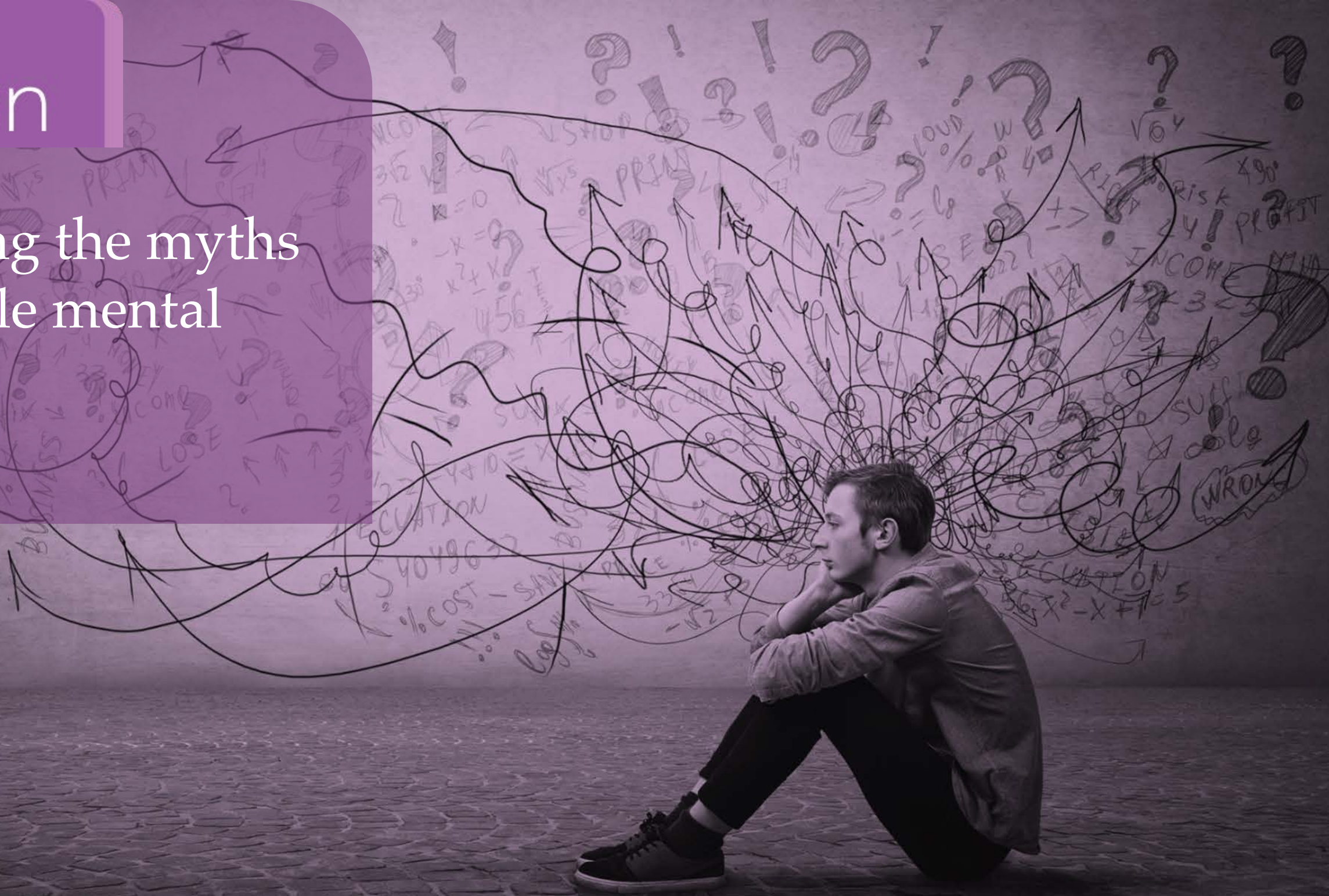


every  
woman

# Debunking the myths about male mental health



Dr Marcus Ranney

everywoman expert





# Male mental health is deteriorating



**5 in 10 men** suffer from anxiety disorder, panic attack, agoraphobia or other phobias.

*Source: Cadabams Hospital (2021)*

Men are less likely to access psychological therapies than women: only **36%** of referrals to NHS talking therapies are for men.

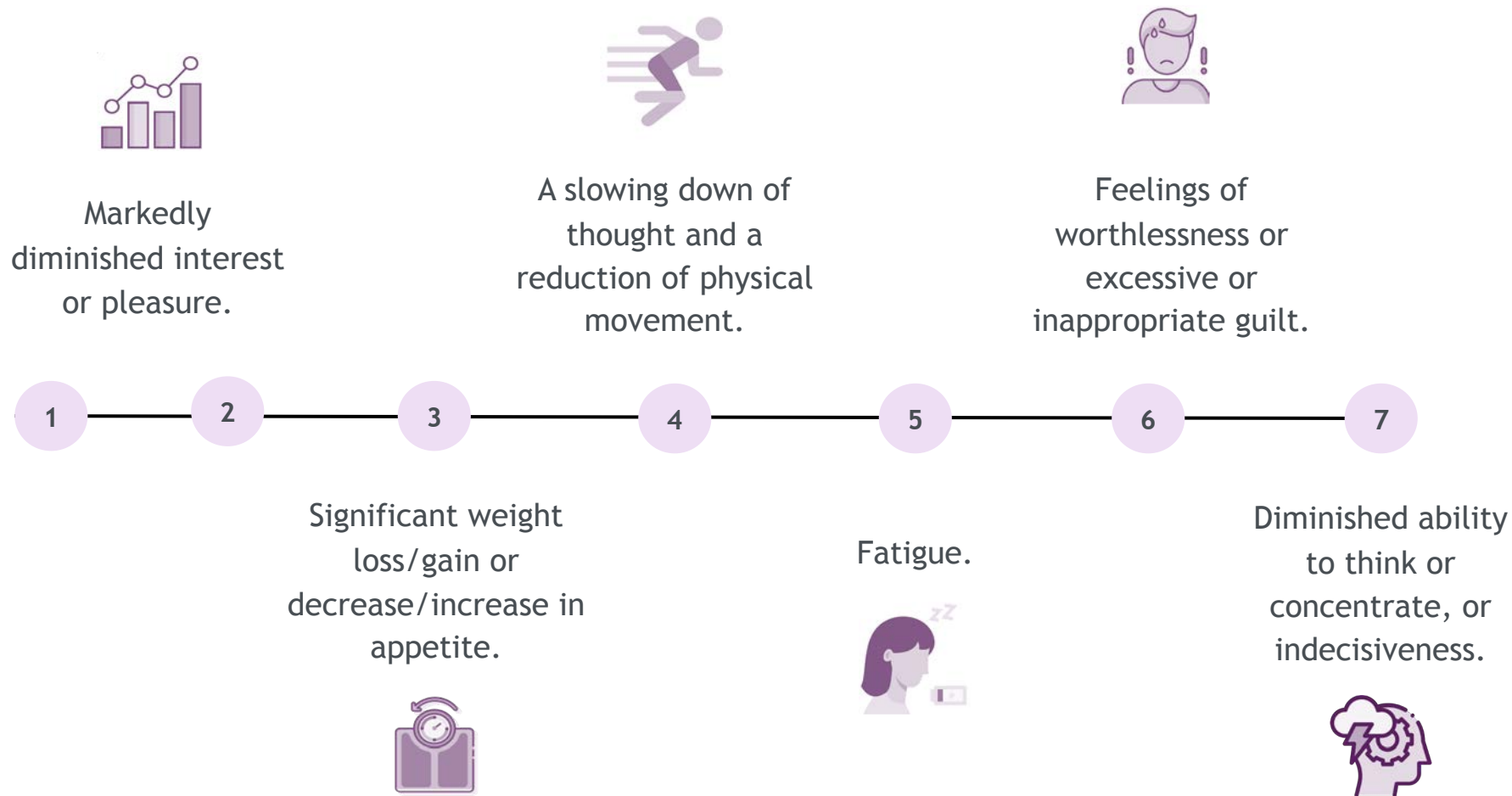
*Source: Mental Health Foundation (2020)*

National Mental Health Survey - the prevalence of alcohol-use disorders in males was **9%** against 0.5% in females and mental morbidity was higher among males (**13.9%**) than among females (7.5%).

*Source: Cadabams Hospital (2021)*



# Physical, emotional, and behavioural signs and symptoms of distress to watch out for








## The impact of toxic masculinity and behaviours associated with it

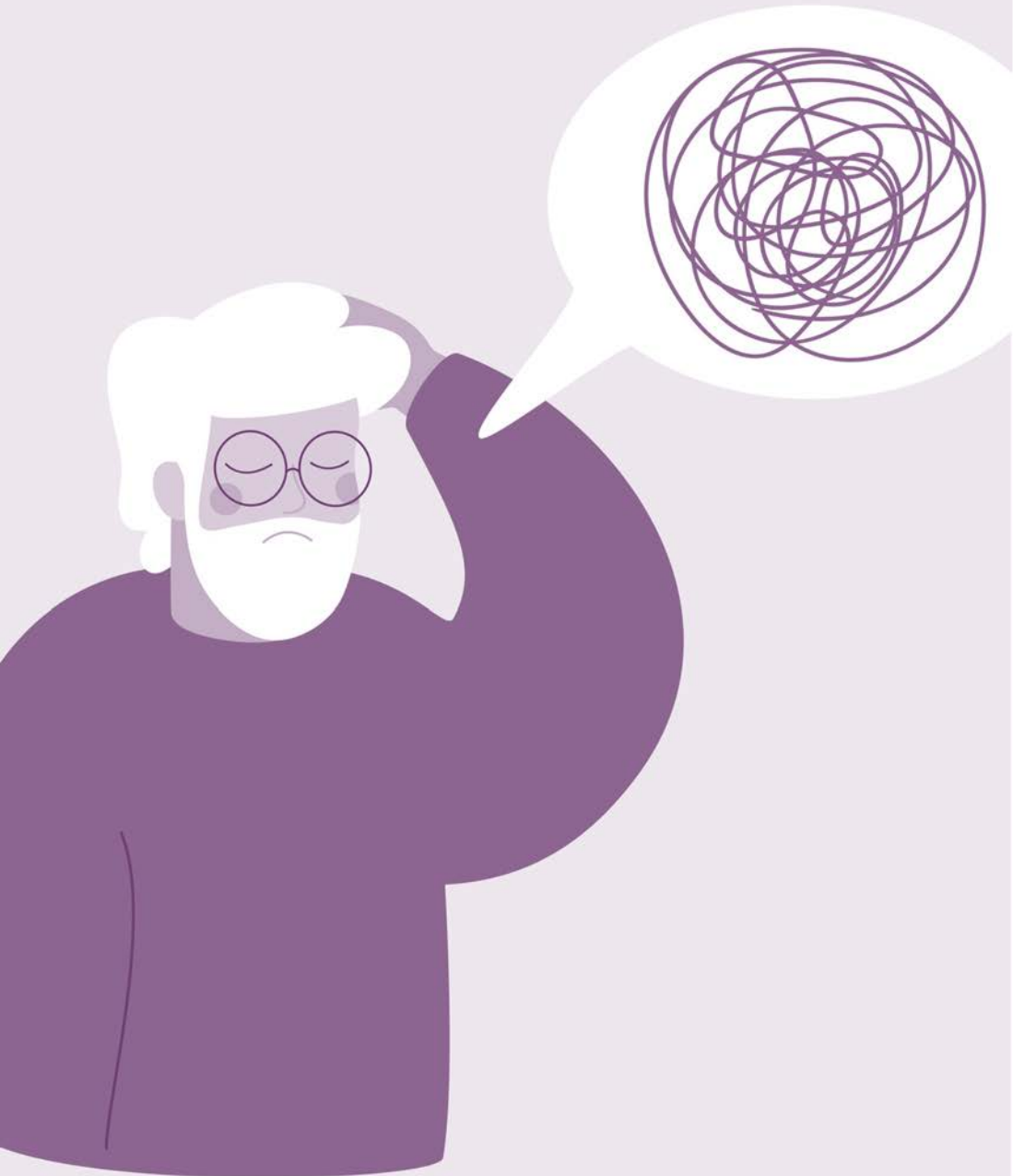
Restraining men from showing emotions leads to depression and in some circumstances, even suicide. Casual phrases thrown around in conversation restrict a whole gender in their ability to express. **Expression is the first antidote to mental health issues.**

- **Suppression of emotions:** Keeping a stiff upper lip and not letting emotions show. The reprimand of “boys don’t cry” and “man up” are repeated to little boys, enforcing this socialisation.
- **Extreme self reliance:** The need to do everything on their own (making it less likely to seek treatment or reach out for help).
- **Fear of emasculation:** Any appearance of traits seen as feminine, such as being emotionally expressive or vulnerable, a man is termed “weak.” It follows that emasculation is the idea that regardless of what other “manly” pursuits he may indulge in, certain acts like showing vulnerability will render a man “unmanly”.

*Source: BW Wellbeing World (2019)  
& Times Now News (2018)*

A close-up, low-angle shot of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard. The person is wearing a dark, long-sleeved shirt. The laptop is on a wooden desk. In the background, a window shows a blurred cityscape with buildings and trees. The entire image has a soft, purple-tinted overlay.

“I associate showing  
vulnerability with ...”



## We have been trained to suppress strong emotions at work

- Leadership IQ's new report, *The State Of Leadership Development In 2020*, surveyed 21,008 employees to assess leaders' effectiveness. 21% of employees say that their leader never or rarely openly shares the challenges they're facing.
- Vulnerability is associated with weakness, uncertainty & timidity. Thus, we start fearing showing our vulnerabilities at work.

*Source: Forbes (2020)*



# The power of vulnerability

Vulnerability is uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure. If you replaced vulnerability at the beginning of that sentence with the word leadership, it would define that quite well too. Thus, vulnerability & leadership go hand in hand. Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, and creativity. It is the source of hope, empathy, accountability, and authenticity.

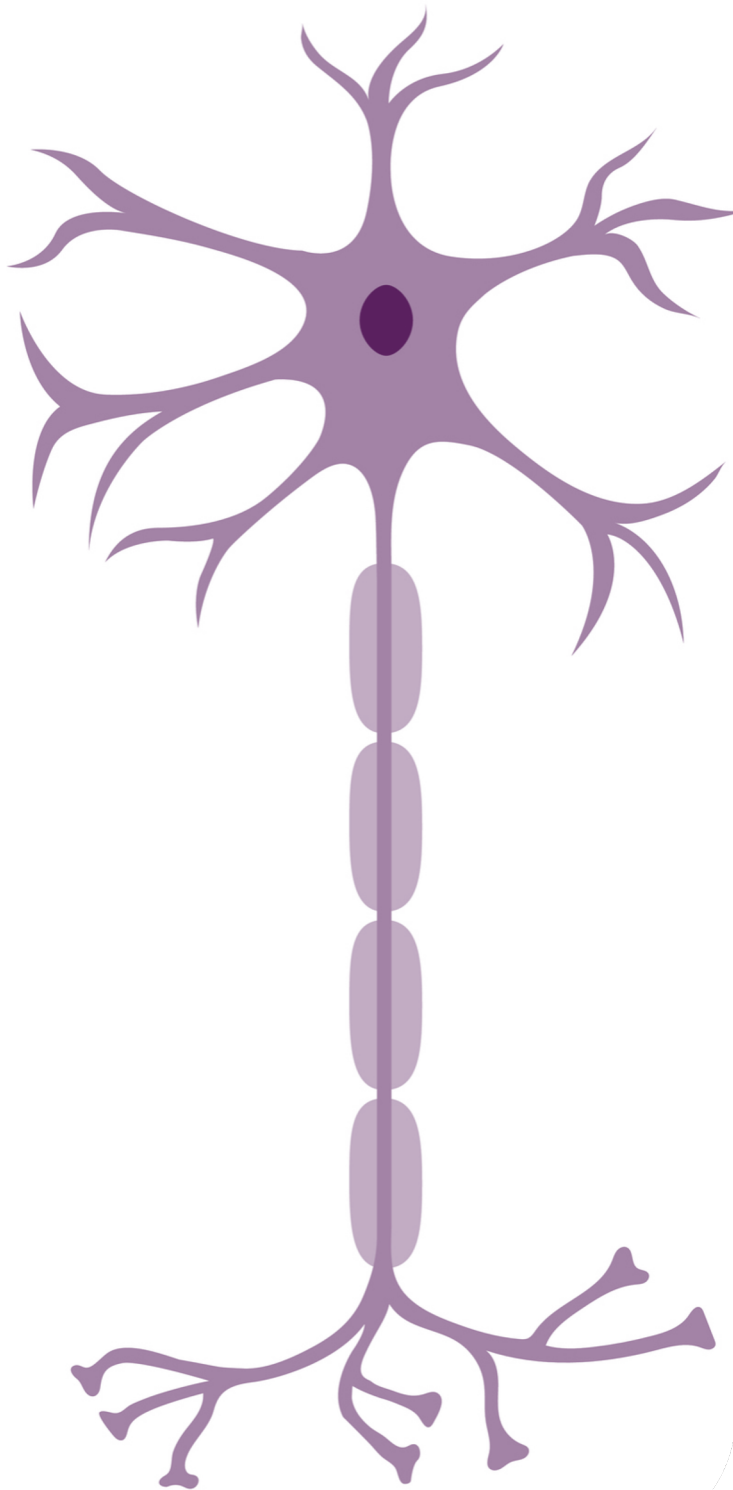
## *EMBRACING THE BENEFITS OF VULNERABILITY*

Making you relatable	Driving trust	Inspiring creativity	Encouraging psychological safety
Connecting through authenticity	Enabling shared ownership	Building stronger teams	Inviting others to help

Source: Forbes (2019, 2020)

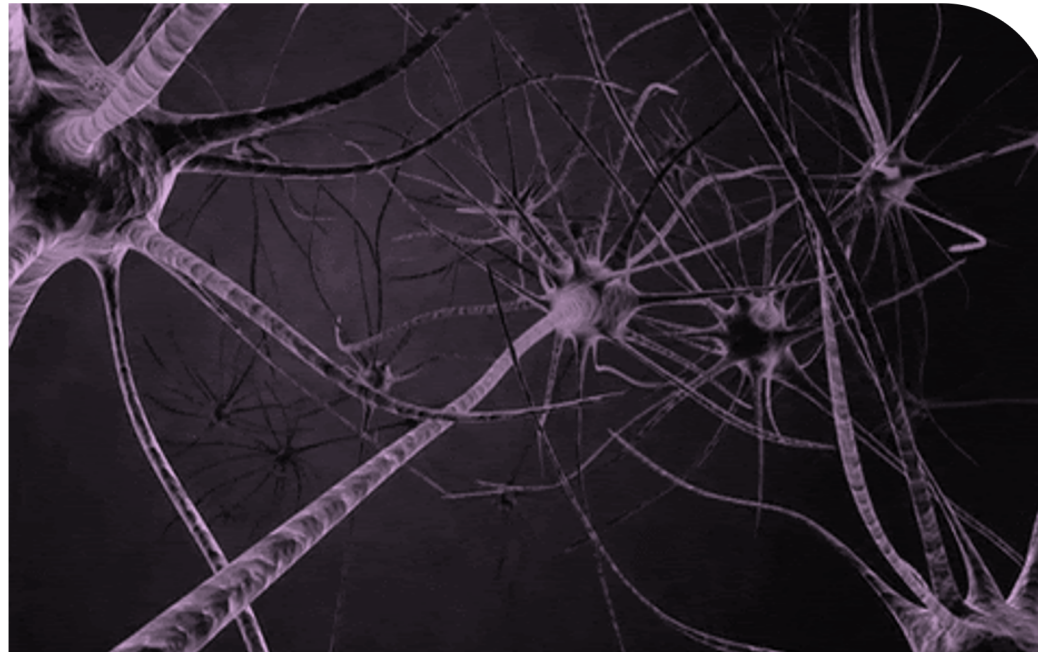


Biohacks to take better  
care of your mental  
wellbeing during  
challenging times



## Neural circuits “create” who you are

- The first step is to ‘rewire’ your brain for consistent high performance.
- We have neural pathways for everything we encounter, people, objects, events, behaviors, environmental cues, etc and the more we encounter them or do something, the stronger the pathways becomes - they become our default patterns.



*“Neurons that  
fire together,  
wire  
together.”*



# Three steps to create (and reinforce) a new pathway

1

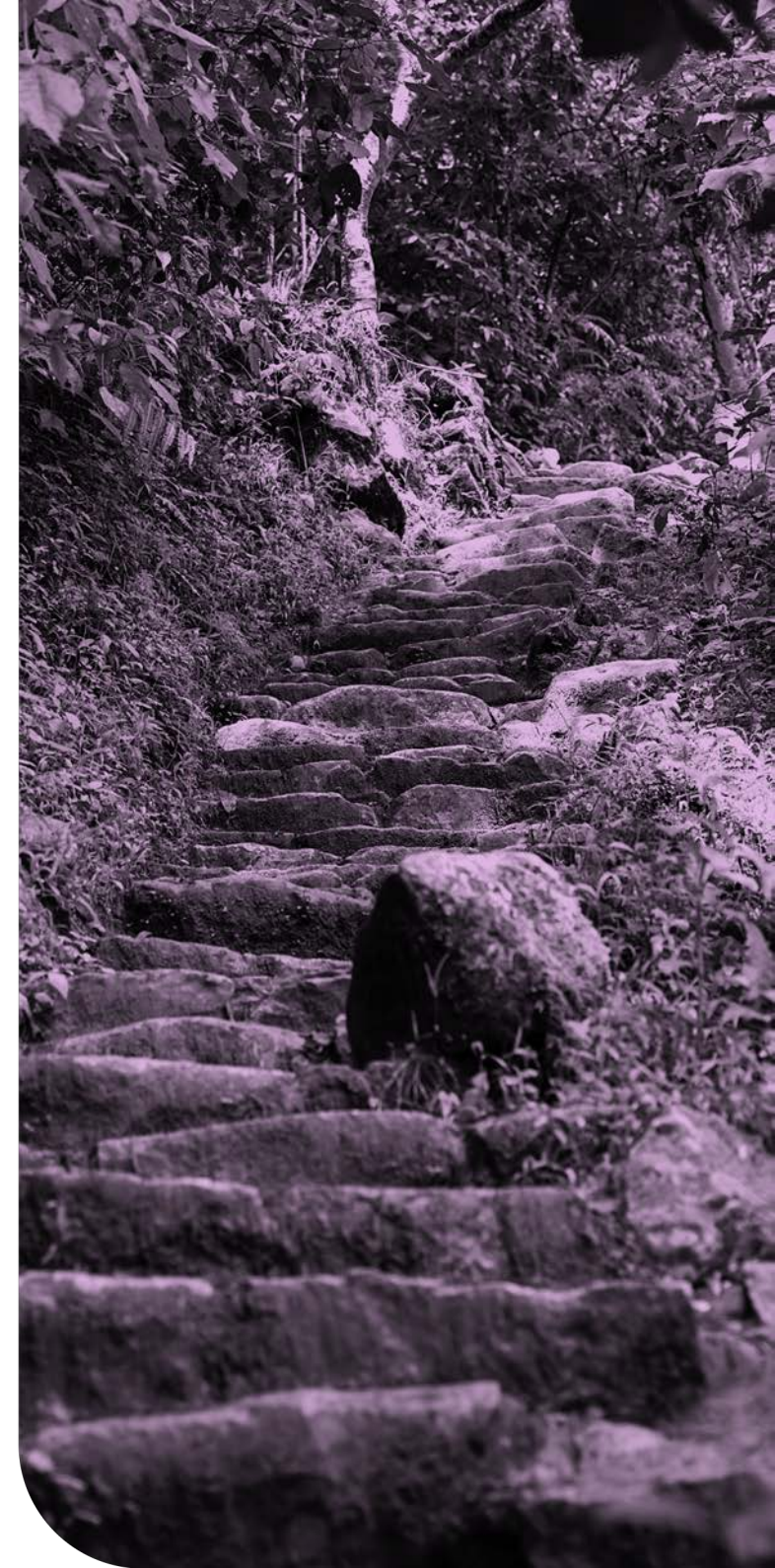
**Start small, start today** - Let's explore tiny triggers/habits that you can start to do today.

2

**Stack them up** - Like paper cups, the easiest way to build sustainable habits is stacking lots of tiny triggers one on top of each other.

3

**Celebrate the wins** - The brain, as we shall see, loves dopamine. It's addicted to it. So every time you have a win, relish in the good feeling that dopamine provides you with so you can keep at it.





# Biohack 1: Utilise the power of breath

Count slowly from 10-1 whilst breathing deeply.



Let's do this together

Taking deep breaths can help you voluntarily regulate your Autonomic Nervous System (ANS), which has many benefits –lowering your heart rate, regulating blood pressure, helping you relax, and reducing stress hormones (cortisol).

Source: *Healthline (2018), Harvard (2012, 2017)*



## Biohack 2: Take a dose of Vitamin B12 daily

This vitamin plays a vital role in synthesizing and metabolizing serotonin, a chemical responsible for regulating mood. Vitamin B12 deficiency may lead to decreased serotonin production, which may cause a depressed mood. Studies support the use of vitamin B12 supplements for improving symptoms of depression.

The best sources of this vitamin are:

- Fish, shellfish.
- Liver.
- Red meat.
- Eggs.
- Poultry.
- Dairy products such as milk, cheese, and yoghurt.
- Fortified nutritional yeast.
- Fortified breakfast cereals.
- Enriched soy or rice milk.
- Supplements.

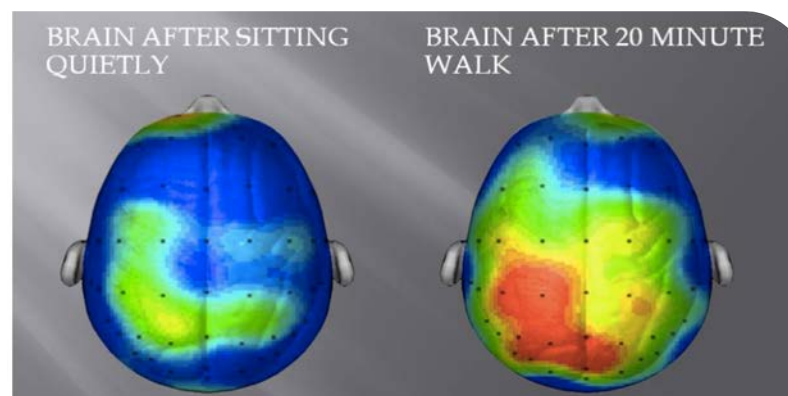






## Biohack 3: Schedule 15 minutes of walking daily to flush out cortisol

Regular walks can enhance the connectivity of important brain circuits, combat age-related declines in brain function and improve memory and cognitive performance. Walking improves cardiac risk factors such as cholesterol, blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, vascular stiffness and inflammation, and mental stress.



Source: Stanford (2014), Buffer (2014), Harvard (2021)

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## Biohack 4: Schedule at least 5 minutes a day to cultivate silence

- Get beyond the noise. Quiet time is healthy for your body and mind. Silence offers opportunities for self-reflection and daydreaming, which activates multiple parts of the brain. It gives you time to turn down the inner noise and to increase awareness of what matters most.
- Studies show that taking out time for silence restores the nervous system, helps sustain energy, and conditions the mind to be more adaptive and responsive to the complex environment in which we live. Research shows silence is associated with the development of new cells in the hippocampus and increases an individual's chances of encountering novel ideas and information.







## Biohack 5: Once a week, share a challenge with team members

Share your challenges and problems with others. This motivates other people to share their own challenges and problems. This helps in tapping into past experiences and being unafraid to share your struggles.

*Source: Forbes (2017, 2020),  
Harvard (2021)*

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Questions?

