

**Community Empowerment
Through Black Men Healing Conference**

JUNE 26, 2015

Metropolitan State University, St. Paul Campus
700 East Seventh Street, St. Paul MN 55106

Relationships Between Black People

**BREAKING THE TRANCE, GETTING BEYOND
BLACK CULTURAL PARALYSIS – OR ELSE**

Presenter: Dr. Cleo Manago

I HOPE TO PROVOKE A SOLUTIONS-BASED, [BLACK]
PROBLEM-SOLVING CONVERSATION WITH YOU TODAY.

- Feel free to interject, ask a clarifying question, or share a disagreement at any time. Yet, you have to rationally explain your disagreement. I encourage dialogue over being just a talking head.
- The methods I will be using throughout the presentation are based on a Black behavioral excellence method I developed called 'Critical Thinking and Cultural Affirmation (CTCA), & [Black] Trauma Deflection'

- We will be entertaining a number of “Why?” questions, and answering them. There will be no rhetorical questions.
- BUT, I ONLY HAVE AN HOUR

Let's get started

THE STAND UP EXERCISE!

Who is Dylan Roof?
What did Dylan Roof do?

Quotes from Dylan Roof's "Black" Friend

- Video excerpt

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gImcyx7dePg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RQgHceuOg4>

- "That he actually did everything he said he was going to do."
- "I don't feel no different today, than I felt about him before he did this stuff."
- "I still love him"

"Many Black people have a classic "battered spouse" relationship with White Supremacy myth. It beats, batters or kills us, "we" keep "forgiving," then going back for more abuse. Afraid to cut the cord.

This young man's circumstance is a tragic consequence of inter-generational Black assimilation, adaptation and resulting anti-Black norms and thinking in the US.

A resolvable dilemma, but not if we keep adapting to White Supremacy myth, instead of identifying and deflecting its impact."

How does what this young Black man said about Dylan Roof make you feel?

WHY?

- Have any of the parents here actually sat down with your child to check-in with and/or explain to them what racism is, how it works and what its purpose is?
- (It is quite possible that the parents of Dylan Roof's "Black" friend did not teach him about racism/White supremacy. Many Black parents don't. The curriculum simply is; Go to school, go to church, get an "education", then get a job. That's basically it. Not much information on racism/White supremacy myth.

- What is the purpose of racism/White Supremacy Myth?
- Why would I call it White Supremacy MYTH?

- Did you comfort your children or each other to deflect trauma or what this massacre implies concerning Black people?
- Did you do the same after highly televised events like the racist murder incidents of Amadou Diallo, Sean Bell, Oscar Grant, Trayvon Martin, Jordan Davis, Renisha McBride, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Freddy Gray.
- What does the Mother Emanuel AME Massacre imply about Black people in the US?
- What does a litany of police murders of Black people in the US imply?

- So, why did some of you (if not all) NOT engage or comfort your children (or each other) in the wake of these high profile attacks on Black life?

- We are conditioned not to attend to each other, but to attend to White folks.
- Have you ever noticed grown Black people whisper the word “White” when referencing or complaining about White racism? Even when no one White is around!
- Many Black people are White racism accommodationist.

We must UNLEARN THIS TRADITION



POP QUIZ:

Has there been an increase in the police murders of Black people?

BREAKING TRAUMA INDUCED BLACK TRANCE STATES

No matter how functional many African-Americans appear, most are in an intergenerational White supremacy induced trauma trance.

When we are silent with each other, or don't attend to each other in the midst of an injury to our psyche or humanity (like the Emmanuel Massacre, racist police murders, Black people in media never loving each other) we become co-conspirators in perpetuating Black trauma and the trance state.

BREAKING TRAUMA INDUCED BLACK TRANCE STATES

- LIKE JEWS WHO ALWAYS REFERENCE OR TALK ABOUT THEIR HOLOCAUST IN GERMANY! (A NEW MOVIE, SERIES OR DOCUMENTARY COMES OUT SEVERAL TIMES YEARLY), BLACK PEOPLE MUST TALK ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST THAT OCCURRED FOR MULTIPLE CENTURIES IN THE US. - THE ENSLAVEMENT OF BLACK-HUMAN BEINGS
- BLACK PEOPLE MUST STOP ABSTRACTING THIS HISTORY. [MORE ON THAT LATER]

DEFINING TRAUMA

- trau·ma
- noun
- 1. 1. a deeply distressing or disturbing experience.

DEFINING TRANCE

- trance
- noun
- 1. a half-conscious state characterized by an absence of response to external stimuli, typically as induced by hypnosis or entered by a medium.

Why MUST Black people address the issue of Black trauma?

“A people that hides or does not recognize its' trauma will and does pass that trauma on to current and future generations.”

- We can and MUST break the cycle.

- The relevance of trauma almost never makes it to “culturally relevant” preventive health curriculum or educational programs targeting Black people. This is why almost 100% of preventable health disparities faced by Black people are rarely meaningfully prevented.
- *Nothing abstract can be resolved or managed. Black Trauma is often abstracted.
- Have you ever wondered why HIV, for example, especially among Black men, has been consistently “off the chain” for over 30 years, but has been reduced for every other group, homosexuals included in those groups?

How do we intervene on Black Psychological trauma?

- Black people must talk about and educate each other about trauma in Black communities, about the historical context, co-factors and origins of Black trauma in the U.S. Just like a child victim of rape who is silenced by power, that silence often has the child blaming themselves. This helps to perpetuate a phenomenon I will address later, that I call NAS Syndrome or Niggas Ain't Shit Syndrome. We Must Talk About Trauma. It is as close to us as our skin.

How do we intervene on Black Psychological trauma?

- One of the most successful groups in the U.S. – again, Jewish identified Whites - are ALWAYS addressing and featuring the “Holocaust” in Germany.
- It can be therapeutic and induce an active self/group preservation consciousness to collectively engage and know your history of oppression. Yet from a position of survival and resilience. Not just an “only-victim” perspective. Black people must unlearn the myth-based inferiority-complex that has us wanting to be so much like White people (and not just Black (or a nigga)) that we develop an artificial sense of Black, historical disassociation.

EXAMPLE of Black historical disassociation

Recently Steve Harvey said, "I Don't Give A Damn About Slavery" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXGgGAoSwaAc>).

Can you imagine a Jewish identified White person saying, "I Don't Give A Damn About the Holocaust?!"

To help resolve or manage BLACK trauma, we must take it out of the abstract, educate and encourage each other to share experiences and emotional responses to life as Black in the U.S. historically and now. We must deeply face and engage the problem and context that produces Black internalized White Supremacy/Black inferiority myth. We have to stop accommodating White folks, including the one that lives in our heads (evict him), that has grown Black folks whispering the word “White” – even in an all-Black setting. This, when justifiably acknowledging or complaining about White racist practices. Why you whispering?

- Black life within the context of a White supremacist environment must be faced and prepared for. When we – and our children – see clear evidence of it in media, we should have conversations, and/or check-ins and comfort each other, especially children. Our silence implies that we agree with White supremacist/racist abuse.
- A people that hides or does not recognize its' trauma will and does pass that trauma on to current and future generations.

(<http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/search-for-guides-reviews-and-reports/?productid=1129&pageaction=displayproduct>)

BEING OR BECOMING A MENTALLY HEALTHY AFRICAN AMERICAN
REQUIRES DELIBERATE INVOLVEMENT IN A PROCESS
of UNLEARNING .

UNLEARNING WHAT?

If we are not actively unlearning, or critically thinking in compensatory ways, we often default into anti-Black behavior or NAS Syndrome.

EMPERICAL PROOF OF THE IMPORTANTANCE OF BLACK PRIDE

According to research published in the *Journal of Child Development*, affirming Blackness for a Black child does more than just give them a personal boost, it helps them academically as well.

The study, conducted by Ming-Te Wang and James P. Huguley of the University of Pittsburg and Harvard University respectively, found that “racial socialization”—teaching kids about their culture and involving them in activities that promote racial pride and connection—helps to offset the discrimination and racial prejudices children face by the outside world.

- Wang explains:

“Our findings challenge the notion that ‘race blindness’ is a universally ideal parenting approach, especially since previous research has shown that racially conscious parenting strategies at either extreme—either ‘race blindness’ or promoting mistrust of other races—are associated with negative outcomes for African American youth.

(<http://thegrio.com/2009/11/17/ethnic-pride-can-improve-mental-health-in-black-children/>)

- We have empirical proof (Which is supposed to be so important, according to funders and lots of White folks) that Black pride, self-love and respect reduces disparity. So, why are Black cultural affirmation and self-conceptual repair strategies - in a racist society - rarely in the curriculum? Why is MBK basically still getting off the ground?

WHY?

- The institutionalized and behavior-ized myth of White supremacy and Black inferiority and Black people having lesser human value, is now practiced within every group in the U.S. including Black people.

DEFLECTING BLACK TRAUMA

- Misdirected - toward each other - Black rage and abuse is rampant— resulting from slavery and consequential anti-Black norms. One of the reasons we hold on to the word “nigga” is a result of misdirected rage and anti-Black norms.
- No other group self-implements an oppressor’s insult as a part of their culture. Centuries of cultural disorientation and deprivation have taking its toll.
- Our survival activity has been to assimilate and adapt, not to critically evaluate the context in which we live while being Black, or deliberately focus on Black self-conceptual repair, healing and transformation. And, institutionalize White supremacy myth, and Black inferiority myth, bolstered by the word nigga, or more recently, thug and ghetto, perpetuate these myths.

WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE

- Have you ever heard anyone say, “Sit your Black ass down”?
- White people do you often recommend to other Whites that they sit their White asses down?
- **Black folks, stop being a Black objectifying White Supremacist, and calling Black folks “niggas.”**

WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE

- Clandestine (sneaky) ways in which the myth of Black inferiority and dehumanization is embedded in society, thus re-embedded by U.S. citizens, and whoever it influences globally.
- The word thug used to describe Black males. The phrase “That’s so ghetto” to describe so-called “low class” behavior. Gangsta, as in gangsta rap. All of the words mean “nigga.”

POP QUIZ:

Which president recently declared war under false pretenses with another country, killing millions of innocents, including thousands of U.S. citizens to avenge his father. Then their vice president assigned their own company \$39.5 billion in related contracts over a decade, to provide housing, meals, water and bathroom services to soldiers, a deal that led to a Justice Department lawsuit over kickbacks?

Now that's thuggish, gangsta, wrong, etc. Yet, it is Black people in the mind's eye of the U.S. when these words are used. Similar to being on the "DL."

Barriers to the “natural” state of Black self-respect

Racism defies logic and Reality:

When you think of pro-Black people or pro-Black activity what kind of ideas, or feelings come to mind?

Generally, what is imagined to be the opposite of pro-Black?

Barriers to the “natural” state of Black self-respect

The Opposite of Pro-Black is Anti-White!

This is not logical!

Black people must learn to practice trauma deflection

- No more “nigga”
- No more shame
- No more Black objectification

How do you break the trance?

Trance (or numb) states result from normalized, intergenerational, unaddressed trauma around being Black in a brutally White supremacist life and cultural context.

Again: Black people must talk about and educate each other about trauma in Black communities, about the historical context, co-factors and origins of Black trauma in the U.S.

How DON'T you break the trance?

You can't break the trance by silence, abstractions or inducing more trauma (calling each other "niggas", Black-assed, shaming or being abusive). You have to do just the opposite.

POP QUIZ:

Name a Black affirming television personality (someone loving someone Black in their personal life, and/or who positively references Black people or being Black), who has an unscripted or non-teleprompted role or voice during prime-time television?

Who was the last Black person to go “off script” and say what he really felt during prime-time television?

POP QUIZ #2:

Are Asian, Latino and White US citizens racist when being self or group only focused, or community and legacy sufficient?

POP QUIZ #2:

So, why are African American people called radical, anti-White and/or militant if/when we do the same thing?

WEAPON OF MASS DECEPTION



STRATEGIES AND CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS – A REVIEW

- Black people MUST TALK ABOUT THE U.S. (AND DIASPORIC) HOLOCAUST DONE TO BLACK PEOPLE – OFTEN CALLED THE MAAFA
- Black people MUST break the cycle of Black intergenerational trauma and trance states.
- Black people must talk about and educate each other about trauma in Black communities, about the historical context, co-factors and origins of Black trauma in the U.S. Just like a child victim of rape who is silenced by power, that silence often has the child blaming themselves.

STRATEGIES AND CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS – A REVIEW

- Black people Must Talk About Trauma. It is as close to us as our skin.
- Black people must unlearn the myth-based inferiority-complex that has us wanting to be so much like White people (and not just Black - or a nigga) that we develop an artificial sense of Black, historical disassociation.
- Black people must take it out of the abstract, educate and encourage each other to share experiences and emotional responses to life as Black in the U.S. historically and now.

STRATEGIES AND CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS – A REVIEW

- Black people must deeply face and engage the problem and context that produces Black internalized White Supremacy/Black inferiority myth.
- Black people have to stop accommodating White folks, including the one that lives in our heads (evict him), that has grown Black folks whispering the word “White” – even in an all-Black setting - when justifiably acknowledging or complaining about White racist practices.

STRATEGIES AND CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS – A REVIEW

- Black life within the context of a White supremacist environment must be faced and prepared for. When we – and our children – see clear evidence of it in media, we should have conversations, and/or check-ins and comfort each other, especially children. Our silence implies that we agree with White supremacist/racist abuse.
- *Black people must learn to practice trauma deflection.
- No more “nigga”
- No more shame
- No more Black objectification

STRATEGIES AND CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS – A REVIEW

- WHITE PEOPLE CANNOT SELF-CONCEPTUALLY EMPOWER BLACK PEOPLE
- WE HAVE TO FIX US. NOBODY ELSE CAN!!
- Realize White supremacy is a myth
- SEEK HELP: Because of “Obama care” there is no reason now not to seek [Black] mental health or wellness assistance. Seek a Black affirming therapist if you can.

POP QUIZ:

IS IT TRUE THAT BLACK PEOPLE ARE MORE ANTI-HOMOSEXUAL
THAN OTHER GROUPS?

Can Black people have constructive relationships in this context?

Sure. We don't hear about it, but, the U.S. has a number of loving, functional Black families, parents, relationships, fathers, mothers, and inner-clan success. Yet, most Black people eventually endure internalized oppression, anti-Black impulses and attempts at group or Black disassociation. These are encouraged by the society we live in.

Sometimes what looks on the outside like success is Black over-compensatory behavior - to make up for being Black. This is anti-Black motivation!

Can we have power as a people? Absolutely!

Can we be deliberate assets to our people, to youth, to each other?
Absolutely!

Can we practice [BLACK] constructive behavior? Absolutely!
Because it's our nature. We just have to practice critical thinking and cultural affirmation as norms, work on breaking or staying out of the trauma trance, and build support-systems among family or friends to get that done.

Thank you!

Dr. Cleo Manago

CleoManago2.o@gmail.com

202-695-0636