

# *Protect, provide and prepare: Understanding Black fatherhood code for treating Black father clients*

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## *Success for today's session includes -*

- ✓ Learning how Black boys' and men's socializing experiences influence how they envision appropriate fathering;
- ✓ Develop strategies to assist in case conceptualization for Black father clients;
- ✓ Design meaning making activities to assist Black fathers enhance their personal insights as clients



# *Influences on Black Masculinity & Mental Health*

Seven domains where masculinity is performed (Edwards, 2006):

- ✓ work
- ✓ education
- ✓ family
- ✓ sexuality
- ✓ health
- ✓ crime
- ✓ representation

External narratives that become internal scripts for Black boys and men include (Mahalik et al., 2003):

- ✓ The “strong/silent” script
- ✓ The “tough guy” script
- ✓ The “give’em hell” script
- ✓ The “playboy” script

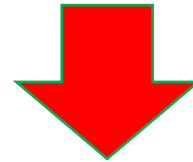


# *Influences on Black Masculinity & Mental Health*



## **Men & Work**

- ✓ Boys and men socialized as financial providers and procreators (Berdahl et al., 2018)
- ✓ Men may prioritize external responsibilities over mental health (Reiner et al., 2019) which can contribute to a higher source of stress.
- ✓ *Work addiction* may also emerge due to the desire of external recognition (Clark et al., 2016).



## **Stress coping strategies (Goodwill et al., 2018):**

1. **Isolated coping** (i.e., coping alone)
2. **Engaged coping** (i.e., coping via actively engaging w/stressors)
3. **Disengaged coping** (i.e., coping via avoiding stressors)





# *Help-Seeking Behavior Among Black Men & Stigma*

Men's help-seeking behavior is determined by:

1. SAFETY to seek help
2. URGENCY of need that requires help

## **Potential barriers:**

- Stigma associated with help-seeking behaviors (Hubach et al, 2019)
- Constructions of Black manhood and masculinity



# *Here's what we know about what it means to become a father...*



- ✓ Phenomenon is cornerstone in adult development (Shezifi, 2004)
- ✓ Can yield more positive health and healthy behavior (Garfield, et. al, 2010)
- ✓ Demands are complex in ways that give us extreme pride and stress (Shezifi, 2004; Chin, et. al 2011)

# *Fathers' Roles in Family & Community*



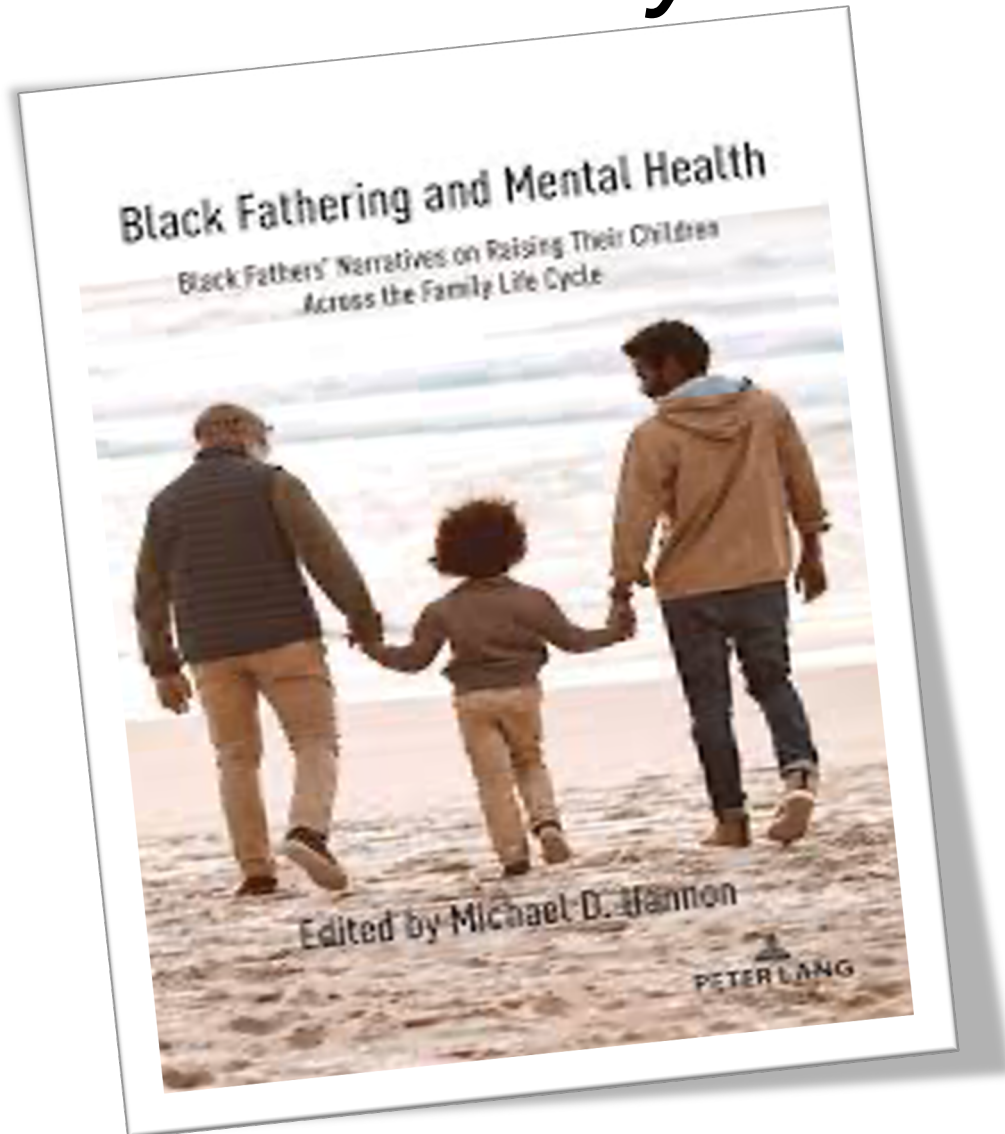
Evolved over time, but generally been:

- ✓ Provider
- ✓ Protector
- ✓ Shared decision-maker
- ✓ Child socializer
- ✓ Supporter of partner/spouse

(Pleck, 1987; Palkovitz, 2002; McAdoo, 1993)



# *This gonna be the first of only two times I mention my book; my word is bond*



All of the contributors :

- ✓ Are professional counselors;
- ✓ Are Black fathers, aspiring fathers, children of Black fathers;
- ✓ Provided readers with their personal experiences with fathering organized across the lifespan;
- ✓ Presented their lessons learned about seeking mental health support (or not);
- ✓ Provided recommendations to mental health professional who may have Black father clients



# *What am I learning about Black fathering and mental health?*

The effectiveness of Black fatherhood is measured by three (3) Ps

- ✓ Protect: What measures must I take – as a Black man/father – to protect my family/children from harm?
- ✓ Provide: What measures must I take – as a Black man and father – to provide for my family/children so they have what they need?
- ✓ Prepare: What measures must I take – as a Black man/father – to prepare my family/children for success in an anti-Black world?



# *What does this look like in practice for our Black father clients?*

## **Clinical/Theoretical Orientations for Consideration**

- ✓ Black psychology theory
  - ✓ *How does my father clients' Blackness intersect with their presenting issues?*
- ✓ Black existential-humanistic theory
  - ✓ *What does it mean to be a Black man and father raising your children at this point in your life and your children's lives?*
- ✓ Relational cultural theory
  - ✓ *What is the extent and nature of my Black father clients' meaningful relationships to support therapeutic change?*



# *What does this look like in practice for our Black father clients?*

## **Interventions for Consideration**

- ✓ Acknowledging clients' *cultural mistrust* and *historical hostility* (Vontress & Epp, 1997; Whaley, 2001)
- ✓ Assessment activities such as RESPECTFUL (D'Andrea & Daniels, 2001),
- ✓ Flexible therapeutic spaces/locations (Addis & Mahalik, 2003; Kiselica, 2011)
- ✓ African-centered group counseling (Harper et al., 2009)
- ✓ Expressive interventions grounded in poetry and hip hop (Washington, 2018; Au, 2005)
- ✓ Post-Traumatic Growth activities (Evans et al., 2016)
- ✓ Culturally appropriate humor (Vereen et al., 2013)
- ✓ Narrative story-telling (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001)



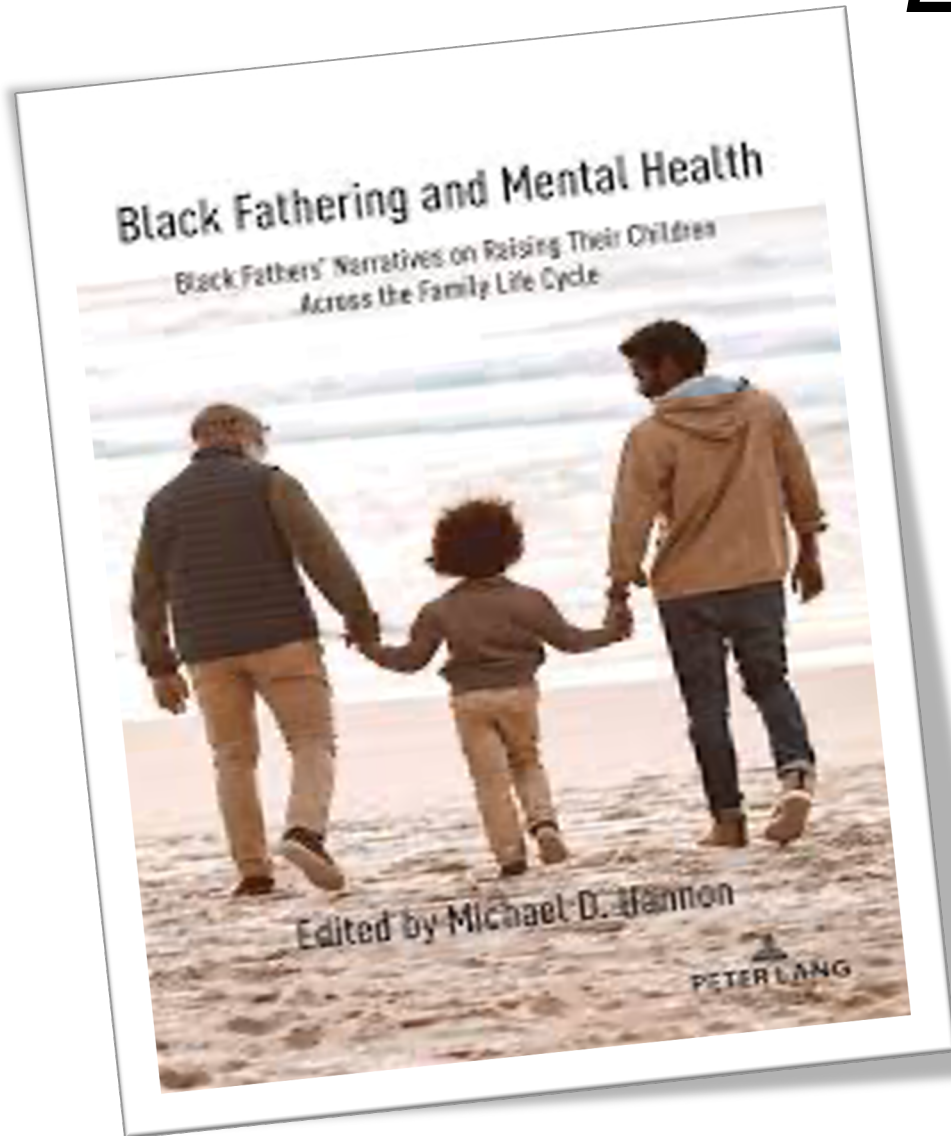
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# Let's Connect



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