HONORING CALIFORNIA’S DIVERSITY: A CALL TO ACTION
Cultural Competence Summit
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THE STEREOTYPING OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN’S TRAUMA, PAIN AND LOSS
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The Stereotyping of African American Women’s Trauma, Pain and Loss

PRESENTATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL
This workshop will focus on several issues related to mental health and wellness of African American/Black women and the impact that race, gender and socioeconomic status has on this population.

OBJECTIVES
Participants will be able to:

- Increase their knowledge about the impact of historical and intergenerational trauma in the lives of Black women.
- List three stressors that induce trauma in the lives of African American women.
- Identify three effective community defined practices for this population that can be used to improve mental wellness.
“If you ask me what I came into this life to do, I will tell you: I came to live out loud.”

Emile Zola

EXERCISE

Table Talk - Sister Circle
Introduce yourself and tell why you selected this workshop and what you want to get out of it.
The Stereotyping of African American Women’s Trauma, Pain and Loss

Making White People and Other People of Color Feel Comfortable and Safe...

IS NOT YOUR JOB!!!
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BLACK & AFRICAN AMERICAN MENTAL HEALTH

13.2% of the U.S. population identifies as Black or African American.

Of those, over 16% had a diagnosable mental illness in the past year.

That is over 6.8 million people.

MORE people than the populations of Chicago, Houston, and Philadelphia combined.

SOURCES
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HISTORICAL AND INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA

The effects of historical and intergenerational trauma on Black Women.

- Poetic Reading - A Dialogue Between a Black Man and a Black Woman at the Onset of Slavery
- Video - Ain’t I A Woman?

? Alfre Woodard reads Sojourner Truth - Copy.webm
HISTORICAL AND INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA

- Historical adversity, which includes slavery, sharecropping, Jim Crow Laws and race-based exclusion from health, educational, social and economic resources, translates into socioeconomic disparities experienced by African Americans today.

- Despite progress made over the years, racism continues to have an impact on the mental health of Black/African Americans. *Negative stereotypes and attitudes of overt rejection have decreased*, but continue to occur with measurable, adverse consequences.

- Historical and contemporary instances of negative treatment have led to a mistrust of authorities, many of whom are not seen as having the best interests of Black/African Americans in mind; especially Black Women.

- **Socioeconomic status, in turn, is linked to mental health:** People who are impoverished, homeless, incarcerated or have substance abuse problems are at higher risk for poor mental health.

*(Black & African American Communities and Mental Health - https://www.printfriendly.com/p/g/bjRKEF)*
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MYTHS AND LANGUAGE OF INFERIORITY
Welfare Queen; Hood Rat and Promiscuous
(Ignorant; Lazy; Loud and Vulgar)
NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES
The Stereotyping of African American Women’s Trauma, Pain and Loss

**MYTHS AND LANGUAGE OF INFERIORITY**

Welfare Queen; Hood Rat and Promiscuous (Ignorant; Lazy; Loud and Vulgar ???)
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About $59 billion is spent on traditional social welfare programs. $92 billion is spent on corporate subsidies. So, the government spent nearly 50% more on corporate welfare than it did on food stamps and housing assistance in 2006. *Think By The Numbers

We’ve FINALLY found Reagan’s Welfare Queen!

...His name is Donald Trump. Trump pays NO TAXES, yet benefits from American laws, subsidies, and taxpayers

The biggest welfare queen in America.
“MAMMIES, JEZEBELS, SAPPHIRE…”

BLACK WOMEN IN AMERICA HAVE LONG BEEN DOGGED BY NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES, ROOTED IN A HISTORY OF RACISM AND SLAVERY.

ROOT Article - Comedian Michael Rapaport - He was in a John Singleton movie and hates Trump...Think he has a Black Card...In an interview he told Kenya Moore that her feet was ashy and that she wanted to be with him...She handled him. He complained about black people celebrating Janet during the Super Bowl and then told a Janet Fan - “You need a hot comb” and “You weave wearing trick”. (And, black people telling the offended “lighten up.”)

“As Black Women lots of times your sense of self, your sense of worth feels violated and invaded upon from the outside world.”

Group Discussion - What do you do to combat the attacks from the outside world and sometimes from the inside world too!
In the United States, discrimination based on skin tone dates back to the chattel system of slavery, where skin color was often used as the basis for the division of labor (Hunter, 2002). These divisions promoted the notion that darker-skinned Blacks were inferior, evidenced by the fact that lighter Blacks were considered more attractive, intelligent, and trustworthy by their White masters.

These biases are particularly salient for African American women, as the American ideal of beauty is primarily Eurocentric.
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INFERIORITY COMPLEX

White Culture has taken the Power to Defined All Things Good As White and All Things White as Good! (All Things Black Are Usually Bad)
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INFERIORITY COMPLEX

Internalized oppression in Black Women can manifest due to white-defined beauty of standards and the damaging effects of it on African-American Women.

African American women's responses and reactions to enforced standards of beauty in Western Culture:

- Rejection
- Alienation
- Self-hatred
- Hatred of those that Look like Them
- And, Self-Destruction - They destroy their hair, skin, facial features, and even our minds.

*FOR EVERY NEGATIVE COMMENT IT TAKES (7) POSITIVE COMMENTS TO ERASE THE NEGATIVE*
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I AM BLACK
BUT
I AM NOT ANGRY

DAMAGE CONTROL: People Try To Paint Me As 'Some Angry Black Woman'
SOMETIMES...WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE ANGRY!
Girls and women of color, like Serena Williams, learned a long time ago that rules will rarely bend for them, in sports or in life; especially for Black girls and women.

In the case of her match with Osaka on Saturday, Williams’ actions, the way she broke that racket, the way she demanded respect from the umpire, all serve to remind people of all the times she was forced to smile and grit her teeth at arbitrary clothing regulations, or frequent random drug test, or racist slurs and boos from certain tennis audiences.
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SOMETIMES...WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE ANGRY...BUT, RAGE USUALLY REQUIRES MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT!

“TO BE A NEGRO IN THIS COUNTRY AND TO BE RELATIVELY CONSCIOUS IS TO BE IN A RAGE ALMOST ALL THE TIME.” JAMES BALDWIN
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EXAMINATION INTO THE EMOTIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN AND THE WORLDVIEW OF THEM AS RUDE, INARTICULATE AND AGGRESSIVE.

Article: How White Women Use Strategic Tears to Silence Women of Color

 LINK - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BlrQSz85Ml8

Notice it is the white woman – Jeanne Beker – who first interrupts the black woman – Jully Black – who takes the interruption in her stride. Black continues to speak passionately and confidently, which Beker interprets as a personal attack on her even though Black is clearly talking in general terms. Beker then attempts to shut Black down by essentially branding her a bully.

Had Jully Black not stopped and repeated Jeanne Beker’s words back at her – “Why are you attacking me?” – they would have passed largely unnoticed, just another woman of colour smeared as an aggressor for daring to continue speaking when a white woman wanted her to stop.

It doesn’t usually end this way. “White women tears are especially potent ... because they are attached to the symbol of femininity,” Ajayi explains. “These tears are pouring out from the eyes of the one chosen to be the prototype of womanhood; the woman who has been painted as helpless against the whims of the world. The one who gets the most protection in a world that does a sh...ty job overall of cherishing women.”
NEGATIVE STEREOTYPING OF BLACK WOMEN DEGRADES AND SUPPRESSES THEIR GROWTH AND CONTRIBUTES TO MENTAL ILLNESS.

EXERCISE - Dyad Discussion

- How are Black Women responding?
- How should they respond?
- What are their responsibilities?
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CONSTANT STRESS

WE CODE-SWITCH BETWEEN HOME AND WORK, OR CORPORATE SPACES AND COMMUNAL SPACES.

Things We Do:

- Change Our Voice - Don’t Sound Black and Talk Low
- Change Our Body - Appear Small and Less Curvy
- Change Our Hair - Alter it with Chemicals and with Heat
- Change Our Clothes - No Ghetto Clothing or Ethnic Wear
- Change Our History - Most Importantly Erase Everything Out of Our Mind Prior to 1978
This book discusses why *we all* have been *socialized* to hate Black women. The ‘*We*’ in *Why We Hate Black Women* consists of all races of people, the media, Hip Hop culture and much more. As this book reveals, we have all contributed towards the hatred of Black women!
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Why We Hate Black Women - Hasani Pettiford

I often find it humorous that no matter where I travel everyone claims to love Black women, especially Black men. Whether I am speaking on a college campus, sitting in a television studio or being interviewed on the radio, Black men, in particular, adamantly say “I don’t hate Black women! I love Black women!” First, I find it amusing that everyone automatically assumes that I’m exclusively talking about Black men in the title of the book. Second, if Black women are so undeniably loved and adored, why don’t the facts bear it out?

If Black women as a group are loved, why are so many Black women alone? Why have they been abused, abandoned, betrayed, lied to, cheated on, devalued and hated for over 390 years? Why is it that 42.3 percent of Black women have never been married in comparison to 23 percent of White women? Why are over 70 percent of all Black households in this country run by single-parent mothers?

Why is homicide at the hands of a current or former intimate partner the number one killer of African-American women ages 15 to 34 (Africana Voices Against Violence, Tufts University, Statistics)? Why are Black women 15 times more likely than White women to be infected with the H.I.V. virus (Center For Disease Control)? Why are Black women the most unpartnered group in America and perhaps the world? Where’s all the love?
Unfortunately, domestic violence and sexual abuse are all too familiar to women in the Black community. The stories are plentiful but they are rarely told.

The subject of sexual abuse, incest, rape, statutory rape and sexual assault are very ugly and hush hush topics amongst African-Americans. So many young women have been forced to suffer in silence.

“THE CRUELEST LIES ARE OFTEN TOLD IN SILENCE.”
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“BEING A STRONG BLACK WOMAN IS KILLING US SOFTLY” -

Unknown Poet


Roberta Flack

“Killing Me Softly With His Song Strumming my pain with his fingers Singing my life with his words Killing me softly with his song Killing me softly with his song Telling my whole life with his words Killing me softly with his song”

Group Question:
Are Black Women Too Strong For Their Own Good? (Pros & Cons)
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**MOTHERS OF THE MOVEMENT**

Is a group of women whose African American children have been killed by the police or by gun violence.

Black Women who are Mothers, Wives, Sisters, Daughters, Nieces, Cousins and Grandmothers Experience Trauma, Pain and Loss in their Lives Continuously.
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TRAUMA, PAIN AND LOSS...

- Michael Brown was shot to death by a white police officer in Ferguson and his body left in the street for hours
- Trayvon Martin, who was shot by neighborhood watch volunteer, George Zimmerman
- Oscar Grant, killed on New Years Eve by BART Police
- Eric Garner died after being placed in a chokehold by NYPD officers, for selling loose cigarettes
- Dontre Hamilton, 31, was fatally shot 14 times by a police officer in a Milwaukee park
- John Crawford, 22, was shot and killed by a police officer at a Walmart, he was holding a BB gun
- Ezell Ford, a 25-year-old mentally ill man, was shot three times, including once in the back, by a white police officer.
- Dante Parker, a 36-year-old father of five, died in police custody after being repeatedly stunned by a Taser in San Bernardino County.
- Tanisha Anderson, 37, died after officers in Cleveland allegedly slammed her head on the pavement while taking her into custody.
- Akai Gurley, 28, was shot and killed by a police officer while walking in a dimly lit New York City public housing stairwell with his girlfriend.
- Tamir Rice, 12, was shot and killed by Cleveland police after officers mistook his toy gun for a real weapon.
- Rumain Brisbon, 34, was shot and killed by a Phoenix police officer who mistook a pill bottle for a weapon.
- Jerame Reid, 36, was shot and killed by police officers in Bridgeton, New Jersey.
- Tony Robinson, 19, was shot and killed by a Madison police officer who was responding to reports of someone disrupting traffic.
- Walter Scott, 50, was shot by a police officer while running away from a traffic stop for a broken taillight.
- Freddie Gray, 25, died of a spinal cord injury a week after he was arrested by Baltimore police.
- Sandra Bland, an African-American woman arrested at a traffic stop in Texas who was later found dead in her cell.

And, All of the other countless lives that have been wrongfully taken or destroyed...Just because they were BLACK!
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COMMUNITY-DEFINED PRACTICES

DR. JOSEPH L. WHITE

SEVEN PSYCHOLOGICAL STRENGTHS OF AFRICAN AMERICANS:

Improvisation
Resilience
Connectedness To Others
Spirituality
Emotional Vitality
Gallows Humor
Healthy Suspicion Of You Know Who!
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SELF-CARE

► Work-Life Balance
► What Matters Most To You?
► Learn to Say No - Utilize Your Calendar
► Align Your Work and Your Life’s Purpose (If you’re lucky to align both)
► Me Time
► Spirituality - Pray, Meditate, Get in Touch with Nature
► Positive Daily Affirmations
► And, When All Else Fails, Have a Good Cry...It Acts as a Pressure Release!

(I CARE DOCUMENT: COMPLETE SELF-CARE WORKSHEET)
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BLACK WOMEN RECLAIMING THEIR TIME!

How Can You Reclaim Your Time?
“To be nobody but yourself in a world which is doing its best day and night to make you like everybody else means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight and never stop fighting.”

E.E. Cummings
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Still I Rise - By Maya Angelou

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4UjEZdKiTVo

PEACE!