Reading Part 4: Reading for Viewpoints

Time: 13 minutes

Read the following article from a website.

Depression can affect men of all ages and backgrounds. Around one in eight men experience depression at some stage in their lives. Since suicide is the leading cause of death for men under the age of 44, and 75 percent of suicides are by men, it seems clear that many men are struggling in silence. Social and cultural expectations about what it means to be a man can contribute to depression and suicide, and can be a hurdle to men seeking help.

"Masculinity norms are one of the contributing factors to men not seeking treatment," says Dr. Stephen Carbone from beyondblue. Expressing problems and feelings may be seen as a sign of weakness by some men. This can mean that men bottle things up and choose not to reach out to others for advice or assistance when they need it. We take a look at which men are most at risk of depression, and how depression manifests. We also explore the story of Jonathan, who was diagnosed with severe depression and anxiety at the age of 21.

The causes of depression are complex and diverse. They may include biological (genetic) factors, personality factors, adverse early life experiences, and current life stressors. Some episodes are triggered by a long-running build-up of pressures, while others are brought on by a specific issue or event, such as a relationship breakdown, a change in health or the loss of a job. At other times, depression can strike without apparent cause or warning. "The depressed mind starts to see everything in negative ways. You feel bad about yourself, bad about your life and bad about your future," says Dr. Carbone.

But there are other signs and symptoms of depression that may seem less obvious. You may experience physical pain (including back and muscular pain), headaches, sleeping problems, tiredness, significant weight gain or loss, and sexual dysfunction due to depression, but it's easy to attribute these to other factors such as physical ill-health, age or overwork. Some men with depression may feel irritable, angry or violent. Others may develop uncharacteristic or reckless behavior, such as reckless driving, drinking too much, drug misuse or compulsive gambling. Getting help sooner rather than later is the key to preventing the negative impacts these changes can have on your life.

The first step towards successful treatment of depression is for men to understand that depression is a common condition and that there is no reason to feel ashamed. Dr. Carbone stresses that "Depression is not your fault. It's not a reflection of who you are, it's a health condition that anyone can experience." Jonathan remembers how hard it was to start talking openly about his depression. There was some shame and embarrassment. Men are used to hurting a muscle playing sport, but not talking about things. It's almost ingrained in us not to admit there's something wrong," he says. Modern treatments are very effective. They include lifestyle advice, psychological therapies, and antidepressants, and most men who do seek help will return to their previous levels of satisfaction with their life.

Using the drop-down menu (□), choose the best option according to the information given on the website.

1. The article is about
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2. Main hurdles for a depressed man to seek help is
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3. The first step towards successful treatment of depression is for men to understand that
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4. The effect of Depression can be
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5. Modern treatment of depression includes
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The following is a comment by a visitor to the website page. Complete the comment by choosing the best option to fill in each black.

It is a good article but I don't think so that every man who undergoes depression is 6._____. I personally experience depression, it is so painful. I really need help from someone to come out of it and I really want to tell everyone that depression or anxiety is not weakness, 7._____.
For some reason, men are supposed to be 8._____ and this is a really dangerous state of affairs. It's so important that men are taught to express any feelings they have, early on, so things don't build up. I think many men have 9._____ due to toxic masculinity. Toxic masculinity refers to actions that 10._____.

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