

Community Education Series

The Recovery Village and Advanced Recovery Systems





Presentation Topic:
Complexities in Men's Mental Health



Speaker:
Bridget Richard, LISW-S

About the Speaker:

Bridget Richard,
LISW-S, Psychotherapist



- Bridget Richard, LISW-S has worked in mental health for the last 20 years.
- She is a lifelong resident of Northeast Ohio where she lives with her husband, two kids, and her Kat Mandu
- Currently sees clients as the owner of Lamplight Counseling Services a counseling private practice in Northeast Ohio.
- Mental health has long been an interest and the need for wellness for the whole family, male and female included, inspired the opening of Lamplight.

Myths

- Depression means weakness
- Men should be able to control their emotions
- Real men don't need help to solve their problems
- Reaching out to others will only burden them

Myths Continued



Men Don't Cry

Research has shown that there are no differences in how men and women emotionally respond to situations.

However, men have been less likely to exhibit emotion because of social conditioning.



Post Partum Only Affects Women

Recent research shows that new fathers are also at risk for depression



PTSD only Affects Military Personnel

PTSD can affect anyone who has experienced a traumatic event (including sexual, emotional or physical abuse)

It's About Biology

- Mental illnesses are identified by a range of symptoms which are caused by physical factors.
- Your brain can be influenced by its own deficits and that of other parts of the body.
- Co-morbid diagnoses which have mental components include:
 - Diabetes
 - Thyroid Disease
 - Low Vitamin D
 - Chronic Stress

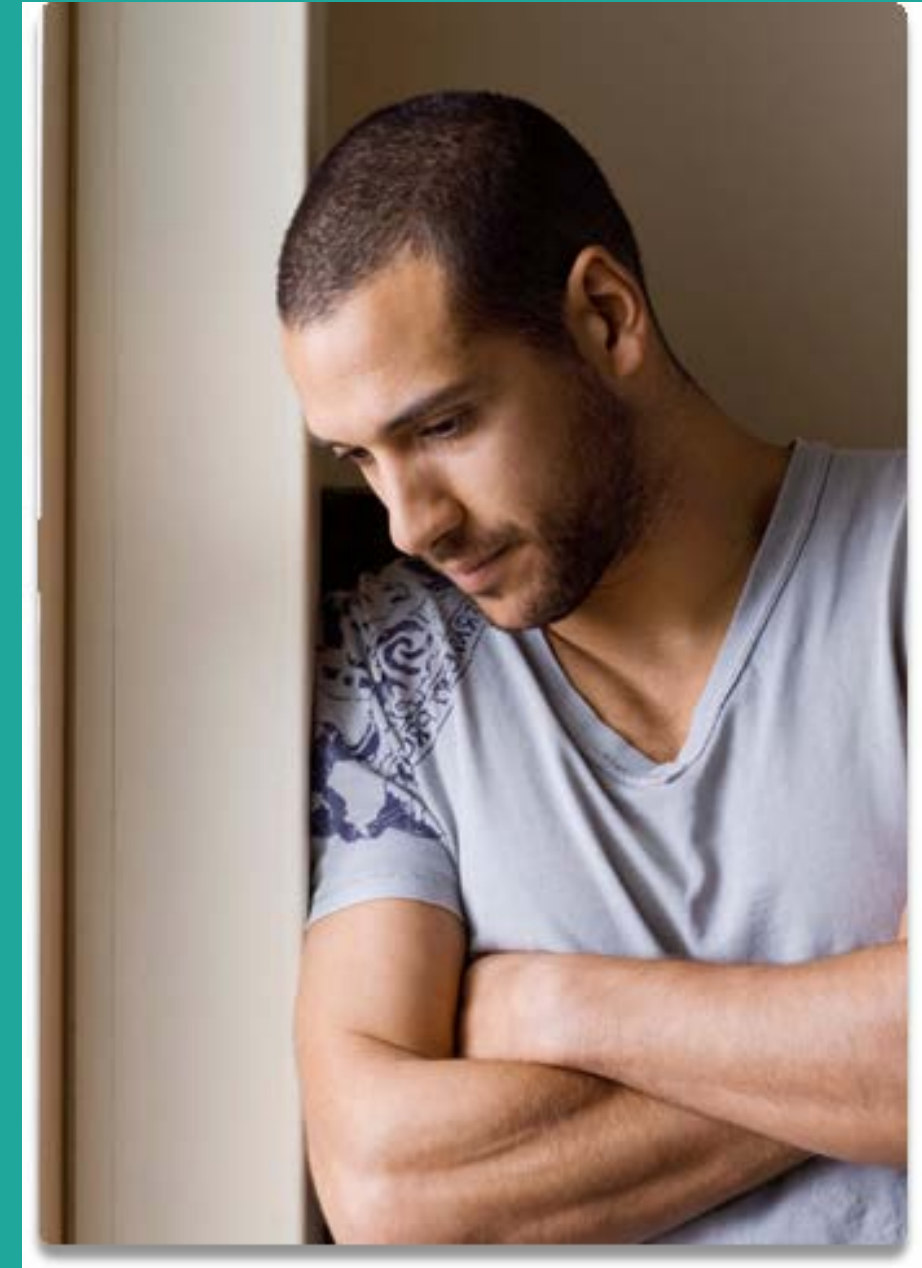


Symptoms In Men Look Different

- Anger, Irritability, Aggression
- “Laziness” – Lack of Motivation - Sleepiness
- Engaging in High-Risk Activities
- Suicidality
- Aches and Digestive Problems Without a Cause
- Erectile Dysfunction
- Difficulty with Concentration
- Feeling Flat, Sad or Hopeless
- Workaholism

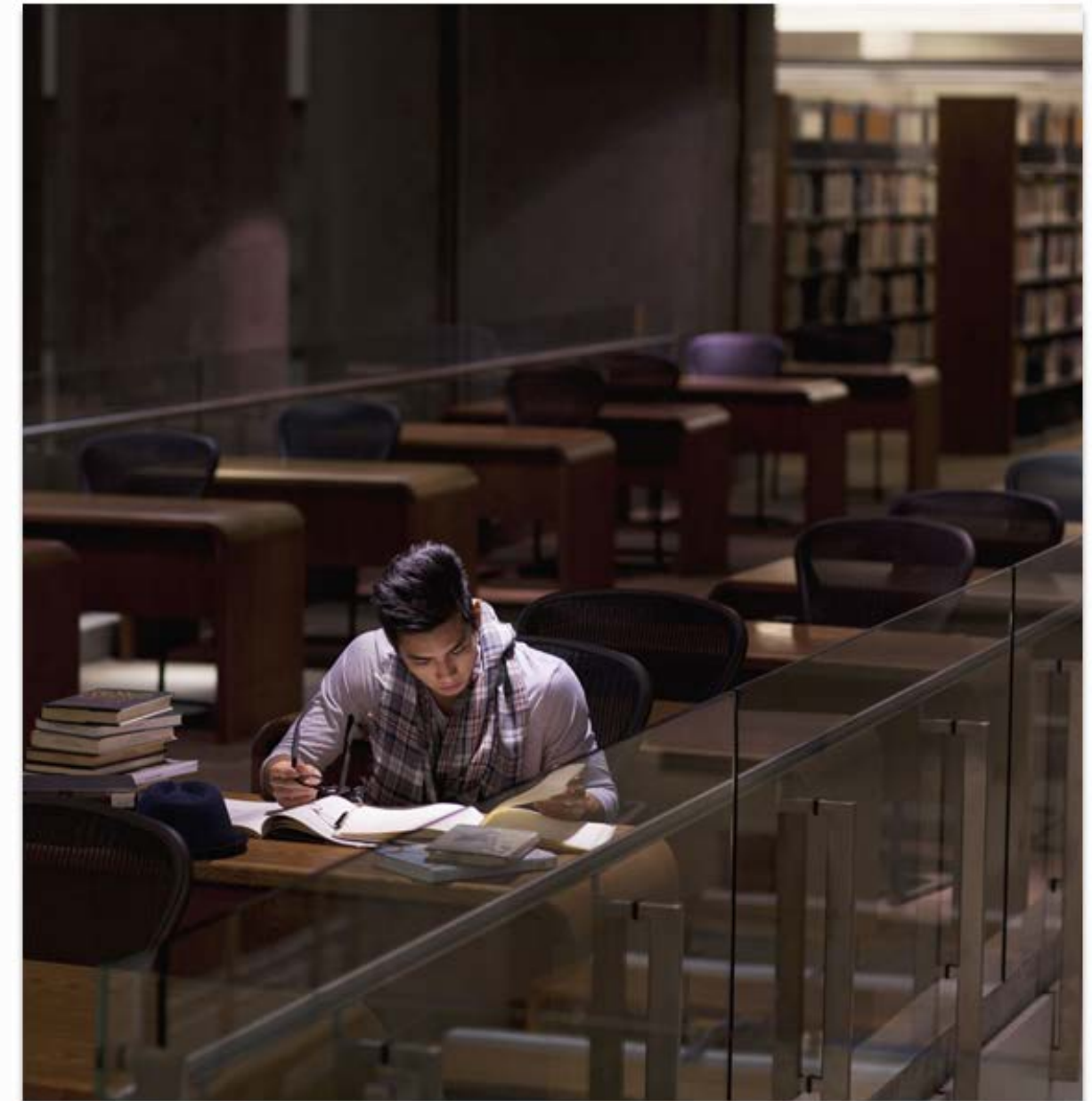
Risk Factors

- Physical health problems
- Relationship problems
- LGBTQ
- Employment problems
- Social isolation
- Significant change in living arrangements (i.e. separation or divorce)
- Age
- Drug and alcohol use



Men's Issues are Complicated by Societal Roles and Expectations

- They feel they need to be the breadwinners in the family
- Display traditional “masculine” traits, such as strength and control
- Be self-reliant
- Not speak openly about their emotions



Stigma

A study published in Canada in the Community Mental Health Journal in 2016 showed male respondents were more likely than females to hold views such as:

“I would not vote for a male politician if I knew he had been depressed,”

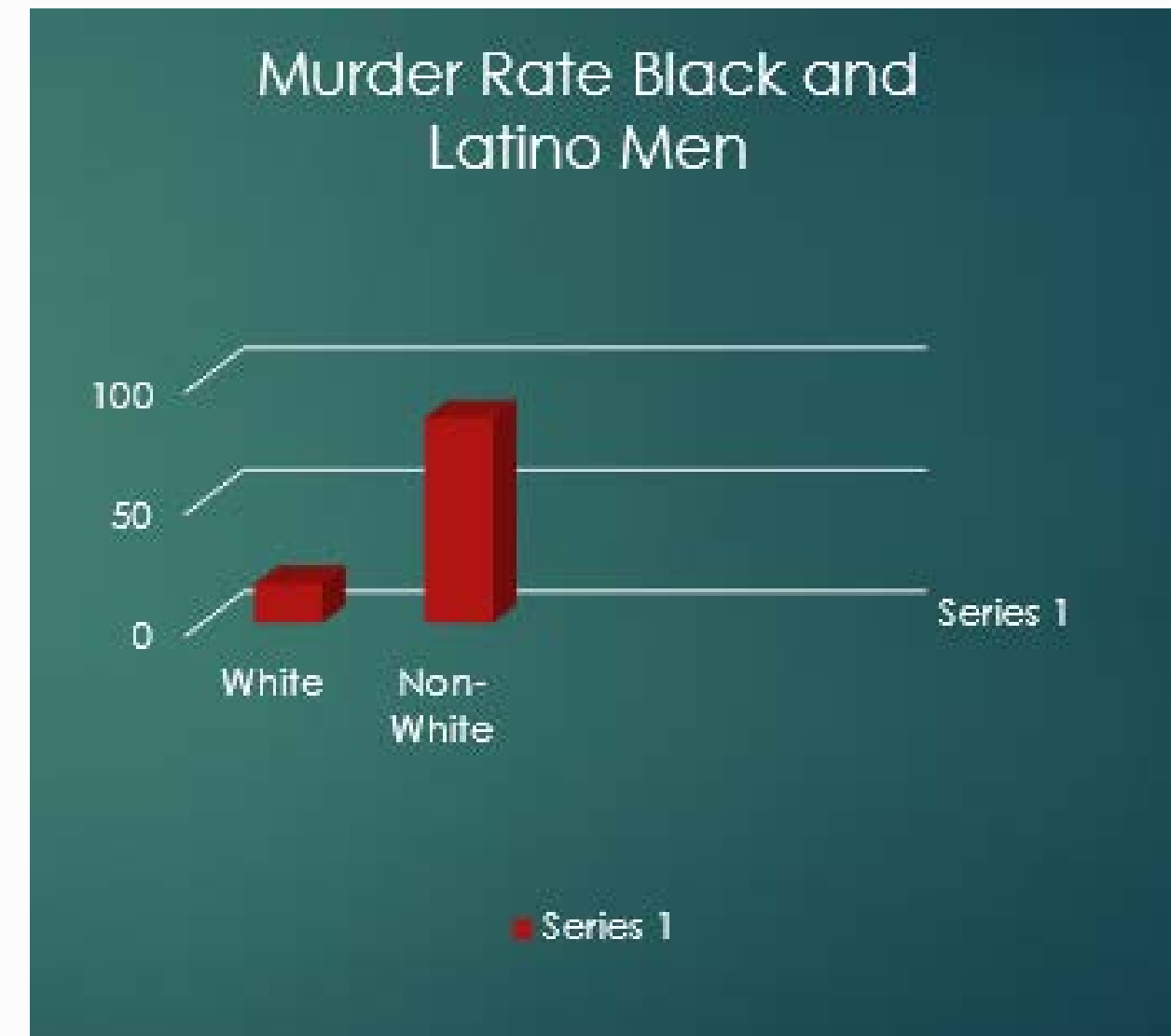
“Men with depression are dangerous,”

“Men with depression could snap out of it if they wanted.”

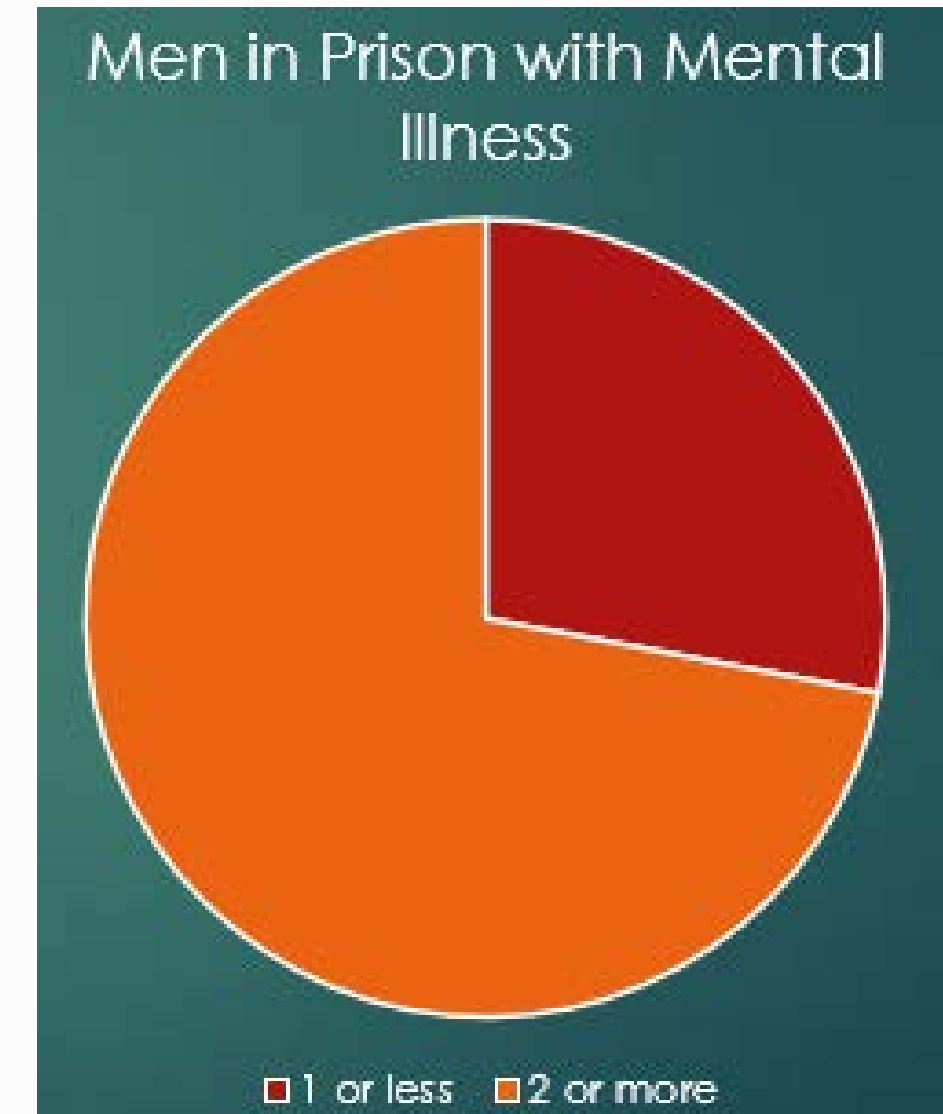
The Statistics Are Staggering

**American Indian
Men Are Most Likely
To Commit Suicide**

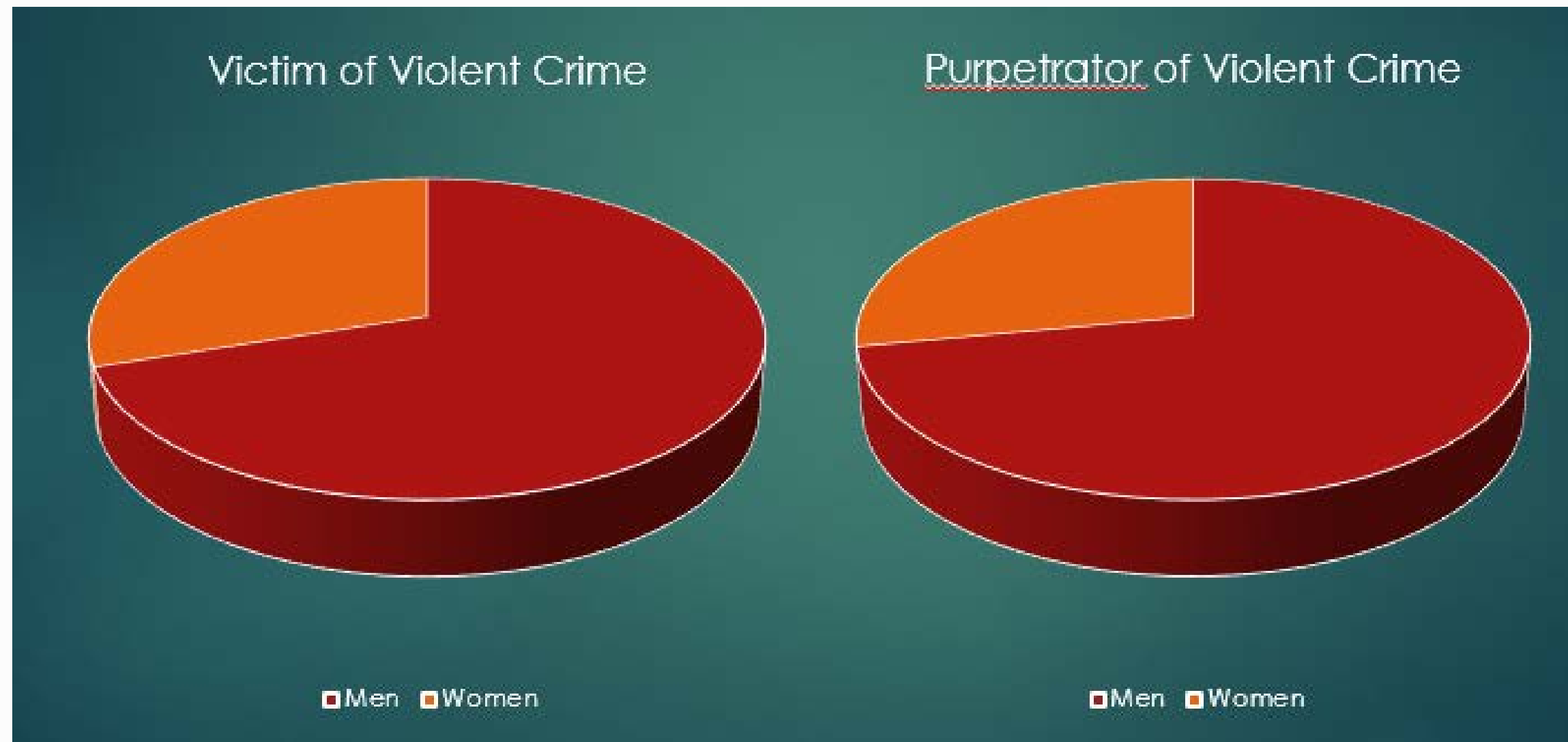
**Black Men are Most
Likely to Be
Incarcerated**



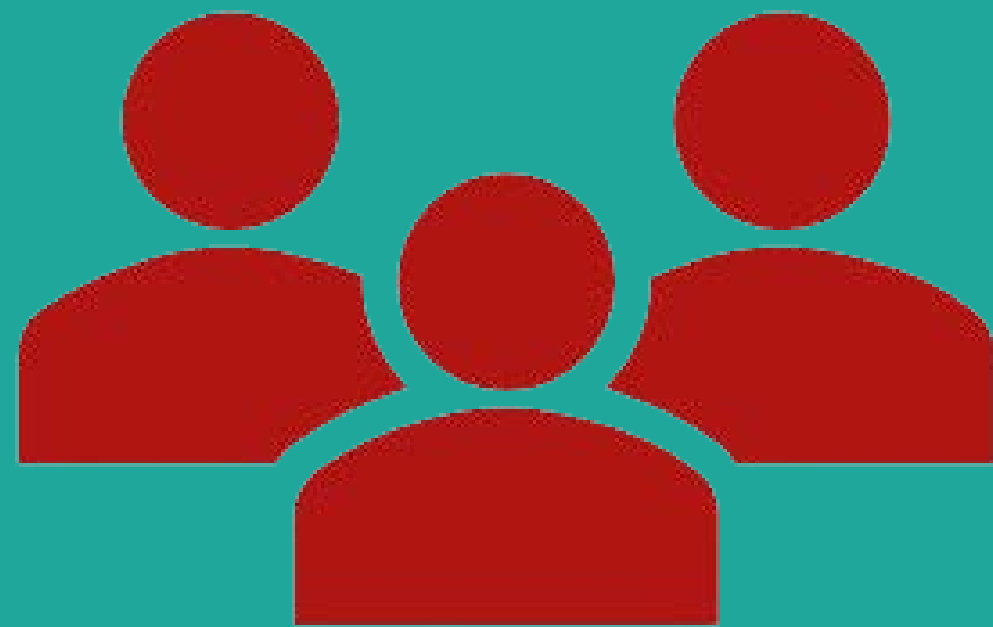
The Prison System



Violent Crime



Impact



- **Divorce**
- **Job Loss**
- **Disability**
- **Low Economic Status**
- **Addiction**
- **Caregiver Burnout**
- **Incarceration**

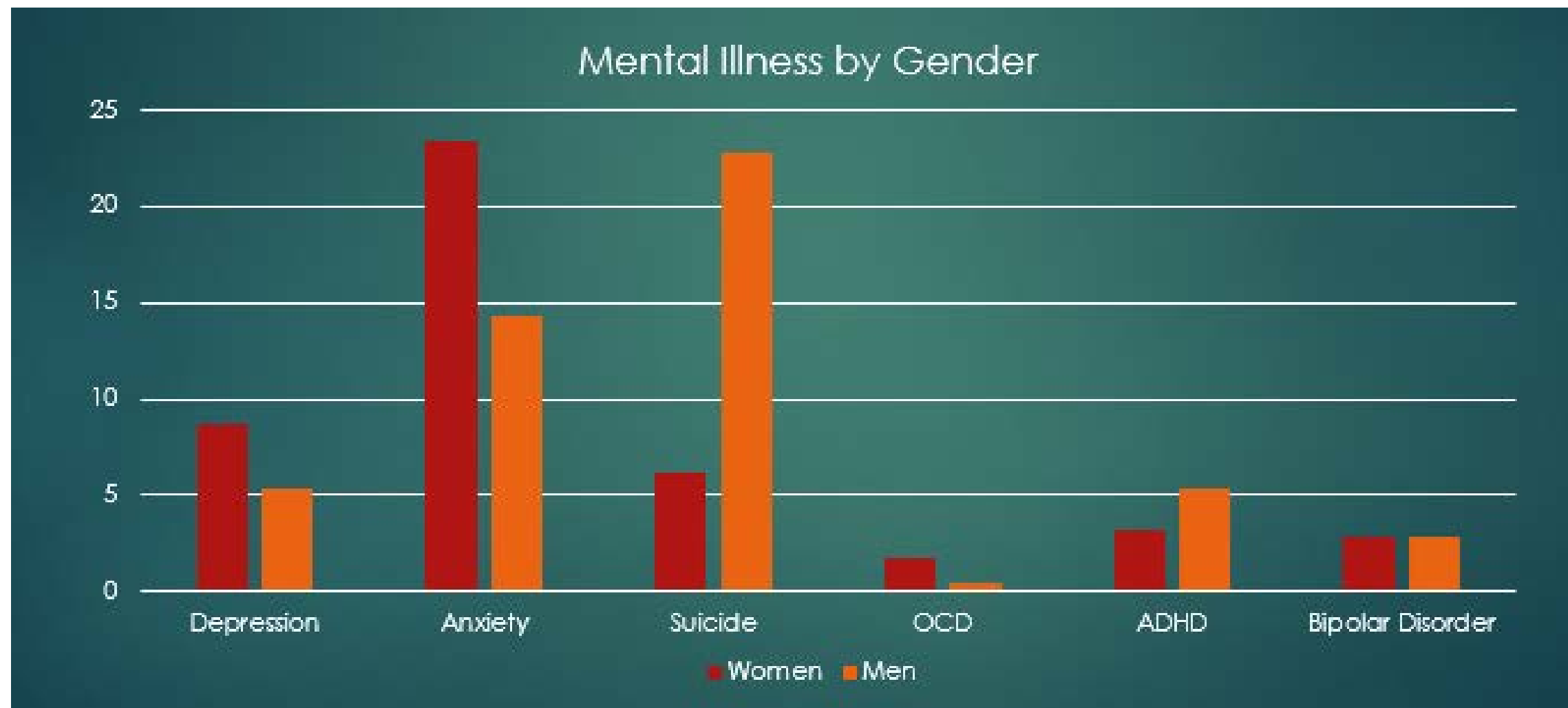
The Link Between Alcohol & Mental Health

- Alcohol use may lead to psychiatric symptoms dependence on alcohol
- It may produce psychological symptoms intoxication may result in short-term behavioral or psychological problems
- Withdrawal or detoxification from alcohol may lead to psychological or psychiatric symptoms
- Alcohol use may exacerbate a pre-existing mental health problem
- Pre-existing mental health problems may lead to increased alcohol use
- Males are more than three times as likely to die by suicide than females, and more likely to have been drinking prior to suicide

Social Impact of Not Getting Help

- Fatherless Homes
- Increased Rates of Domestic Violence
- Homelessness
- Increased Cost and Stress on Health Care System
- Continuation of Stigma

Statistics



Suicide Attempts vs. Completion



The Challenge for Gay Men

Research shows that, compared to other men, gay and bisexual men have higher chances of having:

- Major depression
- Bipolar disorder
- Generalized anxiety disorder



Risk Factors for Gay Men

- Coming out – repeatedly
- Social Isolation and Anxiety
- Lack of Acceptance by Family or Friends
- Lack of Understanding
- Discrimination and Bullying
- Less Encouragement to Structure their Life Like Heterosexual Families Do

Archaic Beliefs Change the Way Men Seek Help

A National Health Interview Survey reports that:

- **1 in three men took medication for mental health concerns.**
- **Only 1 in 4 men spoke to a mental health professional.**

Better Mental Health Education Starts at Home

1

Start the discussion early

2

Normalize getting help for problems you have

3

Talk about family history and the impact of not getting help

4

Praise others for getting support

5

Don't gossip – What you say at home matters

Lifestyle Changes Can Help Too

Eat	Eat a balanced diet.
Sleep	Get enough sleep.
Exercise	Exercise on most days.
Destress	Manage stress through meditation, yoga, mindfulness or prayer.
Avoid	Limit or avoid the use of alcohol and drugs.

How & Where to Access Help When You Need It

Participate	Participating in Online therapy
Finding	Finding In-person therapy
Talking	Talking to Your General Physician
Consulting	Consulting With a Psychiatrist
Seeking	Seeking out a Self-Help Groups
Getting	Getting Support from Community Organizations like NAMI

Reduce Your Risk

- Be open and talk with family and friends, especially during times of stress.
- Seek treatment promptly if any mental health symptoms develop.
- Continue with maintenance treatment to prevent relapses of depression or other mental health conditions.
- Learn to manage stress through meditation, mindfulness, creative outlets, or other methods.
- Practice positive lifestyle choices, such as eating well, sleeping enough, and exercising.
- See a therapist for issues such as low self-esteem or childhood trauma, which could trigger mental health problems later in life.

Do's and Don'ts of Having a Conversation About Mental Health

Do

- Let people know you are open to talking about mental health
- Do Listen
- Do empathize with the person you are talking to
- Do ask if someone is feeling suicidal
- Do let them talk openly
- Do respect their boundaries
- Do let them know if they ever want to talk
- #realconvo

Don't

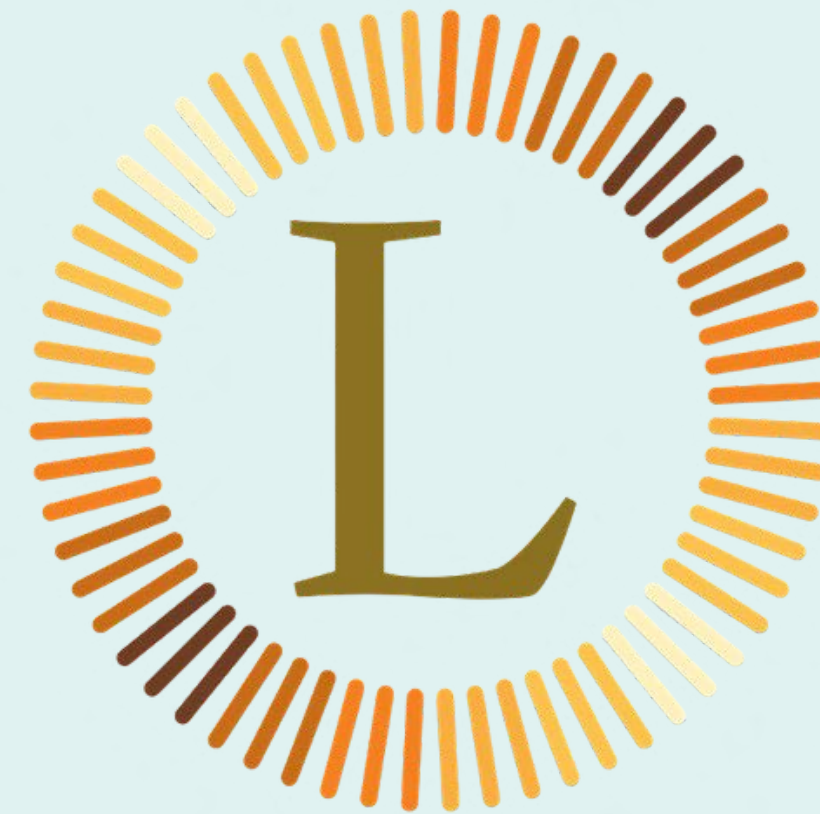
- Don't minimize
- Don't give advice
- Don't make assumptions
- Don't interrupt
- Don't try to fix it
- Don't pressure them to do something they are not ready to do.
- Don't wait for the "right time"

Talking About Mental Health Takes Practice

- If at first, you don't succeed try again.
- Keep using open ended questions, "Are you okay?", "Do you want to talk?"
- Is there any way I can help?"
- And always invite the person for more conversations if needed.
- "I'm here to talk if you need to"

Lamplight Counseling Services, LLC

- Virtual Therapy Available
- 2 Offices in Northeast Ohio
- Independence & Medina
- 216-455-5571 & 330-331-5800
- www.lamplightcounseling.net



QUESTIONS



THANK YOU

