CA Black Health Network

Coping and Resiliency:
Healing Our Families and Strengthening Our Village

January 22, 2014 - 10AM to Noon (PST)

Building healthy communities now and for the future.
Introductions of Presenters

Wenonah Valentine, MBA
African American Series Webinar Facilitator
Founder and Executive Director
iDREAM for Racial Health Equity

Tamittra Clark, PsyD
Professional Psychologist
Social services
Foster care
Infant Mental Health Consultant

Brandon Parks, LMFT
Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
Pastor, Frontline Youth Ministry
Bible Enrichment Fellowship International Church
Wenonah Valentine, MBA
Facilitator

Healing Our Families:
A New Generation Responds
to Mental Health and Wholeness
What Are Health Disparities?

Health disparities are gaps in the quality of health and health care that mirror differences in socioeconomic status, racial and ethnic background, and education levels.

These disparities may stem from many factors, including:

- accessibility of health care
- increased risk of disease from occupational exposure
- increased risk of disease from underlying genetic, ethnic, or families

Source: National Center for Biotechnology Information, U.S. National Library of Medicine 8600 Rockville Pike, Bethesda MD, 20894 USA

Building healthy communities now and for the future.
Mental illness is a medical condition that disrupts a person’s thinking, feeling, mood, or their ability to relate to others and their daily functioning.

Mental illness is:

• A health condition, much like heart diseases or diabetes.
• No one’s fault - not the persons nor the family’s.
• An illness that can affect persons of any race, religion or socio-economic status.

Source: Los Angeles Department of Mental Health
Sadness or Depression

Sad

Everyone sometimes feels sad, but these feelings usually pass after a few days.

Depression

- Feeling sad or empty
- Feeling hopeless, irritable, anxious or guilty
- Not being able to concentrate or remember details
Black Pain...symptoms of inner sorrow

Black Pain identifies emotional pain - which uniquely and profoundly affects the Black experience - as the root lashing out through:

- Desperate acts of crime
- Violence
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Eating disorders
- Workaholism
- Addiction to shopping, gambling and sex.
How to Focus in the Age of Distraction

Creating Rituals/Habits

Managing Your Space

Take a Digital Technology Detox

How to Work

Spend 10 mins each day decluttering
Clear away all distractions
Use a timer
Work in focused bursts
Area with no internet

Managing Email

Morning Quiet
Go for a walk
30 min
Read morning pages
Write

Break
50 minutes of work
20 minutes break
Use only a notepad and pen

Disconnection times
8am-10am
Turn off email alerts
Check email at set points in the day
2-3 times per day

First thing in the morning
What worked?
What will I focus on tomorrow?
At the end of the day
What can be improved?

What are the 3 most important things to do today?

Don't check your email until you get the task complete

Help for Addicts

Blocker programs
Writing programs
Typewriter
Write room

Freedom

Locks you out of the internet
Locks you out of specific sites

Self-control

Saying no to...
No
Do 1 thing
Say yes to...
Yes

Creating

Spending time with family & friends
Reading a book

Creating

Saying yes to...

Facebook
Email
Twitter
Email

Take Time to Reflect and Review

First thing in the morning

2

What will I focus on tomorrow?

At the end of the day

What can be improved?

Don't check your email until you get the task complete

What are the 3 most important things to do today?
Unique Focus on Mental Health

Poverty level affects mental health status. African Americans living below the poverty level are 3 times more likely to report psychological distress.

African Americans are 20% more likely to report having serious psychological distress than Non-Hispanic Whites.

Non-Hispanic Whites are more than twice as likely to receive antidepressant prescription treatments as are Non-Hispanic Blacks.

Source: 2011 National Healthcare Disparities Report

Building healthy communities now and for the future.
Challenge for our community
First Responders
- Grief and loss
- Homelessness
- Food Distribution
- Parenting Classes
- Support Groups
- Child Development

Faith Communities

The spiritual communities are essential to mental wellness.
“All of these indicators point to neighborhoods with a significantly higher need for human services. Nonetheless, no established nonprofit human services exist in these neighborhoods.

To be sure, these neighborhoods may have congregations that provide emergency services such as food and clothing or offer emotional support. Although these are important community institutions, we know from extant research that congregations are a poor substitute for nonprofit human services.

A majority of the congregations, especially in poor neighborhoods, are too small and lack the capacity and the resources to offer more than sporadic and elemental support. (Cnaan and Boddie, 2002; Chaves, 1999).
Examples: Christian Faith Community As a First Responder
Education: 125 year history
Oldest Catholic girls high school in Los Angeles
Glovioell Rowland, PhD, a developmental psychologist, ordained pastor and USC postdoc in the Keck School’s Department of Preventive Medicine, quoted Scripture in an interview and discussion around health disparities.
https://postdocs.usc.edu/featured-postdocs/featured-postdocs-glovioell-rowland/

“Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.”
3 John 2 (New King James Version)
Social Support: Self-help and outreach

Parenting Classes

Lifestyle Study Groups

Where there is no vision, the people perish. Proverbs 29:18
Call-to-Action: Christian Faith Community
New Voices: A Changing of the Guard

- Building community in the 21st Century **demands** that we create dialogues of substance.

- Rising professionals, community health advocates and millennial leaders are voices to eliminate health disparities and act as:
  - **TRANSLATERS** for public health intervention and faith assets
  - **BRIDGE-BUILDERS** for intergenerational relationships
  - **CHAMPIONS** for physical health, mental wellness and spiritual wholeness
“A Powerful Tribe of Overcomers”

“We have endured time, heat and pressure. We have passed the test of difficult times. We have been purged in the heat of oppression. God has allowed the pressures of our painful history to bring to the surface the best of who we are. Your very existence in this world is a testimony that you belong to a powerful tribe of overcomers.” page 9
Faith Assets: Language of Health Advocacy

- Transform
- Overcome
- Victor
- Love
- Warrior
- Renew
- Deliverance
- Neighbor
- Brother
- Compassion
- Sister
- Conqueror
Learning Objectives

1. To increase participant’s knowledge related to the historical and present day barriers experienced by the African American community and its impact on their perspective and use of mental health services.

2. To provide an understanding of the resiliency of the African American population, specifically the use of spirituality as a coping strategy and mechanism

3. To gain an understanding of a culturally competent and empathetic approach in addressing the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs of the African American community.
Coping and Resilience: A Christian Faith Perspective
The days of coming to church for personal salvation alone are over. Today we seek not only personal salvation but social salvation as well. If we don't change the community, the community will corrupt the individual.

— Reverend Cecil "Chip" Murray
National Journal of Sociology, 1994
Although these are important community institutions, we know from extant research that congregations are a poor substitute for nonprofit human services.

From: Spread Thin: Human Services Organizations in Poor Neighborhoods
Reasons for Lack of Utilization

• Lack of congruence between racial and ethic make up of providers
• Lack of access...poverty, transportation, etc.
• Feelings are normal
• Misdiagnosis/inappropriate treatment
• Signs of weakness
• Taboo within the culture
  • Psychotherapy vs. counseling
A visible mark of SHAME, DISGRACE, or DISAPPROVAL of being shunned or rejected by others, further debilitates and desensitizes the AA culture from using mental health systems.

The stigma associated with AA, is linked to the community and its strongest support system, the CHURCH.
STIGMA

- Condition is normal
- Result in being viewed as weak or dangerous
- Incurable and should be kept hidden
- Culturally unacceptable to seek help outside
- That’s what the church is for
Statistics show that 85% of the AA community rely on the church and spirituality to overcome issues in personal life.

The AA community is deeply rooted in spiritual and religious values and morals.

1. No such belief in Mental Illness
2. Person has demons
3. Just pray about it (“Take your burdens to the Lord and leave them there”)
Generational Trauma

Disrupted Family Systems

Self Hatred & Internalized Oppression

Mistrust of Systems

Slavery & Historical Oppression
Self Hatred/Internalized Oppression

FOR A FAIR SELECTION EVERYBODY HAS TO TAKE THE SAME EXAM: PLEASE CLIMB THAT TREE
In 2008, young black men (ages 18-34) were at least six times more likely to be incarcerated than young white men, according to a recent analysis by Becky Pettit, a University of Washington sociologist.
Generational Trauma
Stress

Low Socioeconomic Status

Poor Social Support

Interpersonal Prejudice and Discrimination

STRESS
Coping
Lazarus & Folkman (1984) define coping as “the constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as stressful or exceeding the individuals resources.”
• Distracting themselves (get involved in other activities, such as cooking, shopping, etc.)

• “THE CHURCH”—sing in choir, Usher Board, Mother’s Board, Pastor’s Aide, Missionary Board, Praise Dance, etc.
WOMEN

- Meditating, use of positive affirmations (Biblical and other)
- Social networking
- Relaxation techniques
Men

- Anger: “The Angry Black Man,” aggression
- Physical Outlets: sports/athletics, working out
- Creating culture: hip hop, rap, the barbershop
- Gangs
- Drugs and alcohol
- Sex: Masculinity, self esteem
Historical Coping Skills
MENTAL HEALTH AND SPIRITUALITY

- Prayer
- Worship
- Faith
- Sacred Scripture
- Meditation
MENTAL HEALTH AND SPIRITUALITY

- Support Groups
- Grief and Loss
- Addiction
- Recovery
- Sobriety
- Parenting
- Mentoring

God grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can, and Wisdom to know the difference.
COMMUNITY AND SPIRITUALITY

• Political and Social Justice
• Outreaching to the community
• Advocating for services
• Meeting the needs of the community
Resilience
Psychological resilience is defined as an individual's tendency to cope with stress and adversity. This coping may result in the individual's "bounce back" to a previous state of normal functioning or simply not showing negative effects. Most commonly understood as a process, and not a trait of an individual.
Language of the Church

Bound
Oppressed
Trials & Tribulation
Language of the Church

Delivered

Liberty

Set Free
Presenters Dialogue

Strengthening Our Village
Discussion #1

• What is cultural competence?
• What does it imply?
• Why are cultural relevance and cultural respect a better fit for approaching African descended communities?

Explain the importance of cultural relevance and respect for spiritual communities.

For today’s dialogue, specifically respond to the Christian faith communities.
Discussion #2

Explain the different opportunities available for emotional health and wellness:

- Affirmations
- Social support
- Counseling
- Group counseling
- Psychotherapy

How does prayer, Bible meditation and pastoral counseling fit in?
Collaborative Partner

Wenonah Valentine, MBA, CBHN Consultant

wvalentine@idreamnow.org
Telephone: (213) 458-9706

www.idreamnow.org
Launch updates mid-January 2014

A leadership, training and development network dedicated to equipping a pipeline of change agents and addressing the complex health issues unique to African American mothers and babies throughout the life course. iDREAM for Racial Health Equity is a project of Community Partners®.
Thank You for Your Participation

Connect with CBHN

www.cablackhealthnetwork.org
Telephone 916-333-0613

Building healthy communities now and for the future.
Bonus Reference Materials

Note: These additional reference materials are provided for your future use and may not be discussed during the webinar.
References

3. Health Indicators for Women in Los Angeles County - County of Los Angeles Public Health, 2013


Essential Reading: From iDREAM for Racial Health Equity