

# Tough Talks That Support Men's Mental Health



Globally, suicide rates are over twice as high among men than women. But how can we help the men around us? Sometimes, a simple and meaningful conversation is all it takes to help those who are struggling.

Men are less likely to seek help due to fear of judgement and societal pressures. Men who are struggling with their mental health will show it in other ways such as:

- **Loss of interest in regular hobbies**
- **Connecting less with friends and family**
- **Changes in appetite**
- **Changes in sleep quantity**
- **Deep feelings of hopelessness**
- **Increased use of substances such as alcohol and drugs**
- **Quick to be irritable, angry, or emotional**
- **Making or have plans for self-harm**

Recognizing these signs is the first step towards helping someone. Approaching a loved one who is struggling can be delicate, but it is a key step to making a difference. Use the acronym A.L.E.C. to help you have an important conversation:

**Ask** - Start by asking how they feel and choose a good time to talk. Use open questions to help them share more. Speak about your own struggles to help them open-up. Let them know you want to support them.

**Listen** - Give your full attention, avoid judgement or rushing to answer, and reflect on what is said. Acknowledge their feelings with statements like, "That sounds upsetting" or "I can see you are stressed." Be patient and let them take their time, as it may take a while for them to accept help.

**Encourage** - Suggest actions that can help them feel better and urge them to rely on their support system, such as family, friends, or a professional.

**Check-in** - After talking with them, following-up can help build trust because it shows your support is genuine and ongoing. Ask how they have been feeling or if anything has changed since your last talk. Be ready to listen whenever they want to talk again.

Visit <https://conversations.movember.com/en/conversations/> to practice or learn more about ALEC.

Remember, approaching someone with genuine care can impact how they feel. Be patient, listen without judgement, and let them know you are there to support.

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