

CWC COACHING & THERAPY

Why Accelerators,
VCs and Private
Equity Need to
Provide Mental
Health Services
for Founders /
Entrepreneurs



Accelerators provide many positive benefits to budding founders ... from access to back-office systems to valuable mentors and networking, all the way to seed capital and business expansion. One layer of support required is frequently overlooked however, and critically important ...

mental health. Founders are particularly at risk, and when one adds in the economic impact associated with lost productivity due to common mental disorders, the need to address this debilitating issue has never been greater.

Why Mental Health?

The list of stressors for founders are endless and part of the job description: ranging from technology set-backs to missed revenue projections, lost customers, and lay-offs of dedicated co-workers who quit their safe jobs to join the start-up and serve loyally in the trenches. Being a founder is a 24/7 responsibility and "start-up mode" can be the excuse they make to neglect their health. Sleep, diet, exercise are all at risk of being jettisoned as lower priorities while they struggle to keep the ship afloat.

Academic research shows that many of the same characteristics that push entrepreneurs forward can have equally negative forces pulling against them as well ... drive, determination, and passion when pressed into overdrive can give way to obsession and cloud a founder's decision-making. According to one study, **"passion that is too positive or intense can limit an entrepreneur's creative problem solving."**

Entrepreneurs are the daredevils of business ... but even when they stave off disasters, the after-affects of the adrenaline-fueled excitement of


small success or large set-backs can leave emotional residue. According to psychiatrist **Michael Freeman**, the ups and downs of the entrepreneurial adventure can be an emotional roller coaster ride when a founder's identity and self-worth are tied at the hip with the fate of their business.

Another **study** by Freeman points to the prevalence of mental health conditions among entrepreneurs. According to this research, **entrepreneurs are 2x more likely to suffer from depression, and 5x more likely to have ADHD compared to non-entrepreneurs.**

M₃ E₁ N₁ T₁ A₁ L₁

H₄ E₁ A₁ L₁ T₁ H₄

Mental Health Support Is Economically Sound



Providing mental health services is a good idea for all accelerator programs, but especially so when looked at through an economic lens.

According to [Freeman](#), “Mental health is as essential for knowledge work in the 21st century as physical health was for physical labor in the past. Creativity, ingenuity, insight, brilliance, planning, analysis, and other executive functions are often the cognitive cornerstones of breakthrough **value creation** by entrepreneurs.”

More specifically, according to the [World Economic Forum](#), the **total lost output** of both capital and labor due to mental health issues on a global basis is projected to be **more than \$16 trillion** between 2011 and 2030.

Conversely, the benefit of investing in mental health treatment of depression and anxiety disorders is also clear. There is a positive benefit cost ratio on both an economic and value of health returns in labor force outcomes for such treatment. According to a review of studies published in the [Lancet](#), there is a **\$4 return for every \$1 invested** in treating mental health issues.

How CWC Coaching & Therapy Can Help Accelerator Programs

CWC provides therapy and entrepreneurial counseling to improve founders' mental health and performance, all through a cultural competency lens. We have been working with professionals for over a decade, and are proud to have been selected to provide therapy services for the [Google for Startups](#) Program for five years. In addition, Google has asked us to provide mental health support for their Founders Academy.

Some of the top issues we address with founders include topics such as **loneliness, depression, anxiety, ADHD, stress management, work-life integration, anger management, trauma**, as well as balancing support for their businesses while also supporting their families, both emotionally and financially.

In addition to addressing specific issues, we also explore **broad, underlying issues** that may be affecting a founder's mental health.

We create a psychological safe place for founders to focus on and prioritize their well-being in both their professional and personal lives.

We also include topics such as communication strategies, both across teams as well as with leadership. Important sub-topics include navigating differing work styles, cultural conflict resolution (direct feedback vs addressing issues via 3rd parties), sensitivity to speaking up among large groups or teams, being assertive vs perception of being aggressive, fear of risk-taking or standing out from peers, and repairing co-worker relationships.



Who We Are

CWC Coaching & Therapy is a premium executive leadership service that focuses on confidential therapeutic approaches for the career professional to bring alignment between individual purpose and the larger goals of the

entrepreneur's organization. Our licensed therapists and certified coaches have worked with corporations such as the **Coca-Cola Company, Google, Lenovo** and **CARE**, with a particular focus on Founders.



We spend time with each individual to connect their background and circumstances to the manner in which these factors surface in their output with regards to their workstyle and ethic.

CWC provides a therapeutic framework to support founders in order to help alleviate the mental stresses associated with being an entrepreneur while coaching for leadership performance.

In addition to doing one on one coaching and therapy, we also offer executive leadership workshops. These group sessions include topics such as:

- ▶ Anxiety / Stress Management
- ▶ Work / Life Integration
- ▶ Time Management / Productivity / Delegation
- ▶ What Type of Entrepreneur Are You?
- ▶ Psychological Safety In the Workplace
- ▶ Communication Tools and Strategies for Managing Your Team
- ▶ Strategies for Managing ADHD
- ▶ Your Personal Life: Dating, Love and Partnership for the Entrepreneur
- ▶ Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI personality test)



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