, slowness in activity, poor self image, or thoughts of suicide

**Weight:** weight gain or weight loss

**Also common:** poor appetite or repeatedly going over thoughts, physical pain (frequent headaches, back pain, stomach pain)

# The Male Mental Health Crisis Gap

Of all  
Suicides in 2017

75%  
were

MALE

'I don't wish to burden anyone'  
I've learnt to deal with it

of men won't  
talk to anyone

'I have no one to talk to'  
'I'm too embarrassed'

40%

United States  
28

Mental health staff per  
100,000  
people

Europe

50

Each year, over 33,000 men die from suicide each year, according to data from the CDC.

This accounts for 2.5 percent of all deaths among men, making it the 7th leading cause.

Suicide ranks as the second most common cause of death for every age group for men 10 through 39.

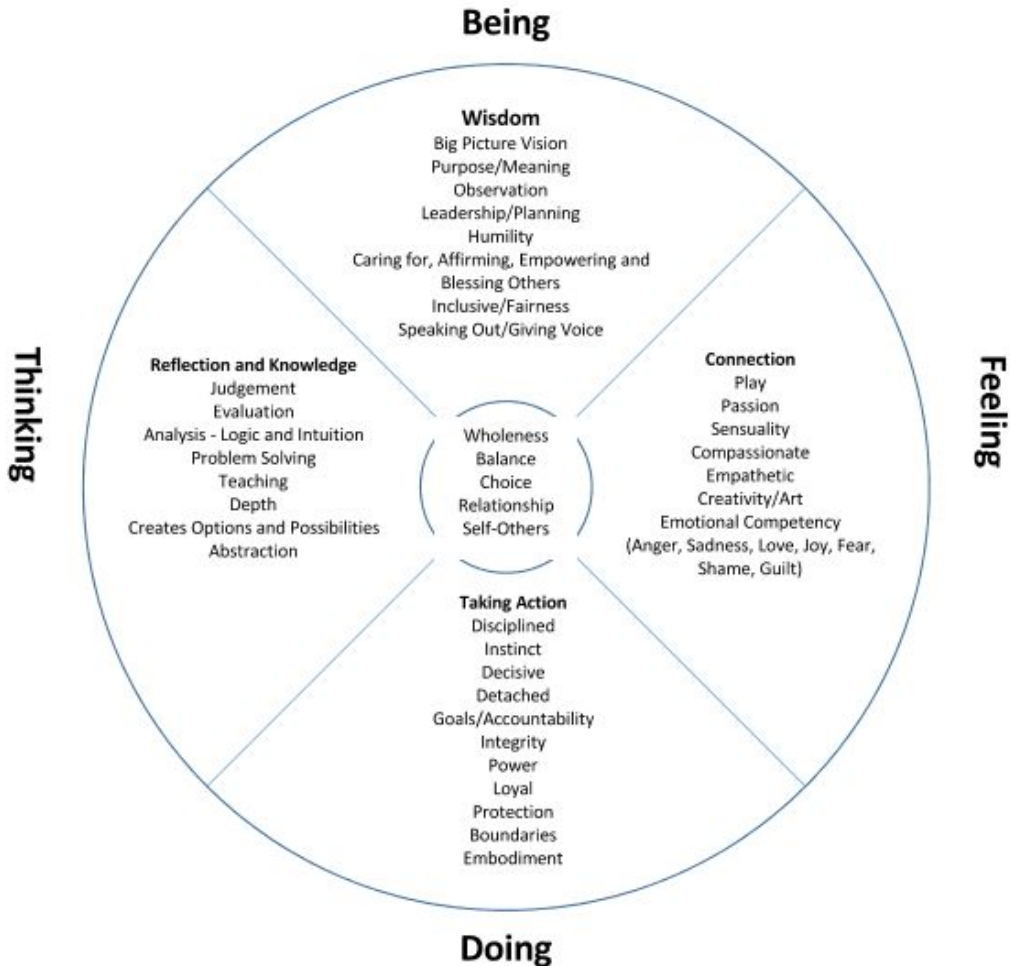
Source: [forbes.com](https://www.forbes.com)

# Pillars of a Healthy Fulfilling Life

**Identity**

**Purpose**

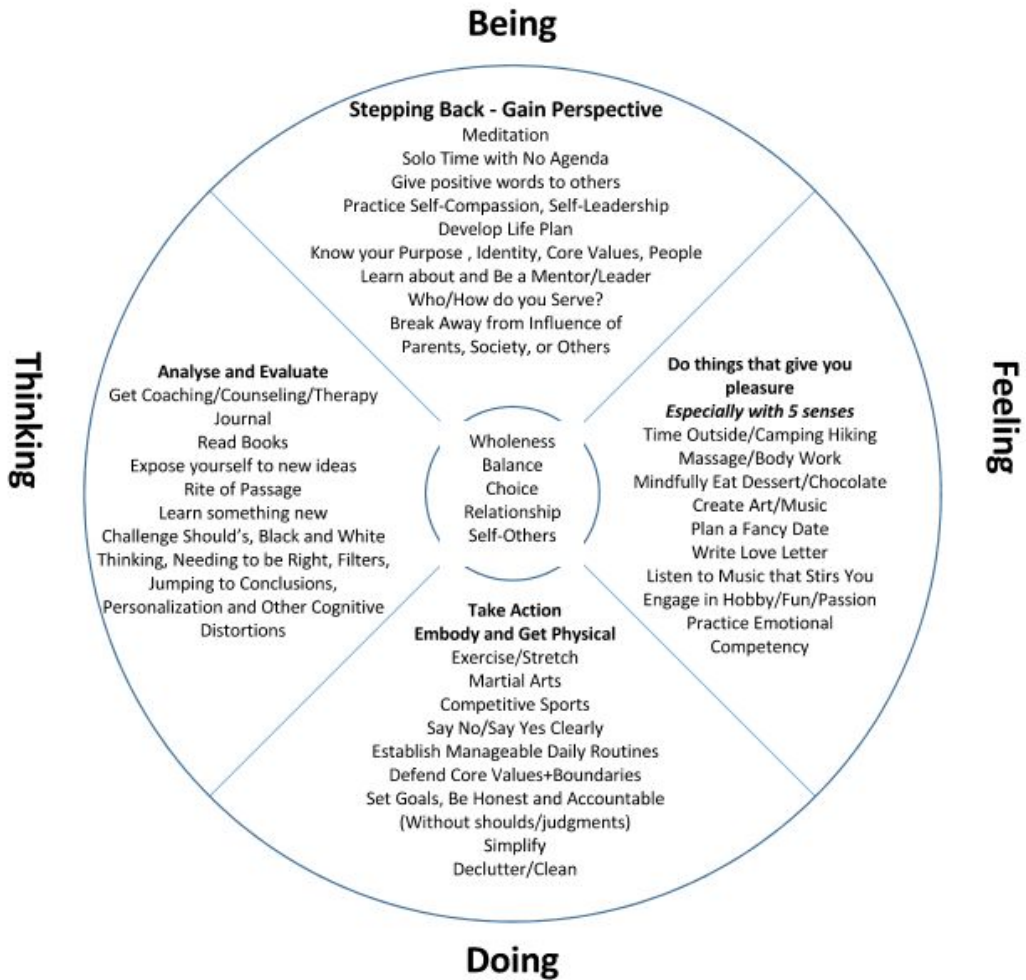
**Community**



# The Self Compass

## 4 Modes for Greater Balance and Self Leadership

**Goal:** Utilize each at the right time and place. Too much or too little of any one creates imbalance and problems.



Solution(s):

Self Care

Activities  
 to

Increase Balance

# Summary

Gender matters. It is underlying everything. There is no one right way.

Masculinity is important. Femininity is important. They look different.

All have needed gifts and traits

Find your unique expression and balance

**Identity**

**Purpose**

**Community**

Isolation and surface level connection harms us all

Support understanding, not blame. Start with yourself.

You matter. Everyone matters.

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# Thank You!

Questions and Discussion Now

Or reach out later when the time is right for you

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