

## **Toward a Dignity-based Paradigm for Working with Boys and Young Men of Color**

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**Description:** In this presentation, we introduce our emerging Dignity-based BMOC paradigm. Drawing on research literature from African American history, international human rights development, and caring sciences, we recommend that researchers and practitioners integrate dignity into BMOC work as both a guiding principle and measurable indicator of success. We address the following questions: What is dignity? Why is dignity relevant to Black Male Achievement work in the United States? By presenting a dignity-based paradigm as an alternative means of engaging BMA work, we point to the flaws of dominant theory, policy, and programing approaches that do little to address the experiences of racism, dehumanization, and humiliation that are so pervasive in the lives of boys and young men of color.

### **Presentation Overview**

- A. Arriving at Dignity: Background of Shaping a Cooperative Vision Research Project
- B. Literature Review: Three Scholarly Perspectives on Dignity
- C. Relevance and Application to BMA Work (Focus on Black Males)
  - a. BMA Work as a Legacy of the Black American Fight for Racial Equality
  - b. BMA Work as an International Human Rights and Development Program
  - c. BMA Work as a Caring Science: Interpersonal Approaches to Eliminating Humiliation
- D. Why Dignity? The need for an alternative approach
  - a. Shortcomings of current approaches
  - b. Dignity (FIHD) as a guiding principle
  - c. Dignity (NIHD) as a framework for success indicators
- E. Group Discussion and Questions
- F. (Re)asserting Dignity: Summary of implications & Next Steps
  - a. For Research
  - b. For Policy
  - c. For Practice

**Table 1. Dignity Concepts Explained**

<b>Dignity Concepts</b>	<b>Threats</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<u>Full Inherent Human Dignity</u>		
Dignity as Humanity	<i>Inviolable</i>	-
Dignity as Autonomy	<i>Inviolable</i>	-
Dignity as Rank	<i>Inviolable</i>	-
<u>Non-Inherent Dignity</u>		
Substantive Dignity	Lack of basic human needs required to sustain a basic quality of life in a given society	Food insecurity, housing insecurity, employment insecurity, lack of access to affirming education, lack of public safety, personal safety, exposure to violence, etc.
Relational Dignity	Actions and circumstances that restrict or strip human lives of their relational connections	Geographic containment, community violence (esp. homicide), police violence, exclusionary policing practices, incarceration, solitary confinement, etc.
Dignity of Identity	Mistreatment by others, low sense self-worth, low sense of self-efficacy, feelings of shame, mental health issues	Media distortions, mistreatment, stereotypes, lack of culturally relevant learning opportunities that diminish sense of self-worth, lack of reflections of self in positions of power and authority, etc.
Dignity of Recognition	Lack of access to social and political communities to influence decision-making in the interest of one's communities of interest	Exclusion and non-recognition of social and political groups, systematic dismantling of social and political movements and groups, lack of access to social, political, and economic decision-making bodies, etc.