

Father's Day



With Father's Day here and gone, I can't help but think, as I often do, how fortunate I am to be the dad of three wonderful daughters and, most recently, two incredible grandchildren.

In reflecting on my over 37 years as a dad and four as a grandfather, I can't but help ponder how my life-long battle with [depression](#) and anxiety may have and has affected them, as well as my wife. There were certainly times when many of the classic behaviors surfaced: anger, withdrawing from socializing, insomnia, stomach aches, loss of appetite, getting caught up in work, etc. Yet, even with manifestations of these illnesses, I am comforted by the fact it could have been so much worse.

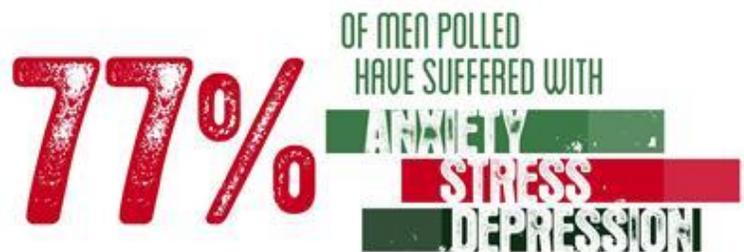
What were/are the mitigating circumstances?

If there is a common theme, it is talking it out. Talking it out not only with my psychologist but also with support groups and friends. NAMI provided the support group environment with its central theme of 'hope' along with providing education. It took a bit longer to land a consistent dialog with friends, as men generally are reticent to talk about mental health challenges, theirs or their family members. I have been fortunate to have developed a group of male friends over the years that involves a consistent, open exchange on our challenges.

The [statistics](#) on the % of overall suicides involving males (90%) along with other mental health related categories, is staggering. Incidental to NAMI's mission is removing the stigma of mental health and that includes efforts to encourage men to talk it out and to feel comfortable in seeking help. I am seeing some progress, but much remains to be done.

Come take part in the conversation to prevent suicide locally at our McHenry County Suicide Prevention Task Force meetings every 3rd Thursday @ Northwestern (3701 Doty Rd, Woodstock). If you are a guy and have been impacted by mental health conditions, contact NAMI McHenry County to find support!

Join us, will you, in pursuit of a world where mental health and all of its challenges is normal...that the stigma is gone, and the silence is broken.



Checkout our website: namimchenrycounty.org
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