

## Trilogy of Trauma - Epilogue: Black Men ~ Suffering in Silence

*“If you are silent about your pain, they’ll kill you and say you enjoyed it.” Zora Neale Hurston*

On Saturday, June 15, 2019, the BMHA held its Trilogy of Trauma session for Black men. Presenters with backgrounds in clinical psychology, family therapy, mental health counseling and transformational healing techniques, delivered special, unique life-affirming and healing messages to the community of Black men that were present at the session. It was truly one of those critical and safe places where Black men could reflect, process some of their emotional feelings and learn how to best address their mental health and well-being.

The men present at the session realized that it doesn’t make a man weak to acknowledge the fears he has about providing for his family, or the anxieties he has about existing in a world in which Black men are devalued...it’s simply realistic. It became very clear from the conversation that Black men can work through these fears and worries by talking with other men, whether they are friends, fathers, siblings, **therapists**, or soon-to-be new friends in group therapy or other supportive spaces. These are spaces where we can heal. Although they require a bit of risk of exposing one’s emotional vulnerabilities, it is well worth it, because on the other side of that risk is less anxiety, less depression, and less stress.

There was a call from the men present, and from many other Black men throughout the City, for more sessions and more healing opportunities for Black men. The BMHA is giving serious consideration as to what should come next to invest in and support safe spaces that would allow Black men to open-up, unpack and address the influences of historical/contemporary trauma, toxic stress, chronic depression, thoughts of hyper-masculinity, and overwhelming exposure to violence that negatively affects their mental health and psychological well-being.

Following, are session-related, but also post-session thoughts, tips, tools and resources that we hope will be of benefit to those Black men that no longer wish to suppress the pain and continue to suffer in silence.

# For Black Men That Have Been Told to “Man up” -Even Through Their Darkest Times

By: Richard A. Rowe, BMHA Project Consultant

We must tell each other as Black men how much we mean to each other. There is no weakness in that. Only strength, self-care, self-affirmation, self-preservation, and power. Given what we've been through, and are going through, our mental health and well-being must become a top priority.

So, Black men, we encourage each of you to hold onto the following:

1. **Before you can love and heal others, you must love and heal yourself.**
2. **Given what we've been through and given our pain, it's okay to cry. In fact, we should “holla” and scream! Let's stop suffering in silence. Dismantling structural racism is exhausting and can be life-threatening.**
3. **You/we are here for a reason. Find your “WHY” and the “WAY” will follow. Our women and children are depending on us to love, value and protect them 24/7/365!**
4. **Read more and take care of yourself as if your life depends on it, because it does.**
5. Showing and sharing your emotions isn't a sign of weakness. Paying attention to how we feel helps us become more in tune with our mental state of being. Relating to your emotions is not synonymous with being weak or inferior,
6. **Your mental health matters.** You can't “work yourself” out of your mind. Emotional trauma is very real and worthy of our time. We've been through a lot. You have the right to seek and receive therapy. And, even though our women and families care about us, **OUR MENTAL HEALTH IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY!**
7. Never consider giving up or giving in! **Your life is precious, and you deserve to live – so we must dream and thrive** — despite the odds.
8. **You are a descendent of kings.** We need all Black men and young Black men on deck to help build, maintain and protect our kingdom. Don't opt out, especially not now.
9. **“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”**  
James Baldwin
10. **"Someday" is TODAY.** Write that book, do a “TED Talk”. Write that Op-Ed piece. Tell another Black man, a Black woman and a Black child/youth that you love them - often and always.

## **Organizations in Baltimore City that are Committed to Black men and Young Black men**

Joe Jones  
Center for Urban Families  
(410) 367-5691  
jjones@cfuf.org

Darryl Green  
Deep Forgiveness  
(443) 739-3260  
info@deepforgiveness.com

Cameron Miles  
Mentoring Males in the Hood  
410-852-8013  
cmilesmmth@gmail.com

Charles Smith  
Choo Smith Youth Empowerment  
(443) 863-7474  
info@chooyouth.org

Changa Bell  
The Black Male Yoga Initiative  
Tel: 443-597-7217  
chilechanga@gmail.com

Damion Cooper  
Project Pneuma  
443-851-1697  
theprojectpneuma@gmail.com

Fanon Hill  
Strong Art, Strong Youth: Youth  
Resiliency Institute  
fanon@youthresiliencyinstitute.org

One Hundred Black Men, Inc.  
4413 Liberty Heights Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21207  
Email: net100md@aol.com  
410-664-6726

Andre Turner  
Boys Coming of Age (BOAC)  
Manhood Development and Training  
(410) 262-8471  
turnerdre@aol.com

“If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” --**African Prover**

## Important Web Sites for Black Men

### Local

**Black Male Yoga Initiative**

**Black Mental Health Alliance**

**Center for Urban Families**

**Dare To Be King**

**What Ever It Takes Black Men**

[www.bmyi.org](http://www.bmyi.org)

[www.blackmentalhealth.com](http://www.blackmentalhealth.com)

[www.cufu.org](http://www.cufu.org)

[www.daretobeking.net](http://www.daretobeking.net)

[www.whateverittakesblackmen.com](http://www.whateverittakesblackmen.com)

### National

**African American Images**

**Black Male Achievement**

**Black Men's Health Project**

**Black Men's Health Initiative**

**Black Doctor**

**Black Fatherhood Project**

**Concerned Black Men**

**Fatherhood**

**Office of Minority Health**

**Schott Foundation**

**State of Black America**

**Third World Press Foundation**

**100 Black Men**

[www.africanamericanimages.com](http://www.africanamericanimages.com)

[www.blackmaleachievement.org](http://www.blackmaleachievement.org)

[www.blackmenshealthproject.org](http://www.blackmenshealthproject.org)

[www.bmhi.org](http://www.bmhi.org)

[www.blackdoctor.org](http://www.blackdoctor.org)

[www.blackfatherhoodproject.com](http://www.blackfatherhoodproject.com)

[www.cbmnational.org](http://www.cbmnational.org)

[www.fatherhood.gov](http://www.fatherhood.gov)

[www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov](http://www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov)

[www.schottfoundation.org](http://www.schottfoundation.org)

[www.soba.iamempowered.com](http://www.soba.iamempowered.com)

[www.thirdworldpressfoundation.org](http://www.thirdworldpressfoundation.org)

[www.100blackmen.org](http://www.100blackmen.org)

## Online Resources

American Psychiatric Association [www.healthyminds.org](http://www.healthyminds.org)

Black Psychiatrists of America [www.bpainc.org](http://www.bpainc.org)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [www.samhsa.gov/index.aspx](http://www.samhsa.gov/index.aspx)

National Association of Black Social Workers [www.nabsw.org/mserver](http://www.nabsw.org/mserver)

National Institute of Mental Health [www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/index.shtml](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/index.shtml)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

The Association of Black Psychologists [www.abpsi.org](http://www.abpsi.org)

Black Mental Health Alliance [www.blackmentalhealth.com](http://www.blackmentalhealth.com)

National Alliance on Mental Health [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

Brighter Tomorrows Start Today [www.btstservices.com](http://www.btstservices.com)

## Reading List for Black Men

1. Akbar, Na'im. (1984) *Chains and Images of Psychological Slavery*. Jersey City: New Mind Prod.
2. Akbar, Na'im. (1991) *Visions for Black Men*, Tallahassee, FL: Mind Productions & Associates, Inc.
3. Cress-Welsing, Frances. (1990) *The Isis Papers: The Keys to The Colors*. Third World Press, Chic.
4. Madhubuti, Haki R. (1990) *Black Men: Obsolete, Single, Dangerous?* Chic: Third World Press.
5. Madhubuti, Haki R. (2002) *Tough Notes: A Healing Call for Creating Exceptional Black Men*, Chicago: Third World Press.
6. Porter, Michael, *Kill Them Before They Grow: The Mis-diagnosis of Black boys in Public Schools*, African American Images, Chicago, Ill.
7. Vanzant, Iyanla. (1996) *The Spirit of a Man: A Vision of Transformation For Black Men and the Women Who Love Them*, New York: Harper Collins.
8. Michelle Alexander. (2010, 2012), *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. The New Press, New York
9. Leary, J. D. (2005) *Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing*. Portland Or. Uptowe Press
10. Coates, Ta-Nehisi (2015), *Between the World and Me*. New York: Spiegel Grau / Rando House
11. Williams, Terri. (2008) *Black Pain: It Just looks Like We're Not Hurting*, New York: Scribner
12. Kunjufu, Jawanza, Dr., *Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys*, Vol. I, II, III, & IV. African American Images, Chicago, Ill.
13. Haley, Alex (1964), *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Ballantine Books, NY.
14. Smith, Mychal, D. *Invisible Mn: Got the Whole World Watching* (2016), Nation Books, NY
15. Winbush, Raymond, A. *The Warrior Method* (2001), Harper Collins, NY



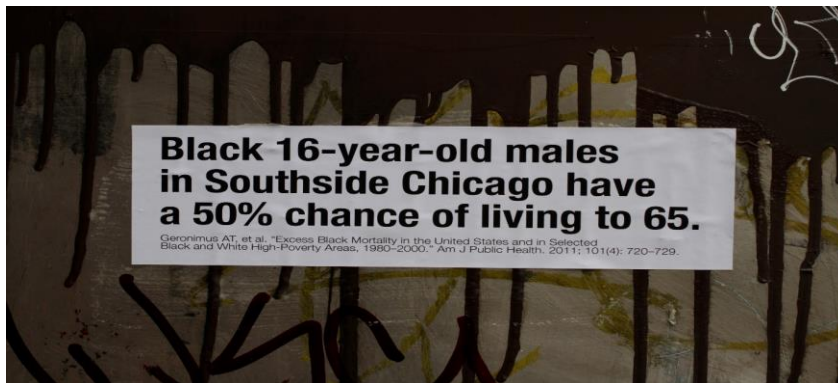
## **Newspaper Headlines That Should Concern All of Us about The Psychological Health Black Men and Boys**

### **Report: Life expectancy for Black men lower than any other group**

Ayana Jones Tribune Staff Writer / Mar 15, 2019

### **Lagging Life Expectancy for Black Men: A Public Health Imperative**

M. Jermaine Bond, PhD and Allen A. Herman, MD, PhD / Am J Public Health. 2016 July;



Am J Public Health . 2011

### **20-Year Gap In Life Expectancy Between Richer, Poorer Areas Of Baltimore**

By Devin Bartolotta July 6, 2017 at 7:36 pm

### **Broken Dreams and Financial Illusions: The Secret Depression of Black Men**

Dr. Marcus Bright, Contributor Scholar and Activist

05/24/2017 07:20 pm ET | Huffington Post

### **1.5 Million Missing Black Men**

By JUSTIN WOLFERS, DAVID LEONHARDT and KEVIN QUEALY APRIL 20, 2015

For every 100 black women not in jail, there are only 83 black men. The remaining men – 1.5 million of them – are, in a sense, missing.

### **Black men/young men and Mental Health: Too Many Black men/boys are suffering in silence.**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is the third cause of death among African-American males between ages 15 and 24, behind homicide and accidents.