

[View this email in your browser](#)

Based on Science, Written from Experience

Written by Adam Grimm, ACC | Founder - Pegasus
Realm

Specializing in burnout prevention and civilian transitions for first responders. To learn more click the "Coaching with Adam" button at the bottom of the newsletter.



Logo

The Foundation of Growth is Understanding

Here to guide you every step of the way toward growth;
whether it's working on leadership skills, building a cohesive team dynamic, or the latest wellness research.

This Week... Men's Mental Health: The Importance of Emotional Processing

For those who are short on time today.

BLUF (Bottom Line Up Front)

In this week's Wellness Team Culture edition, we explore the critical topic of men's emotional health. Emotional processing is often stigmatized in men, leading to emotional suppression, unhealthy outlets, and long-term health risks. This newsletter discusses:

- **Why men need safe spaces to process emotions responsibly.**

- The distinction between emotional reactions (anger) and healthy emotional expressions.
- The long-term consequences of emotional suppression on mental and physical health.
- Practical steps for supporting men's emotional well-being.

Let's build a culture where men can express their emotions without judgment or stigma.

|FNAME|, feel free to share with anyone who may find this useful.

The Emotional Stigma Men Face

Societal norms often discourage men from expressing emotions, labeling vulnerability a weakness. This expectation creates emotional suppression, limiting emotional growth and overall mental health.

Studies published in The American Journal of Psychiatry highlight that men who suppress emotions are more likely to experience depression, anxiety, and substance abuse. Emotional repression can also lead to interpersonal difficulties, isolation, and increased risk for suicidality (Olfiffe et al., 2019).

Societal pressure for men to “man up” can teach emotional detachment early, with parents, siblings, and peers often discouraging emotional expression in boys. **This leads to anger becoming the default, socially acceptable outlet for emotional release.** APA notes that anger is often mistaken as the sole emotion men are “allowed” to show.

Parents and leaders can support boys and men by encouraging diverse emotional vocabulary and creating safe, judgment-free environments to discuss their feelings.

Emotional Reactions vs. Emotional Processing

Emotional processing allows men to identify and regulate their feelings, while emotional reactions, often manifesting as anger, reflect unresolved internal struggles.

The Journal of Men's Health Research identifies anger as the "mask" for emotions like sadness, fear, and shame. When men rely solely on anger to express feelings, it can escalate into aggression or harm personal relationships.

Studies show men who develop emotional literacy (identifying and naming emotions) are better equipped to manage conflicts and build healthier relationships. Emotional regulation, as outlined in Emotional Regulation Theory (Gross, 2015), emphasizes processing emotions rather than reacting impulsively.

Practical Example: Tools like journaling or mindfulness practices can help men identify the root of their emotions rather than reacting in anger. For example, a man may reflect, "I'm not angry; I feel hurt because I wasn't heard in that conversation."

Encourage men to practice emotional reflection. Instead of asking, "Why are you angry?" --ask, "What are you feeling, and why?"

Long-term Dangers of Emotional Suppression

Suppressing emotions doesn't just harm mental health—it also impacts physical well-being.

Chronic emotional repression is linked to **heart disease, hypertension, and weakened immune function** (Harvard Health Publishing, 2020). Men who suppress emotions also face higher risks of developing anxiety disorders, PTSD, and other psychopathologies (Martínez-Páramo et al., 2017). A study published in Frontiers in

Psychology found that **emotionally repressed men are more prone to addiction and unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as substance abuse, overeating, or avoidance behaviors.**

Suppression also perpetuates a cycle of avoidance. For instance, **avoiding emotional pain can exacerbate stress, resulting in heightened reactivity, poor decision-making, and strained relationships.** Leaders, partners, and family members can model emotional openness by sharing their feelings and supporting the men in their lives to do the same.

How to Foster Healthy Emotional Processing



four portraits of men with their arms crossed and one wearing a red shirt

Men need access to safe spaces, supportive networks, and tools to process emotions responsibly. Here's how individuals and organizations can help:

Encourage Vulnerability: Challenge societal norms that equate masculinity with stoicism. Normalize vulnerability by encouraging open discussions about emotions in personal and professional settings.

Use Tools for Emotional Growth: Apps like BetterHelp or Headspace offer guided therapy or mindfulness practices. For those resistant to traditional therapy, peer-support groups like Movember Conversations can provide a less formal space to connect.

Workplace Initiatives: Organizations can offer workshops on emotional intelligence, mental health awareness, and stress management tailored for men. APA's Workplace Well-Being Guide emphasizes the importance of fostering psychological safety for emotional discussions.

Integrating emotional literacy training into workplace development programs can create environments where men feel valued and supported.

Pro Tip from a Bomb Guy: *For all you Type As who love to jab and joke with your team about being weak; create a scheduled supervision where they are safe to process one on one with their supervisor, or reach to a mental health professional and get the team on a mandatory regular rotation. Type A team dynamics are needed and*

even healthy in many ways, however, they tend to not allow outlets of processing after a situation requires someone to “man up”...everything has a cost, and we see it regularly from the people we help, but often overlook it in our inner circles.

Stay safe, and healthy, please.

References

Oliffe, J. L., et al. (2019). Men, Masculinity, and Depression: Understanding the Connections. American Journal of Psychiatry.

Gross, J. J. (2015). Emotion Regulation: Conceptual and Practical Issues. Annual Review of Psychology.

Martínez-Páramo, M., et al. (2017). Emotional Suppression and Its Impact on Mental Health. Frontiers in Psychology.

Harvard Health Publishing. (2020). The Link Between Emotional Suppression and Heart Disease.

Movember Conversations. (2023). Supporting Men's Mental Health. Movember Foundation.

APA. (2022). Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Boys and Men.

Together, let's embark toward growth; whether it's working on leadership skills, building a cohesive team dynamic, or the latest wellness research. Visit [Pegasus Realm](#) for more support options, or [schedule a talk with me](#).

|FNAME|, feel free to share with anyone who may find this useful.

Pegasus Realm Wellness

Coaching with Adam



Logo

Copyright (C) *|CURRENT_YEAR|* *|LIST:COMPANY|*. All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe](#)