



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

# MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS: DEVELOPING A GROWTH MINDSET

### Definitions:

**Mental Health:** “Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community” (World Health Organization).

**Growth Mindset:** “In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment” (Dweck, 2015).

### 1. BACKGROUND/ STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Even though mental illness affects everyone, regardless of race, Black people in the United States (U.S.) are reported to use less mental health services than other racial and ethnic groups<sup>1</sup>. There are many reasons for such a disparity. One is the stigmatization of mental health in the Black community. Studies show Black people have indicated mild depression or anxiety would be viewed as “crazy” in their interpersonal relationships and social circles, and many interviewed also believed that discussions about mental illness wouldn’t be appropriate even when they were among family<sup>2</sup>. Other reasons include the feelings distrust in physicians in the Black community, the lack of availability in resources due to insurance coverage, and the lack in representation of

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<sup>1</sup> Taylor, R. E., & Kuo, B. C. (2019). Black American Psychological Help-Seeking Intention: An Integrated Literature Review With Recommendations for Clinical Practice. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration, 29*(4), 325-327. doi:10.1037/int0000131

<sup>2</sup> Williams, M. T. (2011). Why African Americans avoid psychotherapy. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/culturally-speaking/201111/why-african-americans-avoid-psychotherapy>

black bodies in the mental health profession. In the U.S. only 6.2% of psychologists, 5.6% of advanced-practice psychiatric nurses, 12.6% of social workers, and 21.3% of psychiatrists are members of “minority” groups and that’s more than the amount of mental health professionals who are Black<sup>3</sup>. Regardless of the reasoning, Black lives of all ages are at a disadvantage when it comes to resources and an understanding of mental health. For the first time in the history of such research, in 2018, the rate of suicides in Black children ages 5-12 exceeded those of white children, and more than one third of elementary school-aged suicides involved Black children<sup>4</sup>. To combat atrocities like this, it is imperative that we create programs that will provide resources, opportunities, and educate Black communities on the importance of mental health and wellness.

**Activities/ Methodology:** Integrated approach utilizing performing arts (dramatizations, music, dance etc.), traditional teaching styles, new & digital media, and audiovisual presentations and simulations to foster collective positive mental health; and broaden the receptivity of curricula and information through relatable scenarios, practical and implementable assignments, and engaging stimulating activities. The following methods/strategies will be applied in order to facilitate maximum psychological growth, self-awareness, and advocacy at the end of the pilot program.

A. Partnership with Community Resources

A good amount of time will be devoted to identifying community resources and partnerships for mental health counseling and other social services. Those partners identified will be in the nonprofit and private sector, ranging the gamut of local and regional organizations, community-based mental health facilities & organizations, creative-entrepreneurs, and educators, etc.

B. Community Promotion & Engagement

Visits will be made to specific target and at-risk communities to document their stories in relation to program aims and objectives. The first visit will be to identify potential participants through program recruitment and promotional activities.

C. Program Curriculum Assessment & Evaluation

Curriculum will be assessed and adjusted, if necessary, following advocacy among stakeholders and community promotion and engagement so as to better address the need for financial education in the Black community.

D. Program Implementation & Training

Training and instruction in curriculum will begin in communities and virtually (online).

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<sup>3</sup> Hoge, M. A., Stuart, G. W., Morris, J., Flaherty, M. T., Paris Jr., M., & Goplerud, E. (2013). Mental Health And Addiction Workforce Development: Federal Leadership Is Needed To Address The Growing Crisis. *Health Affairs*, 32(11). doi:10.1377/hlthaff.2013.0541

<sup>4</sup> <https://blackmentalhealth.com/>

#### E. Program Completion, Results and Reporting

End of the pilot program will follow with a full financial and technical report, and conversion metrics and other forms of reporting (i.e. mental health assessments), in the months subsequent to the program end date.

**Pedagogy:** The Black Literacy and Arts Collaborative (BLAC) Project's pilot mental health education program is one that intentionally accounts for varied types of learners in an effort to maximize program results in psychological growth and self-awareness at the end of its undertaking. A uniquely blended combination of **six (6)** key pedagogical approaches- a sort of melting pot of inclusivity and diversity in approach- a hallmark of The Black Literacy and Arts Collaborative Project's mission.

These approaches are, namely:

- (1) **Integrated Learning:** Content and skills from more than one subject area are brought together through an intersectional lens allowing program resources to be used and applied to other subject/ program areas.
- (2) **Differentiated Instruction:** Activities address a range of student learning styles, abilities and readiness; including strategies for learners with difficulties and the needs of visual, auditory & kinesthetic learners.
- (3) **Experiential Learning:** Authentic learning experiences are provided that venture beyond the workshop or seminar session that address real-world issues and problems related to curriculum content in a real-world context.
- (4) **Cooperative Learning:** Group and cooperative learning strategies are a priority. Cooperative learning skills are explicitly taught, practiced and assessed.
- (5) **Inquiry Learning:** Learning is directed by questions, problems, or challenges that students work to address. Students, assisted by the teacher clarify the question(s) to ask and the process to follow to arrive at solutions. Sometimes referred to as Guided Inquiry.
- (6) **Assessment and Evaluation of Student Learning:** Tools are provided that help students and teachers to capture formative and summative information about students' learning and performance. These tools may include reflection questions, checklists, rubrics, etc.

**Program Aim(s):** Enhance positive mental health through self-love workshops, webinars, workbooks, creative arts, and access to mental health counselors. These programs will help at risk communities to positively handle stress, relate better to others, make positive life choices, and become advocates for positive mental health.

**Program Objectives:**

1. Raise awareness about mental health
2. Reduce stigma associated with mental health and mental illness in the Black community
3. Promote practices that support mental and emotional wellbeing
4. Facilitate opportunities for psychological growth
5. Cultivate self-awareness and positive self-efficacy
6. Educate on how to navigate and advocate on the mental health continuum (general mental health to illness & disorders)

### **Expected Outcomes:**

1. Participants will gain a better understanding of the concepts of mental health; it's myths and misconceptions.
2. Participants will demonstrate knowledge of beneficial mindfulness and mental health practices.
3. Participants will develop skills such as flipping negative self-talk to improve mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.
4. At least 75% of participants will show improved mental health through self-reported assessments such as surveys, journaling, and peer-led groups.
5. Participants will better understand mental health issues affecting the population and become advocates for change and Mental Health awareness in their community

## **PROGRAM CURRICULUM**

### **PART 1: Mental Health**

#### **Module 1: What is Mental Health?**

- Definition, Concepts of Mental Health & Wellness, and How it Affects Your Life

#### **Module 2: Mental Health in the Black Community**

- History of Mental Health in the Black Community
- Common Stereotypes, Community Stigma, and Mental Limitations
- Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome (PTSS)

#### **Module 3: The Five Thieves of Happiness**

- Happening v. Happiness: How to Separate the Two
- Control
- Conceit
- Coveting
- Consumption
- Comfort: The Enemy of Growth

#### **Module 4: Self-Talk**

- What is Self-Talk
- How Self-Talk Affects Your Life
- Positive & Negative Self-Talk
- Flipping Negative Self-Talk
- Practicing Positive Self-Talk
- Changing Your Belief Systems

#### **Module 5: Mindfulness**

- Definition, Benefits, and Common Misconceptions
- Mindfulness Practices

#### **Module 6: It's Okay to Not Be Okay**

- Therapy: The Truth and Common Misconceptions
- Community Resources
- Getting Help Doesn't Mean You're Crazy. It Means You're Ready to Grow.

### **Part 2: Creating a Growth Mindset**

#### **Module 1: The Power of a Growth Mindset**

- What are Fixed, Mixed, & Growth Mindsets?
- Choosing a Mindset
- The Talent Trap
- The Importance of Setting Goals

#### **Module 2: Growth Mindsets in Action**

- Failure Advantage
- Creating Opportunities for Growth

- The Leadership Myth
- How to Have a Flexible Mind

### **Module 3: Nurturing Your Mindset**

- Practice & Role Play
- Studying v. Learning
- Having a Past, Present, or Future Mindset

### **Module 4: Growth Mindsets in Real Time**

- How to Reach Your Potential
- How You Predict Your Future
- Dealing with a Changeable Landscape
- Thriving