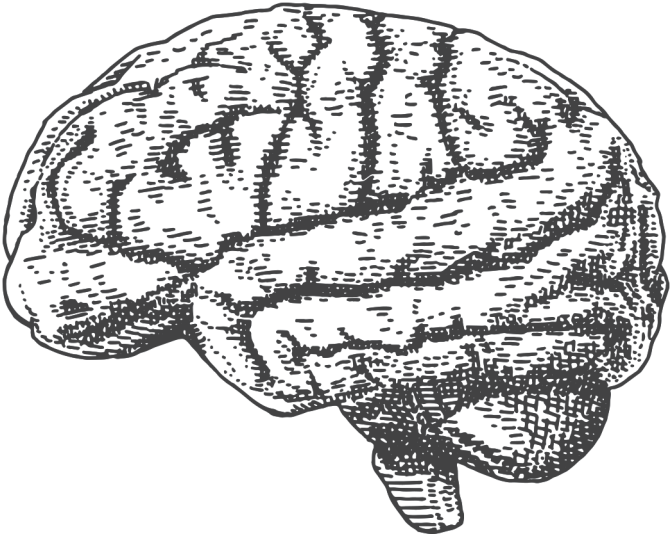


OPERATOR'S MANUAL

FOR THE MALE BRAIN

MAN THERAPY



**Troubleshooting and maintenance
for men's mental health**



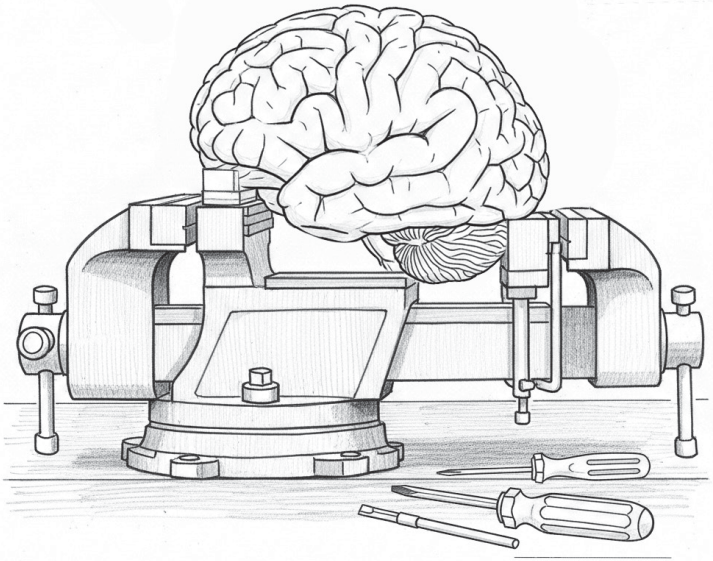
TOOLS FOR WHEN EVERYTHING IS SCREWED

Congratulations! You're a proud owner of a human brain—the most complex piece of machinery you'll ever operate. But just like any other tool in your shop, it requires maintenance.

This manual is a resource for men who don't wait for someone else to fix their problems. For men who roll up their sleeves and put in the work, keeping their minds running at peak performance. Take a knee, gents, let's get started.

MAN THERAPY.

Therapy. The way a man does it.



Unsure where to start? If you aren't sure which parts of your brain need maintenance the most, take the **20-Point Head Inspection at mantherapy.org** for a free, confidential assessment designed to help you identify specific areas of mental wear and tear and connect you with actionable tools, tips, and resources.



**Take the 20-Point
Head Inspection**

THE MALE MAINTENANCE MANUAL

This manual isn't to be tossed into a junk drawer filled with twist ties, dead batteries, and beer koozies. This is your operational field guide. Keep it handy and use it often, because despite our best efforts, our mental gears can get jammed, our wiring can fray, and our batteries can drain. Man Therapy will help you get your system back in working order.

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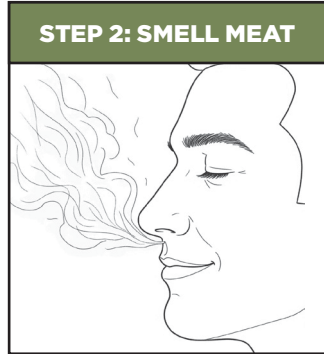
STRESS

STRESS

The Problem: Stress feels like your brain trying to crank down on an old, rusted bolt. If you're not careful, you can strip a mental thread. The usual suspects are work demands, financial pressure, and relationship conflicts. When you try to ignore the issue, stress manifests in your body through headaches, jaw-clenching, shortness of breath, high blood pressure, and even your digestive issues.

The Truth: The reality is that stress doesn't come from external problems as much as it comes from a lack of control over them. Stress lives in that gap between what you're capable of and what you're actually doing. Stress can send you into fight-or-flight mode. While stress can be a motivator, letting that 800-pound gorilla sit on your back unaddressed can eventually wear you down to the studs.

The Hack: Aromatherapy is a good way to kick your brain into relaxation. Take in the smells and **focus on your breath.**



If you find that your brain is overheating like a two-dollar stick welder before you even begin, try deep, measured breathing, take a short walk, or inhale a calming essential oil like lavender, or better yet, toss a 48-ounce porterhouse on the grill and inhale those soothing, smoky scents. I'd bet my mustache you'll feel your heart rate drop and your shoulders loosen as you gain the mental clarity to size up the tasks at hand and move forward with confidence.



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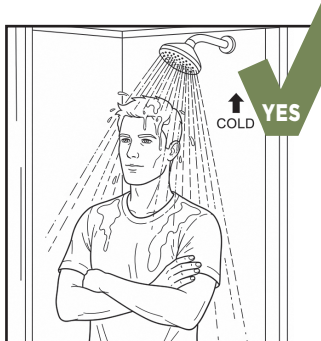
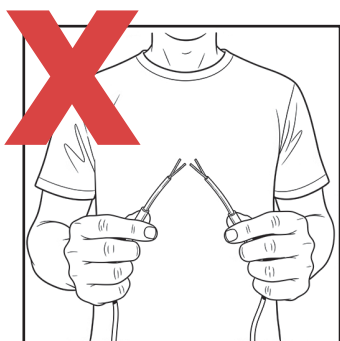
ANXIETY

ANXIETY

The Problem: Anxiety is an intense, persistent feeling of dread or unease about a threat that may or may not be logical. Anxiety is designed to help us recognize when something is threatening our ability to function properly. However, anxiety can cause us to start seeing life-or-death situations when there aren't any, which keeps our nervous system constantly running. It's like redlining a high-performance engine while still in park.

The Truth: While anxiety serves a purpose (it's there to protect us from real danger), our brain can react in unhelpful ways and make us worry about things that are incredibly unlikely. It's as if all the warning lights on your dashboard came on at once; your brain is distracted by problems that likely don't actually exist.

The Hack: You need to interrupt the feedback loop. The best way to do this is with a **shock to the system**.



Give yourself a shock to the system with something cold. Splash some ice water on your face, place some ice cubes on the back of your neck, or better still, channel your inner Viking and take an ice-cold shower. The shock of the cold forces your brain to deal with reality. It's a quick hard reset that snaps your thoughts out of your brain and back into your boots.



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DEPRESSION

DEPRESSION

The Problem: Feeling depressed has been described by many as a state of feeling persistently drained. It's far more than just having a bad day, week, or month. It's an invisible weight that sucks the energy and motivation right out of you.

The Truth: Depression is the result of uncontrollable changes in brain chemistry, often caused by environment, personal history, genes, and even physical health. While experiencing depression symptoms can leave your internal battery drained, there are a few things you can do to give yourself a mental jump-start.

The Hack: When your internal battery is dead, and you need a jump, do one simple task **to get motivated.**



That jump-start can come from something as simple as cleaning. That's right, roll up your sleeves and clean something. Put your dirty underwear into the hamper, wash a dish, or fire up the ol' leaf blower. You can start as small as you need, just do something; anything! Aim to increase the amount you accomplish every day until you're ready for a bigger goal.

Once you're ready, try to find something that helps reignite your sense of purpose. Find a non-profit, support an organization you believe in, and donate your time and talents. Just remember, start small and work your way up. You can climb out of this hole; just take it one step at a time.

LONELINESS

The Problem: Loneliness isn't just about being physically alone; it's about feeling like an outsider, disconnected, or unable to be a "real" version of yourself. You feel like a man without a tribe. It's a hollow, draining feeling that tells your brain your signal isn't reaching anyone. It can have profound impacts on both your mental and physical health. Just as running a chainsaw for hours on end without adding oil, this maintenance task simply cannot be ignored.

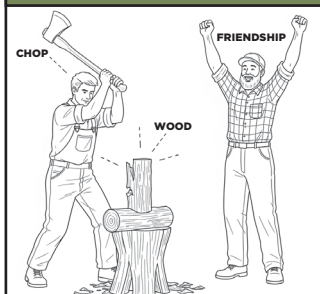
The Truth: While it may sound manly to be a lone wolf, in reality, men have always hunted in packs. Men need one another to lean on, lend a hand, and, when warranted, to occasionally give one another a swift kick in the pants.

The Hack: You need to link up with someone and **ask for help with a physical favor.**

STEP 1: LINK UP



STEP 2: CHOP WOOD



Asking a neighbor or acquaintance to lend a hand on a project is a great way to forge a new friendship. If you're short on neighbors or acquaintances at the moment, consider signing up for a woodworking class or a recurring group workout. The eventual goal is to ask someone to help you with a physical favor. Men are hardwired to be helpful, and I bet he'd be more than happy to lend a hand and a hammer. Ask him for a quick hand repairing your fence, or moving a piece of heavy furniture. Before you know it, the two of you will be out chopping wood while you chop it up.



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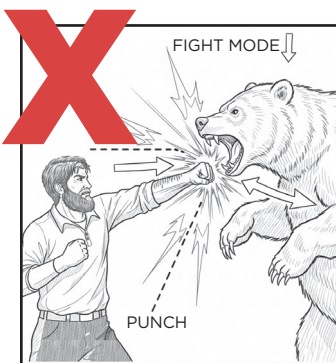
ANGER

ANGER

The Problem: Anger is a natural tool, and like any tool, it has its place. However, this particular tool can easily become dangerous or damaging when used for the wrong purposes. A cutting torch, for example, is perfect for certain tasks, but when used for the wrong job, it can burn the entire project down.

The Truth: When a man is raised to think he can't be sad or scared, the only acceptable emotion left in his toolkit is anger. It's the mask that says, "I'm strong," when the real emotion is, "I'm threatened." It's a natural, built-in system, but after a lifetime of defaulting to anger, it can start to feel like you've lost control of the cutting torch. It's always running hot, and it's burning the people you love.

The Hack: When the heat starts rising in your chest, take a **Tactical Time-Out**.



Stop talking. Physically leave the room. Walk away. Take five minutes. This is not an act of cowardice; it's self-control. Your brain needs a minute to switch from "fight mode" back to "logic mode." Keep in mind, anger is a physical burst of mental fuel (cortisol and adrenaline). There's a right and wrong way to utilize it. Find a positive outlet to burn off that fuel before it burns others. Join a gym and hit the punching bag, learn a martial art, or train for a race. Whatever you choose to pursue, you're guaranteed to leave feeling calmer, more collected, and more in control.

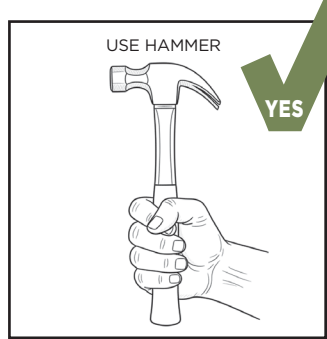


IMPULSIVE BEHAVIOR

The Problem: Gambling, too much booze, doom scrolling, chasing cheap thrills: these are shortcuts that can cause you to short-circuit. These might seem like harmless vices, escapes from the stresses of everyday life, but they're just wrapping tape over a cracked water pipe.

The Truth: When you give in to these urges, you turn yourself into a puppet, letting your cravings pull the strings. Every time you chase one of these so-called remedies, you're punting your problems and responsibilities down the field. But don't forget, it's future-you receiving that punt.

The Hack: You need to replace destructive behavior with a **productive, positive activity**.



Instead of heading home at five and reaching for the bottle, go straight to the gym and move some iron, or head to the workshop and get some sawdust in your beard. The point is, be productive. Get your fix from fixing something instead of fixing yourself a drink.

Another helpful approach is the Delay and Distract Method. When you're feeling tempted to give in to an impulsive urge, simply ask yourself, "What's the real reason I'm about to do this?" Is it stress? Loneliness? Boredom? Odds are you won't find a satisfying answer, and rationalizing that urge can help put you back in the driver's seat.





YOUR BRAIN DOESN'T COME WITH A WARRANTY. MAKE SURE YOU MAINTAIN IT PROPERLY.

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is the manliest thing you can do.

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