



香港城市精神健康聯盟

City Mental Health  
Alliance HK

# Men's Mental Health: The Power of Vulnerability

Moderator



**Jessica Chan**

Senior Director,  
Investor Solutions Lead  
at JLL Hong Kong

To mark Men's Health Week (13-19 June), **City Mental Health Alliance Hong Kong (CMHA HK)** and **The American Chamber of Commerce Hong Kong (AmCham HK)** hosted a panel to explore the topic of men's mental health in the workplace and the power of vulnerability.

The event gathered corporate leaders and mental health professionals to share perspectives on the specific challenges that men face in dealing with their mental health, the importance of cultivating an open work environment and how to lead with vulnerability. The panel was moderated by **Jessica Chan, Senior Director, Investor Solutions Lead at JLL Hong Kong.**

Panellists



**Alex Bowen**

COO at PayMe HSBC  
Hong Kong

## Leading with vulnerability

Being vulnerable in the workplace is accepting and "showing that we're not infallible, that we're just human, especially in the context of leadership," said **Alex Bowen, COO at PayMe HSBC Hong Kong.**



**Andrew Wong**

CEO, Health & Beauty  
North Asia DFI Retail  
Group and Chairman of  
MINDSET

There are many layers to vulnerability, including genetic, physical, corporate, cognitive and cultural which can each in turn trigger mental health vulnerability, noted **Dr Roger Ng, President of the Hong Kong College of Psychiatrists.** "When we are willing to share feelings and show emotional vulnerability, it increases connectedness between people. It also creates a ripple effect by enhancing trust, team spirit and productivity," said Dr Ng.

Bowen shared his journey in overcoming mental health challenges at work. He described feeling irritable, impatient and detached from work for a sustained period and how this had a negative impact on his relationships. "I didn't understand the feelings that I was experiencing, and I couldn't see a way out." For Bowen, recognising and acknowledging the problem was a big turning point. He took this as an opportunity to engage colleagues on the topic of mental health and encourage open communication within the team. "It's crucial to create a culture that encourages people to speak up and share how they feel - ultimately it helps everyone be at their best," added Bowen.



**David Butts**

President Asia Pacific &  
Group EVP at Techtronic  
Industries Co Ltd



**Dr Roger Ng**  
President of the Hong Kong College of Psychiatrists

Having an environment that fosters dialogue is key, added **Andrew Wong, CEO, Health & Beauty North Asia DFI Retail Group and Chairman of MINDSET** - “When people feel safe, they come out of their shell and perform so much better. Have the courage to show vulnerability as a leader and demonstrate to team members that they don’t need to carry an armour to work every day”.

**David Butts, President Asia Pacific & Group EVP at Techtronic Industries Co Ltd.**, added that having a supportive and open culture is a priority within the organisation. “No matter what your role is within the company, you can play a part in contributing to that culture,” said Butts.

## Courage to seek help



**Dr Sharmeen Shroff**  
Clinical Psychologist at Central Minds

Dr Ng noted that many men readily seek medical help for physical ailments, when these are often symptoms of mental health issues. From his clinical experience, it is “unusual for men to express that they feel sad or depressed. They are usually emotionally avoidant and are reluctant to describe their feelings.” While all of us experience a full spectrum of negative emotions as part of daily life, it is important to pay attention to the severity and duration of these emotions so that we know when to seek help.

Another obstacle to people seeking help is that many corporations do not provide comprehensive coverage for mental health care, if at all. This can push employees to seek medical help from a physical angle, which can lead to invasive and harmful treatments without treating the root cause.

**Dr Sharmeen Shroff, Clinical Psychologist at Central Minds**, added that men are less likely to access psychological therapy compared to women. Conventional ideas of masculinity hold men back from seeking help and from showing vulnerability. Dr Shroff encourages us to reframe our perception of masculinity and normalise certain behaviours for men, including:

- **Asking for help**
- **Talking about feelings**
- **Going to therapy**
- **Having and expressing emotions**
- **Prioritising their mental health and wellbeing**
- **Crying**
- **Having insecurities**
- **Being vulnerable**

# Tips for Supporting Men's Mental Health

To conclude, Dr Shroff offered practical tips on how to support the mental health of men:

- **Check-in and break through "I'm fine" responses – don't assume that you know what is going on**
- **Find an appropriate time to engage in dialogue and ask how you can offer support**
- **Hold space for men to open up about their mental health**
- **Be a good listener, not just a speaker**
- **Be patient – it takes time to open up**
- **Be careful with your language so as not to stigmatise men's mental health further**
- **Engage in conversations about men's mental health by sharing your own story and demonstrating vulnerability**
- **Remember that effective support is not a one-off check-in – it requires consistency and continued effort**

## RESOURCES

### Mind HK Community Directory

<https://www.mind.org.hk/community-directory/>

### Movember

<https://hk.movember.com/about/mental-health>

### Central Minds - Men's Mental Health

<https://www.centralminds.hk/mental-health/mens-mental-health/>



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The City Mental Health Alliance Hong Kong (CMHA HK) is a not-for-profit membership organisation. We are an alliance of businesses, working together with mental health experts and partner organisations, to achieve our vision that every workplace will protect, support and create positive mental health for their people.

We provide training, events, resources, research and practical support for companies wishing to create mentally healthy workplaces.

## CONTACT US

Website: [cmhahk.org](http://cmhahk.org)

LinkedIn: [City Mental Health Alliance Hong](https://www.linkedin.com/company/city-mental-health-alliance-hong-kong)