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Part I:
Welcome to The
Harry's Masculinity Report

Harry's Co-founder Jeff Raider
& UK General Manager Matt Hiscock

It gives us immense pleasure to welcome you to Parliament for the official launch of The Harry's Masculinity Report. We want to explain why Harry's, a grooming company, decided to conduct the biggest-ever academic study into British masculinity.

Put simply, we conducted the study because we wanted to better understand the British man. We know it can be tough being a man in today's world so we asked men what made them feel positive and not so positive about life.

To give this more context, it is important to talk about how men are portrayed in advertising. We started our business with a model that is set up to listen. Harry's was founded because we didn't like the way the grooming brands were communicating with men (neither did many people that we know). It has never made sense to see brands create stereotypes that mount pressure on men to be something that is, frankly, unattainable to most of us.

The one myth we are most proud to dispel in this study is that misleading or unrealistic 'aspirational' representations in adverts – adverts that portray a physically perfect object of desirability – are not important to British men who have told us that they value mental health above physical attributes. It confirmed to us that there must be a change in advertising and the way brands talk about men. The portrayal of men needs to mirror how society has developed and masculinity has progressed.

We want to use this study and event to amplify the conversation on masculinity and raise awareness of the one-dimensional portrayal of men, not just in advertising, but in their lives as a whole. We want to be proactive, provoke debate and spark necessary conversations. Even when they're hard, even when we're not sure what the answers are. Initiating debate is an excellent way to judge how far we have come from men being the image of perfection with an expectation to be the 'best' – and how far we still have to go.

We are proud to have uncovered and developed research which shows that modern British men hold dear the core values of hard work, commitment, kinship, family and a belief in a more equitable future for all. We intend to use this data to show that there's a different, more positive way to talk about gender roles.

We hope that this study can be a springboard for more conversations about healthy, positive masculinity, regardless of race or sexuality, and we very much look forward to being part of that discussion.

Finally, the work means that we can speak to men confidently in the knowledge that we aren't alienating them and making them feel they have "be the best" to be a success. Better is achievable, being the best is harder.

Introduction

Martin Daubney, co-author of the Harry's Masculinity Report, co-founder of the Men & Boys Coalition and UK Ambassador for International Men's Day

The Harry's Masculinity Report was borne out of a desire to kickstart a more positive conversation around modern masculinity and to listen and learn more about men today. To do that, Harry's teamed up with University College London and conducted the biggest-ever academic study into British men in history.

Ahead of Harry's launching in the UK, we wanted to find out not only what makes British men tick, but, most importantly, what gives them a sense of positivity and wellbeing. What core values defines British men in 2017?

The good news is we discovered that, to their eternal credit, British men aspire to hold commendable, selfless values, such as honesty, dependability and reliability. The most positive British men proved to be defined by hard work, were in committed relationships, valued their health and loved their friends. British men also tend to get more positive as they age, which gives hope for us all.

Crucially, for the first time in any study, we proved British men value their mental health above their physical health. Some 44.4% of British men deem their mental health to be "very important" to their sense of general wellbeing where in comparison physical health was deemed "very important" to 37%.

This represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to utilise men's new openness and turn it into a positive conversation around men's mental health.

This major breakthrough in embracing men's mental wellbeing cannot come a moment too soon, with suicide being the number one cause of death of men aged under 45.

Harry's also wanted to challenge stereotypes and clichés around masculinity built up in the media and in advertising. In the media, of late, the dialogue around masculinity has been overridingly defined by the problems men cause.

In advertising, representations of masculinity have become so negative – men as either perfect (objectified success objects), or pathetic (numb-skulled men whose dogs are more adept at securing insurance quotes) that the Advertising Standards Authority has recently been compelled to introduce new guidelines around gender stereotypes for men.

More recently, the dialogue about what it means to be a man has commendably moved onto the problems men have and the challenges they face.

Alongside male suicide, a more progressive debate around addressing low educational attainment (boys are bottom of the class at every level, from reception to University, where there are now 65,000 fewer male undergraduates than women) is a welcome addition to the canon of issues that disproportionately affect men and boys.

The main reason for today's Parliamentary launch is that Harry's wanted to use the Masculinity Report to move the dialogue on from addressing men's problems to offering real-world solutions.

That is why ahead of today we conducted a think tank around the Harry's Masculinity Report. Here, we tasked politicians sympathetic to men's issues, the UK's leading men's charity heads, key men's service providers, campaigners and clinical psychologists who specialise in men's issues to offer a range of practical suggestions and solutions focused on the crucial topic: what do we do next to help men who might be struggling? What can we learn from the most positive men to form a route map to fulfilment for those who may not be so fortunate? How do we help improve the lives of men who want to be better fathers, sons, partners or colleagues?

The result is the document you hold in your hand.

Harry's wanted this report to be the beginnings of a new, more positive and progressive conversation around masculinity and the challenges of being a modern man.

But above all, we wanted the Harry's Masculinity Report to act as a clarion call for cross-party, parliamentary and real-world action on men's issues.

You will find those recommendations beginning on page 7 and our conclusions on page 28.

It's a big ask. But if the Harry's Masculinity Report proved British men are ready to talk, surely the onus is now on us. Are we ready to listen?

Dr. John Barry

UCL Department of Psychology

There has been a very welcome increase in focus recently on issues of particular relevance to men, such as the continuously high male suicide rate and the underachievement of boys and young men in education. The findings of this survey provide important insights into aspects of life that impact men's mental health, and should be of immediate interest to policymakers and others who believe that the mental health of men and boys is an issue of importance.

Ann Coffey MP

Member of Parliament for Stockport, sponsor of the Harry's Masculinity Report's parliamentary launch and long-standing advocate on men and boys' issues

Mental health problems of boys and men have gone under-reported for years.

Our masculine culture, in which men find it hard to admit to vulnerabilities, has led to many boys and men coming to harm.

That is why I am delighted to sponsor the launch of the Harry's Masculinity Report, which I hope will encourage a more open and positive dialogue around modern masculinity, men's mental health and general wellbeing.

Organisations like the Men and Boy's Coalition help to challenge prevailing attitudes and culture with important campaigns on such issues as men's health, male victims of intimate violence and boys' education.

The wellbeing of men and their mental health is important to society as a whole – to men and women alike – as is promoting positive and constructive public discussion about men, manhood and masculinity.

Men account for 76 per cent of all suicides and they are less likely than women to acknowledge illness or seek help when sick.

A 2016 report from the All Party Parliamentary Group for Runaway and Missing Children and Adults into safeguarding of absent children, which I chaired, highlighted how risks of grooming for criminal exploitation by gangs were not routinely identified when a child is reported missing to the police and how children, particularly boys, get categorised as being at 'no apparent risk' and left without response until the risks escalate.

Culture takes a long time to change. We have all seen the sea change in attitudes towards gay rights and it is important to understand how those attitudes were changed. There was a strong message from campaign groups, reinforced in the media, relayed through culture and art and repeated again and again and reinforced in communities.

I am confident this can be done again to challenge stereotypes of masculinity and encourage a healthier and more progressive dialogue around what it means to be a man in 2017 and beyond.

The Panel

The Houses of Parliament, November 16th 2017. This invitation-only event brings together an expert panel to reflect on the findings of the Harry's Masculinity Report and the broader related issues, in this distinguished government surrounding.

Chair

Martin Daubney
Is a journalist and broadcaster, and co-author of the Harry's Masculinity Report. A former editor of Loaded magazine, he has since established himself as one of Britain's most prominent commentators on men's issues and is a co-founder of the Men & Boys Coalition.

The Panel

Ann Coffey MP
Is the Labour member for Stockport and Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Runaway and Missing Children and Adults.

Natasha Devon MBE
Is a campaigner, writer and social entrepreneur, who was for a time the Department of Education's mental mealth champion for schools. She is the author of several books including The Self-Esteem Team's Guide to Sex, Drugs and WTFs?!!

Mo Gilligan
Is a stand-up comedian and social media superstar. Mo currently has projects in development with Channel 4, BBC1Xtra, BBC3 and Comedy Central and supports comedy charity Stand Up 4 Mental Health.

Dr. John Barry PhD
Co-wrote the Harry's Masculinity Report, John is also Honorary Lecturer at UCL's Faculty of Brain Sciences and founder of the Male Psychology Network.

Simon Gunning
Is the CEO of CALM, the Campaign Against Living Miserably, Britain's only male suicide prevention charity.

Leon McKenzie
Is a former footballer and professional boxer. In 2011 he spoke publicly for the first time about his battles with depression and suicidal thoughts, and has since become a leading mental health advocate.

Robert Webb
Is an actor, comedian and writer, best known for performances in Peep Show and as part of the double act, Mitchell & Webb. His recent autobiography How Not To Be A Boy was widely acclaimed for its unflinching descriptions of modern masculinity.

The Harry's Masculinity Report executive summary

In the Summer of 2017, researchers from the psychology department of University College London, led by Dr John Barry and co-written by Martin Daubney, conducted an academic survey, in conjunction with Harry's, to identify the values and priorities of British men and the factors which contribute to their emotional, physical and mental health and wellbeing.

In a comprehensive survey of 2000+ male respondents, subjects were asked about their core values, lives, careers, work/life balance, relationships, money and physicality. Who do they aspire to be? What values do men hold dear? What gives them the greatest sense of positivity?

That survey, the biggest-ever academic study of its kind, became the Harry's Masculinity Report.

We found that modern men want to stand for something more selfless than selfish. Forget celebrity idols, sporting legends or filtered Instagram followers, the values these men aspire to are those of everyday heroes: dads, mentors, men with a social conscience and self-made success stories.

Key findings

- Modern British man is a decent, moral man. When asked what characteristics he aspires to, he chooses values that centre on the needs of others over his own.

- The strongest predictor of a positive mindset in men – by far – is secure and satisfying employment. Men who have high job satisfaction are very likely to be content in other aspects of their life.

- The second-highest determinant of positivity was relationship status. In general, the more committed men are, the more positive they appear to be.

- Forget the myth of the carefree bachelor. Single men are significantly less likely to be positive about life than their married, cohabiting or romantically-involved peers. They are also less likely to be satisfied with other aspects of their lives, including job satisfaction.

- For the first time, British men told us they value their mental health above their physical health. All the indications are that men are ready and willing to talk and take action to improve their own state of mind. The question is, is anyone ready to listen?

- Men treasure fatherhood. Their sense of responsibility to their own children trumps all other concerns, and their own fathers are the biggest influencers on their attitude.

- Things can only get better! As men mature, their positivity rises and they become more likely to have a healthy and positive outlook on life.

- In terms of regions, men in the South West are typically the most positive, while those in Wales and Northern Ireland displayed the least positivity.

- London ranked eighth out of 12 UK regions, indicating that life in the Capital represents its own unique set of challenges for British men.

Part II:
The Harry's Masculinity
Report: expert responses

We asked experts from both academia and the frontline of service delivery to respond to the findings of the Harry's Masculinity Report. The objective was to carry this research forward from the graphs and data towards real and positive impacts on the lives of men in Britain today. In the pages that follow we will hear from some of Britain's most acclaimed and respected individuals and charities in the fields of men's mental health, wellbeing and relationships.

The importance of mental health

One of the headline breakthroughs of the Harry's Masculinity Report was that, for the first time, British men told us they value their mental health even higher than their physical health.

Overall, 44.4% of British men deem their mental health to be "very important" to their sense of general wellbeing. In comparison physical health was deemed "very important" to 37%.

At one end of the age spectrum, the oldest men (60-85s) deemed mental health highest, which is perhaps due to increased public awareness of dementia, etc. Some 86.4% of this group deemed their mental health to be "important" or "very important".

At the younger end, a gratifying 75.9% of millennials (18-29s) also deemed mental health to be "important" or "very important," showing twenty-something men with little risk of degenerative mental illness are switched onto the benefits of positive mental health. This points towards a new openness among British men and helps shatter the stereotype of the British "stiff upper lip".

It's important to point out that this new embracing of mental health is not at the expense of men's physical health; indeed, men repeatedly told us they saw their physical health as holistically supportive of and vital to their mental health. "Strong of body, strong of mind" appears to be true for British men.

Even millennials – those who prized athleticism highest (33.9% important or very important) – see mental health as far more important to their general wellbeing.

This new, commendable male openness represents a significant opportunity, and one that has never been more needed, with male suicide being the number one – and growing – cause of death for men aged under 45.

It appears men are ready to talk. Unfortunately, a lot of men sense that people are not ready to hear them.

With that in mind, we first reached out to **Simon Gunning**, CEO of CALM, the UK's only male-specific anti-suicide charity and Harry's charity partner for 2017. We wanted him to underline Harry's goal of forming a cross-party action group on male suicide that focuses on a gendered approach to ending this epidemic.

Next, we approached **Martin Seager**, a consultant clinical psychologist and co-founder of the Male Psychology Network. He is also honorary consultant psychologist with Central London Samaritans. It was always important that the findings of the Harry's Masculinity Report should be applicable to the development of frontline services. Martin was invited to reflect upon how this data can help steer change in health and social care to meet the needs of men, in a society where the assumption is usually that it is men themselves who need to change.

Lucy Allan MP is Conservative MP for Telford and founder of Family First Group, which campaigns to reduce the number of children in state care. Lucy gave us permission to republish her speech delivered to Parliament at the International Men's Day debate in 2015, in which she called for a more enlightened and inclusive political approach to issues of gender politics, as exemplified by Harry's Masculinity Report.

Jonny Benjamin MBE rose to public prominence as the subject of the acclaimed 2014 documentary, Stranger on the Bridge, which detailed his efforts attempts to trace the anonymous man who saved his life from a suicide attempt. He is now recognized as one of Britain's leading mental health campaigners. Utilising data gleaned from the Harry's Masculinity Report and his own experiences, we wanted him to utilise his unique perspective and expertise to address how we can help to destigmatise mental health for men in particular.

Core values

Which values did British men want to live up to in their daily lives?

Most Popular

Honest

Reliable

Dependable

Loyal

Committed

Fit

Collaborative

Creative

Adventurous

Athletic

Least Popular

A gendered approach to changing and saving men's lives

Simon Gunning, CEO of CALM

The Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) exists to prevent male suicide, the single biggest killer of men under the age of 45 in the UK. The issue is complex, so our approach is necessarily multi-faceted: alongside the provision of services for men in crisis who need immediate support, CALM campaigns tirelessly for culture change, challenging stereotypes that prevent men seeking help and taking action to keep themselves – and those around them – healthy.

Our commitment to sustainable, societal and systemic change must be built upon the sound foundations of a deep understanding and thorough exploration of what it means to be a man today. We are primarily concerned with how a diversity of masculinities exist and evolve in our culture, and how these contribute to men's experiences of life's challenges and suicidality.

CALM's response to The Harry's Masculinity Report 2017 focuses on reaching men of all ages, the worth of work, a gendered approach, and sport and sociability.

Reaching men of all ages

The report findings show that older men tend to have a more positive mindset, with an invitation to younger men to relax and embrace a rosy future.

Men get happier as they get older. We found a clear correlation between age and wellbeing   H'

However, ONS figures for male suicide over the last three decades show men in middle age (40-59) are most likely to take their own lives. Whilst there is welcome focus on young male suicide in the media – as well as across the suicide prevention, wellbeing, and mental health sectors – CALM's remit of work was updated in 2012 to include supporting men of all ages.

This reflects a need for appropriate and accessible support to reach men at different stages in life, as well as a robust understanding of how life's transitional moments – relationship breakdown, parenthood, retirement, ill health, social isolation – continue to shape the male experience throughout life.

It is therefore crucial that, whilst men may mature to a more positive mindset overall, the wider community commits to value lifelong wellbeing, which includes acknowledging and preventing suicidality among men in middle age. For CALM and our peers, this means developing appropriate community and workplace partnerships to reach this group as well as broader advocacy through the media and brands.

The worth of work

A key insight in The Harry's Masculinity Report 2017 is that job satisfaction is the top determinant of men's wellbeing. There is a huge amount of importance placed on the role of working life to a man's value and self-worth.

Men love being a breadwinner. Being in work and being a provider remains a fundamental bedrock of male happiness   H'

This would suggest that the inverse is also true: a lack of job satisfaction – incorporating being valued and making a difference – is a prominent risk to men's happiness. CALM places much importance on building happier workplaces and working lives. We believe strongly that employers can improve productivity and performance by investing in and valuing workforce wellbeing and – as this study shows – empowering men to achieve job satisfaction.

Our recommendation to businesses across all sectors is to make explicit commitments to these actions; to actively invest in championing progressive, gendered approaches; and to embed positive working practice in supporting employees.

For guidance and inspiration, we can look to outstanding examples such as Harry's, who embody progressive, positive social change not only as a brand but also as an employer. Similarly, our pilot programme CALM Companies has been built expressly to support businesses in taking action we know will keep men happy at work and, as a result, happy in life.

A further recommendation in this area addresses the risk to men's wellbeing posed by worklessness and precarious employment. We must ensure young men are equipped and supported to glean job satisfaction in a rapidly changing working world, adapting to factors such as the gig economy, Brexit, and zero hours contracts. This is the work of schools, colleges and universities in career preparedness, whilst we encourage workplaces, job centres and recruiters to be accountable to workers' evolving needs.

A gendered approach

Many of the report's findings are underpinned by what we can interpret as highly gendered identities. We see men valuing work insofar as it satisfies a desire to be the breadwinner or provider. We see men considering their fathers to be more important than their mothers in shaping the positive aspects of their personalities. We see men who place importance on being authoritative as a parent exhibiting a more positive outlook.

Men who valued traditional gender roles for men and women were more likely to have a positive mindset than other men **H'**

Gender roles in society are in a state of evolution. This both promises huge benefits to the freedoms enjoyed by both men and women and also disrupts the solidity of accepted and acceptable gender roles valued by many – as shown in this report.

Our recommendation in this space is fundamental to CALM's overall endeavour: services, institutions, societal structures, workplaces, schools and communities must take a purposeful gendered approach to changing and saving men's lives. This necessarily begins with awareness and education of the issues arising at the intersection of gender and mental health, then extends to embedding informed practice across all sectors.

An example of this is the development of new ASA guidelines on mitigating gender stereotypes in advertising. CALM's campaign activities focus on disrupting masculine stereotypes to prompt attitudinal and behavioural change.

Sport and sociability

The report shows men placing value on the benefits of sport not only to their physical health but also to their mental health. This reflects what we know is a growing understanding of how significantly movement can contribute positively to overall wellbeing.

British men seem to value their mental health above their physical health **H'**

The report also underlines the extent to which men value the social side of sport, which is supported by wider research demonstrating the importance of social connections in men's lives – especially in later life. This underpins CALM's Collectives programme, which serves as a platform for coming together around a passion such as sport. CALM's Running Collective is a blueprint not only for how to maintain mental health through movement, but also for the power of shoulder-to-shoulder activity.

Our recommendation is to build widespread awareness of the health and wellbeing benefits of moving, and specifically of moving with friends old and new. As resources for formal mental health provision diminish daily, it is our belief that individuals, groups and communities can embrace opportunities to build their own resilience and create self-supporting networks. CALM's mission is to support this, and there are important opportunities for these efforts to be supported by formal bodies as well. We see this as a rallying cry to brands, business, sports clubs and associations to step up and support in whatever way they can.

Must we change masculinity, or create male-friendly services?

Martin Seager

The fact that, overall, the Harry's Masculinity Report showed 44.4% of British men deem their mental health to be "very important" to their sense of general wellbeing represents a hugely positive opportunity for mental health provision for vulnerable men in the UK.

Mental health was deemed important or very important to 81% of British men   H'

Yet these results show that it's not that men are not reaching out (or are quietly prepared to) so much as that we are not tuning in to men's behaviour. We have misunderstood what motivates and concerns men. The positive is that there is hope of change, but the hope needs to come from changes in society's attitudes to, understanding of and responses to men rather than changes in men. The health of any demographic group will improve if they feel understood and listened to. The Harry's Masculinity Report shows we owe men that duty and honour: to listen to men on their terms.

The contrast between the importance placed on mental health by men in the survey – mental health was deemed either important or very important by 81.6% of men – and the lack of gender-specific mental health services and pathways for men means that society has still yet to reach out to men in ways that honour masculinity.

Traditional counselling and mental health services are more suited to female modes of communication – we are asking men to be vulnerable but still designing society with less compassion for men (work place and military mortality, life expectancy, mental health, prison, education, homelessness, addiction, domestic violence, child access).

While the Harry's Masculinity Report proves men value their mental health as 18% more important to British men's general wellbeing than physical health we know men are typically 50% less likely to have sought professional help before taking their own lives.

This means we have misunderstood the picture. By telling men to open up or "man up" we are blaming them for their troubles whilst at the same time not acting to provide services for vulnerable men. Men will respond to our actions not our words.

The survey also shows that men care about children and care to provide for their families – so if we want to reduce male suicide we need to help men with things like employment and child access initiatives rather than blaming them for not opening up.

When experiments have been tried even within traditional talking care models with altering how we listen to men rather than trying to change how men talk, the results are dramatic. For example the "Man Talk" Project Central London Samaritans (2014) found that by simply exposing volunteers (80% female) to male culture over a variety of workshops for a year, the phone calls with men got significantly longer – in particular it was reported that volunteers felt "better connections with men". For example, male banter was respected as an attempt to connect emotionally rather than dismissed as a superficial attempt to avoid emotion.

With this in mind, a key next step of the Harry's Masculinity Report should be exploring more male-specific methods of talking to men, training health care professionals in how to more effectively engage with men and setting up dedicated, tangible services for men that proves we are ready to engage with men on their terms.

The survey demonstrates that men like to be in stable relationships and to be supporting their families. The idea that men are uncommitted is therefore a stereotype or myth. The idea of the male as provider however is closer to an archetype because when men are prevented from being involved with their kids or providing for them, the suicide rate goes up.

The Harry's Masculinity Report proves the importance of traditional gender role models for good reason: it works for the majority of men. We need to respect that. Traditional masculine values are not lightweight stereotypes but important archetypes that can be reworked in a modern society. For example the male need to be strong can be reworked so as to include help-seeking as a strength – if you seek help you are being a man; you are taking action and taking control.

We don't have to change masculinity any more than we ever had to change femininity. We just have to expand our sense of what a man can be but not undermine masculinity itself. The Harry's Masculinity Report shows men are more willing to talk. Now it is our responsibility to listen.

Destigmatising men's mental health, once and for all

Jonny Benjamin, MBE

It is encouraging to see conclusive data in the Harry's Masculinity Report that suggests men are ready to talk more openly. Since I began working in the mental health field a few years ago I have observed that a much higher proportion of women feel able to engage in the subject of mental health and suicide prevention compared to their male counterparts.

Whether it be a talk we present to a company or a visit to a mental health service, it is rare for men to engage and interact with us.

However, when giving talks in schools we find that young boys are more willing to talk about this subject. We do tend to notice though that young girls are able to have more frank and open discussions than male students. This highlights the need for greater awareness and education about mental health in our schools from a young age, particularly for boys.

We know that 75% of all mental health issues begin in adolescence [12] and yet mental health is a topic still not addressed in many schools, colleges and universities.

In 2016 we launched a mental health workshop for secondary schools called ThinkWell [13]: The workshop aims to begin a conversation on mental health in the classroom; something that many pupils have not done previously.

Surveys we have conducted show an increase in pupils awareness and understanding of mental health, and a reduction in stigma, as a result of the workshops.

In almost all cases, pupils say they are much more likely to ask for help and support should they or a loved one be struggling with a mental health issue, once the workshop is complete.

It indicates the difference addressing mental health at school can make, and raises the question why mental health education is still not a mandatory part of the school curriculum, whereas physical education is.

Personally, I feel the need to discuss this topic must begin before secondary school age, within our primary schools. My own mental health issues began very young. I was first taken to a child psychologist at the age of five due to emotional and behavioural issues.

Up until the age of between six and seven I felt able to express these issues but it is then that I believe the stigma attached to mental health presented itself due to the messaging about masculinity I was receiving from those around me. Statements such as "big boys don't cry" were constantly reinforced, in and out of school.

As a result I felt unable to convey vulnerability and distress. I perceived it as weak for a man to show too much emotion. This had a profound impact on me during my teenage years. I began experiencing what was later diagnosed as schizoaffective disorder, a combination of schizophrenia and depression, when I was 20 years old.

Before my diagnosis I hid my illness for many years previously, then post-diagnosis I denied it and refused to accept help.

It was only in my mid-twenties that I finally accepted I had a mental health issue and engaged with medication and therapy. This helped me to begin managing my condition; particularly the latter.

I now believe that the crisis point I reached aged 20 when I was hospitalised and attempted to take my own life after I received my diagnosis, could have been prevented.

This is why the primary focus of my work, and I believe any work to address men's mental health, must be in early intervention.

I would propose we establish an education system where mental health is embedded into the curriculum from primary school age.

Why don't we discuss which historical individuals had mental health issues in our history lessons, for example? Winston Churchill often talked about his experience of depression, which he termed the black dog.

If pupils learnt about the brain in science classes, and how chemical imbalance can lead to mental illness, or if they debated literary portrayals of mental health issues within English lessons, it would surely lead to a greater understanding of this topic.

Moreover, by addressing mental illness in men throughout different subjects in our schools, we could finally begin to destigmatise male mental health once and for all.

The importance of work

A stand-out finding of the Harry's Masculinity Report was that the strongest predictor of a positive mindset in men – by far – is secure and satisfying employment. Job satisfaction was four times more important than the next indicators of positivity, health and being in a stable relationship. Men who have high job satisfaction are very likely to be content in other aspects of their life. Men at work are more likely to be men at ease with themselves. Everything else – contentment at home, in relationships and friendships – flows down from men being satisfied at work.

Indeed the core values British men most aspired to – such as dependability and reliability –can be seen to be synonymous with work values.

Clearly, being a provider, and that proud feeling of "standing on your own two feet" are as important to today's men as they were to our forefathers.

Yet, increasingly, in a fast-changing world where "men's jobs" are increasingly a thing of the past, today's men don't need to work at the same jobs, or for the same long hours, as our forefathers did, to find positivity.

Indeed, the Harry's Masculinity Report pointed towards a new, more progressive work/life balance for men, with autonomy –being a consultant, self-employed or an entrepreneur – often cited as being associated with increased job satisfaction, especially for fathers.

The aspects of work most related to positive mindset in men were men who felt they were making a direct impact on the success of their business. This was more important than money, proving feeling highly valued at work is more important than being remunerated.

With all this in mind, we decided to reach out to two experts to talk about the importance of fulfilling work to men's positivity.

Jenny Gulliford was formerly policy and research officer for the Work Foundation, and co-author of the report Unemployment Makes You Sick in collaboration with the Men's Health Forum. She is now Principal Policy Officer at London Councils, but writes here in a personal capacity.

Michelle Dewberry is a former winner of TV show The Apprentice, an entrepreneur, mental health campaigner, mentor, employment ambassador and Sky News presenter. She also stood as an independent candidate at the 2017 General Election in Hull West and Hessle. She is currently devising a 'one stop solution' for businesses, working with all the 'best in practise' suppliers to assist and simplify the process of supporting their staff's mental health needs.
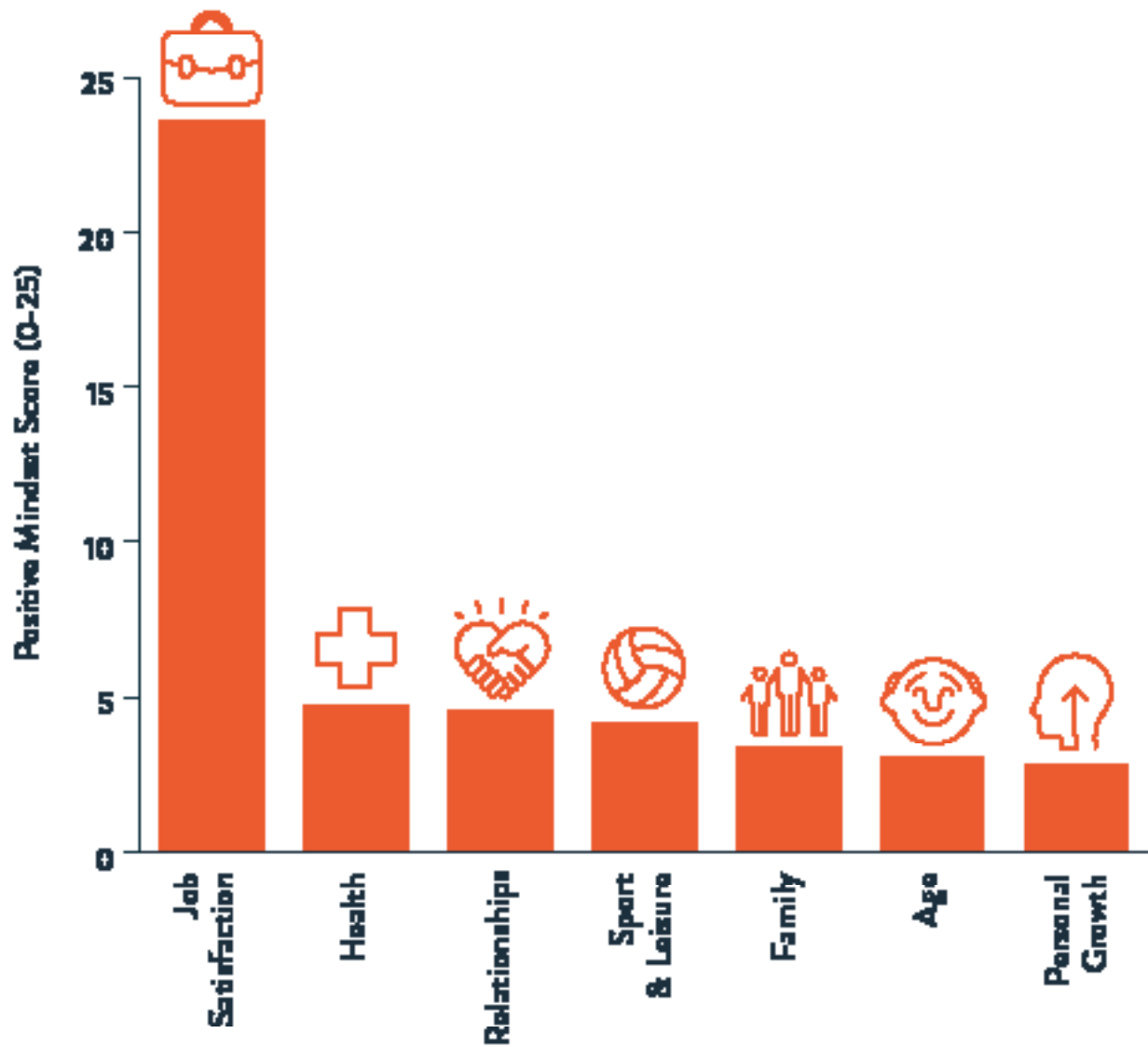
The aspects of work most strongly related to a positive mindset in men are:

- *Feeling he is making a direct impact on success of the workplace*

- *Sociability (chat with workmates)*

- *Having his opinion valued*

- *Having a diverse set of perspectives*

Positive Mindset

What are the indicators of a
positive mindset?

The significance of employment to men's wellbeing

Jenny Gulliford

Work provides more than just an income. It can provide a structure, a purpose, and a social network. These things are important to everyone, but they seem to have particular links to male mental wellbeing. There is a strong cultural connection between work and masculine status, with men being more likely to define themselves through their jobs. Things are changing, but in a heterosexual relationship men are still more likely to be the primary earner, and are more likely to work full-time than women.

There is also a greater stigma associated with unemployment for men. Things have changed in the last few decades, but there is still a societal expectation that fathers are 'providers' for their families, and if they are not in work they are failing this.

The findings of Harry's Masculinity Report suggest it is not the size of men's salary that really makes a difference to their positive mindset, so much as being valued and feeling they are making a difference in what they do. This is very much in keeping with previous research findings. Being able to live comfortably and make ends meet is obviously crucial, but for most people being part of something, and feeling like your work matters is also important.

Among men who are above average in positivity, 78% are satisfied with their work, making a rewarding job by far the strongest predictor of positive state of mind **H'**

Most people spend the majority of their days in work, so it makes sense that the way you feel at work, what you do and the people you meet all plays such a big part of your sense of well-being. Having autonomy, and control is a big part of this – no one wants to feel like a cog.

Again, this is very important to men who are expected by society to get more of their self-worth and identity from work than women, who traditionally have been expected to find their identity through the home and children.

Contented employees, contented employers
Employers need to think about their work places holistically, and understand the role that work plays in their employees' lives. It seems self-evident, but a healthy, happy workforce is more likely to be productive, loyal and effective. Focusing on well-being isn't fluffy – it's good business sense.

What many employers don't realise is that these kinds of interventions needn't be expensive – it's not about colourful beanbags or ping pong tables – it's about workplaces in which people feel respected, in which they have control over their work, and in which they feel like they are able to make a different. Easy interventions, like the introduction of flexible working, encouraging team bonding etc. are not expensive but have big impacts.

Making sure that line managers have the proper training to support the well-being of their staff is also key. Schemes such as mental health first aid training, and the 'Time to Talk' campaign are both examples of good practice - men are less likely than women to seek out medical support, so bringing these kind of services in to the workplace could help reduce preventable sickness absence and improving productivity.

This all plays an important role in increasing productivity, preventing ill health, and retaining staff, all ensuring that people are working to the best of their ability. It can also help reduce turnover – a huge waste of talent and resource.

Work makes you happy, unemployment makes you sick
Overall, men are more likely to experience a quick, sharp rise in mortality and general poor health than women, followed by a plateau during medium term unemployment and another steep rise when moving into long term unemployment, emphasising the need to act quickly. It is well established that unemployment may double or even triple the risk of male suicide.

There are a number of factors at work. Firstly, becoming unemployed has an immediate shock on someone's well-being and sense of self. This is particularly true for men, who are more likely to have a strong cultural connection to work. The loss of routine and purpose all play a role.

There are also lifestyle changes when you leave work – men become more likely to engage in unhealthy habits, such as smoking, and problem drinking and are less likely to exercise or eat healthily. Social activity is also likely to decrease, as men lose access to work colleagues and the income to go out. The lack of routine, the lack of social activity and purpose can all play a role in either the development of ill health or the exacerbation of pre-existing conditions.

Being ill can also make it more difficult to look for work, making both the act of job-searching tougher as you manage a health condition, but also risking potential employers looking at you differently. Too many workplaces still discriminate against disabled people and people with long term health conditions.

Importantly however, while we know that unemployment has a negative effect on men's health (particularly mental health), we also have evidence to suggest that a return to work negates these effects.

Staying positive in the flexible gig economy

One of the biggest social and economic changes of recent decades has been the shift from an assumption of a job for life to the so called 'gig economy' or flexible labour market. For some people having access to flexible types of work, whether zero hours contracts or the 'gig economy' means that they can fit their jobs around other aspects of their lives – one of the reasons that women are far more likely to be in part-time or flexible work is that it means that employment can fit in with child caring responsibilities.

However, flexible working should be separated from the idea of precarious work and the 'low pay no pay' cycle, in which people churn in and out of employment. Overall women are more likely to be affected by these phenomena, but research indicates that it is increasingly affecting men.

Individuals may suffer further as result of being unwilling or unable to claim out of work benefits in what they hope to be short periods of unemployment. The uncertainty of their situation can lead to increased stress and anxiety as individuals take on loans to get them through the times between jobs, pushing them into debt.

Debt is a major risk factor for common mental health conditions, with adults in debt being three times more likely than those not in debt to experience this. This cycle is difficult to escape, as the short periods of unemployment may mean that they are unable to access support, although the introduction of Universal Credit might change this.

It's also worth pointing out that, for the most part, low paid precarious jobs do not have many of the qualities of what we consider to be 'good work' – stability, autonomy and the opportunity to grow and develop within a role. Such jobs are less likely to offer preventative interventions such as proper health and safety practices or suitable sickness absence policies, or to implement legally required reasonable workplace adjustments for people with a long term health condition or disability.

This will not only make it more likely that they will drop out of work due to ill health, but will affect their experience of unemployment. Flexible working is not inherently a bad thing, but it does need to be held to the same standards as we hold more traditional full-time jobs.

Jobcentres must be supported to allow greater action to prevent poor health amongst unemployed men, helping back to work support providers identify men at risk of or already suffering from poor health. Incentivising Work Programme providers to address the health risks of unemployment is also likely to help tackle the situation.

The government must ensure that both preventing ill health and addressing existing health conditions that are barriers to returning to work are priorities within back to work support services.

Furthermore, there is an urgent need for further research in this area. Very little recent primary research has focused on health and unemployment in the specific context of the UK benefit system, and the Work Programme in particular.

Recommendations

The government should consider how ill-health in unemployed men could be prevented, and how health should inform back-to-work support provided through Jobcentre Plus. Action to prevent poor health as soon as an individual claims an out-of-work benefit has the potential to be a cost-saving intervention.

The introduction of Universal Credit, which will bring people who are in low pay in to the Jobcentre for the first time, will need to be handled carefully. The government is considering using conditionality to incentivise people to increase their earnings.

Support to progress at work is welcome, but there have been few large pilots looking at what works in this area – the government needs to really understand what effective support looks like before they penalise someone for being in low pay.

Employers should be encouraged and empowered to offer line manager training in mental health and wellbeing, along the lines of mental health first aid.

Working towards a new male positivity

Michelle Dewberry

I feel strongly about the value of work and applaud Harry's for conducting this critical research into the link between work and men's mental positivity.

"So, what do you do for a living?" I'd bet that is probably the second or third question that most of us ask when we meet someone new for the first time. In today's society, our work increasingly seems to be one of the core things that defines us. Without it, what do we stand for?

It's no surprise then that the Harry's Masculinity Report shows that the top driver to positivity within men is job satisfaction, with 77.6% deeming it very important or important, and it rating highest with millennials at 83.2% very important or important.

Yet the world of work as we know it will change dramatically over the next 20 years. We are entering into the fourth industrial revolution and it will be more crucial than ever that our young men leave school with the relevant skills to prepare them for this changing workplace. Employers should be involved in the education system, to ensure that pupils are leaving education fully 'work ready'.

A great example of such innovative education is University Technical Colleges. UTCs partner with employers and local universities to offer 14-19 year-olds academic, technical and practical education focusing on science, technology, engineering and maths. More of these innovative facilities should exist.

It's highly encouraging to see the Harry's Masculinity Report identifies that flexible working practices increasingly work for today's men, and in particular entrepreneurship. We should continue to develop an entrepreneurial mindset within schools, expanding on the enterprise initiatives which currently exist. We should also seek to include mental resilience within the curriculum, helping pupils build strong and healthy minds. Understanding our minds and being able to manage thoughts and reactions is crucial to wellbeing.

The changing work economy will also give further opportunity to men who want to progress gainful self-employment or build their own enterprises. Technology enables us to reach customers globally and we should exploit this. We should champion the benefits of self-employment within schools, ensuring that entrepreneurs are regularly invited to speak to students, especially "local lads made good" as this gives aspirational and attainable role models that young men can identify with.

I've run an annual employment roadshow in partnership with The Sun newspaper for the past six years, connecting thousands of jobseekers, employers and the government. I have seen first-hand the despair that struggling jobseekers face. In particular I have seen it in cities where the primary industries have collapsed and no real alternative employment economy has replaced it. Men more often bear the brunt of this painful change.

The strain of men's joblessness damages whole families, particularly where the man has been playing the traditional role as the breadwinner. We should identify and target 'at risk' cities with support to encourage and incentivise people to set up new businesses in those areas. A particular challenge of job seekers entering into the job market for the first time is a lack of experience. Apprenticeships are well placed to fix this challenge by combining education with real employment experience. A focus should be placed on these, as opposed to the current academic focus on universities.

Once in employment, poor mental health costs us all dearly. It is the number one reason for staff absence, often explained away when calling in sick. There is an annual cost to employers of between £33-42 billion (absence, lower productivity, etc.). The cost of poor mental health to Government is between £24-27 billion in lost revenue, increased NHS costs, etc. The cost of poor mental health to the economy as a whole, in terms of lost output, is a staggering £74-99 billion per year.

Most employers have good intentions but they often don't know the best practises to follow. My recommendations are for all employers with over 250 employees to undertake an anonymous employee 'wellness check' and deliver assistance conducive to mental wellbeing. This could include simple things like a quiet area in offices, through to an employee counselling service. So many service providers are operating in this space at the moment and it can be overwhelming to companies. This is why I am in the process of devising a one-stop solution for businesses, working with all the best in practise suppliers to assist and simplify the process of supporting staff.

Everyone of us has mental health, in the same way that we have physical health. Sometimes, our mental health is stronger than at other times. Men are often not as open as their female counterparts in discussing their mental health challenges. This can often be more prominent in working class environments where men are expected to be tough, provide and have a stiff upper lip. We must continue to champion the need to seek help during tough times and normalise conversations around mental health.

The Harry's Masculinity Report represents a welcome "line in the sand" moment, and one progressive employers should sit up and take notice of.

Positivity by region

After taking age, relationship status, and parental status into account, positivity is highest in SW and lowest in SE England

■ Most satisfied

□ Least satisfied

Job Satisfaction by region

After taking age, relationship status, and parental status into account, job satisfaction is lowest in Ireland

□ Most satisfied

■ Least satisfied

The importance of relationships

After work, by far the biggest determiner of men's positivity was being in a relationship, and, in general, the more committed men were, the greater their general sense of overall wellbeing.

Married men (and those in civil partnerships) were the most positive, followed by those co-habiting. The least positive of all were single men, with the youngest the most affected. Single men felt less positive about life than even divorcées or widowers.

Furthermore, romance was considered important or very important to a staggering 90.4% of British men overall, placing it above friendship (84.4%). Men aged 30-39 deemed romance the most important (93.5% deeming it very important or important).

This seems to shatter the myth of the British man as emotionally-detached and commitment-phobic, and disproves the myth that men are happiest while indulging in a self-centred "laddish," promiscuous lifestyle.

The Harry's Masculinity Report seems to prove that, irrespective of all other factors, commitment is bliss for British men.

With this in mind, it would seem reasonable to conclude that encouraging men into – and keeping them in – committed relationships would be a wise move.

To affirm this, we reached out to two leading experts at Relate, the UK's largest provider of relationship support: **Dr. David Marjoribanks**, Policy and Research Manager and **Anna Darnell Bradley**, Policy and Research Officer.

Every year Relate helps over a million people of all ages, backgrounds and sexual orientations to strengthen their relationships. We wanted to add Harry's data to Relate's expertise to offer clear guidelines of how to encourage more men to seek relationship help, while addressing the specific challenges and barriers men face.

Married men were the happiest of all –a full 10% happier than other men, when all other factors were taken into consideration

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The effect of relationship status

Single men have the lowest positivity

Single men have the least job satisfaction

Relationships matter

Relate's Dr David Marjoribanks, Policy and Research
Manager and Anna Darnell Bradley, Policy and Research Officer

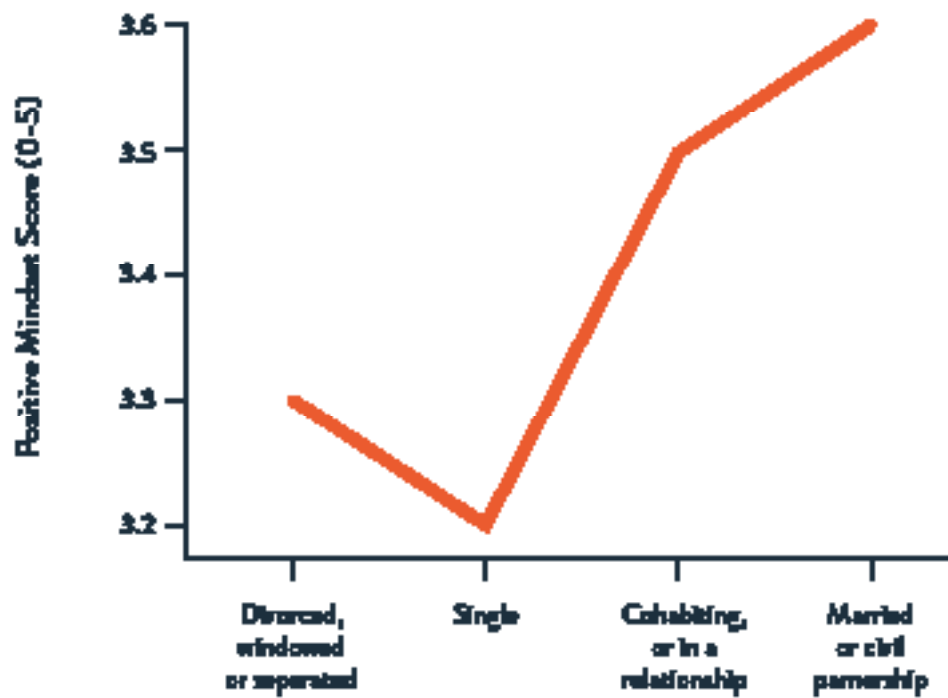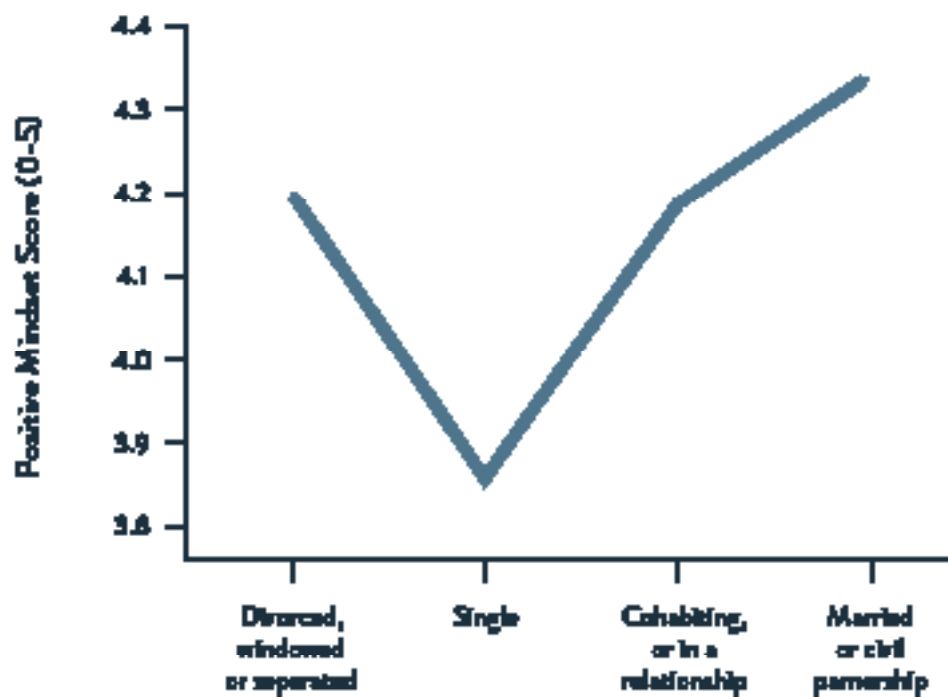It is tremendously positive to see the high importance British men place on strong, committed relationships, as highlighted by the Harry's Masculinity Report. Harry's findings echo Relate's own firm belief: that relationships are the beating heart of our lives – and when they aren't healthy, we suffer.

To underline Harry's findings, a significant body of research documents the benefits of good quality, stable, supportive relationships across the life course for mental and physical health. Studies also point to links between relationship distress and alcohol misuse,[1] depression[2] and poor health: a major evidence review found an 'unequivocal association' between relationship breakdown and general adult ill health as well as more specific conditions such as coronary heart disease and raised blood pressure.[3]

Fourteen percent of adults who have very poor quality relationships will experience depression later in life, compared to seven per cent of adults with high quality relationships.[4] A meta-analytic review examining the associations between social relationships and mortality found that a lack of good quality relationships may be as harmful to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.[5]

Being in a relationship is the second most important factor in British men's happiness, after job satisfaction. Married men are the most positive, closely followed by those who are going steady or cohabiting H'

What this means for men
While the Harry's report show that men are happier in committed relationships, we know they are less likely to seek help for relationship difficulties and less likely to access emotional support. Unpicking why this is the case is crucial to developing policy and practice that best addresses the emotional and mental health needs of men.

There are a number of factors that can contribute towards relationship difficulties for men such as employment-related issues; financial difficulties; communication differences and expectations of support; and alcohol and substance misuse.

Male help-seeking behaviours
We know that men experience poorer health outcomes compared with women, through a combination of unhealthier lifestyles and less effective use of health services; men drink and smoke more than women, for example. They are also less frequent attendees of all primary care services, including dental services, ophthalmic services and GP surgeries.[6] Men are also in a minority of those who use telephone advice and helplines provided by healthcare charities.[7] We also know that men are less likely to access counselling services. Referrals to the Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies programme (IAPT), the national initiative designed to make counselling services more easily accessible via primary care, are lower for men than for women. The most recent figures show that men make up just 35% of those referred to and entering treatment with IAPT services.[8]

Men and relationship support
Men are also underrepresented in relationship support services. For example, in the six months from January – June 2017, 39% of Relate's clients across all services were male, and we know from previous evidence they are more likely to exit earlier from the counselling process than women.

Our data from January – June 2017 show an underrepresentation of men across Relate services that have different referral processes/channels of access. For instance, 36% of clients of Children and Young People's Counselling (who are in most cases referred via a mixture of schools, parents and self-referral) were male. And, only 24% of users of our online Live Chat services (up to 30-45 minutes of clinical support as an initial assessment) were male.

The reasons for this underrepresentation are varied. Some recent data from Relate's 2016/17 The Way We Are Now research series suggest it might be less to do with stigma and fear of reaching out for help, and more connected to a lack of awareness of what support is available. Nationally representative polling of over 5,000 UK adults found that while men were less likely than women to say they would seek professional support if their relationship was under strain (19% vs. 25%), they were no more likely than women to say that they would keep it a secret if they did. However, men were more likely than women to say they didn't know where they would go to find local professional relationship support (47% vs. 35%), and less likely to select options such as 'online search', 'GP or other health professional' or 'Relate, Relationships Scotland or Marriage Care'.

Our research also found that nearly one in six men said they had no close friends (16%), compared to one in ten women (10%) saying the same. This is a particularly worrying finding given the evidence showing that social isolation and loneliness are significant determinants of our mental and physical health.

Improving relationship support for men[9] Drawing on the emerging evidence base around relationship support, Relate's 2013 report with Men's Health Forum – Try To See It My Way: Improving Relationship Support For Men – highlighted some clear themes around which men and women differ in their approach to relationship difficulties:

Financial difficulties Despite recent increases in maternal breadwinning, men continue to be the primary breadwinner in the majority of male/female couple households that are bringing up children. This may explain why loss of employment appears to affect men's sense of wellbeing more negatively than it does that of women.[10] The same is true of continuing job insecurity.[11] Furthermore, as many as one in seven men may develop depression within six months of being made redundant.[12]

Alcohol and substance use Men are significantly more likely to misuse both alcohol and drugs, which can have significant impacts on their relationships.

Childcare roles and responsibilities Disputes over childcare often centre on the balance of responsibilities undertaken by the parents. Men were more likely to identify the emergence of a tension between the demands of work (exacerbated by the increased financial pressures on the family) and the desire to be involved with their child. Some men also experience a feeling of being "pushed out" after the birth of a baby.

Communication and expectations of support Relate counsellors found that men have a tendency to want to "solve problems" whilst women want to discuss change and understand why things have happened. This desire to "solve problems" can often result in unrealistic expectations of counselling by men. Men often wait to access support for their relationship until there is a crisis in their relationship or permission has been conferred by friends or family whilst women tend to notice strains in the relationship earlier.

Relate and the Men's Health Forum, endorsed by Harry's, recommend that Looking at the statistics from the Harry's Masculinity Report and considering our own research, we can conclude with certainty that good quality, stable relationships are significant determinants of our health and wellbeing, as well as key contributors to happy and stable families, it is vital that we improve knowledge of and access to relationship support for men in particular. There are a number of things that Government and relationship support providers need to do to tailor and target their services to men.

The Department for Work and Pensions should pilot a campaign to improve and increase the access points to relationship support. The campaign should target GPs and employers who are often in the frontline in supporting men who are experiencing relationship difficulties.

Relationships and Sex Education is taught by trained, confident specialists. We welcomed the government commitment in March 2017 to make relationships and sex education in primary schools and secondary schools compulsory subjects in England. However, in order to ensure quality, it is now important that either it is taught by trained, confident specialists from appropriate Third Sector organisations or specialist trained teachers. Consideration to gender should be included in monitoring of the quality and effectiveness of this programme.

The Department of Health, through the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme, should pilot new ways of engaging men to increase their participation in therapies such as couple therapy for depression.

Relationship support providers should explore less formal approaches to relationship support such as Relationship Coaching, which could make use of a more "practical" solution-focused approach to meet the needs of men in accessing relationship support.

Relationship support providers should explore ways to take services out of traditional counselling settings and delivering them online and in community settings and workplaces. Providers should also explore ways of extending opening hours so that access to services is more flexible.

Relationship support providers should experiment with ways to market their services directly to men, using "male-friendly" language and imagery.

Relationship support providers should look at ways to engage more men – for example exploring more 'practical' solution-focused approaches to relationship support; delivering more services online, in community settings and workplaces; offering more flexible access to services; marketing services directly to men; and working in partnership with employers.

Further research is needed to understand better how and why men access (and don't access) relationship support services. In addition, research is needed as to how specific groups of men such as gay and black and minority ethnic men access relationship support.

The importance of family

The Harry's Masculinity Report found that behind job satisfaction, relationships and health, family life plays a central role in the positive mindset of British men. Family was considered very important or important to 79.3% of British men, with those in the 40-49 age group displaying the highest regard for family: 83.2% deemed it very important or important.

This directly corresponds with Office for National Statistics divorce data, that shows more British men separate in their forties than any other age group. In 2015, 32,536 men aged 40-49 divorced in the UK, are at by far the greatest risk.[1]

So it should come as no surprise that British men take a reinforced focus on family values, as often they are fighting for inclusion in a family unit that deviously defined them both as fathers and as men. The effect of children on fathers' positivity was apparent, with men who were fathers typically displaying increased positivity to those who were childless, although divorce and separation from children can represent very real challenges.

In particular, the men in our study placed importance on the part that their fathers played as a role model; in the capacity as someone they looked up to and aspired to be, if he was a positive role model for them, or supersede if he was perhaps not so ideal, or perhaps absent.

With proposed changes to UK shared parental leave laws, the increased numbers of cohabiting, non-married couples, step families, lone parent families, families with children that stay at home longer and same sex couples, it is no wonder that a man's role within this landscape has come under scrutiny.

Families Need Fathers is a registered national charity set up in 1974 to promote shared parenting after family separation. It supports children maintaining their relationships with dads (as well as some mums and grandparents), providing around 200,000 direct and online services a year.

Their expertise is particularly relevant to the findings of the Harry's Masculinity Report, with respect to the welfare of children and non-resident dads, who make up 90% of non-resident parents.

Men who valued a traditional paternal role ('being like my father', being authoritative) were more likely to have a positive mindset. Conversely, men who feel they are not living up to traditional standards for a family man

are likely to be at mental health risk.

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Positive Mindset

Attribution to a positive mindset
in relation to age
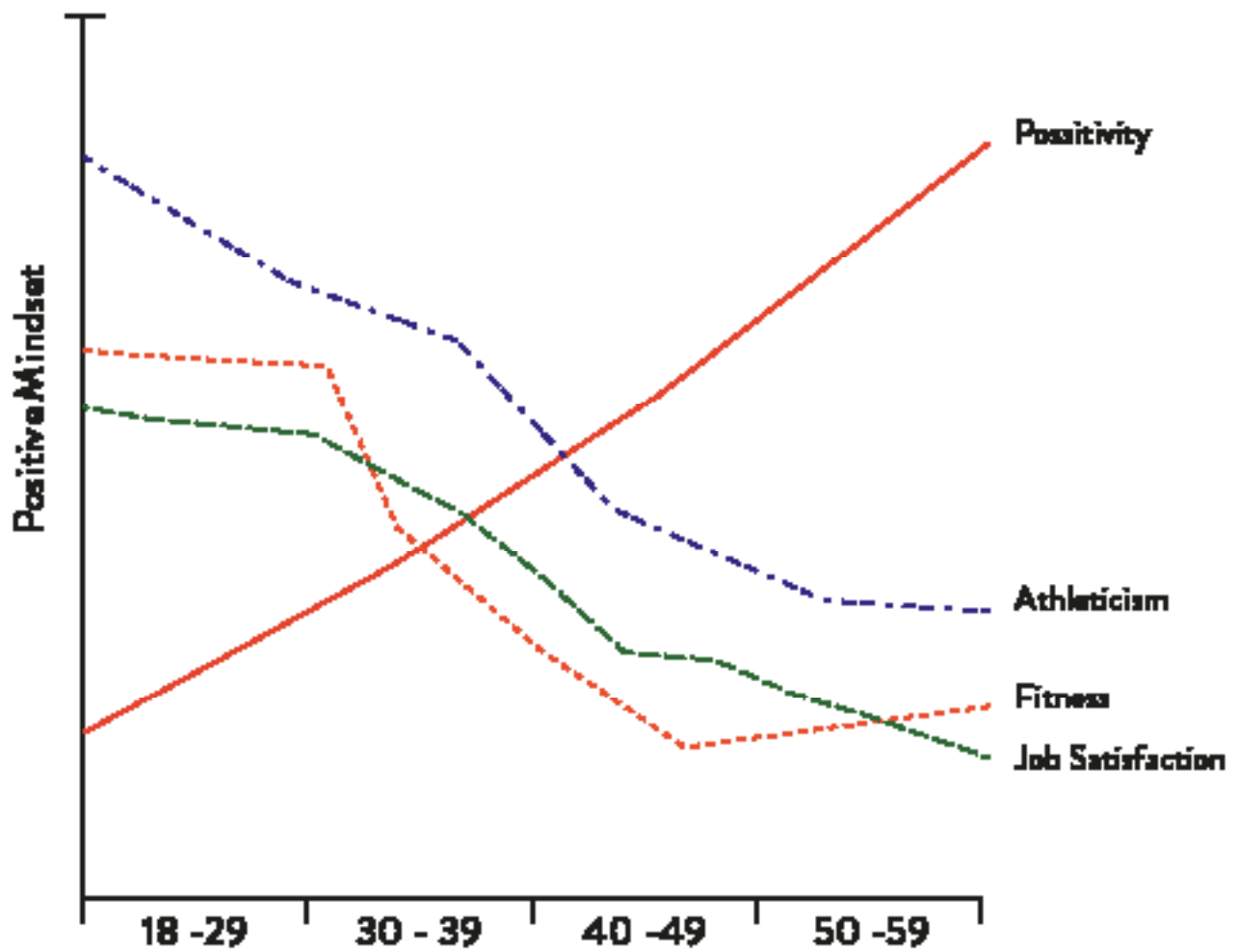
The parental time bomb

Families Need Fathers

The Harry's Masculinity Report revealed a simple and profound truth that's all too rarely acknowledged, but is one we see on a daily basis with the men we work with: men treasure fatherhood. What's more, the survey discovered that men's sense of responsibility to their own children trumps all other concerns, and their own fathers are the biggest influences on their attitudes.

Men told Harry's that they wanted to be a father to their children, not a friend, and judged their own parenting against that of their own father – aspiring to being as good as him if he was a good role model, or better him than if he was not.

A typical response to the survey was that being a good father is "one of the biggest drivers in my life", while the core values men identified as being most important to them, were traits likely to be associated with positive parenting and strong family relationships – honesty, reliability, dependability, loyalty and commitment.

Family separation and wellbeing

Recent government estimates[1] suggest that mental health costs the UK economy £74-99 billion per annum. Stress, depression and suicide are triggered by traumatic life events[2] and of those, relationship breakdown, abuse and loss of a partner, parent or child are the biggest predictors of mental health problems.


Men who valued a traditional paternal role ('being like my father', being authoritative) were more likely to have a positive mindset. Conversely, men who feel they are not living up to traditional standards for a family man are likely to be at mental health risk.

In 2016 there were 4,941 recorded suicides, 75% of which were men.[3] Samaritans report that this is the tip of an iceberg, with 770,000 contacts from people feeling suicidal in the same year. They observe: "They [men] have seen their jobs, relationships and identity blown apart. When marital relationships fail, men are less likely to be awarded custody of, or have access to, their children. Separation from children is a significant factor in some men's suicides. Men are more likely to be displaced from the family home, to unstable accommodation or homelessness, itself a risk for suicide.'[4]

All of these findings were echoed in the Harry's Masculinity Report: in every age bracket, from 18-85, well over 70% of those who contributed said that family was either "important or very important" to them.

In light of this, it is unsurprising that family separation often brings together several of the key factors that lead to poor mental health. What is worse, they tend to all at the same time. The impacts include:

- Restricted relationship with children
- Complete destruction of paternal relationship (parental alienation). Some 62% of FNF[5] respondents report this as a top-three issue for them; for 24% it is their single biggest problem
- Loss of family home (dads are most likely to leave or be forced to move out)
- Financial strain of court proceedings
- If represented by legal advisors, costs are over £20k on average and rising to over £100k
- If not represented, costs are still significant, but accompanied by stress of conducing own proceedings
- 50% of respondents report being subjected to false allegations, many of which are completely devastating to the accused. At least one academic study suggests this may be an underestimate.[6]
- Child Maintenance payments that don't reflect care time or even affordability
- Only the parent with 51%+ of care time receives child support and only that parent receives child benefits/ credits and Universal Credits
- The formula frequently asks low-income parents to pay money they don't have.[7]
- 17% report having to give up work as they could not afford to continue earning.

What dads say about their issues

In September 2006, Families Need Fathers surveyed over 800 service users. Here are just some of their accounts:

"Total mental breakdown. I will never work again"
"I left mainstream employment to take back control!"
"I feel so bullied by it I want to go abroad"
"Benefits should be shared"
"My children stay with me approximately 40 per cent of the year yet I'm still classed as the non-resident parent. I'm entitled to no financial support which has an impact on how I'm able to provide for my children."
"[The system] has a perverse incentive to... to keep contact as low as possible"
"I cannot afford this due to rent, legal costs and costs of travel to see my children"
"Caused clinical depression (many) and suicide attempts"
"I've lost my house"
"They don't consider my outgoings"
"I feel worthless as a parent"
"Loss of self-esteem"

There are around 50,000 applications to family courts each year. With all these challenges, it is incredible that men are as resilient as they are. However, it explains the demand for Families Need Fathers services.[8]

Identity as 'mothers' and 'fathers'

If the Harry's Masculinity Report identifies how important fatherhood is to dads, then it stands to reason it can be devastating to men when the right to be a loving, committed, involved father is removed from their lives.

Samaritans highlight identity as an important element. It comes into sharpest focus in the thousands of cases involving parental alienation. A senior family judge defined this as:

"The process, and the result, of the psychological manipulation of a child into showing unwarranted fear, disrespect or hostility towards a parent and/or other family members".[9]

Women often identify themselves as the 'mother', fathers tend to use such terms less frequently, but in our experience, they feel very deeply that they are the 'father'. Most have been involved fathers before separation. The destructive nature of parental alienation and marginalisation of their paternal role is enormous. The response to this by the family justice system and government is wholly inadequate. They fail children and parents terribly. They especially fail parents who have had their children used as weapons against them in this particularly cruel way.

A high proportion of people report to FNF their inability to focus on work, loss of jobs, depression and suicidal tendencies. These are not 'deadbeat' dads; they are loving fathers who are struggling against the odds.

The institutional disenfranchisement of fathers needs to stop. Dads need to feel valued. Children need good paternal as well as maternal role models.

So what is to be done?

- We need wholesale reform of family justice and welfare to reduce conflict in family separation with policies that are truly gender neutral and encourage collaborative parenting, whether together or apart.
- The adversarial nature of family justice needs to be stopped.
- There needs to be equal, non-transferable parental leave for both parents.
- Fathers who are not main carers should not be treated, as they are by the welfare system as 'single adults', without taking into account either their caring or financial responsibilities. Universal Credit must consider Child Maintenance to ensure that it encourages separated parents to work and above all is affordable (currently marginal 'tax' rates taking Child Maintenance into account are close to and over 100% for low-income parents.
- Child maintenance calculations should be not discriminate against shared parenting by forcing statutory payments on just one party even when the children stay with them for 40%-50% of the time. The 'winner takes it all' approach must end.
- Parental responsibility needs to be defined in a way parents understand, specifying their rights and responsibilities, as does the 'Paramountcy Principle'.
- Parental alienation must be recognised as an abuse/welfare issue – all Cafcass social workers and judges must have mandatory training in it.
- 'Standing temporary orders' with shared care arrangements need to be the default position unless there is a good reason not to and a court application/order to vary this.
- Family courts are always stressful, but made much worse when a Child Arrangement Order (made in the child's interest) is ignored and the courts do not enforce them – not even 1% of around 6,000 enforcement applications annually are enforced.[10] This is abusive of parents and children and must be rectified.

Scandinavian countries have introduced many such policies since the 1970s, resulting not just in equal parenting arrangements becoming the norm, but also the lowest gender pay-gaps in the world. What is more, in Sweden, for example, just 2% of family separations are resolved by courts.[11] A real 'win-win' for mums, dads, the children and the taxpayer.

In a civilised society, both parents should feel empowered and valued whether together or apart. No parent should feel stigmatised and disenfranchised and feel that they are only valued for their wallets.

We cannot afford to fail – it is a time bomb!

The importance of friendship

The Harry's Masculinity Report showed friendship is vital to men's positivity and wellbeing. Overall, 84.4% of British men deemed it important or very important. While it is most important to millennials (18-29s) it stays strong throughout life, and still comes in at 84.8% for those aged 60-85.

Friendship is so important to British men, they placed it in higher regard even than their health (83.2% deemed health deemed important or very important) and family (79.3% deemed family important or very important).

The importance of friendships came through strongly in other areas of the Harry's Masculinity Report, too. When Harry's asked men about the importance of sport and leisure, we repeatedly heard of the social, as well as physical benefits. Indeed, the social side of sport was deemed far more important than the more self-centred aspects, such as getting a good body, winning, or being skilful.

In sport, men repeatedly told Harry's they enjoyed "being part of something," extolled the virtues of "teamwork" and enjoyed the "banter" of team and group environments. Physical health led to improved mental health, and team sports were considered the best routes to that positivity, with the social side proving a win-win for men.

Yet it is worth noting that some 16% of men report having no close friends, versus only 10% of women. As we know social isolation underpins poor mental health – and the data proves how important friendship is to British men's positivity – efforts to get men into group environments where they can form bonds of friendship would seem a healthy goal for all.

With this in mind, we reached out to the **UK Men's Sheds Association**. Originating in Australia in the mid-1990s, Men's Sheds were developed to combat isolation, depression and loneliness and promote social interaction, particularly among older men. The idea has spread rapidly throughout the world, and it is now estimated that in the UK alone there are now over 430 Sheds with six new Sheds opening every month.

Harry's feels Men's Sheds is a model example of the effectiveness of projects that are designed with men's needs, values and interests in mind, bringing significant benefits to men's physical and mental health and happiness.

H'

Overall, 84.4% of British men friendship to be very important or important –which is higher even than family at 79.3%

H'

Shedding the burdens of manhood

UK Men's Sheds Association

Among all the landmark findings of The Harry's Masculinity Report, one of the most emphatic was the importance men place on their friendships. From men just out of their teens, right through to those entering their twilight years, over 80% of respondents to the survey said friendships were "important or very important" to them.

At Men's Sheds we provide the spaces and connections for men to build and nurture friendships that become cornerstones for their mental health and wellbeing.

What Sheds offer men

Men can find it difficult to talk face-to-face, but shoulder-to-shoulder, they thrive. When doing something they love in this way, they are unstoppable.

It's hard to face somebody across a table and talk about how you feel after the loss of your lifelong companion, but when standing side by side, one man holding a piece of wood whilst another saws, it's easier to open up, to offload a little, to unburden oneself.

Through helping Shedders connect with people and places to give a sense of belonging, Sheds also promote problem solving and creating things to generate a sense of purpose and achievement. Men's Sheds facilitate closeness between older men so they support each other's health and wellbeing – by talking, sharing experiences and prompting one another to take action for their health.

Whether it's the space that a man doesn't have at home to create his own project, the desire to get involved in making and mending for those in his community or the excitement of playing with all of those power tools, it's the camaraderie and connections between the men that sees them coming back to every session. It's that camaraderie that makes the men feel safe and like they belong. Like the Shed is a place where it's okay to make a bad joke about a sad situation to relieve the debilitating grief or feelings of loneliness.

Because Men's Sheds typically attract older men who enjoy similar things, it's easy for them to form connections over shared purpose, exchanged knowledge and a good cup of tea.

Because of the model of 'the ideal man' that we have created as a society, which values male independence and stoicism, when men are confronted with life changes like retirement, divorce or loss of a loved one, many can struggle to deal with it, sometimes to a tragic end. The confines of such a stereotype can make it difficult to open up, talk about personal issues or address health concerns. A lot more is being done to break down these potentially damaging stereotypes now, but for the generations that are typically attracted to Men's Sheds, this is often all they know.

Alongside the pressures brought by society's expectations of men, it is widely acknowledged that men are less connected and sociable. This particularly relates to older generations who have given their lives to working and providing for their families with little room for anything outside of that. This can lead to loneliness and isolation, which in turn impact on both mental and physical wellbeing.

A grassroots model of companionship

UK Men's Sheds Association equips and empowers men to go out into their local communities, build connections and develop Men's Sheds for them and like-minded men in their local area. We do this by providing arms-length support, never doing, but always encouraging, and we provide the information and written resources that they need to create a safe and enjoyable Men's Shed without being bogged down in paperwork or having to try and reinvent the wheel.

We provide lifetime support to Men's Sheds and Shedders, as they are affectionately known, to ensure their Sheds remain safe and sustainable and can benefit men for years to come. In addition, through our volunteer Ambassador programme we match those that have done it successfully with those in their area that want to create their own, to provide a friendly guide who they can relate to and turn to for support.

This bottom-up approach to community development is quite rare for older age groups, but we believe it is the most rewarding and fulfilling. Sheds built in this way have a far better chance of remaining sustainable without having to rely solely on big cash injections from grants and other funding streams.

Being a UK member organisation we facilitate an important network and wider movement of Men's Sheds to facilitate learning between Sheds and even countries. Through us, Shedders can find out what others have done – to save time and money – and learn from their mistakes. Being part of something bigger makes Shedders feel stronger and more confident, it gives them a louder voice with policy and decision makers. Locally, nationally and internationally we can do more together than alone. To date, there is little like this for men in older age.

The Shedders' approach to engaging men

In a world where things are done to you and for you when it comes to engagement in later life, grassroots Men's Sheds

are a refreshing change. The sense of achievement and fulfilment that men get from creating a place for themselves that they enjoy will seldom be achieved by anything prescribed.

UK Men's Sheds Association simply equips men with the knowledge and informational resources to go and develop a solution to their own problems, in a way that they will personally enjoy, take pride in and take ownership of. We never prescribe or dictate the way things should be done, we simply share inspiration created by their like-minded peers. Many of the services provided by charities and organisations targeting older generations are attractive predominantly to women.

Men's Sheds have broken that mould and they are mostly attractive to men. The smell of sawdust, the pleasant screeching of power tools and the deep vibration of laughter as soon as you walk in all adds to the attraction, but it's the connections between the men, doing things they love together, that will always win the day.

Older men and isolation
The Harry's Masculinity Report found that for respondents aged between 50 and 59, 80.2% said friendships were "important or very important", while men aged over 60, the percentage was even higher -- with nearly 85% placing this level of importance on their friendships.

But despite this, unlike women of a similar age and stage in their lives, older men tend not to have networks of close friends and rarely share personal concerns about health, relationships and work worries. It is particularly the case when personal identity and status have revolved around employment, when even something like wearing a uniform can give individuals a sense of self-worth. UK Men's Sheds provides vital networks to bridge this gap.

A (very) final word
At UK Men's Sheds Association, we're constantly asked if the men that attend Men's Sheds are lonely. Our answer is usually "not any more". The connections that are made last a lifetime and build a support network to face the future together. Most importantly, in a place they've built for themselves.

In at least one Shed we know of, a group of men are building a coffin for a fellow Shedder who is struggling with his health. On first impression this is only sad, but you quickly see the fun they are having too. All signing the casket and writing messages to their friend, who stands over them, laughing as he says "come on guys, I'm going to need this soon".

Part III:

Conclusion and recommendations by study co-author Martin Daubney

Harry's Masculinity Report:
Conclusions and seven-point action plan

Martin Daubney, co-author of the Harry's Masculinity Report

The essays and articles in this report add up to a compelling, persuasive demonstration that the findings of the Harry's Masculinity Report are not the end of a road, but the beginning of a conversation. Our contributors have raised large numbers of talking points, thinking points and concrete proposals. We would like to conclude by bringing together their recommendations into a programme for change; an informal manifesto for a society that considers men with the compassion, concern and responsibility that the men in our study show to others.

1. **MALE SUICIDE** A call for cross party action on male suicide prevention. On male suicide, our experts were unanimous. Nearly 80% of suicides are male but there are almost no male-specific suicide or mental health services. This needs to change, as does the way frontline professionals talk to men, which needs to be more male-centric. Key partners here are suicide charities such as CALM and frontline psychologists who work with suicidal men, such as Martin Seager.

2. **ADDRESS MALE MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS** There is a clear need for credible discussions around mental health in schools, especially as the Harry's Masculinity Report hinted at a new openness around the topic in the youngest (18-29) age group. This could amplify the work of Jonny Benjamin's ThinkWell initiative on suicide and Natasha Devon's work on general mental health wellbeing. We believe early intervention is key, meaning looking at the possibility of getting mental health on to the National Curriculum even as young as primary school level.

3. **RELATIONSHIPS** Recognising that the most positive men are in committed relationships (and single men are the least positive of all, especially young men), we should do more to help men to get into healthy relationships and stay in them. We endorse and echo Relate's proposal that the Department of Education should pilot a campaign targeting men to encourage them to take up relationship support. Likewise, Relate recommends that The Department of Health, through the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme, should pilot new ways of engaging men to increase their participation in psychological therapies

such as couple therapy for depression. We also believe that Relationships and Sex Education must be made mandatory in UK schools and taught by trained, confident specialists in a way that addresses the needs and sensitivities of men and boys.

4. **WORK** Recognising that fulfilling work was the greatest determinant of positivity in British men, we echo the Men's Health Forum's call for more research into the area of targeting jobless men in poor health, which is a significant barrier to employment. In schools, especially in areas of high unemployment (and in regions that showed lowest positivity, such as Wales and Northern Ireland), more could be done to amplify the hugely positive message that work gives a mental health lift that prevails through every level of life. Perhaps this could be best achieved in a tangible, relatable manner, such as through male mentors or success stories, of "local lads made good" to give aspirational male role models to boys who often have few, especially if boys are part of one parent families. Calls for a government think tank on this would be welcomed.

5. **FATHERHOOD** We back government plans for equal, non-transferable parental leave for both parents to empower men to take time off to be fathers, while empowering their partners to return to work. On a company level, employers should be encouraged to do more to make paternity pay equal to maternity packages. Families Need Fathers call for parental alienation to be recognised as a child welfare issue – an area worthy of more research.

6. **FRIENDSHIP & SPORT** The report proved friendships are important to men, especially in the area of sport, where the associated social/physical boost aids mental health and general wellbeing. We would encourage more research into this key area and make attempts to get men into team sports, or sports clubs, especially those in at-risk groups such as the jobless, divorcées or men recently made redundant. We should empower men to form support networks, and get physically and mentally stronger shoulder to shoulder with like-minded men. GPs who identify men with depression might direct them to local sports

clubs. While the Harry's Masculinity Report found that older men were typically happier, we should also amplify initiatives like Men's Shed that encourages older men to find kinship through crafts and labour.

7.   **MAKE SOCIAL POLICY MORE GENDER-INCLUSIVE** Men who find themselves vulnerable or in need of support often have needs or circumstances that are specific to their gender. When developing policies in areas such as homelessness, addiction and recovery, supporting survivors of abuse and many others, service providers and policy makers should be aware of how gender factors can be both a barrier to progress and a key to success. Developing policies which recognise and address the different needs of men and women would be of help to both, while challenging the prevalent but false belief that addressing men's issues may be somehow contrary to women's interests.

A final note on ethnicity and sexuality

The Harry's Masculinity Report did ask respondents about their ethnicity, and 89% of men born or resident in the British Isles stated their ethnicity. Of these, 93% were white, 3% were black, Asian or Chinese, and the rest were 'other' (mixed).

This sample overwhelmingly identified as white, and as a consequence, there isn't much scope for credibly comparing answers by ethnicity.

Part of this is due to the difficulty in recruiting black men to fill out questionnaires about their mental health, echoed in previous work carried out by University College London into the link between mental health and going to the barber's, led by The Harry's Masculinity Report's co-author, Dr John Barry. [1]

All of this means we would recommend more research into the area of BAME men's positivity, mental health and general wellbeing. As it is true that black men, while 17 times more likely to be diagnosed with a serious mental illness when compared with white yet they are less likely to seek professional help.[1]

Likewise, while the Harry's Masculinity Report did not ask for respondent's sexuality. We took this decision as while all men are difficult to recruit for surveys, intimate or intrusive questions are likely to put them off. Typically, these sensitivities can emerge around sexuality, income, taxes, criminality and drugs.

However, a similar report into the specific issues and needs of the LGBT community would be a laudable next step.

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Part IV:
The Harry's Masculinity Report
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The Harry's Masculinity Report

John Barry, PhD, and Martin Daubney

ABSTRACT

The study of masculinity in psychology began in the 1990s, and developed a deficit model, focusing mainly on problems related to masculinity. Positive psychology is also a relatively new field, and its application to masculinity has yet to be properly explored. This study aimed to find out what values men in 2017 think are important to them, and what factors contribute to their mental positivity. To do this, an online survey analysed using multiple linear regression was conducted. The first 2000 men born or resident in the British Isles who responded to the survey were included in the final data analysis. It was found that men tend to value honesty and reliability more than fitness and being adventurous. Multiple linear regression found that the main predictors of happiness were job satisfaction and being in a long term relationship. Older men also tended to be happier than younger men. Men, especially younger men, appear to value their mental health more than their physical health. All of these findings have implications for how we understand the role of men in the British Isles today.

BACKGROUND

The New Psychology of Men began in the 1990s. It questioned traditional norms for the male role and focusing mainly on the ways in which masculinity might be harmful to men and others (Levant and Pollack, 1995). This has possibly contributed to a tendency to think of masculinity in negative terms e.g. 'toxic masculinity', which may encourage men to think of themselves negatively.

The field of positive psychology is relatively new, with publications in this field starting in the late 1990s. Recently, this model has been applied to our view of men, resulting in the Positive psychology/positive masculinity (PPPM) model (Kiselica, Englar-Carlson & Fisher, 2006). This model suggests that there is more to be gained by seeing the positive aspects of masculinity rather than focusing on the negative. However a systematic review of positive psychology papers on gender, race and ethnicity found that men were underrepresented as participants (Rao & Donaldson, 2015). Although some studies have found gender differences in variables related to positive psychology, they have tended not to assess the predictors of outcomes on these variables. Also, although people's core values and wellbeing has been assessed in relation to the workplace (e.g. Zwetsloot et al, 2013), it has been less explored in a more general sense.

Based on the current state of the literature, the aims of the present study were to assess the predictors of happiness using the Positive Mindset Index (PMI), and assess the values most important to men today. The Positive Mindset Index (PMI) is a composite measure of happiness, optimism, confidence, sense of being in control, stability, and motivation, is typically slightly higher in men than women (e.g. Barry et al, 2014).

METHODS

Design

This study is a cross-sectional online survey analysed using multiple linear regression. Demographic variables were used as predictors. The dependent variables were mental positivity and ratings of values. Data were analysed using SPSS software, Version 22.

VARIABLES

Dependent variable

The dependent variable in this study is mental positivity, measured using the The Positive Mindset Index (PMI).

Mental Positivity (Appendix 1)

The Positive Mindset Index (PMI; Barry, Folkard & Ayliff, 2014) (Appendix 1). This scale consists of six items (happiness, confidence, being in control, emotional stability, motivation and optimism) on a 5-point Likert scale. This scale shows good internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.926) and good concurrent validity with the psychological subscale of the SF-12 ($r = .678$). Seager et al (2014) found good concurrent validity between the PMI and Paykel's (1974) Suicidal Ladder ($r = -.539$).

Free text responses

Free text responses (i.e. answers expressed in the respondent's own words).

Predictor variables

i.   Age

Age was measured in years, and categorised into age groups (18-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-85) for some analyses.

ii.   Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction was assessed with a single item on a 6-point Likert scale: How satisfied are you with your job?

[6 = Highly satisfied.... 1 = Highly dissatisfied]

iii.   Relationship status

Relationship status was operationalised by putting participants into two categories: those who were married, in a civic partnership, cohabiting or in a steady relationship (coded as 1) and those who were divorced, widowed, separated, or single (coded as 0).

iv.   Values

Value domains were operationalised as shown in Appendix 2. The eight domains were: Work, Friendships, Romantic Relationships, Family, Sport & Leisure Activities, Health, Community, and Education. Each domain was described by several items, for example, the Sport & Leisure Activities domain asked how important winning, fun, feeling healthy etc were to participants.

Setting

The setting was online.

Participants

Participants were recruited via various websites, including the Men's Health Forum, Psychology on The Net, MensMindsMatter website and also social media. An invitation to participate in the study was posted on each participating site. To ensure broad UK reach across all demographics, the survey was also promoted by Martin Daubney via articles written for Telegraph Men, and The Round Table newsletter/website, plus radio interviews on TalkRadio and TalkSport.

Exclusion criteria

i.   Not giving key information e.g. age.

ii.   Being under 18

iii.   Not completing the consent form

Sample size

Based on the sample size calculations for multiple linear regression described in Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) it was decided that at least 400 cases were needed for sufficient statistical power.

Procedure

A notice regarding the survey appeared on participating websites and the social media of the research and his associates in the Male Psychology Network. The questionnaire survey is shown in Appendix 2. The survey data was collected using UCL's RedCap survey software.

Ethics

Informed consent was given before the survey could be started. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any point. Participants were not required to give any identifying information, such as contact details. The data are confidential and treated in accordance with the Data Protection Action (1998). For any participants who may become upset due to reading the survey questions, contact details for support are given in the patient information section of the survey. Ethical approval for the study was granted by University College London's Graduate School Research Ethics Committee (REC reference: 4075/013).

Statistics

Means and SDs and parametric tests were used where relevant assumptions were met. Missing data were deleted pairwise, so that where a participant gave some information but had not given responses to all items, data for the responses they gave could be included in the analysis. The predictors of mental positivity were identified using the enter method with multiple linear regression. To reduce the chance of a type 1 error due to multiple testing, the threshold for significance was set at $p<.01$. All statistical tests were two-tailed. All statistical analyses were carried out using SPSS statistical software for Windows, Version 22 (IBM Corp, Armonk, NY, USA).

RESULTS

The survey ran between 25th May and runs until 24th May 2018, as per the one-year survey period agreed with the ethics committee. For the purposes of this report, we closed the survey on 1st September 2017 when the sample size of 2000 had been attained. The data presented in this report is from the final data set following exclusion of participants who omitted important data (e.g. mental positivity scores) or who were not born or resident in the British Isles. Findings published in other sources may differ very slightly due to being based on earlier versions of the data set that had not made these adjustments. Initially responses were collected from male and female participants, but because far fewer women responded than men, their data was not used in the analysis below. The final sample consisted of 2000 men born or resident in the British Isles (Table 2). Thus in the analyses below, only the UK sample is used. The total sample size (which included women and foreign men) was 2,789 respondents.

The mean (SD) age of the sample was 41.9 (15.2) years old. Table 2 shows that the most usual location of participants was London (20.3%). 45% of the men were married (Table 3). 38% of the men were fathers. The mean (SD) number of children was 1.2 (1.3). 89% stated their ethnicity; 93% were White, 3% were Black, Asian or Chinese, and the rest were 'other'.

Table 1. The age group of the participants in the sample

Age group	% of sample
18-29	22.6
30-39	22.9
40-49	24.8
50-59	19.2
60-85	10.4

Table 2. The location in the UK of the participants in the sample

Location	% of sample
South East England	16.2
London	20.3
North West England	9.9
East of England	10.0
West Midlands	5.7
South West England	8.2
Yorkshire & Humber	7.1
East Midlands	7.1
North East England	3.3
Scotland	6.6
Wales	3.2
Ireland	2.5

Table 3. The relationship status of the participants in the sample

Relationship status	% of sample
Single	29.6
Divorced, widowed, separated etc.	7.6
Cohabiting, or in rel	17.4
Married or civil partnership	45.4

Value system

Participants were presented with a list of 35 values (e.g. loyalty, honesty etc) and asked how important to them each were on a scale from 1 to 6, where 6 indicates 'very important'. Table 4 shows the five values that were consider most important and five considered least important.

Table 4. The five values considered most and important and least important by the sample.

Rank		Mean	SD
1	Honesty	5.3	1.0
2	Reliability	5.3	1.0
3	Dependability	5.3	1.0
4	Loyalty	5.3	1.0
5	Commitment	5.0	1.0
~			
31	Fitness	4.1	1.1
32	Collaboration	4.1	1.2
33	Creativity	4.0	1.2
34	Adventurous	3.9	1.6
35	Athleticism	3.7	1.3

Regional differences in positivity

Table 5 shows regional variation in mental positivity. Positivity was lowest in North East England (3.24) and highest in South West England (3.50).

Table 5. Regional differences in mental positivity, after taking age, relationship status, and parental status into account.

Location	Mean	Std. Deviation
South East England	3.49	.68
London	3.39	.68
North West England	3.39	.75
East of England	3.48	.73
West Midlands	3.49	.75
South West England	3.50	.70
Yorkshire & Humber	3.44	.68
East Midlands	3.44	.68
North East England	3.24	.74
Scotland	3.34	.67
Wales	3.30	.71
Ireland	3.34	.85

Relationship between age and the importance of physical versus mental health

Tables 6a and 6b & show that men, especially younger men, appear to value their mental health more than their physical health.

Table 6a. Mental health: importance to men of different ages

	Age Group				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-85
Very unimportant	2.0%	1.3%	0.8%	1.8%	1.0%
Unimportant	2.0%	2.0%	2.4%	0.8%	1.5%
Slightly unimportant	4.7%	3.5%	3.8%	2.4%	2.0%
Slightly important	13.2%	13.2%	9.9%	10.8%	9.4%
Important	31.9%	37.7%	37.2%	39.3%	43.3%
Very important	46.2%	42.3%	45.9%	44.9%	42.9%

Table 6b. Physical health: importance to men of different ages

	Age Group				
	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-85
Very unimportant	1.6%	0.4%	0.4%	0.8%	0.0%
Unimportant	1.6%	1.5%	0.6%	1.1%	0.5%
Slightly unimportant	2.9%	3.7%	4.7%	2.1%	2.5%
Slightly important	18.5%	19.6%	14.8%	16.3%	12.4%
Important	43.4%	45.4%	43.9%	43.2%	44.6%
Very important	32.1%	29.3%	35.6%	36.6%	40.1%

Values and demographics as predictors of mental positivity

Table 7 shows that the strongest predictor of mental positivity is job satisfaction. Romance showed the weakest relationship with mental positivity.

Table 7. Demographic and value-related predictors of mental positivity in men

Predictor	β	t
Age	.05	2.66**
Job satisfaction	.49	24.69*******
Relationship status	.12	6.01******
Work	.05	1.78
Friendships	.01	.41
Romance	.00	.07
Family	.07	3.08***
Personal growth	.09	4.00****
Sport & Leisure	.07	3.11**
Health	.12	4.71****
Community	.02	.76
Education	.02	.76

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$, **** $p < .0001$, ***** $p < .00001$, ****** $p < .0000001$ (two tailed).

The above findings show that men's mental positivity is strongly related to job satisfaction, relationship status (having a long term relationship rather than being single), valuing health, valuing personal growth, and valuing family.

The impact of core value domains on mental positivity

Taking the value domains that proved to be significant in the previous table, using multiple linear regression we assessed which of the factors within each domain had the greatest impact on mental positivity, after taking into account the effect of age and marital status.

Table 8 shows that of the values related to Sport & Leisure, after taking into account the effect of age and marital status, the strongest predictor of mental positivity is feeling healthy.

Table 8. Values related to Sport & Leisure that predict mental positivity

Predictor	β	t
Feeling healthy	.14	4.98*****
Competition	.12	3.30***
Socialising	.07	2.67**

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$ *** $p<.001$, **** $p<.0001$, ***** $p<.00001$, (two tailed).

Table 9 shows that of the values related to Health, after taking into account the effect of age and marital status, the strongest predictor of mental positivity is feeling healthy.

Table 9. Values related to Health which predict mental positivity

Predictor	β	t
Living longer	.15	5.55*****
Mental health	.35	4.61****
Physical health	.13	3.80***
Feeling good	.08	2.60**

* p<.05, ** p <.01 *** p <.001, **** p <.0001, ***** p <.00001, (two tailed).

Table 10 shows that of the values related to Personal growth, after taking into account the effect of age and marital status, the strongest predictor of mental positivity is feeling healthy.

Table 10. Values related to Personal growth which predict mental positivity

Predictor	β	t
Feeling more fully 'me'	.12	4.12****
Religious observance	.11	3.91****
Being the 'real me'	.12	3.90****

* p <.05, ** p <.01 *** p <.001, **** p <.0001, ***** p <.00001, (two tailed).

Table 11 shows that of the values related to Work, after taking into account the effect of age and marital status, the strongest predictor of mental positivity is feeling healthy.

Table 11. Values related to Work which predict mental positivity

Predictor	β	t
Making an impact on business success	.22	8.50***********
Feeling inspired by workmates	.08	2.71**
Chat with workmates	.07	2.62**

* p<.05, ** p<.01 *** p<.001, **** p<.0001, ***** p<.00001, (two tailed).

Table 12 shows that of the values related to Family, the strongest predictor of mental positivity is feeling 'Being like my father'.

Table 12. Values related to Family which predict mental positivity

Predictor	β	t
Being like my father	.08	2.84**

* p<.05, ** p<.01 *** p<.001, **** p<.0001, ***** p<.00001, (two tailed).

DISCUSSION

This survey of 2000 men born or resident in the British Isles shows that men in 2017 value moral characteristics (e.g. being honest) over physical characteristics (e.g. being athletic).

There is almost no research on core values of the general population. Most research on core values are from a specific perspective, mostly a business / organisational viewpoint. This means our survey is breaking new ground.

Our findings counter the fashionably negative view of men and masculinity as being somewhat tainted by toxicity. This distorted view probably impacts how men are treated and how men feel about themselves. A more rounded view of men is needed (as promoted by the Male Psychology Network in the UK and the Positive Psychology/Positive Masculinity movement in the US) and this survey helps to highlight that men embody and value many positive values.

Clinical relevance

In many ways the PMI is the ideal way to measure men's positivity because it is very brief and doesn't ask potentially off-putting questions about feelings of depression. Although the PMI is probably a good indirect measure of mental health (it is well correlated with measures of mental illness), we have to be cautious about claims about the clinical relevance of our findings. This is partly because even the lower scores on the PMI (e.g. in North East of England) are not particularly low, which suggests that men in general in the UK are not obviously depressed.

Having made this caveat, there are some points that we can reasonably make about clinical relevance:

Practical applications of findings about job satisfaction

Men who have higher job satisfaction are much more likely to have a positive mindset. Having a direct impact on the success of the business was also important. In the free text answers, autonomy (e.g. being a consultant or self-employed) was cited as associated with increased job satisfaction.

Occupational Psychologists dealing with distressed or depressed men might encourage them towards more autonomy in their work. The study by (Wright & McLeod, 2016) of 305 men and women found that, in the long term, men didn't do as well as women in brief counselling in an Employee Assistance Programme. It is important that we find out what causes men to have such enduring problems due to work-related stress.

Practical applications of findings about Relationship status

We found that having a steady relationship is related to mental positivity. Furthermore, although single people's PMI score is at about the normal level, even people who have been divorced are happier. Age has an impact on the PMI/Relationship correlation, but very little.

The implications of these findings are that there is clinical importance to men having enduring relationships. Thus it is important that services that impact relationships should seek to ensure that they have a male-friendly approach.

Relationship stability is an important anchor for many men. For example, substance abuse is twice as common in men than women, and two key signs that addicts are on the road to good recovery is when they start to have meaningful work and are in a steady relationship (according to Matt Baker, manager of a service covering nearly 4000 London-based substance abuse patients).

Practical applications of findings about Age

Linking our findings about relationships and age, a previous study of 2000 men and women found that for married men negative mood decreased with age (Mroczek & Kolarz, 1998). It might be expected that older age brings sadness due to an accumulation of stressful life events (e.g. health problems, death of friends etc). The finding that mental positivity increases with age is important, mainly because it sends a positive message to younger men who might look to the future with pessimism.

This finding supports some theory and evidence since the 1990s, when psychologists began to theorise that happiness is likely to improve with age because of improved regulation of emotion (e.g. Carstensen,1995; Lawton, 1996). For example, Carstensen says younger people see the future as being full of possibility, whereas older people see the future as being more restricted; to cope, older people orientate their lives toward maximising happiness and minimising anything else. Possibly the best evidence on this topic is a very large international study by Inglehart (1990) of 169,776 people in 16 countries. He found that in the UK and Ireland happiness increased across the age groups (15 – 65+) though countries varied e.g. the US showed no change across the age groups. Another large study (Davis & Smith, 1995) found happiness increased across age groups, until the oldest group (78-89) who showed a slight dip.

Note that none of these studies, including ours, are longitudinal, and the apparent impact of age on happiness might be due to different attitudes of different generations i.e. so-called 'Baby-boomers', born between 1946 and 1964, might have throughout their youth always been happier than todays young 'Millennials', for example. This is an interesting question for a follow-up study.

A general word of caution regarding interpreting the findings of the present study: "correlation does not prove causation". Many of the statistical analyses here are 'multiple linear regression', which is a type of complex correlation, typically used to analyse survey data. The key point is that we can't say things like 'Age causes an increase in Positivity', only that 'Age is significantly correlated with Positivity', or 'Age significantly predicts Positivity'. This does not negate the findings, but it is useful not to fall into the habit of saying that 'X causes Y' when talking about correlational/regression findings.

Practical applications of findings regarding Sport & Leisure values

Men who value sport & leisure for the purposes of Feeling healthy, Competition and Socialising have a more positive mindset. Therefore let's encourage men to enjoy these aspects of sport & leisure. It will help men's physical health and provide isolated men with companionship. Sports Psychology may have a role in encouraging depressed men, who don't want a talking therapy, to engage in sport.

Practical applications of findings regarding Health values

Men who value their health as a way of living longer (for self and others), improving mental & physical health, and feeling good, have a more positive mindset. Health Psychologists might use these four aspects as ways of motivating men to engage more in health behaviours.

Practical applications of findings regarding Personal Growth values

Men who value a spiritual aspect to their life, being authentic and true to themselves, without doing what others want them to do all the time have a more positive mindset. Although it is known that Christian men in the UK don't do much churchgoing, the free text evidence from the present survey suggests that spirituality (e.g. perhaps meditation or mindfulness) should be considered as part of a range of options in therapy. The same goes for finding one's true self/voice/path in life.

Practical applications of findings regarding Family values

Men who valued a traditional paternal role ('being like my father', being authoritative) were more likely to have a positive mindset. Conversely, men who feel they are not living up to traditional standards for a family man are likely to be at mental health risk. Family therapists and family courts should appreciate this when dealing with men who are criticised as being too traditional in their fathering (or what is called generative parenting by Kiselica, Englar-Carlson & Fisher, 2006).

Main lessons from this survey

The core values suggest that men in the UK & Ireland in 2017 potentially make good workers and family members. Overall, it seems that men are more likely to have a positive mindset when they:

- Have good job satisfaction and are in a stable relationship

- Feel connected to others in an authentic way, and feel they can live up to their roles as men

- Are older

- Are more connected to a sense of spirituality

- Engage in sports

Regional differences need to be taken into account e.g. interventions to improve positivity might be focused in regions where positivity is lower.

Certain aspects of positivity might be enhanced by psychologists working in well established field e.g. sports psychologists might help men who are socially isolated by encouraging them into joining in sporting activities e.g. 'walking football'. However other areas related to positivity are less recognised in psychology, such as spirituality.

Are men ready to talk? Moreover, are we ready to listen?

Men are generally less likely than women to fill in surveys, but this survey managed to reach our quota in a relatively short period of time. This could be taken to imply that men in the British Isles are ready to talk about the things in life that are important to them. Unfortunately a lot of men sense that people are not ready to hear them. Martin Seager, consultant clinical psychologist with the Male Psychology Network, describes the 'double bind' of men being encouraged to contact telephone helplines, but then their call isn't taken seriously if they happen to use humour ('banter') or if they want to talk about solving their problem rather than talking about their feelings. It seems that banter and reluctance to talk about feelings are male-typical communication styles that result in men not being listened to, and it would make sense that psychologists question whether they need to improve their listening skills when it comes to men (Liddon et al, 2017; Holloway et al, in review).

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Appendix 1. The Positive Mindset Index (PMI). Barry et al (2014)

Please select one of the options (e.g. "happy" or "unhappy") for the words in each row, indicating how you are feeling at this moment.

Item 1	Very unhappy	Unhappy	Moderately happy	Happy	Very happy
Item 2	Very unconfident	Unconfident	Moderately confident	Confident	Very confident
Item 3	Very out of control	Out of control	Moderately in control	In control	Very in control
Item 4	Very unstable	Unstable	Moderately stable	Stable	Very stable
Item 5	Very unmotivated	Unmotivated	Moderately motivated	Motivated	Very motivated
Item 6	Very pessimistic	Pessimistic	Moderately optimistic	Optimistic	Very optimistic

Appendix 2. Survey questions

Thanks for taking this anonymous and confidential survey. There are no right or wrong answers here, so just feel free to express yourself in whatever way you like, without thinking too much about your answers.

How old are you ? [free text]

Please state your gender (male, female, other)

Please state your ethnic group e.g. White, Black, Asian, Mixed, Other [free text]

Please say what city or town you currently live in [free text]

Please say what country you were born in [free text]

What is your relationship status? For example, single, married etc. [free text]

Do you have children ? If so, please state how many [free text]

Please rate how important it is to you to live up to the following characteristics in your daily life:

	Very unimportant	Unimportant	Moderately unimportant	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Dependable						
Reliable						
Loyal						
Committed						
Open-minded						
Consistent						
Honest						
Efficient						
Innovative						
Creative						
Humorous						
Fun-loving						
Adventurous						
Motivated						
Positive						
Optimistic						
Inspiring						
Passionate						
Respectful						
Athletic						
Fit						

Courageous					
Educated					
Respected					
Loving					
Nurturing					
Humble					
Empathetic					
Equality					
Listening					
Quiet Confidence					
Improvement					
Collaborative					
Future-facing					
Thoughtful					

Please rate how important it is to you to experience the following in your <u>work</u> life.

	Very unimportant	<u>Un</u>important	Moderately <u>un</u>important	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Use my unique talents						
Express myself creatively						
Good pay						
Chat with workmates						
Promotion prospects						
Make a difference in the world						
Work / life balance						
Having a diverse set of perspectives						
Continued learning						

Making a direct impact on the success of the business					
Having my opinion valued					
Feeling inspired by those around you					
Other [free text]. Please rate this too.					

How satisfied are you with your job? [Highly satisfied…. Highly dissatisfied]

Please rate how important it is to you to bring the following characteristics in your <u>friendships:</u>

	Very unimportant	<u>Un</u>important	Moderately <u>un</u>important	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Supportive						
Good listener						
Caring						
Will defend no matter what						
Protective						
Being there						
Laughter						
Being fun to be with						
Having knowledge about relevant topics						
Offering emotional support						
Other [free text]. Please rate this too.						

Please rate how important the following are in your romantic relationships:

	Very unimportant	Unimportant	Moderately unimportant	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Faithfulness						
Leads to marriage						
Leads to children						
Love						
Exciting						
Good sex life						
Laughter						
Fun						
Supportive						
Encouraging						
Quick to move on from an argument						
Financial support						
Balance of responsibilities						
Emotional support						
Other [free text]. Please rate this too.						

Please rate how important it is to you to live up to the following characteristics in your <u>family</u> life.

	Very unimportant	Unimportant	Moderately unimportant	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Caring						
Provide guidance						
Supportive						
Kind						
Authoritative						
Protective						
Provide money						
Being like my mother						
Being like my father						
Being a good parent						
Being a good son or daughter						
Other [free text]. Please rate this too.						

Please rate how important it is to you to achieve the following in your <u>personal growth:</u>

	Very <u>un</u>important	<u>Un</u>important	Moderately <u>un</u>important	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Mental wellbeing						
Overcoming fears						
Letting go of the past						
Controlling my emotions						
Being the 'real me'						
Doing what I want						
Put myself first						
Spiritual development						
Religious observance						
Feel more fully "me"						
Other [free text]. Please rate this too.						

Please rate how important the following are to you in your <u>sport & leisure activities:</u>

	Very unimportant	<u>Un</u>important	Moderately <u>un</u>important	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Winning						
Fun						
Feel healthy						
Get a good body						
Competition						
Socialising						
Being skillful						
Other [free text]. Please rate this too.						

Please rate how important the following are to you for your health:

	Very unimportant	Unimportant	Moderately unimportant	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Healthy food						
Exercise						
Looking good						
Having a 'grooming' routine (shaving or make up etc.)						
Living longer						
Feeling good						
Avoiding illness						
Mental health						
Physical health						
Other [free text]. Please rate this too.						

Please rate how important it is to you to live up to the following as part of your community:

	Very unimportant	Unimportant	Moderately unimportant	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Help others						
Reduce crime						
Preserve historical places						
Preserve nature						
Look after neighbours						
Local issues & politics						
Charitable donations						
'Give back' to society						
Other [free text]. Please rate this too.						

Please rate how important are the following characteristics in your <u>education (whether past, present or future):</u>

	Very unimportant	Unimportant	Moderately unimportant	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Interesting subject						
Leads to interesting job						
Leads to good pay						
Personal growth						
Increased self-esteem						
Increased knowledge						
Understand the world more						
Other [free text]. Please rate this too.						

Please state your main strength(s) in education: [free text answer]

Please state your main weakness(es) in education: [free text answer]

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