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**A Theoretical and Conceptual Framework for the
Development of Recreation Programming Which Enhances
the Self-Esteem of African American Adolescents**

presented by

Saleef Kafajouffe

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A THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RECREATION PROGRAMMING WHICH ENHANCES
THE SELF-ESTEEM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENTS

By

Saleef Kafajouffe

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ABSTRACT

A THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RECREATION PROGRAMMING WHICH ENHANCES THE SELF-ESTEEM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENTS

By

Saleef Kafajouffe

Decades ago, Kenneth B. Clark (1963) stated that one of the most characteristic and impressive things about the American people are their dedication to their children. Something has gone terribly wrong. According to the State of America's Children Yearbook (1994), if trends continue by the year 2001, a total of 17 million children will be poor and the U.S. will spend \$358 per person annually to lock up our youth.

Westinghouse and other major companies are re-tooling major divisions of their companies for purposes of supplying the law enforcement and prison industries with the "latest" in crime fighting technology. Millions of our children are destined to become raw material for the prison industry. Private sector prisons can now be found on the New York Stock Exchange (Donziger, 1996), and there appears to be no end in sight. The field of urban recreation, not unlike other human service areas, has suffered from a pronounced avoidance and awkwardness regarding honest dialogue concerning what implications race, ethnicity and culture have for urban recreation planning. Urban recreation must assume a very

prominent role in any systemic community response to known developmental needs of Black youth. There is a question as to whether the field will continue to provide only traditionally defined recreation activities and delivery systems, or will culturally specific recreation emerge to meet the developmental needs of Afro-Ethnic children and adolescents.

This dissertation presents a comprehensive and essential theoretical/conceptual discussion to assist the Leisure/Recreation professional in developing and delivering recreation activities and experiences that enhance the self-esteem of Afro-Ethnic youth. Heretofore, the psychosocial underpinnings of Black self-concept and self-esteem, have been elusive, veiled by cultural indifference and sometimes presumed by many, not to exist at all. These important psychosocial underpinnings have generally been supplanted by "generic recreative activity vaccines," created by often well meaning leisure professionals seeking to develop an immunity against the low self-esteem that besets many Afro-Ethnic youth. This dissertation presents a body of cogent theoretical material and informational sets, to enable Leisure professionals to develop Afro-ethnic sensitivity and more importantly Afro-ethnic competencies.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

PROBLEM CONTEXT

A review of the literature reveals there has not been a comprehensive and contemporary discussion or analysis of relevant ecological theories and concepts, which explicate the self-esteem, construct and esteem cognition of African American adolescents, as it relates to recreation programming. Also, currently there does not exist, holistic, culturally specific "psycho-therapeutic" recreation program protocols for the purpose of enhancing the self-esteem of African American adolescents. Often a question arises, regarding how effectively recreation delivery systems deal with the self-esteem needs of today's so-called youth-at-risk. In part, this is because many researchers and theorists both within and outside the field of recreation have consistently confined the context of useful scientific inquiry and theory building

primarily to rural outdoor recreation. There has been relatively little research on the potential associated with recreation as a means of dealing with urban youth-at-risk and negative youth-at-risk behaviors. There has been even less research on the potential of recreation as a means for developing self-esteem.

This belief is evidenced by the seminal leisure publication entitled "Benefits of Leisure." This publication, consisting of approximately 35 contributors of articles based on more than 1,600 literature citations, discusses a variety of benefits of leisure (Driver, Brown & Peterson, 1991). Benefits are categorized as: (1) economic benefits and (2) improved conditions of individuals-groups-society. Although this is one of the most current and comprehensive examinations of the topic of "leisure benefits", it incorporates relatively few references related to the benefits of urban recreation or recreation aimed at specifically at urban youth. The first 400 references clearly and substantially indicate a focus upon outdoor and wilderness based recreation, e.g., camping, rock climbing, fishing, hunting.

The lack of scientific research and protocols directed at recreation programming for youth-at-risk is particularly significant given that "urban indoor recreation" continues to be presented as an effective means for building the self-esteem of steadily growing population of so-called "at risk" youth, Black as well as White. Yet, there is a lack of

theoretical and conceptual literature that examines the effectiveness or efficiency of recreation as a means of dealing with youth-at-risk. The programming tendency has been to simply keep youth-at-risk off the street during those times when the potential for maladaptive behavior seems greatest.

Little focus has been given to recreation programming that deals with the development of long term positive self-esteem. It is generally accepted that racism and lack of economic opportunity has shaped in a very negative way the life context of Blacks in general and Black youth in particular. This life context is significantly influenced by collective self-esteem deficits. Recreation strategies employed to stimulate positive self-esteem in African American youth have generally lacked optimum levels of effectiveness.

An unpublished and undated paper by Jemerson et. al. argues that there are certain issues and questions that leisure professionals must face when providing programs specifically designed to improve the self-esteem of urban youth. The authors, who collectively possess more than 60 years of experience as recreation programmers and administrators working with African American youth, identify the following issues which they believe to be critical in addressing the self-esteem of African American youth: (1) defining the leisure professional's role, (2) specialized training needs for the leisure professional, (3) program

evaluation (4) changing the community's self-esteem. Additionally, McDonald (1989) suggests that prospective recreation leaders must be evaluated in light of personality, interpersonal and counseling skills, self-esteem, and the role differences of recreation leaders to determine if these variables effect the enhancement of self-esteem on the part of the participants.

The literature indicates significant conceptual and theoretical gaps in the collective knowledge possessed by recreation professionals and agencies regarding: (1) the cognitive/developmental and ecological basis of self-esteem and, (2) the organization and structure of racially relevant recreation protocols designed to address the self-esteem needs of African American youth.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The primary purpose of this dissertation is to develop and present an enabling theoretical and conceptual framework for the development of systemic psycho-therapeutic urban recreation program protocols, which may be employed to enhance the self-esteem of urban dwelling African American adolescents. The specific objectives are to: (1) Utilize available literature in the fields of social, educational, ecological, cognitive and developmental psychology to provide a theoretical and conceptual discussion of the complex psycho-

social anatomy of self-esteem relative to African American adolescents. (2) Provide a conceptual model for the creation of an ecologically and culturally responsive recreation program design and delivery system that includes: the development of an effective "Racial Pluralism Acumen" to be maintained by public community based recreation agencies. (3) The development of strategies for the mitigation of fears and apprehensions held by many recreation agencies regarding the adoption of more culture specific recreation programming.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation is presented in six chapters. The next chapter will comprise a review of literature concerning self-esteem, self-concept, identity formation, and Black Identity formation. This chapter includes a brief historical perspective relative to Blacks and community recreation. The literature that is reviewed comes primarily from the various areas of the field of psychology, i.e., cognitive, developmental, educational, ecological and social and also the fields of human ecology and recreation/leisure.

Chapter three presents a comprehensive formula based conceptualization of salient components of Self-Concept/Esteem. Chapter four provides an indication of the materials and process used in the development of a "Black Esteem Assessment Tool." Chapter five provides an example of

an Afro-Ethnic Recreation Protocol. This chapter presents a conceptual strategy for the development of Afro-Ethnic recreation program protocols designed to enhance self-esteem in Black adolescent youth-at-risk. Chapter six contains conclusions and recommendations. Supplemental material is included as appendix A.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leisure, play and recreation are important to the health and well being of societies and various populations that comprise different societies. Leisure and play may have emerged as a valued social phenomenon around the same time humans successfully harnessed fire. Imagining early humans gathered around a camp fire for purposes of warmth and the preparation of food, leads the author to the conjecture that many of these fireside gatherings, would eventually become valued as restful time frames dedicated to such things as group cohesion. As various technological advancements created shifts in the amounts of work and discretionary time for play, leisure was pursued more intensely by greater numbers of people (Chubb & Chubb, 1981; Kraus & Curtis, 1973).

While general disagreement still characterizes discussions within academia and the profession regarding what constitutes leisure, and within a more narrow social context,

what constitutes recreation, there is general agreement that fun and games have been, and continue to be, important in different societies. Music, dance, hunting, fishing, sports and ceremonies were functional elements of Egyptian life. According to Wilson (1971), there were even games such as checkers.

Rybczynski (1991) suggests that the Aristotelian view held that the goal of life was happiness and that leisure as distinguished from amusement and recreation was the facilitating state for happiness. Aristotle essentially saw leisure as positive and useful though he did warn however, that societies would degenerate if people were not prepared for leisure. It has been disclosed by (Ibrahim, 1989), that the Arab scholar of the Middle Ages, Ibn Khaldun, also warned that free time could become either leisure or idleness and he believed that these were the two conditions that provided for the rise and fall of societies. Other authors, Driver, Brown and Peterson (1991) and Csikszentmihalyi (1990) agree that leisure and recreation represent potentials for both good and bad, adaptive and maladaptive behavioral manifestations.

One can point to virtually any place on the globe that is inhabited by people and observe leisure and recreation as an integral and complex component of societies. Leisure traditions have developed as fundamental elements of the social structure of many countries today. As an example, many leisure pursuits in Mexico, including various games, are based

upon religious ritual practiced by the distant Aztecs and Mayans. (Cortez, 1989)

In other societies, such as Korea, recreation is especially important, in that, it is instrumental in: (1) developing a sound and healthy leisure life, (2) improve both culture and physical and mental health, (3) enhances productivity, (4) establishes and cultivates desirable human relations and (5) builds a sound and bright democratic society. (Won, 1989)

Burnett (1989) indicates that structured recreation plays a major role in Kenya in terms of the leisure lives of its citizens. In Kenya there is exhibited through structured recreation, a strong emphasis upon socialization and social cohesion. According to Burnett (1989), recreation for the Kenyans is not just a means to keep mentally or physically healthy, it is done in such a way that it keeps them in touch with their culture. A recent article entitled, Recreation As Seen By the Zulu of South Africa suggests that recreation does not appear to exist as the antithesis of work. Recreation exists as a fundamental element of daily life (Magi, 1989). Although there is not much literature on leisure and recreation in African and African American societies, the available literature indicates their cultural importance.

On an individuated and group satisfaction level the relative benefits of outdoor generally include: stress reduction, rest and recuperation, education (academic) e.g.,

discovery learning, mental rehabilitation, positive physiological impacts, self-esteem, personal challenge/self efficacy and interpersonal skills recreation (Driver, Brown, Peterson, 1991). On a more broad, societal level, benefits are said to be environmental, economic, community pride and development, cultural understanding, strengthening of families, supportive behavioral and cognitive base for students in terms of school performance.

The recognized social, cultural and economic importance of recreation has lead many countries and communities to invest in making recreational opportunities more accessible to different segments of their populations. For example, after the Moscow Olympics and prior to the collapse of the USSR, the government declared that youth sports clubs would no longer be reserved only for the physically gifted youngsters. A serious attempt was made in 1981 to stimulate among young people, participation in was termed "casual" recreation (Riordan, 1989). According to Scholer (1989), social legislation in Norway has so enhanced opportunities for leisure and competitive indoor sport that they are now an important part of their way of life. In 1948, the United Nations issued a Declaration of Human Rights wherein it was formally indicated that people have a right to rest, leisure including reasonable limitation of work hours, periodic holidays with pay, the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community and enjoyment of the arts. (Chubb & Chubb, 1981)

In the early 1960's, the Federal Bureau of Outdoor Recreation was established primarily to provide an infusion of dollars for open space and conservation programs (Kraus & Curtis, 1973). In 1964, The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act was passed, establishing matching funds for the development of outdoor recreation facilities. The "Charter for Leisure", developed collectively in 1970 by sixteen international recreation organizations, serves as powerful support for the idea that leisure generates tremendous benefit on an individuated and societal basis (Chubb & Chubb, 1981).

In 1971 the Interdepartmental Work Group on Urban Recreation, within the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, published a report for the Nationwide Outdoor Recreation Plan. In this report to Congress, it was acknowledged that most of the Nation comprises urban dwellers and consequently the term urban recreation was firmly established as an expression of a significant recreation programming domain. This occurrence can be considered as the birth of Urban Recreation as a formally recognized leisure concept and programmatic focus. As a result of a national urban recreation study conducted by the Department of Interior in 1978, Congress enacted the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act of 1978.

Recreation has continually been viewed as a hedge against maladaptive at-risk behaviors and identities exhibited by many adolescents. It is Kelly's (1982) opinion that

identity includes both how we define ourselves and how others define us. He believes that individuals constantly present themselves to others, interpret responses, and sometimes redefine their self-image based on the feedback received. According to Kelly (1983), there is some aspect of the leisure activity that generates the right circumstance for the crafting of identities. This may suggest a multi-dimensional cognitive and self-expressive view of self-concept functions of recreation and leisure. McDonald (1989) contends that recreational professionals should explore every method possible to provide organized programs that enhance self-esteem.

Kelly (1982,1983) argues that organized recreation programming is an important element of any developmental community infrastructure, in regards to empowering youth with the requisite awareness, values and skills of responsible adulthood. Significant attention has been given to the potential of recreation programming and participation as a means for occupying and developing urban youth.

This potential was identified and explored during the 1994 Congressional Hearings, convened in support of an Amendment Bill (H.R. 4034) entitled the Urban Recreation and At-Risk Youth Act of 1994. The Hearing included discussions regarding the perceived relationship between at-risk youth and urban recreation. The Dryfoos (1990) Delinquency domain of at-risk behavior, which will be presented later in this

chapter, was where the Congressional Hearings focused a majority of attention and energy with respect to the usefulness of recreation as an intervention strategy. Disclosures were made regarding how recreation could deter crime by providing a constructive use of non-school hours for at-risk-youth. Many of those who gave testimony argued that recreation and sport programs teach important values and life skills including teamwork, individual responsibility and self-esteem. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency testified that recreation activities clearly help divert youth from self-destructive behaviors.

During the Hearing, representatives of the National Association of Police Athletic Leagues stated that there is a direct link between crime prevention and Police Athletic League participation. It was suggested that young people who have nothing to do and nothing to look forward to prone to crime. Organizations such as the National Governors Association, the Urban Institute, the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development have recommended the expansion of recreation as a means to prevent juvenile delinquency (Miller, et al. 1994, p.4).

In the early twenties community leaders began to recognize that, "...play is the serious business of childhood. It should mean not only happiness and health but mental, moral, and spiritual development as well. Habits and ideals formed in childhood usually remain." (Speakman, 1924, p. 78).

"A new interest in play is being aroused in many sections, - largely because of a recognition of social values in a sane, steady, continuous program of Community recreation. (Atwell, 1923, p. 7)

A national youth oriented organization called the Search Institute compiled what is referred to as 20 major risk indicators associated with the adolescent population, based upon survey data from 47,000 American adolescents. Those risk indicators include: (1) frequent alcohol use, (2) binge drinking, (3) daily cigarette use, (4) frequent chewing tobacco use, (5) frequent use of illicit drugs, (6) sexually active, (7) non use of contraceptives, 8) depression, (9) attempted suicide, (10) vandalism, (11) group fighting, (12) police trouble, (13) theft, (14) weapon use, (15) school absenteeism, (16) desire to drop out of school, (17) driving and drinking, (18) riding and drinking, (19) seat belt non use, (20) bulimia (Benson, 1989)

The survey also revealed that many adolescents have a variety of significant deficits in their lives. Over half of the youth are home alone at least two every day; 48% place high importance on self serving values; 40% watched three or more hours of TV per day; 31% frequently attend parties where peers drink; 21% feel they are under stress most or all of the time; 17% report at least one incident of physical abuse; 10% indicate at least one incident of sexual abuse; 7% have at least one parent with a serious problem with alcohol or drugs;

6% experience a consistent lack of care, support and understanding and; 2% report that most of their close friends are involved in drug use and/or are in frequent trouble at school.

The National Center for Health Statistics revealed that in 1993, American youths between the ages of 10 and 19 years old died every 92 minutes from a gunshot wound. A total of 3,661 were homicide; 1,460 were suicide. (Jet Magazine, May 6, 1996)

"Homicide is still the leading cause of death for black males 15-24. A black male has one in 21 chance of being murdered before he is 25" Roberts-Thomas, 1991, pp. 20,21). The Black Community Crusade for Children reports that guns were the leading cause of death among Black males between the ages of 15 and 19 years old. In 1993, a bullet killed a Black child every 3 hours and 19 minutes (Jet Magazine, May 6, 1996).

"While black men comprise about six percent of the population, they account for almost 50 percent of the prisoners in local, state and federal facilities (Jet Magazine, May 6, 1996). More than 610,000 African American males age 20-29, almost one in every four, are in jail, in prison, or on probation. Moreover, only about 436,000 black males in all age groups (out of a total 15 million) are attending institutions of higher learning. Eighteen percent of American black men

will spend some time behind bars. For white males the figure is 3 percent.

Since 1947, the marriage rate for pregnant black teenagers (15-17) years old has decreased about 80%, and for those 18-19 years old, the rate is down about 60%. Nationally, about one in five (20%) white babies are born to an unmarried mother, while among blacks the ratio is two out of three (66%). The national infant mortality rate is about 50 percent higher among blacks than among whites (Roberts-Thomas, 1991, pp. 20,21).

Delinquency rates for Black youth are also high, and there are those who say that alcoholism is increasing among Black women at a higher rate than for White females (Sue, 1990, citing Smith, 1985). Black male unemployment is two to three times that of White males. The average White high school graduate income is \$26,526, Black high school graduate income is \$20,271. The average net worth of African American families is \$4,604 compared with \$44,408 for White families. (June, 1996, p. 241)

According to U.S. Justice Department reports there were an estimated 2.3 million arrests of juveniles in 1992, a 57 per cent increase since 1983. Arrests of juveniles for murder increased by 128 per cent during this same period. By 1992, juveniles accounted for 15% of all murder arrests. People between the ages of 10 - 20 commit 50% to 60% of all crimes in the United States. The State of America's Children Yearbook

(1994), indicates that if current trends continue, by the year 2001, 37,000 children will be arrested every week.

It is difficult to arrive at a reliable dollar costs associated with negative at risk youth behaviors. However, during the 1994 hearings on H.R. 4034, 1994, it was disclosed that a study conducted by the National Governors Association, estimated that \$1.6 Billion was being spent annually to incarcerate juveniles, an average of \$29,000 per juvenile delinquent.

As recreation academicians, administrators and programmers we have generally sought to create "recreation lockdowns," wherein we simply contain youth within a facility and activity of one sort or another between the hours of 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., implying as we do so, that if the youth are "with the program" they obviously can not be "out there", participating in illegal, violent or otherwise deviant leisure behaviors engaged in by youth. (Caldwell, et al., 1992)

Rarely, if ever, do we ask the question which probes for the reason why most of the youth, adolescent youth in particular, would rather be "out their" than "with the program". " No matter how many different and exciting activities, sports and games they offered as inducements, the boys continued to drop in only sporadically." (Halpern, 1992; citing Nasaw, 1985, p. 216) Why? Economic factors notwithstanding, the lack of personal and collective self-esteem, is at the core of much of the so-called at-risk

behavior exhibited by many of our African American youth (Kunjufu, 1984). Dash (1989) in his writing detailing a year long study of black teenage pregnancy in Washington, D.C., states that he realized shortly after moving into Washington Highlands, that so much of what people told him about their decisions was the result of low self-esteem.

Self-esteem and identity formation have historically, been viewed by writers as major challenges for African Americans, attributable largely to the racism which has existed in the U.S. (Thomas & Sillen, 1976; Jones, 1972). As DuBois (1969) posited over 80 years ago, there exists for Blacks, a double consciousness, a sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness, - an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unconcealed strivings, two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength along keeps it from being torn asunder.

SELF-CONCEPT/ESTEEM

"Recent theoretical developments in self-concept research are described which argue for a separation of the constructs of self-concept and self-esteem." (Dhawan & Watkins, 1989, p. 555). Mayberry (1990) argues that one must examine self-concept in order to understand self-esteem.

Though frequently used interchangeably, self-concept and self-esteem are two distinctly different constructs. The inability of theorists and practitioners to distinguish features of these two co-actional constructs is problematic regarding any subsequent understanding of a Black esteem construct.

The key to refining the construct called self-concept, appears to lie in the ability of theorists to better conceptualize, define and isolate its true nature. Recent investigations have supported a context-dependent self-concept model and have resulted in a more comprehensive conceptualization of self-concept as a multidimensional, rather than one-dimensional, construct (Delugach et al., 1992, p. 214, citing Bannister & Agnew, 1977; Bracken, 1992; Byrne, 1984; Epstein, 1973; L'Ecuyer, 1981; Marsh, 1988; Shavelson et al., 1976). According to the model proposed by Shavelson and colleagues, both of these global areas can be divided further, such that academic self-concept might reflect specific academic subject areas and non-academic self-concept might contain social, emotional, and physical domains (Delugach et al., 1992, p. 214). Rentsch & Heffner (1992) argue that the psychological centrality of self-concept elements determines the degree to which the elements might effect self-esteem. Fox (1988) believes that individuals can have very different evaluative perceptions of themselves in separate aspects of their lives such as their social relationships, academic abilities, or physical appearance has led to the widespread

acceptance of the self as a multidimensional object. The Delugach article expresses the very distinct notion that more broad comprehensive and therefore more holistic conceptualizations are necessary regarding what is typically referred to as self-concept. The literature is clear on the idea that self-concept relates to WHAT, is being evaluated regarding self and not the evaluation itself.

"Self-esteem may be more than the sum of all aspects of a person's self-concept; it may be the way one feels about the self-concept domains that are important to him or her,..." (Mayberry, 1990, p.733)

It is also important to note that the self-construct dimensions are very much influenced by the opinions and views held by others (Kelly, 1982,1983). There is therefore a public self, socially motivated and driven which is often in direct opposition to the private self reflecting the person's own personally held values and beliefs about themselves. This circumstance provides a basis for dissonant emotional states.

Coopersmith defines self-esteem as the evaluation of self and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy. (Ahmed, Valliant & Swindle, 1985) The authors in the same article argue that self-esteem is an extremely situation related trait. For example, high levels of self-esteem may be exhibited within one peer context and not another.

Coopersmith's disclosure helps to establish self-esteem as the evaluation itself as distinctly opposed to self-concept that describes what is to be evaluated. Self-esteem certainly appears to be the actual judgement rendered regarding Self. It is recognized that self-esteem may be a composite of both trait-like and situational components (S. A. McIntire and Edward L. Levine, 1984).

"Measures of self-esteem should be based on conceptual models which specify the level of self-esteem being measured (global & specific) and on measurement operations which are consistent with the conceptual models (O'Brien, 1985, p. 383)." Self-esteem measurement is most often based upon inadequate models or no preceding conceptual model of self-concept at all, particularly when assessing self-esteem cross culturally (Wells, 1976).

Rosenberg (1965) explains that such things as, school grades, social status,... the combined effect of social class and religious affiliation, fulfillment of personal goals, ones neighborhood, racial discrimination, family structure and interpersonal abilities have an influence on self-esteem. However, Rosenberg's global measurement of self-esteem comprising 10 questions does little to mirror even the minimal conceptual matter presented above.

Most psychological theories assume that the quality of parenting and of the parent-child relationship in early childhood is critically important to the child's later

personality development (Kanigsberg & Levant, 1988). Self-esteem is a very major component of personality (Freedman et al., 1975). The development of self-esteem emerges from the first contact the child has with his family. (Kunjufu, 1984)

"Amato and Ochiltree (1986) found that self-esteem was not associated with family structure resources (family income, parent's occupational status) but rather with family process resources, (parent's expectations, parent's interest, family cohesion)" (Glovinsky-Fasholtz, 1992, p. 636; citing Amato & Ochiltree). "The negative consequences of economic deprivation were more likely to be transmitted through their effects on family processes than directly through their effects on adolescent's self perception" (Whitbeck et al., 1991, p. 361).

Coopersmith (1967) suggests that the level of confidence and authority expressed by the parents within the household may contribute significantly to the child's conviction that his parents are successful. Thus, it may be concluded that children with high self-esteem are more likely to have parents who provide indirect impressions and direct experiences of success.

Regarding self assessments: "The importance of others is dependent on the degree of involvement between the participants in interaction,..." (Grgin & Dekovic, 1990, p. 839; citing Forgas, 1985). "Children acknowledge their parents' authority and adapt their behavior and their self-evaluation according to parental approval or disapproval"

(Grgin & Dekovic, 1990, p. 839). It is assumed by most psychological theories that the quality of parenting and of the parent-child relationship in early childhood will influence greatly, the child's later personality development (Kanigsberg & Levant, 1988).

Coopersmith (1967) concludes that mothers of children with high self-esteem tend to be high in their own self-esteem and conversely, the mothers of children with low self-esteem are themselves, seen to be low in self-esteem and likely to be emotionally unstable. Coopersmith believes, fathers of high self-esteem subjects are more likely to be attentive and concerned with their sons, and the sons are more likely to confide in their fathers. The interaction between husband and wife in the families of children with high self-esteem is marked by greater compatibility and ease than is the case in the families of children with low self-esteem. Fathers of high self-esteem subjects appear more concerned and involved with their sons, and have greater authority in their households than do the fathers of children with less self-esteem. The demands for achievement appear greater for persons with high esteem than they are for persons with low self-esteem.

In regards to parental values Coopersmith suggest that; "the codes of behavior they set before their children, both by tuition and example, serve as guides to achieving success and power. Children with low self-esteem are more likely to claim that their parents emphasize and prize accommodation than are

the parents of children with medium or high self-esteem" (Coopersmith, 1967).

Coopersmith (1967) suggests that one must be careful not to presume high esteem in a child, simply because that child is always obedient or seems always willing to fit-in. Being overly accommodating is a reflection of low not high esteem. Judging by their emphasis on accommodation and lack of concern with achievement, these parents and children presumably rely on pleasing others rather than self-competence for their feelings of success.

"Gecas and Schwalbe (1986) reported that late adolescent boy's self-esteem was affected more strongly by the parental behavior dimension of autonomy/control while girls were more strongly affected by parental support or involvement. Also, their results suggested that fathers' behaviors more strongly affected their children's self-esteem than did mothers' behaviors" (Joubert, 1991, p. 116).

This is problematic, given the growing absence of Black fathers from the home. Offer, et al. (1982), report a high correlation between parent-child communication and the quality of the child's self-image. In general, better parent-adolescent communication is associated with more positive adolescent self-image. Mother-daughter communication was most strongly related to their self-image of adolescent girls.

Erikson (1963) posits eight stages of psychosocial development through which a given individual evolves. Those

stages are as follows: (1) Trust versus Mistrust, (2) Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt, (3) Initiative versus Guilt, (4) Industry versus Inferiority, (5) Identity versus Identity Confusion, (6) Intimacy versus Isolation, (7) Generativity versus self-absorption, and (8) Integrity versus Despair.

The stage of development corresponding to the particular age group with which we are most concerned here, is labeled by Erikson as "Identity versus Identity Confusion" and is generally completed between the ages 12 to 18. It is during this stage, an American child must resolve issues such as: Who am I? Who am I to others? Who will I become? Who can I become? Am I handsome/pretty? Am I smart? Do I have skills? Do others think I'm smart? Do I like who I am?

Hamachek (1990) posits that the identity issues of Stage 5 are self-concept issues and more likely to be resolved favorably if the previous four stages have been resolved on the side of positive ego resolutions, i.e., more trust than distrust, more autonomy than shame and doubt, and so on. If, on the other hand, there have been too many negative ego resolutions during the four preceding stages, this, as Erikson (1980) has observed, may result in identity confusion. Identity diffusion entails not knowing what to value and maladaptive valuation.

The maladaptive valuation may in fact, if sufficiently repetitive, be internalized as shame in the author's

estimation. Kaufman (1980) explains that shame can be an impotence-making experience because it feels as though there is no way to relieve the matter, or satisfy the situation in a positive manner, no way to restore the balance of things. There is the feeling that one has simply failed as a human being and nothing can be done.

Savin-Williams & Demo (1984) argue that there are those theorists who believe that during adolescence self-esteem reaches an all time low, fluctuating from moment to another during these stressful and sometimes unstable years. It is possible however, to paint a very different landscape of adolescence and adolescent self-esteem. Savin-Williams and Demo concluded in their longitudinal study, that "adolescence is not necessarily a time of great upheaval in the self-concept and that the person who enters adolescence is basically the same person that exits it" (Savin-Williams & Demo, 1984, p. 1100). The majority of the adolescents in the study that experienced a stable self-esteem, benefited from certain stabilizing factors. Clearly family system ranks as a major stabilizer. While the study by Savin-Williams & Demo (1984) provides valuable insights, it also points to a problem in research that hampers the understanding of Black self-esteem. In the Savin-Williams & Demo longitudinal study, only 3 of the 41 were minorities. Researchers often generalize the findings of studies conducted primarily on White adolescents to persons of other races and cultures. There is a lack of

self-esteem research conducted on African American adolescents to define self-esteem factors.

"Clothing is believed to play a significant role in the socialization process, which in turn leads to the development of the self-concept" (Daters, 1990, p. 46; citing Stone, 1965; Takahaski & Newton, 1967). "Clothing can contribute to adolescent acceptance or rejection" (Daters, 1990, p. 46; citing Kelly & Eicher, 1970; Littrell & Eicher, 1973; Smucker & Creekmore, 1972). The adolescent during the process of valuing him or herself uses various wearing apparel and the responses they tend to elicit from others. The importance of clothing generally reaches a peak for a given individual during adolescence (Daters, 1990). When the other various self-concept dimensions for whatever reason, receive little or no constructive attention, there is a much greater reliance placed upon clothing. Harper & Marshall (1991) have concluded that the association between low self-esteem and problematic health and physical development reflects to some extent, the effectiveness of the media in determining the ideal body-image of women and the extreme difficulty adolescent girls, and indeed, even older females have in attaining this image.

Constantinople elaborates that in adolescence self-esteem is the end product of successful resolutions of each crisis; the fewer or the less satisfactory the successful resolutions, the less self-esteem on which to build at this stage of development, and the greater the likelihood of a prolonged

sense of identity diffusion, of not being sure of who one is and where one is going (Lerner,1986 citing Constantinople, 1969).

At the conclusion of various life crises, when self-esteem, has been confirmed, it grows to be a conviction that one is learning effective steps toward a tangible future, that one is developing a defined personality within a social reality which one understands (Lerner,1986 citing Erickson,1959).

Hamachek(1990) indicates further that identity diffusion is more than not knowing who one is (identity), it suggests also, not knowing for sure what one can do (initiative, industry), not knowing one can do what one needs to be done (autonomy) and, in some instances, not even knowing whether or not anyone can be counted on to help (trust). Identity confusion problems, like logs floating down a river, form a logjam when the normal flow of one's development current carries with it too many negative ego resolutions that come together at the same time.

It may be the case that there is a degree of elasticity associated with Erikson's developmental stages. In other words, it may not be possible to draw a cut off line at the precise age, separating each stage from the other. For example, the age bracket during which identity is believed to solidified, in many situations is well beyond the age of 18 for example, during which time frame, it is said, that

identity is solidified, can probably be extended in many situations, well beyond age 18. One should not therefore, become alarmed at witnessing identity development which appears to be retarded in individuals beyond the chronological age of 18. This may be particularly true for persons who have experienced less than successful resolution at earlier stages.

One view of human development is that it is the result of a probabilistic epigenesis, Gottlieb (1991), i.e., DNA based organismic structures, e.g., the brain or one's motor skills, differentiated over time by human experience and cognitive behavior. An alternative view is that Human Development is the result of a DNA based organismic declarative, which makes no allowance for the plasticity, i.e., genetic make-up being influenced by experience (Greenough, 1991; Gottlieb, 1991; Turkheimer & Gottesman, 1991; Cairns, 1991; Lerner, 1991).

Psychological Development, (i.e., how, and perhaps more importantly, what the mind thinks, prior to the elicitation of behavior), is the result of a certain "developmental reciprocity", described by (Lerner, 1991), as a dynamic interactive relationship. This relationship comprises the human organism and the varied contexts within which the organism is embedded. A human being will act upon his/her environment as their environment acts upon them. According to Maslow (1971) culture and environment is only a necessary cause of human nature, but not a sufficient cause. He also

agrees that biology is only a necessary cause and not a sufficient cause of human nature.

Self-esteem may serve a mediating function in the bi-directional interaction between the organism and the environment. Self-esteem, with its emotive character, may influence not only the acquisition of sensory information, but in addition, the neural mechanisms that generate perceptual impulses leading to behavior. Self-esteem must be comprehended and attended to in ways that transcend the purely affective and greatly overly simplified and commercialized assertion that self-esteem merely equates to one feeling good about oneself.

It is apparent that many African American adolescents act and use certain props to camouflage a lack of self-esteem. For example, many adolescent males wearing a shiny new pair of brand-name sneakers, appear on the surface to have a great deal of self-esteem. They are often view as "cocky" by adults, particularly White adults. This apparent self-esteem is however, dependent upon the prop and the prestige of the prop, rather than positive feelings about himself, his family or his race.

In the same sense, many African American "girls-at risk" use hot straightening combs and chemical hair straightening products to straighten their hair. When the artificially straightened hair returns to its natural character, a more guarded self-conscious behavior begins to appear.

According to Branden (1969) & Freedmen et al. 1975, self-esteem is a fundamental need of man's consciousness. It is a need that cannot be ignored or bypassed. Men who fail to achieve true self-esteem, or who fail to a significant degree, strive to fake it. The individual who fits this description will attempt to hide behind a sort of pseudo-self-esteem. Branden (1969) believes that pseudo-self-esteem can be understood as an irrational pretense at self-value, a non-rational, self-protective device to diminish anxiety and to provide a suspect sense of security. This perpetual avoidance mechanism precludes the discovery of the real causes for the absence of authentic self-esteem.

This phenomenon discussed by Branden (1969) is described by Elliott (1982) as "self presentation", wherein the individual presents an hypothesized self in the hopes of having it validated. This phenomenon is frequently observed in African American youth-at-risk.

In summary, the literature indicates that self-esteem is influenced by, or correlated with such phenomenon as school setting and teachers (Atherley, 1990), parental styles (Joubert, 1991), perceptions of physical attractiveness (Gurman & Malban, 1990; Backman & Adams, 1991), career goals (Chiu, 1990; Pavlak & Kammer, 1985; Poole & Cooney, 1985), temperament (Klein, 1992), teacher attitudes and teaching methods (Atherly, 1990), degree of influenceability and conformity (Rhodes & Wood, 1992), loneliness & depression

(Kalliopuska & Laitinen, 1991; Brown et al., 1990; Kernis et al., 1991), self-perceived physical competence (Sonstroem et al., 1991), relationships with significant others, i.e., family and friends (Coopersmith, 1967; Rosenberg, 1965; Lackovic-Grgin & Dekovic, 1990; Patterson et al., 1990; Walker & Green, 1986), social competence (Waters, et al., 1985), development of specific sports skills (Hopper et al., 1991), age & gender (Elliott, 1982; Oyefeso & Zacheaus, 1990), achievement, (Wigfield & Karpethian, 1991), perception of social group membership (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; Lay, 1992), clothing (Chowdhary, 1988), creativity (Yau, 1991), self-efficacy and the general perception of being competent (Allgood-Merten & Stockard, 1991; Schwalbe & Staples). Also, according to the literature self-evaluation must be measured as both a construct and process. Stable positive self-evaluation requires stable environmental factors (Demo, 1992).

BLACK IDENTITY/SELF-ESTEEM

Based on the literature that was reviewed, it can be concluded that identity is an overall composite view or self-generating picture of oneself. Self-esteem on the other hand, reflects the context driven valuations of self. Dhawan & Watkins (1989) provide support for looking at these constructs on the basis of culture and race. Researchers have found that adolescents with high ethnic identity have higher self-esteem

and use more active strategies in dealing with threats such as discrimination and stereotypes than those with low ethnic identity (Phiney & Chavira 1992). Perhaps the most valuable article dealing with Black identity, in terms of both its conceptual power and comprehensiveness, reviewed by the author was the Spencer and Markstrom-Adams (1990) synthesis of literature dealing with identity formation among ethnic minority children and adolescents. "Identity in its vaguest sense suggests, of course, much of what has been called the self by a variety of workers, be it in the form of a self-concept, a self-system, or in that of fluctuating self experience." (Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990, p. 291).

Racial and ethnic identity can be understood in terms of a level consciousness of self, within a particular group. "Independent of the child's race, socioeconomic status, sex, and age(3,4,and 5), baseline data obtained by Spencer (1970) and reported by Spencer and Horowitz (1973) indicated a significant pattern of negative connotations associated with the color Black and African American people" (Spencer and Markstrom-Adams, 1990, p. 295).

"A parallel pattern of own-group preference has been described by Spencer (1982b) for older (ages 10 and 12) African American children. Such advances in cognitive skills are perhaps reflected in a more realistic assessment of oneself and one's group and greater consciousness of the

"referent other" used for comparison purposes when evaluating the self" (Spencer and Markstrom-Adams, 1990, p. 297).

"Minority and oppressed individuals may be prone to develop a negative identity as a result of accepting negative self-images projected onto them, not only by the larger society, but by their own group as well" (Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990, p. 299; citing Erikson, 1968). Spencer & Markstrom-Adams (1990, p. 299) state that "...the emphasis for minority youth, however, has remained riveted on the "what" as opposed to the "why" and the "how", thus evading questions about the mechanisms of identity formation."

Societal convictions, habits of mind, prejudices, emotionally reinforced are the very social constructs that create the environments in which African American youth exist. While different literature presents the importance of genetic contribution to behavioral structure, it is also clear that if the passive organism has a form - a structure - it must be derived from the environment. If the environment were a non-structured entity it could not easily give a structure to the organism. Therefore it seems likely that it must be the case that the structure of the organism is received from the structure of the environment it experiences (Lerner, 1986). Therefore racism, being a part of environmental structure, will have a significant impact upon identity and self-esteem.

Schiamberg, in Leigh & Peterson (1986), indicates three psycho-emotional assailants which in the author's opinion, beset the Black adolescent with a suspected greater degree of intensity. Black identity formation is severely frustrated by (1) meaninglessness - in the form of expecting that future outcomes cannot be accurately predicted, or possessing a low tolerance for the uncertainty of such future outcomes, (2) powerlessness, in the form of expecting that important dimensions of life are not under the control of the individual, (3) social Isolation, in the form of attaching a low value to group goals and/or displaying a lack of openness in relating to others, which implies estrangement from the real self.

Fromm (1956) suggest that isolation or separateness, arouses anxiety. He believes it to be the source of all anxiety. Being separate means being cut off, without any capacity to use your powers to influence your future. Hence to be separate means to be helpless, unable to grasp the world - things and people - actively; it means that the world can invade me without my ability to react. Thus separateness is the source of tremendous anxiety. Fromm (1956) also suggests that separateness arouses shame and feelings of guilt.

Anger often accompanies social isolation. Anger may be antecedent to a perception of a marked loss in self-esteem. More than forty years ago, Clark (1955) described the anti-social behavior and anger expressed by Blacks as a result of

being cut-off and more or less isolated from typical amenities of society. And of course self-esteem becomes suspect.

Often meaninglessness, powerlessness, and isolation (separateness) are visited upon Black parents, and then quite predictably, upon the adolescent. Spencer and Markstrom-Adams (1990) suggest that while identity development is a complex task for all youths, it is particularly complicated for adolescents belonging to ethnic and racial minority groups in the United States.

Spencer, Brookins, and Allen (1985), argue that one's self-definition is also dependent upon the collective or corporate definition of "one's people." One's people are one's family, both in the biological sense as well as in the racial construct sense. One's family will generally have its most potent if not its last real opportunity to shape the self-esteem of African American youth at Erikson's 5th stage of development, identity formation. Historically Black families have engendered a sense of personal worth in their children by separating the personal sense of themselves from the negative perceptions the racist society has attached to racial group membership (Jenkins [citing Billingsley, 1968; and Pettigrew, 1964] 1982). In other words, Black parents have tended to maintain, in admittedly too few numbers, a strong sense of what the author will call racial integrity versus racial genocide. These are polar opposites on a conceptual "identity continuum".

Allen (1985) identifies five associative factors of healthy identity formation (1) parent and family background characteristics, (2) parent child-rearing goals, (3) parent child-rearing practices, (4) parent-son interpersonal relationships, and (5) child socialization outcomes. To this list the author adds (parent-daughter interpersonal relationships).

As McAdoo (1992) suggests that values of the wider society are, for the most part, detrimental to the development of positive self-esteem (of Black children), ethnic identity, and achievement in school. McAdoo (1988) presents an alternative context, not often employed when viewing Black families. Despite being faced with discrimination and poverty, many Black families have managed to acquire the needed education, skills, and achievements that have allowed them to become more economically secure.

Finally, the degree to which a Black family can be considered high or low functioning with respect to adolescent identity development, can be understood within the context of the William Cross model for Black self-actualization. Whether the identity variable is school grades or perceived grades of hair, parents distributed systematically within the following stages: 1) Pre-encounter, 2) Encounter, 3) Immersion-Emersion, 4) Internalization and, 5) Internalization-Commitment (Cross, 1991), will probably tend to yield a differentiated, yet group or category specific, and stage specific, pattern of parental

validation and nurturance. The adolescent will get what the parent is capable of giving.

The first stage of the Cross model is characterized by anti-Black attitudes/Euro-centric disposition. Stage two produces one or more experiences, often emotionally painful, that force the individual to re-think their pre-encounter identity. During Cross's third stage the individual commits to change, then literally immerses him or herself in Blackness, e.g., literature, clothing, etc. At some point the person emerges from the oftentimes rigid ideation usually associated with this stage into a perhaps more all-embracing disposition.

With stage four comes a genuine sense of pride and self-worth. The dissonance often characteristic of the encounter and immersion-emersion stages is usually resolved during this fourth stage. Lastly, the fifth stage is marked by a sustained interest and commitment to Blacks and the plight of Blacks.

Many Blacks who are young and poor feel they have never had a fair chance, nor is that prospect likely. In light of the insults and discrimination they have faced throughout their lives, it is not surprising that as many as do vent their resentment in violence (Hacker, 1992). The sobering demographics signaling the start of this discussion, are often erroneously referred to as descriptors of Black culture when they are more accurately, aberrations of Black culture, created largely by overt and passive racism in general and economic oppression specifically.

It is important to be cognizant, of the tremendous resilience exhibited by the majority of Black families living in America, who manage to survive the racial oppression and racial indifference which appears to be on the rise (Hacker, 1992). When parents, particularly female single parents, maintain a sense of God and spirituality in the home, positive stability will generally accrue to children. (June, 1991) Self-esteem is believed to be a factor of stabilization in Black youth.

BLACK SELF-ESTEEM MEASUREMENT

With respect to the research effort to date, to detect and confirm the degree to which Blacks have positive or negative self-esteem, the incidence of conflicting results is so overwhelming that validity becomes an obvious problem. (Gordon, 1977). This situation yet prevails. It should be noted also, that the various instruments used most often to determine self-esteem, e.g., (Rosenberg and Coopersmith) have not changed substantively in past 30 years, greater acknowledgement of multi-dimensionality of self-concept and self-esteem, notwithstanding.

As Wells (1976) argues, the wide scale acceptance and application of an undefined self-esteem construct has methodological repercussions. Further, confusion at the conceptual level necessarily manifests itself in equal or

greater confusion at the methodological level. Wells (1976) suggests that many validation studies for self-esteem measures present in the literature, have uniformly neglected the first stage in demonstrating construct validity, that of adequately defining and explicating the construct of interest.

For example, Johnson (1990) explored the relationship between underemployment, underpayment, attributions and self-esteem among Black men. He agrees that the ability of Black men to obtain and hold a "good" job is the traditional test of participation in American society. Steady employment with adequate compensation provides purchasing power and social status. It also develops the capabilities, confidence and self-esteem that an individual needs to be a responsible citizen and provides a basis for a stable family life Johnson (1990). However, the study concludes that the self-esteem of Black men, defined operationally in the study by the Rosenberg self-esteem scale, is somehow raised, not lowered by underemployment. Theoretical psychological concepts such as external attribution and racial versus personal self-esteem are offered as mitigating elements which tend to explain the discovery of higher not lower self-esteem. While the Rosenberg self-esteem scale is generally preferred and used, the study and its conclusions raises questions about the validity of the scale in measuring Black self-esteem.

According to Robson (1989), the primary shortcoming of the Rosenberg scale, is that it is inherently vague and lacks

intuitive credibility. Robson indicates that some theorists have suggested that while it may be psychometrically sophisticated, it is conceptually primitive.

When it comes to the measurement of Black self-esteem, a major difficulty associated with instruments that measure self-esteem, rest with the repeated attempts of self concept/self-esteem researchers, to create a culture free instrument. These attempts do not acknowledge the ecological and developmental differences between Black self-esteem and White self-esteem. To assert that self-esteem is not at least tinted, if not marked indelibly, racially and culturally, is a mistake (Wells, 1976; Robson, 1989). Pang, Mizokawa, Morishima and Olstad (1985) disclose that Pacific American (APA) children have been studied with attention to the overall self-concept and to the specific racial and physical self-concepts. Findings have shown that APA children in general do not feel as positive about their physical characteristics as do their White American peers.

The validity of scales and instruments used to examine and assess some aspect of mental development relative to Blacks, have long been questioned (Long, 1925; Wells, 1976; Robson, 1989). In regards to African Americans, both self appraisals and the appraisals of others contribute to a lowered sense of self worth DuBois (1969); Clark (1939); Thomas et al. (1976); Spencer & Markstrom-Adams (1990); Spencer, Brookins & Allen (1985); Kunjufu (1984); Jones

(1972); Cross (1991). These processes have also been used to explain why blacks have poorer self-images than whites, although research using direct measures of self-esteem has provided evidence to the contrary (Hoelter, 1983). This raises questions as to what traditional instruments are measuring when applied to blacks.

Thomas & Sillen (1976) suggests that for the past 25 years, the mental health field has been in the thrusts of a significant evaluation of the role mental health and related professions have played in the continuance of racist ideas and practices regarding human development. These authors also suggest that that psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and other professionals have long recognized that racism was epidemic in our society. They had assumed that their special training and their dedication to humanistic values made them immune and they underestimated the tenacity of tradition, the deep roots of racist thinking in the history of the disciplines concerned with human behavior. An example is G. Stanley Hall, founder of the American Journal of Psychology in 1887 and often referred to as the "father of child study", who described in his work *Adolescence* (1904), Africans, Indians, and Chinese as members of 'adolescent races' in a stage of incomplete growth (Thomas & Sillen, 1976).

Commenting on the efforts of Black psychologists and theory building relative to the psychological functioning of Blacks, Joseph A. Baldwin, chairman of the Psychology Department at Florida A&M University explains that; "...rather than operating as intellectually independent scholars/scientists employing our true creative genius in conceptualizing and explaining the psychological universe from the framework of the true historical, philosophical, and cultural reality of African people, we instead follow the obscure and misrepresenting intellectual leadership of our 'European mentors',...by relying upon their historical, philosophical and cultural reality to direct and inspire our theoretical developments" (Burlew, et al. 1992, p. 49). Baldwin concludes further that the influence of White authorities and sources has been so intense that scholars and theorists have tended, to omit from the academic and scientific literature and thereby 'devalue' the highly relevant theoretical work of Black scholars, scientists and theorists, because such work is not preceded by or concomitant to some Eurocentric-oriented empirical exercise (Burlew, et al. 1992). Avoiding issues raised by Baldwin, has and continues to severely limit the ability of psychologists to

craft relevant and effective solutions to the psycho-socially-related challenges facing millions of Black youth in the United States. Looney (1988, p. 51) raises the question; "When knowledge of human development is largely constructed on White populations, how does a Black in America define self? "

Baldwin contends that the field has failed to recognize significant contributions of Black psychologists and theorists who have sought to understand the psycho-social development of Blacks. For example, a widely used, 500 page graduate level text on developmental psychology, edited by Lerner (1986), fails to discuss racial implications relative to psychological development. It omits the work of Black psychologists, psychiatrists and theorists entirely.

COMMUNITY RECREATION

According to a 1994 project funded by the Skillman Foundation, institutions and processes that have traditionally provided youth guidance, for better or worst, are breaking down. The result is what might be called a guidance gap: today's children are getting less guidance while functioning in a society that bombards them with a wide range of choices and that places many of them at a social, economic, and political disadvantage from the start. Sports and recreation must endeavor to enhance the development of youth in many positive ways. The benefits of sports and recreation extend

beyond physical activity and motor skill development, to social, moral-character development, psychological self-esteem and confidence, educational development, health and well being. In 1991, to emphasize the responsibility of recreation agencies to develop programs designed to enhance self-esteem, the California Park and Recreation Society passed a resolution which contained key principles and recommendations directed towards community service agencies and organizations which includes those engaged in park and recreation. This resolution urges these agencies to take actions that will serve to promote the development of positive self-esteem among the population in general and to facilitate the raising of low self-esteem among Californians who are at-risk in various ways (Soderberg, 1991).

Given earlier comments centering upon the importance of the family in the development of healthy children and adolescents, it is vitally important that it be noted here that; whether the outcome variable is family satisfaction, family interaction, or family stability, leisure activities do appear to be associated with positive outcomes and this is a relatively consistent finding (Othner & Mancini, 1988). The authors do admit to there being only very limited research available.

Csikszentmihalyi & Kleiber (1989, p. 8), in a paper which was prepared for delivery at the Benefits of Leisure Conference revealed suggested that; "...the value of leisure

is not that it offers relaxation, pleasure, or recreation; on the contrary, it requires effort in order to provide a sense of accomplishment and enhanced self-esteem..."

"Leisure may thus offer some unique conditions for self-actualization that more constrained contexts do not, particularly as it allows an individual to broaden his or her experience while involved in culture-affirming practices" (Csikszentmihalyi & Kleiber, 1989; citing Kelly, 1987, p.8). "...Involvement in an activity must be deep, sustained and disciplined to contribute to an emerging sense of self. This is especially important to note at a time when leisure practices are criticized for responding too readily to market demands and to the mass media, helping to perpetuate a superficial consumer mentality, instead of helping to accumulate new and complex experiences" (Csikszentmihalyi & Kleiber, 1989; citing Goodale & Godbey, 1988; Lindar, 1970, pp. 8,9,).

Schorr & Schorr (1988) provide a set of guidelines on how to design recreation programming for youth: (1) a broad spectrum of services, (2) programs which cross when necessary traditional professional and bureaucratic boundaries, (3) program structures which are flexible, (4) programs which see the child within the context of the family and the family within the context of its surroundings, (5) program staff are perceived by participants as individuals who genuinely care about and respect those for whom they are providing a service,

(6) services are coherent and easy to use, (7) program continuity, (8) programs which exhibit the ability to adapt or circumvent traditional professional and bureaucratic limitations when necessary to meet the needs of those they serve and (9) professionals are able to redefine their roles.

There is a lack of scientific information to assist in the design of recreation programming which mirrors Black self-concept and which leads to the development of Black self-esteem. The lack of applicable research is compounded by the absence of a unified theoretical framework for interpreting differences in self-esteem factors and processes between whites, blacks, and other ethnic minority groups. Most published studies use as their basis the marginality and ethnicity perspectives developed by Washburne (1978), which question whether differences in participation are due to the cultural characteristics of particular minority groups or to the social position they occupy in the dominant society (Hutchison, 1988, p.11). Washburne & Wall (1980, p. 1), argue that the "marginality explanation" interprets under-utilization of both city and wild land recreation resources by Blacks as less a reflection of choice than as a consequence of the cumulative effects of social, economic, and education discrimination and segregation practices. By contrast, the "ethnicity perspective" assumes that participation variation may be due to the existence of minority subcultures with unique values and normative systems that are distinct from

those of the American mass-culture which is dominated by a Eurocentric emphasis (Kunjufu, 1984; Jones, 1972).

When designing and providing esteem building recreation programming for Black youth, it is important to recognize that leisure patterns of Blacks are in part, based on their subculture style, or ethnicity. If leisure is an integral reflection of culture, characteristic preferences for leisure activity among Blacks may have developed and been maintained in the same fashion as among Whites (Washburne, 1978).

BLACK ESTEEM AND COMMUNITY RECREATION; Historical View:

"Negro leadership in America has invariably for good or ill, wisely or unwisely sought to win the respect of the dominant majority by achievement; to attain equality by proof of equality in the various phases of life; to establish the good will by loyalty to the traditions and ideas of their country. Nowhere has this need of proof of equality been more marked than in athletics" (Carter, 1933, p. 208).

Henderson (1936), provides a brief yet captivating glimpse of the famous boxer Joe Louis as he discloses that Louis had secured the admiration of millions. This author states that Joe Louis was to some, a symbolic Sphinx of Egypt, or a human replica of Rodin's "Thinker". An association was made between Louis, who commanded the medium of mind and muscle and Einstein who calculated cause and effect. Authors,

Hughes, Meltzer & Lincoln (1983), suggest that to millions of Negroes, Joe Louis was not only a great fighter but he was also a symbol of the potential progress of the Negro people under democracy. They recall that on the night of June 19th, 1936, at Yankee Stadium in New York, when Max Schmeling knocked Joe Louis out, in the twelfth round, hundreds of Black people wept openly on Harlem streets. When Joe Louis climbed into the ring on that eventful night of June 19, 1936, every Black man, woman and child within listening distance of a radio, climbed into the ring with him. Joe Louis was to have secured for all, unquestioned respect and dignity. When Joe lost, they felt they all had lost. "...Because it believes that the physical and mental health of any community depends to a large extent, upon the use of free time by all groups, Community Service is increasing its efforts to organize recreation for the colored people of America." (Atwell, 1923, p. 7) The emphasis on more community recreation for Black communities was lead by Ernest T. Atwell, then Director of the Bureau of Colored Work Community Service, Department of Playground and Recreation Association of America. "Regular play together under supervision is the surest way for colored children and young people to get training for health, team work and good citizenship which will work toward the progress of the race. The social, artistic and civic activities that are part of community recreation programs for colored people of all ages are giving them happiness and self-expression and

making them more mindful of the welfare of the group."
(Opportunity, 1924, p. 22)

According to Johnson (1984), the Douglass Center possibly afforded African Americans to participate in recreation. The Douglass Center, still operates today in Kalamazoo, Michigan. African Americans in the community and their families all knew, and many white workers ultimately learned, that Douglass meant opportunity (Johnson, 1984). Douglass provided African Americans of all ages an opportunity to learn by participating in activities previously not available to them. Douglass provided educational opportunities as well as recreation. Those who visited and used the Douglass Center developed a great sense of community pride (Johnson, 1984)

Whether it was a "Negro Unit" of the Boy Scouts of America (Opportunity, 1932), the summer camp initiatives under the Roosevelt administration (Canady, 1937, p. 182), Philanthropist Julius Rosenwald's YMCA initiatives (Arthur, 1923, p. 16), or the recreation work of the Works Progress Administration (Meyer, 1938, p. 75; Lawson, 1937, p. 202) or the recreation programs of the Urban League, an early pioneer of recreation programs for Blacks (Gordon, 1936, p. 206), a productive psychological state, (i.e., positive self-esteem), was a major intent of these recreation programs designed for African American children.

CHAPTER THREE

SYSTEMS FORMULATION MODEL,
SELF-ESTEEM COGNITION, AND BLACK SELF-CONCEPT

While living in Detroit, Michigan during the early 80's, this author became involved in the design and delivery of motivational self-esteem seminars directed at Black adolescents and the parents of those adolescents. The author has conducted more than 150 seminars involving more than 4,000 individuals ranging developmentally from preschool to retirement. In these seminars, self-esteem was approached as it is by many others, as a one-dimensional expression of the regard one had for oneself. These experiences, seminars and resulting interactions, along with Ph.D. courses at Michigan State University, clearly indicate that self-esteem is a deep sub-conscious feelings one has about one's given "aggregate personhood" and "aggregated personhood".

It has also become clear that a systems approach provides an integrative and thereby much more holistic

rendering of the self-esteem anatomy. While there is still not much scientific or professional literature regarding a more holistic Black self-esteem construct, it is important that the concept and application protocols are communicated broadly across human service disciplines, especially to recreation professionals involved with programming for youth-at-risk.

The author has had the opportunity to experience and study various types and degrees of Black self-esteem deprivation and acts that negatively effected Black esteem. For example, advertisements aimed at Black communities imploring residents to consume liquor and cigarettes. Black adolescent boys were observed referring categorically to adolescent Black girls as bitches and hoes. Black adolescents frequently paid to watch movies that commonly depicted Blacks as impoverished, caricature like social misfits.

The author's observations of Black adolescents, made over the past ten years in a variety of natural settings, including, field studies on Detroit city busses, consulting with community organizations providing recreation for Blacks, working in a Lansing, Michigan middle school with a large population of African Americans, contributed to the development of theoretical propositions regarding the contextual character of self-esteem.

NATURE/NURTURE SELF-EVALUATION MODEL:

The literature clearly suggest that feeling good about oneself is an inefficient description of positive self-esteem. The model presented next describes key elements of the "nature/nurture self-evaluation model" Kafajouffe (1994). The model incorporates a basic "neuro-psycho-social" systems approach to understanding the self-esteem construct. This model is presented to add greater precision to simplistic, though widely accepted "feel-good" definitions of self-esteem. It recognizes and incorporates biological as well as environment factors associated with self-esteem.

There are gaps in current literature and research regarding what Kafajouffe (1995) refers to as the neurological formatting and functioning relative to self-evaluation. Also, the neurological "synaptic gap" and the ways in which brain cells or neurons fire and communicate to elicit behavior, in response to positive or negative esteem building environmental stimuli, have not been sufficiently discussed in the literature. Therefore, the model is still not fully developed. The model does however, embody a great deal more self-esteem factors than the literature has given in terms of the cognition associated with self-esteem.

The model, unlike other self-esteem constructs, explicitly recognizes an individual's biology as important in determining self-esteem. The inclusion of biology is based on

literature that contends that Black esteem processes must include a biological reality that co-acts with environment (Gottlieb, 1991; Lerner, 1991; Greenough, 1991; Gottesman, 1991; Cairns 1991). Gottlieb's (1991) developmental levels (1) genes (2) cytoplasm (3) cell (4) organ (5) organ system (6) organism (7) behavior (8) environment, are components in the model. Biological primacy is incorporated in the model because the biological human organism must exist before the ecologically dependent self-esteem processes and associative behaviors can be discussed.

$$\text{Self-esteem} = [\text{DNA} + \text{CP} + \text{C} + \text{O} + \text{OS} + \text{HO} = \text{PHD}] + [\text{E} + \text{SE} + \text{RSC} + \text{RCD} + \text{EA} + \text{CSCD} + \text{SC} = \text{OHDsp}]$$

Deoxyribonucleic Acid - (DNA)
 Cytoplasm - (CP)
 Cell - (C)
 Organ - (O)
 Organ Systems - (OS)
 Human Organism - (HO)
 Phylogenetic Human Development - (PHD)
 Environment - (E)
 Sensory Experience - (SE)
 Random Self Consciousness - (RSC)
 Reoccurring Contextual Demand - (RCD)
 Emotional Attachment - (EA)
 Contextual Self Consciousness Domains- (OCSCD)
 Self-Concept - (SC)
 Ontogenetic Human Development - (OHDsp)

Phylogenetic Human Development:

$$[\text{DNA} + \text{CP} + \text{C} + \text{O} + \text{OS} + \text{HO} = \text{PHD}]$$

Phylogenetic human development is generally understood within developmental psychology in terms of placing all human

genotypes within a common genetic or biological framework that enables the separation of our species from others. It is that which makes humans human. The model enumerates biologically based elements, and thus defines major contributions of "nature" in the total development of a human being with high or low self-esteem.

Healthy people regardless where they live do not have dramatic differences in terms of let's say, basic bodily functioning, e.g., sympathetic and para-sympathetic nervous systems, etc. Substantively, if not entirely based upon genetic wiring, "neural switching stations" situated at various points along the epigenetic pathways of development, which through interaction with one or more life contexts, turn on the "genetic juice" that elicits human development (Greenough, 1991; Lerner, 1991; Gottlieb, 1991). These elements, if explicated to a greater degree, may serve to better explain self-esteem acquisition. The current self-esteem literature is very much incomplete in this area. This global description of organismic functioning relative to human beings and self-esteem acquisition is a basis for understanding the existence of a global self-esteem measure applicable to both Black and White adolescents.

There is support in the literature that an organismic or genetic description of human development is a useful beginning when one discusses developmental issues such as self-esteem. The fact that there may be adolescents who are better self-

esteem cognizers than others, and thereby in possession of more positive self-esteem, may be explained in part by variance in the relative biologic health of these adolescents. Given that biologic or physiologic health influences self-esteem, positive prenatal and early health care may be important considerations in the acquisition of positive self-esteem.

Ontogenetic Human Development; self-perception (OHD,sp):

[E + SE + RSC + RCD + EA + CSCD + SC]

In contrast to phylogenetic human development, ontogenetic human development speaks to the individuated probabilistic epigenetic evolvement of a human being. Positive self-perception or self-esteem is power. The power of positive self-perception, manifests itself in one's ability to shape one's aspirations and direct subsequent behavior in positively conceived and well-charted directions. Positive self-perception, which is positive self-esteem is a psycho-emotional phenomenon, capable of driving persons to significant levels of success.

Environment (E):

There is widespread agreement in the literature, that environment plays a significant role in human development and

the acquisition of self-esteem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Cairns, 1991; Cobbs, 1968; Coopersmith, 1967; Erikson, 1968; Hamachek, 1990; Jones, 1972; Lerner, 1991; Kunjufu, 1984; Wilson, 1978).

Sensory Experience (SE):

Genetics influences behavioral structure, however, Lerner (1986) also points out that "if the passive organism has a form -a structure - it must be one derived from the environment." If the environment were a non-structured entity it could not easily give a structure to the organism. He argues that the structure of the organism is received from the structure of the environment with which it interfaces.

Light rays, sound waves, energy forces, molecular and chemical structures are subsumed under the heading, "nurture," and comprise the "cognitive input vessels." They enable a human-being to experience and learn fully the physical world in which they live. From these cognitive input vessels, a given human will extract a certain individual meaning and physical essence of life. The senses are conductors of "ecological sensory current," and provide the physiological structures by which families socialize adolescents. What adolescents' see their parents do - hear their parents say - how they are touched or not touched by parents - what they

taste - what they smell, initially in the home, form the cornerstone of long term identity.

Eyes, ears, nose, skin sensors and taste buds are conductors of "ecological sensory current" and provide physiological structures by which families socialize adolescents. These sensory receptors make it possible for adolescents to cognitively construct an ultimate identity, indeed, an ultimate reality. What adolescents see parents do, hear parents say, as well as how they are touched or not touched by parents form the cornerstone of long term identity.

Generally individuals, regardless of race, ethnicity or gender, have the same inventory of natural sensory receptors. The inventory of natural sensory receptors found in an African American youth will also be found in a European, Hispanic and Asian youth. Also, the detection of sensory data, regardless of ethnicity, will be accomplished in much the same manner. It is also likely that the mechanisms necessary in rendering an ultimate determination of self-value operate in very much the same manner and sequence regardless of race or ethnicity.

Variance in self-valuation is probably influenced by (1) qualitative and quantitative composition of environmental sensory information, (2) skill of subject in the acquisition of such information and, (3) skill of subject in the use of cognitive faculties. The relative level of maturation possessed by the subject influences these skills and information.

Adolescents will, through the detection of sensory data contained within these cognitive input vessels, begin to make critical assessments as to their own relative worth as human beings (Kelly, 1982; Lerner, 1991; Coopersmith, 1967; Erikson, 1968; Hamachek, 1990). They will seek to understand their existence on the basis of how they "stack up" against other humans in society. The cognitive inputs in question, will eventually lead to a mirror set of behavioral manifestations. The behavioral manifestations begin to give the individual away, in terms what they really feel about themselves, whether positive, negative or indifferent.

The literature suggests that individuals with high positive self-esteem are internally driven and at some point begin to derive their high sense of value without the aid of anyone or anything outside of themselves. It is often said that genuine self-esteem comes from within. It has also been hypothesized that persons having high esteem do not let the outside world determine how they should value themselves once a certain level of maturity and understanding about "self" has been reached. These individuals develop into more expert detectors and cognizers. They have learned to detect from the environment and cognize only that sensory data which yields positive self-valuations. Such individuals gain more from the sensory data they detect, than do less proficient cognizers.

A significant problem exists with respect to the sensory data most often projected throughout society regarding

Africans generally and African Americans in particular. So much of the sensory data available within the environment for detection by Black adolescents is of a racist nature. It also emphasizes a separateness from society rather than a oneness with society. Fromm (1956) has argued that the experience of separateness creates anxiety. Indeed, Fromm believes separateness to be the source of all anxiety. Being separate means being cut off, without any capacity to use my human powers. Separateness also arouses shame and the feeling of guilt. Such feelings of course, are directly counter to high positive self-esteem and what Fromm refers to as a sense of at-onement.

There exist within the general community, many points of origin for the sensory data adolescents use in the self valuation process. Several of the those ecological-contextual points of origin are: businesses, radio, health care systems, textbooks, magazines, academic programs, churches, movies, newspapers, teachers, parents, legal systems, television, recreation programs, government, and people in general.

Maslow (1971) theorizes that "nurture" explains 100 percent of human development and "nature" explains 100 percent of human development. Humans bring to the situation certain cognitive faculties and then actively engage the environment to shape it, and are shaped by it. It is by virtue of this cognitive experience that self-evaluations are produced.

"To assert that human development is a product of interaction between the growing human organism and its environment is to state what is almost a commonplace in behavioral science. To be specific, the principle asserts that behavior evolves as a function of the interplay between person and environment expressed symbolically in Kurt Lewin's classic equation: $[B = f(PE)]$ (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 16)." Self-esteem of adolescents are influenced and shaped by the experiences of those adolescents. Many social learning theorists such as Bussey & Perry (1984) believe that children continuously refine their conceptions of the sorts of behavior society considers appropriate or inappropriate for people like themselves, as they develop. Children base these conceptions on a variety of social learning experiences.

"Thus, the most basic process of development is a relational one. Scientists who study only one component of this relational system are appraising a partial and incomplete sub-process. In other words, in the analysis of basic processes in development, the only approach that suffices is relational analysis (Lerner, 1991, p. 28)." It must obviously be the case that environment acts upon self; acts upon the environment.

The familial or home experience of a given adolescent plays very critically in the ultimate valuation that adolescent places upon him or herself self-esteem wise. When the home experience is both positive and nurturing, a major

dimension of self-concept has been satisfied and adolescents are more likely to develop high self-esteem. The psychological landscape of the adolescent's home frontier is a critically important experiential dimension of self-concept and self-esteem. Distorted or otherwise dysfunctional home environments will impact negatively upon self-valuation. When an adolescent embarks upon Maslow's path of development, and proceeds successfully from vitamin needs to meta motivation, observing key landmarks along the way, e.g., deficiency needs - deficiency cognition, meta needs - meta cognition, peak experience - transient self actualization, (Maslow, 1971), his or her initial guide and benefactor has been family.

Learning is defined by Ewer (1929) as a cognitive process whereby an individual will modify their reactions or response to environmental stimuli over time. How the adolescent in question reacts to, and feels about her/his self-image, will depend largely on whether parents display positive high esteem behaviors including affection, teaching, rewarding and disciplining. Bronfenbrenner (1986 p.738) suggests that, " It is essential to determine which policies and programs can do most to enable families to perform the magic feat of which they alone are capable: making and keeping human beings human." What is distressing however, is the fairly constant bombardment of both single and paired parents with social feedback which tends to undermine the parent's

ability to convey a positive sense of self to the child (McAdoo, 1988).

A considerable number of the Black men and women, who contribute positively and consistently to society are individuals who were raised by a single mother, grandmother, great aunt or single father. A one parent home with an adequate economy and moral stability is infinitely preferable to a home environment where deficient values, bad language, and poverty status, are multiplied by two or more "adolescent/adults" who are not emotionally equipped to provide parenting. Clearly, what is being taught is as important as the number of people teaching. Granted, the task of creating high esteem adolescents is perhaps made more difficult in a single parent home. However, programming single parents to feel inadequate where child rearing is concerned and programming the children in single parent homes to believe that they are in great risk and peril because they have but one parent supervising and caring for, undermines the parenting function.

Social institutions have without sufficient understanding and sensitivity to self-esteem issues, label the children of single parents "at risk". The use of the label, "at risk" may impact negatively on the self-esteem of Black adolescents who are constantly reminded by parents, teachers, bureaucrats and various media, that they are "at-risk". It may be that many of these adolescents begin to think of

themselves as major risks to their parents and the community. Clearly, they can associate nothing genuinely good or positive with the label "at risk", occasional windfalls like free tickets to various sporting events notwithstanding. In fact, they may internalize a measure of shame each time the label is applied to them. At some point, there may be a build-up of "at risk shame" sufficient to diminish self-esteem.

Random Self-Consciousness (RSC):

Random self-consciousness (RSC) is the random, but decidedly "me" oriented awareness or alertness regarding the world which envelops an individual (Freedman, et al., 1975). These authors also suggest that an individual's reticular activating system facilitates this awareness or alertness. RSC reveals a physical ontological dimension of experience. The term biologic is used to draw a distinction between this and more socially anchored self-consciousness.

An individual's self consciousness, which is a major contributor to perception (Freedman, 1975) can be viewed as a metaphoric stereophonic radio on which "life-noises" (sensory stimuli) are constantly played. An individual's existence can be enriched by virtue of their ability to render these "life noises," into intelligible schema stations comprising, contextual news flashes, reports of emotional climate, and reassuring stimulating melodies of Perceptual knowledge.

Neisser (1976) argues that schemata can be likened to a body of general abstract recollections (knowings), found deep within the recesses of long term memory. When these prior experiences or recollections are sufficiently reoccurring, emotionally charged, and organized into particular domains of recollections, contextually specific schemas are created. An individual's sense of consciousness influences perceptions important in valuations of self.

If esteem deprivation is a disorder of consciousness, as hypothesized in this dissertation, then the Reticular Activating System (RAS) has an impact upon valuations of self. The reticular activating system (RAS) acts as an arousing mechanism that increases alertness when stimulated. Freedman et al., (1975) disclose that there are experimental studies that have demonstrated that stimulation of the RAS can have both facilitory and inhibitory effects. Research experiments have shown that from a behavioral standpoint, the RAS, besides playing a central role in sleep and arousal, appears to be involved with attention, memory, and habituation.

Sensory stimuli serve a two-fold function from the point of view of consciousness. First, they bring information from the environment to the cerebral cortex, thereby fulfilling a cognitive function. Second, through what are termed collateral pathways, environmental stimuli arouses and alerts the organism, thereby fulfilling a consciousness-raising function. Incoming sensory data, depending upon its

level of significance, elicit impulses which are sent to the RAS, producing a state of alertness or reduced alertness in regards to consciousness (Freedman et al.,1975). It is the opinion of Neisser (1976), that consciousness undergoes changes throughout the course of life because we learn to pick up new sorts of information in new ways. Theorists refer to this process as cognitive development in some contexts and perceptual learning in others. Consciousness raising is what has to occur in regards to increased levels of positive self-esteem.

Returning to our radio metaphor, the reticular activating system will limit non-useful static, inherent in life noise. It thus enhances the tonal quality of schema stations that may ultimately comprise consciousness. This is the process of perceiving. Schemata is the by-product. When during the mental activity of perceiving, an emotionally dominant schema emerges, the volume is turned up accordingly. In other words, the consciousness of the individual will be amplified and raised to a higher level. The eyes, ears, skin sensors, nose, and taste-buds are on/off switches to consciousness. For an individual to make use of sensory stimuli, he or she must detect and attend to sensory stimuli. In other words the individual must be "turned to the right station." Detection and attention can be likened to a tuning dial on our metaphoric radio.

It has been observed that the RAS is responsible for a two functions. One is the reduction of other sensory information that might compete for attention. The other involves the integration of the sensory information being attended to with the continuously changing background of environmental sensory data. A sleeping mother who wakes to the sound of her baby, but not to louder noises, has been cited as an example of this function. Similarly, a person may be able to hear his name called in the midst of a noisy crowd (Freedman et al., 1975). Essentially, a person is made aware of the schemata station to which they should be tuned. Schemata stations can and do include such things as: skin color, hair type, physical size, treatment by mother, treatment by father, treatment by teachers, treatment by employer, treatment by social workers, treatment by community leaders(e.g., recreation leaders), accomplishments of mother, accomplishments of father, personal accomplishments, religion/spirituality, recreation skills, academic skills, social skills, and others.

Habituation may be defined as the method by which the nervous system reduces or prevents response to inconsequential repeated stimuli (Freedman et. al., 1975). Messages (stimuli) such as "Feel good about yourself" "God didn't make any junk" "Your ancestors were kings and queens" "Black is beautiful", aimed at "low esteem" African American youth may have become sufficiently habituated to be only marginally effective in

generating positive self-esteem. It may be necessary to introduce more dynamic and creative stimuli that encourage the use of greater numbers of sensory receptors. This is the composition of stimuli that will receive meaningful focused attention by, so-called African American "youth at risk".

Focused attention should not however, imply automatic retention in long term memory as schemata. What focused attention may have simply have done, is give the stimuli receiving focused attention a status worthy of short term memory processing or working memory. There may not be sufficiently dominant positive schemata to allow full integration of new stimuli with long term memory of past experience (existing dominant schemata). Indeed, if existing dominant schemata is of a negative self-devaluing composition, the novel and positive, incoming stimuli may not be embraced and given long term memory status immediately. However, the recreation context can be an effective context in which to create such stimuli. It may in fact, take considerable time and attention, perhaps at the short term memory processing level, before the new novel stimuli is allowed to enter long term memory for purposes of building new positive and more receptive self-valuing schemata. It should also be noted that many individuals seek to affirm negative as well as positive self-images.

Freedman et al., (1975) & Neisser (1976) suggest that memory powers and sustains consciousness. It is thought that a

structure called the hippocampus is actually responsible for imputing incoming sensory information into long term memory (Bailey et al., 1975). Emotion and repetition appear to be key factors in terms of the information that actually gets stored. This is an important structure within the reticular activating system. Short term memory may also be related to the role long term memory plays in powering consciousness.

Stations on an actual radio could consist of a weather station, jazz station, light rock station, etc. The cognitive stations on the metaphoric radio, could consist of mathematics, riding a bicycle, reading, writing, dating, running, parenting, painting a watercolor, self-valuation of hair, etc. The station selected by an adolescent will be one that is enriching, illuminating or useful within a specific life context.

The hippocampus serves the function of depositing sensory data or schema building material entering short term (working) memory into long term memory, occasionally referred to as schema memory. It is said that emotion is closely associated with the hippocampus and its function.

Reoccurring Contextual Dimensions (RCD):

As adolescents grow, they become increasingly aware of and alert to reoccurring life patterns and contextual dimensions. Over time, these contextual dimensions are

aggregated into contextual self-consciousness domains that lend meaning to life. Psycho-emotional stability is thereby added to the life of an adolescent who awakens daily to a similar surrounding comprising recognizable people and objects of existence.

Adolescents discern the relevant patterns and major contexts of their own lives, e.g., home, school, community life. If they place positive valuations on emerging contextual self-consciousness domains, psycho-emotional stability is enhanced further. Positive and negative valuations of contextual self-consciousness domains will be mediated by adult humans, to a great extent, by virtue of the adults' ability to render positive validation and solidification of the adolescent's place in the world. Adults interacting with the adolescent in this way is an important part of the self-esteem building process.

Emotional Attachment:

It is generally accepted, at least at the conceptual level, that the contextual self-consciousness domains (CSCD) or self-concept has a hierarchical character. This hierarchical nature is hypothesized to be a result of the degree of emotional attachment allocated to one domain over another.

The sympathetic nervous system may influence the ultimate determination of one's self-esteem. The sympathetic nervous system regulates an individual's vital functions, e.g., blood pressure, during times of perceived threat. This mechanism is activated any time an individual is presented with a physical or psycho-emotionally threatening situation. It prepares that person to fight the perceived threat or challenge or evade it by one means or another. Everything quickens, the heart rate, the breath rate, everything. The body also begins to excrete certain hormones into the body and the muscles become very tense. Each time we experience threatening or challenging sensory data, we experience these threats in a physical/biological as well as psychological way.

Certain types of threatening or challenging sensory data may have a negative impacts on the self-esteem valuing process. As an example, an African American male adolescents who daily hears, "you're no good, just like your daddy," or "you're an endangered species," or "you're an at-risk-youth" may suffer enduring psycho-physical impacts that can interfere with "self-esteem cognition." For many African American adolescents this is a daily reality. The sympathetic nervous system may therefore impede the cognitive ability of the adolescent to render an accurate judgement of self. There is a need for research in this area.

Contextual Self Consciousness Domains (CSCD):

Through a kind of "bio-social metabolism", CSCD's are generated and further differentiated over time into area specific schema or schemata. Neisser (1976) also reports that a schema is that portion of the entire perceptual cycle that is internal to the perceiver, modifiable by experience, and somehow specific to what is being perceived. In one sense, a schema is like a format in a computer-programming language. A schema also functions as a plan. This plan has to do with getting more useful sensory information and functions to eliminate dissonant or inconsistent states of mind (Festinger, 1966).

Taste and preference related to perceptual schema can change as adolescents develop. At some point along a vertical cognitive plane within consciousness, perceptual skills improve. Individuals are able to better identify stimuli of a higher cognitive tonal quality, sophistication and usefulness in raising consciousness in specific areas of cognition (e.g., self-valuation).

The identity versus identity confusion stage described by Erikson (1968) may in part determine "dominant self image" or dominant identity." This dominant identity has a similar enabling function as a computer operating system (DOS). A 6.2 DOS version is much more powerful than DOS 2.0 and is able to run more complicated and involved software applications. The

same line of reasoning can be applied to dominant self image. When dominant self image is upgraded (e.g., 2.0 to 6.2 version), an individual will be more capable of extracting and incorporating self-esteem building stimuli from the environment.

Men, women, boys and girls, whether Black or White, act and interact based upon the image they have of themselves or the image projected upon them by society. Ecological and contextual sensory data in the form of the visual and auditory imagery society provides will often greatly influence the Dominant Self Image and resultant social behavior.

Self-Concept (SC):

Self-Concept emerges from specifically organized schema, which emerges from contextual self-consciousness domains. Self-concept domains and accompanying dimensions represent area specific schema, e.g., hair or home or race. A given schema or specific cognitive station is both, a static definition of the individual's past existence and is the basis ever evolving existence, i.e., a probabilistic epigenesis (Lerner, 1991).

The author originally included (cognitive experience) as the second of five major self-concept domains. For Black adolescents to feel genuinely good about themselves they must have positive and enriching experiences relative to each self-

concept domain. These experiences will typically be manifested within the following contexts: (1) home (2) school (3) general community, e.g., recreation centers.

Cognitive experience can be viewed as the facilitating perceptual framework within which all self valuations are made for specific self-concept domains. The following self-concept domains are hypothesized to be the foci of self valuations: (1) physical appearance/condition, (2) achievement or accomplishment, (3) knowledge and, (4) skill.

The first of four major self-concept domains is physical appearance/condition. The physical domain of Black self-concept includes: (1) hair, (2) skin color, (3) size of lips and nose, (4) relative size/proportions, (5) clothing and, 6) physical health/conditioning. An Afro-American adolescent who respects and genuinely appreciates their generally permanent physical features, e.g., skin color, hair, relative size, etc., will have satisfied a very important requisite for productive self-esteem.

Harper & Marshall (1991) suggest that the association between low self-esteem and problematic health and physical development should indicate to some extent, the power of the media in regards to determining the ideal body-image of women and the extreme difficulty adolescent girls, and even older females have in acquiring these images. Coopersmith (1967) argues that there are a number of physical characteristics that could conceivably be related to self-esteem.

Hale-Benson (1986, pp. 192,193) state that "The issue of appearance is critical in documenting that the oppression of Black people has been more severe than that of other ethnic groups in America. If a graded continuum of appearance characteristics were constructed, we would have to concede that the most valued physical characteristics in America have been keen facial features, fair skin, blue eyes, and blond, straight, long hair. Black (African) people have more of the polar opposites of those features than any other ethnic group - broad facial features, dark skin, dark eyes, and dark, kinky, short hair. Black people are clearly most at risk to be oppressed because of differences in appearance."

Kunjufu (1984, p. 25) argues that "If America and its numerous media define beauty as light skin, long hair, fine features and any color eyes but brown as beautiful, haven't they also defined ugly? It must mean the exact opposite. It must mean dark skin, short hair, broad features, and brown eyes are ugly. In the best selling children's book, "Colors Around Us", by Vivian Church, I show pictures of all different complexions. My observations have been that the pre-school and primary applaud for all the children, while the upper grades have their accolades for that child who best represents an European definition of beauty. Have you ever wondered about a culture where the older children become, the less self-esteem they possess." Significant pressure is directed towards African American girls and women to wear their hair in the

"politically correct" European styles. The problem is that there is the risk that this will result in internalizing self denial regarding a very fundamental dimension of their self-concept, natural hair type.

Hair texture and appearance appears to be more important to younger and younger Afro-American children. For example, recently the author overheard a seven-year-old light brown skinned girl tell a darker, shorter haired African American girl that "your mama needs to straighten your hair so it can be pretty like mine." These young girls had already learned whose (hair) was pretty and whose was not. Talbot (1984), an African American who grew up in Canada and author of Growing up Black in Canada, intimates that she could write her whole life story around "hair".

Adolescent Black males are also influenced by negative attitudes and actions regarding African American features. As a case in point, recently the author had occasion to counsel an African American man approximately 40 to 45 years of age. He was concerned with the maladaptive behaviors of his 15 year old step son being the result his mother's negative disposition toward physical features of her son and other Africans and African-Americans generally. The mother would frequently say that the son should "hold in his lips so they didn't appear so large." She would also urge her son to "pinch his nose to prevent it from spreading further." This practice

of pinching the noses of African American babies was prevalent, during the 50's.

The second self-concept domain that contributes to Black-esteem is achievement or accomplishment. When an adolescent continues to accomplish meaningful personal goals, (e.g., academic or cultural or athletic), increments of esteem are cognitively deposited into their schemata account and locked away in long term memory. Black adolescents who have not realized meaningful accomplishments often have relatively lower levels of self-esteem.

Increments of esteem also accrue by virtue of those accomplishments made by the nuclear and extended family members with whom the adolescent associates him or herself. "The sense of confidence and authority expressed by the parents within the household may contribute materially to the child's conviction that his parents are successful. Thus, we may conclude that children with high self-esteem are more likely to have parents who provide indirect impressions and direct experiences of success (Coopersmith, 1967, p.117)." Accomplishments made by members of the adolescent's racial group, also serve as transmitters of Black esteem, (e.g., parents, athletes, entertainers, teachers). Unfortunately, for some Afro-American adolescents, pimps, hustlers, and gang members may also be transmitters of esteem.

The relationships between racial group accomplishment and self-esteem mean that Afro-American history can be a

valuable and psycho-socially potent instrument of adolescent socialization. Unfortunately, the current Euro-centric skewness of history lessons taught in American schools is problematic as it relates to the identities of the Black adolescents.

The third self-concept domain that influences self-esteem is knowledge. A person's perception of their level of knowledge in specific areas is very important in the development and maintenance of productive self-esteem. Knowledge of oneself includes those dimensions evident in the model, as well as others of a more narrowly conceived idiosyncratic nature. The knowledge areas that adolescents perceive are valued by the broader community are very important. The "God dimension" within the knowledge domain, includes a broadly conceptualized spiritual focus and not any particular conceptualization of God. When parents, particularly female single parents, maintain a sense of God and spirituality in the home, positive stability will generally accrue to children. (June, 1991)

The last self-concept aggregate domain is perceived skill level. Skill, the ability to apply knowledge effectively in the completion of tasks, leads ultimately to positive esteem. This can include: (1) social skills such as verbal communication, non-verbal communication, written communication, critical thinking, positive situational leadership; (2) educational skills including reading, study

skills, planning, positive ideation, career exploration; (3) survival skills such as entrepreneurship, conflict resolution (saving face), stress management, self defense skills, street skills, cooking/sewing; (4) leisure skills including crafts, chess/board games, roller skating, fine art, cultural exploration, performing arts (dancing, singing, acting, etc.), (5) sports skills such as running, jumping, and athletic skills and; (6) career development skills such as letter/resume writing, business language, job seeking

In summary, self-esteem exists as the enduring conscious and sub-conscious value one places on oneself in specific regard to physical appearance and conditioning, accomplishments, knowledge and skills. Self-esteem involves feelings and valuations, both good and bad.

CHAPTER FOUR

DEVELOPMENT OF A BLACK ESTEEM ASSESSMENT TOOL

The literature indicates that the appropriate measurement of the self-esteem of Afro-Americans has been problematic. To an extent this is because in most cases the various instrumentation employed for measurement purposes have not been based on contextually relevant empirical observation. This chapter presents two pilot (exploratory) investigations which provided the basis for the development of an assessment tool for measuring self-esteem of African-American youth.

The pilot test was part of an on-going effort to design a more valid, multi-dimensional self-esteem assessment tool that can be used on African American adolescents. The questionnaire consisted of 110 items that may constitute and provide a relevant measure of self-esteem for African American adolescents. These items were based on literature and empirical observations of different factors that appear to influence self-esteem of African American youth. Contained

within various items on the questionnaire were certain perceptual constructs that are believed to differentiate a "Black Self-Concept".

The 110 item questionnaire was administered to two purposeful samples of 21 women and 21 men employed in a cross-section of professional and non-professional occupations. The sample of women consisted of all African-American women ranging in age from 26 years to 70 years, all of whom resided in the Lansing, Michigan. The sample included a 44 year old government supervisor, a university librarian in her late 40's, a 31 year old college student, a 70 year old retired federal government worker, a 51 year old factory worker, a 49 year old systems analyst, a 35 year old teacher, a 44 year old elementary school principal, a 37 year old waste treatment plant supervisor and doctoral student, a 40 year old human services professional, a 44 year old home maker and political aspirant, a 39 year old mother and college student, a 40 year old health care professional and entrepreneur, a 43 year old college academic counselor, a 43 year old guidance counselor, a 38 year old attorney, a 26 year old lab technician, a 45 year old program administrator, a 40 year old educational book distributor, a 28 year old nurse, and a 33 year old nurse. Additionally, all sample members were either parents of African American youth or employed in a capacity wherein they supervised or taught African American youth.

The purpose of the pilot study was to identify factors

of Black self-esteem to be used to develop a multi-dimensional, culturally relevant scale to measure Black adolescent self-esteem. The first sample constituted women because it was felt that in all cultures women initially and significantly (not exclusively) transmit self-esteem dimensions to the child during infancy and early childhood.

Sample members were initially selected, purely on the basis that they were considered to be Black women who possessed the ability and willingness to express their feelings regarding the self-esteem of 10-15 year old Black adolescents. A 10 item Likert scale was used to identify those who had a positive self-esteem level and an inclination towards an Afrocentric lifestyle. It was felt that someone whose orientation was more Eurocentric, would perhaps be significantly limited in their ability to render judgements pertaining specifically to Afrocentric self-esteem criterion. Scale questions 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 specifically addressed Afrocentricity. Women who tended to demonstrate a group orientation that appeared to be more Eurocentric than Afrocentric, were dropped from the sample. Additionally, only those women who were assessed to have positive self-esteem were included in the sample. Two women were eliminated from the sample based on the results of the screening.

AFROCENTRIC SCREENING ESTEEM SCALE

1. I have an attractive physical appearance.

___ Strongly ___ Agree ___ Neither Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly
 Agree nor Disagree Disagree

2. My life has harmony because I am in harmony with God,
 the source of all good.

___ Strongly ___ Agree ___ Neither Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly
 Agree nor Disagree Disagree

3. My life experiences have been positive.

___ Strongly ___ Agree ___ Neither Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly
 Agree nor Disagree Disagree

4. I feel an unbreakable connection to my African ancestors,
 African children yet unborn, all of nature, and the entire
 African community.

___ Strongly ___ Agree ___ Neither Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly
 Agree nor Disagree Disagree

5. I am an accomplished person.

___ Strongly ___ Agree ___ Neither Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly
 Agree nor Disagree Disagree

6. I attend African cultural events whenever possible
 because it is important in terms of my psychological
 health.

___ Strongly ___ Agree ___ Neither Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly
 Agree nor Disagree Disagree

7. I am a knowledgeable person.

___ Strongly ___ Agree ___ Neither Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly
 Agree nor Disagree Disagree

8. Holistic, best describes my thinking style.

___ Strongly ___ Agree ___ Neither Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly
 Agree nor Disagree Disagree

9. I am a skillful person.

___ Strongly ___ Agree ___ Neither Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly
 Agree nor Disagree Disagree

10. I believe in terms of family love, there is no concept of mother-in-law, there is only mother; there is no concept of father-in-law, there is only father; there is no concept of sister-in-law nor half sister, there is only sister, there is no concept of brother-in-law nor half brother, there is only brother.

___ Strongly ___ Agree ___ Neither Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly
 Agree nor Disagree Disagree

The initial sample of men were all African Americans ranging in age from 26 to 54 years. The sample included: a 45 year old psychologist; three entrepreneurs ages 37, 39 and 48; a 40 year old engineer; a 32 year old state trooper; a 44 year old college math professor; a couple of program administrators 42 and 51 years of age; a 53 year old public school administrator; a 38 year old purchasing agent; a 45 year old realtor; a 26 year old college student; a 41 year old public relations specialist; a 41 year old accountant; a 45 year old college professor; a 36 year old marketing specialist; a 47 year old higher education specialist; a compliance specialist age 54; a 39 year old trainer and a 40 year old legislative analyst. The method employed to derive the sample was identical to that use to develop the sample of women.

The structured telephone interviews were conducted over a 45 day time frame. Because of the length of the instrument, it was administered during three twenty minute sessions. The women comprising the final sample were provided information on

the goals of the research and they were assured of complete confidentiality. They were also supplied information on sponsorship and the total time commitment involved. At the start of each of the interview sessions, respondents were provided the following instructions: For the next 20 minutes I will be reading a list of statements to you regarding the self-esteem of African American youth 10-15 years of age. Please give me your honest opinion as to whether the statement accurately reflects a positive self-esteem behavior. In other words, if you saw a 10-15 year old African American youth displaying the behavior that is described, would that behavior indicate positive self-esteem. Think in terms of African American youth approximately 10-15 years old, not adults. The responses available to you are: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree. If, for whatever reason, you did not hear or do not understand a statement please tell me and I will be happy to read the statement again. Do you have any questions regarding the instructions I've given you? May we begin?

With the exception of the time to conduct the interviews, 60 days for the men and 45 days for the women, and the need to interview men at more unusual hours, e.g., 1:30 AM, the interview methods were identical for the women and men.

Pilot Study ResultsThe All Women Sample

A total of 27 of the 110 items were unanimously judged to be valid behavioral indicators of self-esteem of 10-15 year old African American youth. These data are variables 16, 19-21, 26, 35-38, 40-42, 44, 48, 53, 55-56, 58, 60, 63, 65, 66, 69, 97, 100, 104 and 105.

Nineteen of the 110 items were considered valid indicators by 95% of the women respondents. These items include: 11, 18, 24, 27, 30, 43, 45, 46, 51 52, 59, 61, 62, 67, 71-73, 75 and 91.

Ninety percent of the sample consider 26 of the 110 items to be self-esteem indicators. These data are variables 1, 3, 13, 17, 22, 29, 31, 32, 34, 39, 57, 68, 76-81, 83, 90, 98, 101-103 and 109. A total of 9 of the 110 items were agreed upon at the rate of 86%. These data are variables 2, 4, 12, 15, 33, 50, 70, 87 and 89. A total of 10 of the 110 items were agreed to at the rate of 81%. These data are variables 5, 9, 23, 28, 74, 82, 84, 88, 99 and 106.

Of the 110 items, 91 were considered to be indicators of adolescent self-esteem by more than 80% of the respondents. The grand mean for the 110 item scale of all women sample is

4.2758. The grand mean for the five scale domains or sub-scales are:

Experiences [items 36-64] = 4.41

Accomplishments [items 65-74] = 4.34

Physical Appearance [items 1-35] = 4.25

Knowledge items [75-96] = 4.21

Skills items [97-110] = 4.12

The All Men Sample

A total of 41 of the 110 items were viewed as valid indicators of self-esteem by all the men in the sample: items 19-22, 27, 30, 31, 36-38, 40, 41, 43-46, 48, 53, 56, 59, 62-64, 66, 69, 70, 75-84, 87, 89-91, and 105. Eighteen percent of the 110 items are considered to be valid indicators by 95% of the sample. These items include: 1, 3, 24, 26, 29, 39, 42, 52, 55, 65, 67, 85, 86, 88, 100, 101, 104, and 109. Twenty two of the 110 items were determined to be valid indicators by 90% of the men including: 2, 11, 12, 18, 32, 34, 35, 51, 54, 57, 58, 60, 61, 68, 71-74, 97, 98, 102 and 103. Ten of the 110 items were considered valid by 86% of the sample: items 4-6, 13, 16, 17, 23, 33, 50, and 99. Another three items - 14, 28, and 47 - were viewed as self-esteem indicators by 81% of the men.

Ninety-four of the 110 items considered valid indicators of self-esteem of Afro American adolescents by 81% or more of

the sample. The grand mean for the 110 item scale for the men sample is 4.2978. The grand mean for the five scale domains or sub-scales are:

Experiences: [items 36-64] = 4.41

Knowledge: [items 75-96] = 4.39

Accomplishments: [items 65-74] = 4.28

Physical Appearance: [items] 1-35 = 4.21

Skills: [items 97-110] = 4.15

The Coefficient Alpha, a measure determining internal consistency (Mehrens & Lehmann, 1991), is .9434 for the all male sample. The computed alpha for all women sample is .9749. A coefficient alpha of .70 is an indication of an acceptable scale. The coefficient alpha scores indicate a high degree of reliability associated with the scale.

The 110 scale items comprising the questionnaire contain certain perceptual constructs that differentiate a "Black Self-Concept." Originally five major domains of self concept were conceptualized, i.e., Physical Appearance, Experiences, Accomplishments, Knowledge and Skills. The pilot study provided external criterion generally missing for items comprising many self-esteem scales and inventories.

ASSESSMENT TOOL

Self-esteem theorists have clearly established that self-esteem constructs reflects a multi-dimensional structure.

It is therefore necessary to develop assessment tools which are themselves multi-dimensional in character, and which more accurately measure the self-esteem levels found to exist within African American youth. The scale below, which is based on the literature and results from the pilot test reported author has sought to accomplish this below. The assessment tool utilizes a Likert scale format.

(Adolescent Version)

Date _____
 Male _____ Female _____
 Age _____

.....
 Please place a check √ by your response.

___ Strongly ___ Agree ___ Neither Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly
 Agree nor Disagree Disagree

1. I like to see others wear natural African/African American hairstyles.
2. Me having a clean outward appearance is not all that important.
3. I like my body size and shape.
4. I straighten and or perm my hair.
5. I participate in swimming and other activities where my hair may get wet.
6. When someone is critical of my natural hair, I should get angry.
7. I am not embarrassed when I meet Africans and African Americans wearing an "afro", "dread locks", "braids", etc.
8. I have colored or tinted my hair.
9. I accept African/African American persons with very dark skin.

10. I do not accept African/African American persons with very light skin.
11. I like my skin color just as it is.
12. The color of my skin is not usually considered beautiful or desirable.
13. I think my own naturally tightly curled hair is as beautiful and desirable as anyone else's straight or straightened hair.
14. When I see my full thick lips in the mirror, they look too large sometimes.
15. I can think a White person is pretty without thinking I am not as pretty.
16. Higher priced, designer clothes make me feel good about myself.
17. I put more value in human life rather than fashionable material things like clothing, expensive sneakers, sweat suits, expensive cars or houses.
18. I am not very healthy.

Experiences

1. There are people in my life that I know, I can count on.
2. I probably frown more often than I smile.
3. My behavior shows I respect my parents.
4. Many people think that African Americans are not worthwhile human beings.
5. My behavior shows I respect my school teachers.
6. My best friends have negative attitudes and values.
7. My friends spend their free time doing positive things.
8. My environment is unsafe.
9. My school teachers care about me.
10. I do not enjoy being an African American.

11. I hold my head high - looking forward when I walk.
12. I do not show positive, controlled behavior when at home.
13. I show positive, controlled behavior when at school.
14. I do not show positive, controlled behavior when at public places, including city streets.
15. I am a positive and enthusiastic person.
16. I do not really value my life and personal safety.
17. I value the lives of other Black people and their general personal safety.
18. I do not value the lives of White people and their general personal safety.
19. I believe that God loves and cares about me.
20. Many people treat me like I am less than a worth while human being.
21. I am well liked by my peers.

Accomplishment/Achievement

1. African Americans have accomplished a lot.
2. I have not accomplished very much with my life.
3. My mother has accomplished a lot.
4. My father has not accomplished very much.
5. I am doing what it takes to complete my schooling/training.
6. I usually do not think about having a positive career or business.
7. African Americans in my neighborhood, have accomplished a lot.
8. I have negative feelings when trying something challenging or new.

Knowledge

1. I have a complete knowledge of who I am.
2. I have very little knowledge about the history of Africans and African Americans who have built civilizations.
3. I have a knowledge of a God.
4. I have very little knowledge about the history of African American builders of American society.
5. I have a knowledge of the positive parts of African American culture.
6. I am not knowledgeable in mathematics.
7. I have a knowledge of Science.
8. I do not have much knowledge that society thinks is important.

Skill

1. I have good study skills.
2. I have trouble reading.
3. I am capable of having good ideas.
4. I can not depend on my abilities to get me through difficult situations.
5. I have good communication skills.(speaking/writing)
6. I do not relate easily to the opposite sex.
7. It is easy for me to thank people.
8. I can not take kind, constructive criticism.
9. I can give kind, constructive criticism.
10. I do not dance very well.
11. I am good at drawing pictures.
12. I can not sing very well.

13. I can be funny.
14. I do not have the skills to win in a fair fight.
15. I can run fast.
16. I can not jump very high.
17. I have quick hands.
18. I have sort of slow feet.
19. I am a physically strong person.

SCORING INSTRUCTIONS:

At the outset, the author acknowledges the hierarchical nature of the self-esteem construct. However, as there currently exist no scientific confirmation within the literature as to the exact hierarchical structure involved, the author has assigned equal weight to each of the given items suspected to reveal a Black self-esteem construct. This form of the Black Esteem Assessment Tool (the B.E.A.T.) is designed to provide both a global as well as domain specific indication of general self-esteem levels of middle school and high school age African Americans. The salient domains of self-esteem as embodied herein are:

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE/CONDITION (P)
LIFE EXPERIENCES (E)
PERSONAL AND GROUP ORIENTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (A)
KNOWLEDGE (K)
SKILLS (S)

Again, this instrument is designed to yield both a score for global or overall self-esteem and a score for each of the five domain specific, self-concept aggregates. This approach arms the self-esteem advocate or consultant with the evaluative precision to address overall self-esteem-wise well being and specific trouble areas of self-esteem needing attention.

INDIVIDUAL DOMAIN SCORING

High self-esteem = 86 - 100 % of possible point total
Moderate self-esteem = 70 - 85 % of possible point total
Low self-esteem = 54 - 69 % of possible point total
Very Low self-esteem = 0 - 53 % of possible point total

Using the key that follows, the scorer simply determines a total score for each of the domains and then calculates the respective percentages of possible domain point totals. This derived score is then compared to the above shown schedule of percentages to determine the level of self-esteem reflected.

HOW QUESTIONS ARE KEYED

Odd Numbered Questions:

SA = 5, A = 4, NAND = 3, D = 2, SD = 1

Even Numbered Questions:

SA = 1, A = 2, NAND = 3, D = 4, SD = 5

POSSIBLE POINT TOTALS FOR EACH OF THE SELF-ESTEEM DOMAINS

Physical - 90 pts.

Experiences - 105 pts.

Accomplishments - 40 pts.

Knowledge - 40 pts.

Skill - 95 pts.

TOTAL - 370 PTS.

GLOBAL SCORE

To capture a more global indication of self-esteem, the scorer will now average the percentages obtained for each of the five self-esteem domains. This single global percentage which will have taken into account the variability from one self-esteem domain to the next, thereby rendering a more meaningful general indicator as to overall self-esteem.

CHAPTER FIVE

DEVELOPING AN AFRO-ETHNIC THERAPEUTIC RECREATION PROTOCOL

Black-Esteem Protocol:

Theorist and practitioners have not actively developed, implemented and evaluated new types of recreation programs designed to rescue African American at-risk adolescents. Traditionally recreation programming aimed at these youth have primarily relied on neighborhood recreation mentoring centers. The purpose of these centers is to build and maintain positive relationships with kids in an " extended family sort of way."

However, the traditional community center approach may not be adequate to deal with the complexity of problems of youth-at-risk. Times have obviously changed, youth have changed, and to be effective recreation programming may have to change in significant ways to be a relevant hedge against the social disorientation visited upon our youth-at-risk. Increased levels of precision (e.g., Afro-Ethnic Recreation Programming) provides opportunity for designing recreation

opportunities and programs that effectively build self-esteem and in doing so reduce the "level of risk" of African American adolescents.

Effective "esteem building" recreation programming for African American youth-at-risk will recognize that: (1) Leisure is a psychological construct, (2) Self-concept is distinct from self-esteem, (3) Self concept is distinguishable across races, (4) Self-concept is a multi-domain and multi-dimensional psychological construct, (5) Self-esteem is an evaluative by-product of the tri-interaction between cognitive faculty, self-concept and environment, (6) Self-esteem is a dynamic construct and thereby subject to improvement and diminishment, (7) Every human being has the right and the responsibility to develop as much of their human potential as possible.

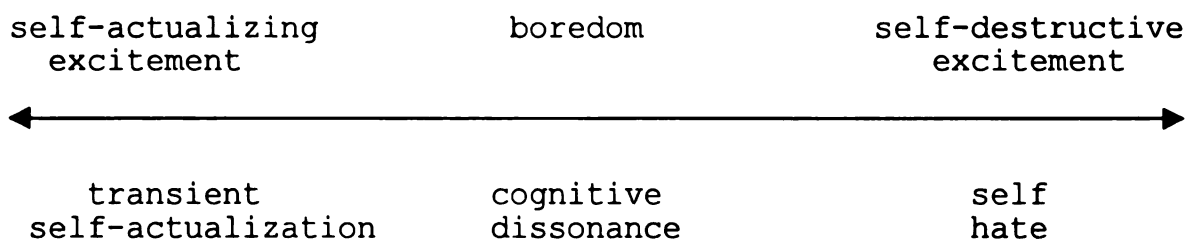
CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS:

The following definitions are presented to further explicate the conceptual foundation for Afro-Ethnic focused recreation programming. Kelly (1983) believes that leisure is a psychological construct, underpinned by such drives as freedom of choice, enjoyment, and happiness. Leisure comprises physical time frames, belonging to individuals that are unencumbered by mandated physical survival or social responsibilities. Leisure is a psychological construct

comprising a bi-polar continuum. Self-actualizing excitement is one pole, boredom is in the center of the continuum, and self-destructive excitement is on the other pole. This continuum is referred to as a Psychological Leisure Preference Continuum (PLPC).

The PLPC exists as a mirror function of the self-esteem construct or continuum. One pole on the self-esteem continuum can be described as "transient self-actualization." Maslow (1971) indicates that transient self-actualization is a temporal form of self-actualization. The mid point on the continuum is cognitive dissonance. Festinger (1966) suggests that cognitive dissonance amounts to inconsistent cognitions. The other pole on the continuum is self-hate.

Figure 1. - Psychological Leisure Preference and self-esteem Interface Continuum



It is hypothesized that where an adolescent is on the self-esteem continuum will have an influence where they are on the PLPC. Positive, self-actualizing and exciting recreation programs may only be useful and positively stimulating to the adolescent who has reached a certain level of positive self-

esteem. An adolescent's state of mind relative to perceptions of unstructured time, will more or less dictate the nature and duration of freely chosen recreation. The "Leisure State" is the psychological underpinning for recreation.

While agencies and non-profit organizations can provide an array of recreational activities and facilities designed to occupy and hopefully satisfy the leisure needs of adolescents, whether and how an adolescent responds to these opportunities depends on their positioning on the PLPC. If an adolescent's leisure state of mind is more towards the self destructive excitement end of the continuum (which correlates with the self hate side of the self-esteem continuum) they may vandalize the tennis courts rather than play tennis, or ignore the recreation opportunity and engage in other destructive behaviors. The leisure state of mind influences the leisure behaviors, and this is influenced by perceived self-esteem. An adolescent's leisure behavior also influences perceived self-esteem.

Neulinger (1981), urges that leisure be considered a state of mind, wherein the quantitative aspects become secondary and quality becomes the primary concern. In summary leisure is a psychological state and recreation is a particular response to that state. Time spent in a particular recreational activity must be viewed not as some sort of absolute indication of leisure itself. Leisure is much more than time spent. Leisure gives meaning to time, recreation

gives meaning to Leisure.

Some adolescents will attempt to avoid boredom, even if it means participating in an activity that involves illegal or otherwise self-destruction behavior. Boredom can be characterized as a lack of interest. Boredom has been conceptualized as an affective construct. Boredom is generally considered to be a temporal state. However, Vodanovich, et. al., (1991), believes that there are those individuals who tend to be bored across time and situations. As part of his volunteer work with young Black males, this author visited the Ingham County Youth Home (Lansing, Michigan) and the Jackson Corrections Facility (Jackson, Michigan). Young African American males indicated that the fundamental reason they were incarcerated was due to boredom -- I didn't have anything to do, so I....." or, "There wasn't nothing happening, so I....." Many of the young men who associated a crime with boredom also displayed low levels of self-esteem.

The conceptualization of leisure and recreation must recognize that ethnicity and race play an important role in deciding one's psychological leisure state and therefore their recreational choices. Although effective recreation programming will recognize differences across races and ethnic groups, leisure and recreation can actually be a force to diminish racism. To a great extent racism is a by-product of frustrated aspirations, stress, economic strife and also extreme boredom with life. All of which often generate

hostilities that are dissipated in the form of racial tension. A self-actualizing individual, Black or White will have less psychic residual energy to direct towards racist behavior.

To the extent that these various relationships, e.g., race/leisure state are recognized and understood through research, opportunities will exist to provide more self-actualizing recreational experiences beyond the more stereotypical provisions of leisure expressions.

Recreation is an experiential response to demands placed on the individual by his or her PLPC status. Leisure is not Recreation. Leisure is measured in time spent. A leisure nomenclature comprises activities that are experienced in degrees of passive or active psychomotor activity called recreation. These various activities allow the individual to re-create their psychological and or physical reality. The individual becomes an active participant in the "creation of meaning." Individuals bring with them to a given recreational experience a certain schema or schemas, i.e. prior experiences and cognitions, organized in such a way that these schemas shape the individuals response to the current recreation situation. Over time, specific recreation schemas are created that the individual will use to access greater variety and intensity levels of recreation experiences.

Afro-Ethnic Recreation Programming for adolescent Blacks will reflect and incorporate specific cultural and racial dimensions of the participants. An example of such programming

might include; African drum and dance or ethnic cooking classes.

Adaptive Recreation Behavior includes any recreational activity that elicits behavior from the participant that can generally be categorized as self-actualizing. The physical and psychological cognitions employed tend to facilitate and otherwise enhance the physical and psychological well-being of the participant.

Mal-Adaptive Recreative Behavior includes any recreational activity that elicits which can generally be categorized as self-destructive. The physical and psychological cognitions employed tend to debilitate and otherwise degrade the physical and psychological well-being of the participant.

Self-esteem is the enduring conscious and sub-conscious value one places on oneself in specific regard to physical appearance and conditioning, accomplishments, knowledge and skills. Self-esteem involves feelings and valuations, good or bad, about self-concept dimensions ("self-characteristics").

Self-Concept is a composite of self characteristics or self domains, e.g., the physical self, the experiential self, the accomplished self, the knowledgeable self and the skillful self. Subsumed under a given domain or self characteristic, are racial and cultural, differentiating dimensions. See Figure 2, The P.E.A.K.S. Model.

Ecological Systems exist as various external social impacts exerted upon an adolescent. Bronfenbrenner, (1979) suggests the following ecological impacts. Microsystem -- situations where the adolescent has face to face contact with influential others. Mesosystem -- comprising a relationship between microsystems such as, home-school, home-church, home-community. Exosystem -- situations that indirectly impact the adolescent such as, parent's place of employment, parental peer group, local government. Macrosystem -- comprising societal policies, laws, mores, collective assumptions about human nature.

The Protocol:

Most park and recreation professionals and academics agree that public recreation has a responsibility and opportunity to improve the quality of life and self-esteem of African American youth. Based upon the principles identified in the literature review (Chapter II), this chapter sets forth the protocols or guidelines by which Afro-Ethnic programming can be developed and utilized to generate esteem building, culturally responsive recreation policies, activities and experiences.

This Afro-ethnic recreation protocol for self-esteem enhancement, is based upon the self concept domains and inner dimensions for African American adolescents, which are

supported by research results presented in Chapter IV. Those self concept domains include: (1) physical self, (2) cognitive experiences, (3) achievement/accomplishment, (4) Knowledge and (5) Skill.

The P.E.A.K.S. Model shown in Figure 2 indicates the inter-relatedness of primary domains and inner dimensions. Figure 3 illustrates the dynamic interactional relationship between domains, dimensions and self-valuation. It also further clarifies inner dimensions that are essential in determining a Black Self-Concept. The model graphically presented in Figure 3 is both a construct and process model. The circular bi-directional lines indicates movement and internal dimensional changes illustrating that the self-valuation process involves a fairly constant focus and refocus upon what has been described as recurring contextual dimensions shown as major organized dominant schemata. The bi-direction change line (lower right area of the figure) indicates the changing dimensional foci along the self-esteem continuum. At various times and as one's life context spins and changes the self-valuation dimension, the dominant schema wheel drops down and the appropriate point of internal dimension locks temporally into a notch along the self-esteem continuum, indicating a self-valuation which mirrors how the person feels about a dimension of themselves at that moment.

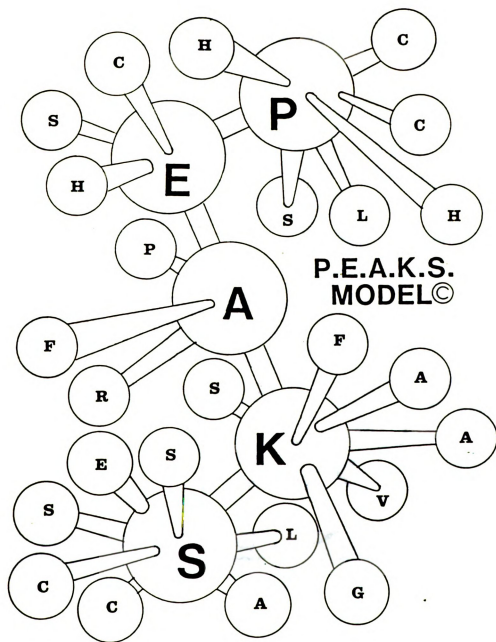


Figure 2 - The P.E.A.K.S. Model For Self-Concept

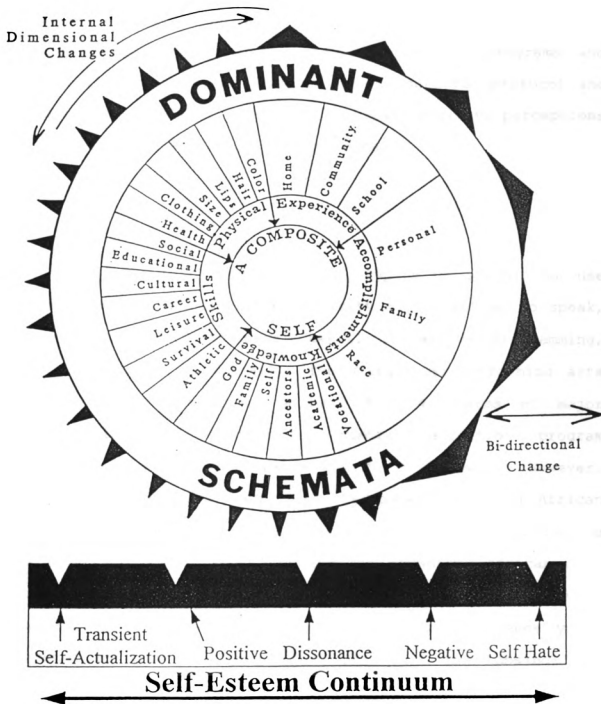


Figure 3 - Interactive Self-Evaluation Model

Self-esteem enhancement is a by-product of positive valuations of self concept. Afro-ethnic recreation programming, comprises recreative strategies, programs and facilities that may be attached to one specific protocol and which are specifically intended to create positive perceptions of one or more Black self concept domains.

Philosophy:

The field of recreation as typically sought to use athletics and sports related activity as "hooks" so to speak, to attract youth to developmental recreative programming, (e.g., midnight basketball). The visual and performing arts have clearly been given a back seat in terms of major recognition and funding as viable recreation program modalities for comprehensive youth development. However, during the past five years, there has developed within African American communities across the state and country, a significant "grass roots" demand for organized African drum and dance programs directed at youth development. Having worked directly with several of these drum and dance youth groups in Michigan, (e.g., Detroit, Flint and Lansing) the author has witnessed the potency of this Afro-Ethnic recreation approach to positive self-esteem enhancement relative to Afro-Ethnic youth. The delivery of this performing arts medium includes guidance and mentoring provided by a

council of adults who are knowledgeable about the self-esteem enhancement process as well as being knowledgeable about West African drumming and dance. The real focus of the drum and dance is youth development. African drumming and dance becomes the recreative modality for shaping and enhancing the "quality of life" for Afro-Ethnic youth involved.

America owes all of its children, the guarantee that each shall have the opportunity to access her/his complete positive human potential. Society must make every effort, indeed, must do all that is humanly possible to effect the positive development of America's future as a nation. America's future is its children. It has been recognized that America has to one degree or another and for various reasons, failed to provide effective and efficient teaching, guidance and mentoring for many Afro-ethnic youth. Afro-ethnic youth must be guaranteed access to positive self-esteem development and it is believed that afro-ethnic recreation programming can contribute towards that end.

Mission Statement:

The fundamental mission of this afro-ethnic recreation program protocol, is to provide overall guidelines and consultation on experiences and activities within a recreation context that reflect the heritage and culture of Afro-ethnic youth. The literature indicates that an individuals heritage

and cultural background is essential to identity formation and ultimately to the self-valuation process itself. The following program elements will apply.

Program Components:

- 1.0 Program Development/Objectives
- 2.0 Staff Development
- 3.0 Program Evaluation

Objectives/Possible Program Elements:

Physical Domain:

- 1.1 To develop and implement Afro-ethnic recreation programming which enhances the valuations Afro-Ethnic youth place on themselves regarding their physical appearance and conditioning.

Program Elements:

- (1) development of programs and activities dealing with the science of melanin, (i.e., as related to skin color)
- (2) Development of a library of African/African American magazines such as Ebony, Jet, Essence, Emerge, Crisis, etc.
- (3) Programming as much as possible all wall space with visual imagery depicting relatively equal numbers of dark skinned and light skinned African Americans, wearing natural

hair styles and in beautiful settings and positive situations

(4) Utilization of multi-media educational programs which are created for the explicit purpose of visually demonstrating the contemporary beauty and contemporary environments of African peoples on the continent

(5) Utilization of visual art programs to desensitize African American youth to issues of racial color and general physiognomy

(6) High profile, glamorous African fashion shows; featuring models with a range of skin color from very dark to very light. Fashion models should comprise African American men and women from the community with high respectability, visibility and believability. Models will all wear a natural "Africoid hair style."

Experiential Domain:

1.2 To provide a set of positive, enjoyable and exciting experiences and exposures which validate participants and communicate to them that they are valued as individuals and also as members of a valued culture and racial heritage.

Program Elements:

(1) Development of programs and interactions which include the meaningful and positive participation of every recognizable community context ,e.g., Businesses, Radio and T.V., Church, Schools, Parents, Teachers, Government Officials, Legal System, Entertainment Industry, Print Media, Health-Care

System. The purpose of course is to have these various entities, provide youth through word and deed, with sensory information necessary in building positive esteem schemata. Rites of Passage programs are very effective in accomplishing the above, as are traditional African drum and dance programs for youth. (2) An emphasis should be placed on family participation, given all that we currently understand regarding the importance of family regarding self-esteem development. b. Provide all management, administrative, and programming staff with special training in the "Positive Psychological Growth and Development of African American Youth" This will insure that the experiences of African American youth will be maximized, in terms of enjoyment and productivity. It will be critical to provide well crafted diversity training (3) Organizational development and training must be expanded to include executive board members, who often hold great power in shaping the direction and structure of public recreation programs (4) It will be critical that a given recreation organization develop the capability to interface with and extract from the community at large, meaningful and necessary information which will better enable recreation organizations to program for diverse populations (5) Provide youth with an opportunity to participate in adaptive recreation activities which stress, a non- competitive, everyone wins, set of rules and procedures.

Accomplishment/Achievement Domain:

1.3 To provide programmatic opportunities for participants to acknowledge and have acknowledged, their individual accomplishments. The program also seeks to acknowledge the more global accomplishments of their race and culture.

Program Elements:

(1) A recreation center newsletter can be an important esteem building tool. The recreation oriented accomplishments as well as other special accomplishments of the various youths frequenting a given recreation center, can be made known to parents and community at large. (2) A community news bulletin board/showcase can be used to highlight the accomplishments of African Americans living in the community. In this way, African American youth are presented with viable and accessible community role models. (3) Recreation programmers must at all times, stress to the youth that they must look at each recreation activity/experience in terms of all that they were able to accomplish, beyond just winning or losing. In which case, it will be very important for recreation leaders to help youth identify specific goals that they will be seeking to accomplish by participating in a given recreation activity or experience.

Knowledge Domain:

1.4 To enhance the knowledge the participants have regarding their total self-concept, their spirituality, traditional academic subject matter and to stimulate a positive African centered world view.

Program Elements:

(1) An African/African American history club will be very useful in providing youth with positive knowledge about themselves and their ancestors. A facilitating Black library will be needed. (2) Academic tutorial programs should be maintained within recreation centers. (3) Various programs in African American culture should be available to youth.

Skills Domain:

1.5 To enhance the positive skills possessed by participants.

Program Elements:

(1) Learning to read; reading to learn programs should be established at recreation centers. (2) Structured conflict resolution programs should be maintained (3) Communication skills must be stressed and training provided at recreation centers (4) Athletic skills must be developed at recreation centers

2.1 Board members, administrators, programmers, supervisors, janitors, parents, volunteers and all who are directly or indirectly associated with the delivery of this Afro-Ethnic modality, must be educated/oriented in the fundamentals of Black identity formation and Black self-esteem enhancement.

2.2 To the degree possible, all of the above named human resources must be exposed to well crafted diversity training. A focus of such training will be to develop competencies (skills) along with sensitivities regarding race relations.

2.3 To the degree possible, the grouping of human resources named above, shall comprise an appropriate showing of racial and gender diversity. It is particularly important that "Afro-Ethnics" be included.

2.4 All individuals who will be associated with the delivery of this Afro-Ethnic protocol, must be properly oriented to the significant historical, technical, moral, and developmental elements inherent in traditional African drum and dance.

3.1 The method of program evaluation shall to the greatest extent possible comprise quantitative assessments. Anecdotal accounts may be used along with the quantitative measures.

3.2 With respect to the central issue of self-esteem enhancement, the Black-Esteem assessment tool discussed herein will serve as a pre and post test instrument.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A focus primarily on nature based outdoor recreation continues to preponderate conceptualization and research efforts pertaining to "market" and "extra-market" benefits associated with recreation. Though there have been several noteworthy efforts made during recent years, (Busser et al., 1996; Tice & Tindall, 1994; Witt & Crompton, 1996; Colston & Patton, 1994; Krichbaum & Alston, 1994), relatively little attention has been directed to the scientific evaluation of urban recreation, particularly in regards to explicating valid reasons and meanings associated with benefits accruing to different racial and ethnic populations.

The relative lack of specific research attention to the recreational benefits associated with racial and ethnic populations is possibly due to several reasons. One reason may be that there are still too few university researchers and academicians who possess the three C's of recreation research and programming, which would include more of an urban and

racial diversity emphasis. The three C's are: courage, commitment and cross-cultural-competencies. There is a general absence of courage on the part of researchers and academicians to champion projects and efforts that primarily benefit the millions of "inner-city-throw-aways," all too dispassionately referred to as African American at-risk-youth. Researchers and academicians have not demonstrated a sufficient willingness to immerse themselves in the conceptual and theoretical complexity of urban community based recreation and its use as a self-esteem building modality.

Leisure researchers and practitioners have foregone significant opportunities to gain valuable insights from the urban context due to a lack of commitment to racial and cultural equality. There has also been an unwillingness to design research and programs that focus on Black perspectives important in designing recreation programs that would build Black self-esteem. Ironically, it may be that leisure researchers have too often been influenced by stereotypical perceptions of Black and other racial groups. This has perhaps led to a general devaluing of Blacks and their communities. It has no doubt been difficult for many recreation researchers to investigate beyond the stereotypes to discover positive elements of "Black life." Black family life, contrary to the often sick aberrations so often projected by mass media, is more healthy than unhealthy, more productive than non-

productive, more moral than immoral, and more diverse than homogeneous McAdoo (1988).

The impact of race is clear in Hacker (1992). Race relations will influence the ability and inclination of recreation agencies and organizations to enhance the self-esteem of African American youth through Afro Ethnic recreation programming. Effective community frameworks must be built to have honest thoughtful dialogue regarding the impacts of race relations upon recreation programming. Hacker (1992) argues that it is Whites who decide which people and productions will be underwritten, which almost always means that 'black' projects will have to appeal to whites as well. Over fifteen years of professional recreation experiences including work with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and several urban recreation departments revealed incidents of this regarding the funding of Afro-ethnic recreation projects.

The majority of white recreation professional do not eat dinner with Blacks, do not attend funerals with Blacks, do not worship with Blacks, do not party with Blacks, and do not suffer with Blacks, yet they often claim to know what is "best" for Blacks programmatically. Leisure professionals must collectively take a decision to yield (not relinquish all power), to Black scholars, Black practitioners, Black board members, and even recognized Black community leaders, in an effort to create expressions of leisure and recreation that

are more in tune with the Ethno specific self-esteem needs of Black youth.

"Cultural sensitivity" is required of recreation professionals who seek to create and deliver recreation programs that speak to the needs of culturally diverse populations. Cultural sensitivity has often meant nothing more than the ability to "tolerate" cultures different from one's own and efforts to eliminate words from one's vocabulary, known to be offensive to certain cultural groups.

Cross cultural competencies must drive the Afro-ethnic recreation program planning process. Recreation professionals who understand Black identity formation and Black esteem development and measurement, are knowledgeable about the accurate history of Africans/African Americans, and who have a working knowledge of the composition and functionality of the African American community are better equipped to develop programs designed to raise the self-esteem of urban Black adolescents. They are more prepared and capable than the recreation professionals who have focused only on cultural sensitivity.

Even casual observers of African American "youth at risk" can agree that self-esteem induced behavioral change can substantially reduce the "risk" associated with being young and African American. Self-esteem is often cited as a primary objective for many recreation programs, but the concept and context of self-esteem is frequently misunderstood. What

escapes all but a very few however, are the psychosocial programming elements associated with self-esteem enhancement in general and specifically self-esteem enhancement as it relates to African American youth at-risk. There are significant complexities inherent in constructs like self-concept, self-esteem and identity when multiplied and divided by race, ethnicity, and culture.

Design and implementation of successful self-esteem focused programming will require increased knowledge on the part of recreation professionals, boards, and elected officials. Recreation professionals seeking to raise self-esteem levels in African American adolescents must acquire a working knowledge of universal cross-cultural and cross-gender self-esteem construct models. In addition, they must develop a working knowledge of those contextually specific models that relate with greater precision to African American adolescents.

It will also require a willingness to develop and evaluate new and different types of recreation programs. For example, it is true that sports camps, e.g., basketball, provides urban youth opportunities to develop their "B-Ball Acumen" over a period of three days to a week. The emphasis is primarily on building skills. However, there are many youth that either do not play or like basketball. Yet, basketball and other sports mediums are sometimes offered as the only skills building component of recreation programs. Recreation programmers also often direct much attention at providing

"prideful moments," which frequently involve enlisting the services of a popular athlete or entertainer to perform for or interact with youth. This is often viewed as an effective way of building self-esteem.

There is a theoretically rich landscape upon which to develop and enhance community recreation programming that is built on more effective and efficient long-term self-esteem enhancement. However, it is important that a more complete theoretical undergirding for Afro-Ethnic urban recreation programming is developed. It is especially important that attention is directed at ways to build low self-esteem exhibited by many African American youth-at-risk. The plight of America's African American communities, is inextricably bound to the general welfare and condition of America's African American youth. To ignore the many challenges of African American youth at-risk, is at best, ill-advised.

Academics and other professionals must cooperate to develop conceptual models that delineate the cognitive mechanisms associated with identity formation. Much more research is required that explores cognitive processes embedded within a child's emergent ethnic and racial concepts during childhood and adolescence. Additional work must be directed toward development and evaluation of constructs that better represent attributes that are relevant to non-white races of society. Researchers and practitioners alike must be cautious and ever skeptical concerning the generalizability of

psychological laws, theories, and measurement efforts (e.g., self-esteem scales) across different races and cultures.

Universities and Colleges, through their respective Leisure/Recreation related departments have not only the opportunity, but a major responsibility to provide leisure/recreation related research, teaching, and consultative leadership to urban communities across the country. The academic community must assume leadership in the development of leisure/recreation theoretical and conceptual frameworks to enable urban communities to extract with greater precision, the developmental power inherent in the recreation context, when the enhanced self-esteem of African American youth at-risk is the goal.

Park, Recreation and Leisure departments at universities must stimulate and participate in new and sustainable initiatives focused on developing and evaluating new recreation programming to enhance self-esteem. This will require that they extend directly into urban communities through research and technical assistance. Academics must provide the theoretical basis and protocols needed to help recreation professionals and local communities to design and acquire funding for innovative recreation programs that specifically focus on recreation as a self-esteem building modality. They must conduct more research that is focused and applicable to the urban context.

Aspiring recreation professionals must be provided with relevant urban perspectives and must leave the University setting with a more holistic understanding of their roles as recreation professionals. When they graduate, they must be prepared and enthusiastic to bring to the community recreation milieu, a zest for that programming which is culturally responsive and theoretically anchored.

All indications are that recreation programming will be a greater force within our society. It will be expected to develop and deliver programming that addresses sound developmental theory as well provide fun and entertainment. Programmed recreation is an effective means by which vast numbers of "youth at risk", can be provided with opportunities to access the growth and development potentials they possess.

One may direct one's attention in any direction, and see more, not less, trouble on the horizon for at-risk-youth, and especially African American at-risk-youth. At no other time since the celebrated embrace between this country and G. Stanley Hall's conceptualization of the adolescent, has it been more critical to understand with scientific precision, that which urban recreation does and does not do, and can and can not do, relative to the enhancement of self-esteem exhibited by African American youth at-risk. Scientific precision must begin with theoretical and conceptual knowledge relative to Black Identity and Black self-esteem. We can then move swiftly to the psychosocial dynamics of leisure activity

which tend to ignite self-esteem across race, ethnicity, and culture.

There are and will continue for the foreseeable future to be, many racially charged social problems which provide difficulties regarding the development of culturally responsive leisure and recreation programming. The extent to which recreation professionals will be successful in creating Afro Ethnic programming which is responsive to the specific psychosocial needs of Black youth, may be directly proportional to the degree to which African American recreation participation is no longer maintained at marginal levels of cultural relevance.

APPENDIX I

APPENDIX A

Self-esteem Descriptors as Related to African American youth:

Date _____
 Race _____
 Profession _____
 Age _____

Please place a check $\checkmark$ by your response.

____ Strongly ____ Agree ____ Neither Agree ____ Disagree ____ Strongly
 Agree nor Disagree Disagree

PHYSICAL

1. Having a clean outward appearance is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
2. Wearing hairstyles which highlight a natural African/African American character and structure of hair is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
3. Having general social behaviors which applaud the wearing of natural African/African American hairstyles is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
4. To wear clothing which display positive images of dark complexioned people is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
5. Wearing clothing which displays people with natural African/African American hairstyles is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
6. Wearing clothing which displays Africans/African Americans with normal but somewhat large lips is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
7. Assertive participation in swimming, gym or other situations where hair will invariably become very wet or moderately wet is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
8. Exclusive use of oils, water, herbal or other natural organic based products in hair conditioning and management is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

9. Avoidance of chemical/heat treatments as primary hair care methods is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
10. Having an accurate anthropological understanding of hair type is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
11. Responses to verbal attacks of one's natural hairstyle which reflect confidence and self acceptance is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
12. Making eye contact and showing an accepting facial expression, e.g. a smile, upon encountering an individual wearing an "afro", "dread locks", "braids", etc. is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
13. Positive acceptance, of a positive explanation, from someone who is explaining why they prefer to wear natural hairstyles is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
14. Maintaining the natural color of one's hair is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
15. Verbally demonstrating an understanding of the scientific basis for skin color, i.e., understanding melanin is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
16. Acceptance of African/African American persons with very dark skin is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
17. Acceptance of African/African Americans with very light skin is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
18. Use of natural skin care products which cleanse, enhance natural beauty, but do not substantially lighten or darken skin color is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
19. Thinking one's own very dark colored skin to be as beautiful and desirable as anyone else's light colored skin is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
20. Thinking one's own naturally tightly curled hair as beautiful and desirable as anyone else's straight or straightened hair is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
21. Seeing one's full thick lips in the mirror and thinking them beautiful and desirable is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

22. An inclination to read books, play with toys, e.g., dolls bearing general features of African/African Americans is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

23. Wearing clothing with printed messages that are positive and uplifting to African Americans is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

24. In spite of hairstyle worn, maintaining that hair style in a neat clean manner generally is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

25. Avoidance of plastic coverings, worn on hair in public as if fashion statements is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

26. Acknowledging the attractive appearance of a European American's physical appearance without comparatively diminishing one's own is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

27. Verbally commenting on the relative beauty of African Americans is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

28. Behaviorally demonstrating an understanding that there is no factual (scientific or otherwise) basis for the image of Jesus being shown to look European or European American is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

29. An ability to show a healthy measure of detachment from high-priced designer fashions - brand named clothing, worn as symbols of social status is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

30. Valuing human life and limb over fashionable clothing, e.g., expensive sneakers, sweat suits, expensive cars, houses, etc. is a indicator of positive self-esteem.

31. Wearing less costly, perhaps less fashionable clothing, with pride is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

32. Demonstrating an awareness of the psychological conditioning power of mass media in regards to physical attractiveness is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

33. Having a general perception that one is generally health is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

34. Acceptance of body size and shape is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

35. Exhibiting a measured, non-threatening response to an individual's rather examining like stare is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

EXPERIENCES

36. The perception that one is valued as a human being is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

37. Using words like boy, guy, man, men, instead of words like dogs, niggas to describe African American men is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

38. Using words like girls, sisters, women, woman, instead of words like whores, bitches, tack-heads to describe African American women is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

39. Having an awareness of a nurturing support system is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

40. Tending to generally demonstrate positive facial expressions and demeanor, most of the time is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

41. Demonstrating positive and respectful attitude towards parent(s) is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

42. Demonstrating positive and respectful attitude towards teachers/school officials is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

43. Demonstrating positive and respectful attitude towards people in general is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

44. The perception that African Americans are valued as human beings is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

45. Having an awareness and degree of dislike for movies, music, television, magazines and newspapers that portray African American negatively is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

46. Having peer group circles that reflect positive attitudes and values is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

47. Having peer group circles which are predominantly reflective of one's own culture and heritage is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

48. Having peer group circles who's recreation and leisure time is spent in positive ways is an indicator of positive self esteem.
49. The perception that one's environment is generally safe is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
50. The perception that one is generally well nourished and cared or by parent(s) is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
51. The perception that parents generally love one is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
52. The perception that one is generally loved by brother(s) and or sister(s), in one's own family is an indicator of opositive self-esteem.
53. A general awareness of extended family and an awareness that extended family can be looked upon for support is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
54. A perception that teachers care about African American youth is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
55. Feeling comfortable about one's biological family is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
56. Feeling comfortable being in a specific racial family, i.e., African American is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
57. Hanging posters and photos on bedroom walls which depict positive African American life in general, i.e., people, places, etc. is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
58. Head held high - chest out most of the time - looking forward - eyes focused is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
59. Exhibiting positive purposeful, controlled behavior when at home is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
60. Exhibiting positive, purposeful, controlled behavior when at school is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
61. Exhibiting positive, purposeful, controlled behavior when at public places, including city streets is an indicator of positive self-esteem.
62. Expressing an excitement, an anticipatory and positive outlook on life is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

63. Showing high personal regard for life and limb of both oneself and others is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

64. Having a belief that God loves and cares is an indicator of positive self-esteem is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

65. Expressing a positive awareness of African/African American accomplishments in general is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

66. Having an awareness of personal accomplishment is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

67. Having an awareness of accomplishments made by biological family members is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

68. Having an awareness of accomplishments made by extended family members is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

69. Expressing a desire to complete schooling/training is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

70. Expressing a desire to have a certain career or business, which is of a positive nature is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

71. Having an awareness of accomplishments made by African American members within one's community or neighborhood, e.g., teachers, ministers is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

72. Expressing excitement at trying something challenging and or new is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

73. An expression of positive acceptance upon seeing or hearing of an accomplishment of one's peer is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

74. Participation in programmed extra-curricular activities at school is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

KNOWLEDGE

75. Expressing a complete knowledge of oneself (e.g., the physical self - the empirical self - the accomplished self - the knowledgeable self - the skillful self) is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

76. Having knowledge of ancient and contemporary history of Africans/African Americans making civilization in general is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

77. Having knowledge of ancient and contemporary history of Africans/African Americans making science is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

78. Having knowledge of ancient and contemporary history of Africans/African Americans making mathematics is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

79. Having knowledge of ancient and contemporary history of Africans/African Americans making literature is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

80. Having knowledge of ancient and contemporary history of Africans/African Americans making politics and government is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

81. Having knowledge of ancient and contemporary history of Africans/African Americans making fine art is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

82. Having knowledge of ancient and contemporary history of Africans/African Americans making Performing Art, e.g., music, theater, etc. is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

83. Having knowledge of ancient and contemporary history of Africans/African Americans making inventions is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

84. Having knowledge of ancient and contemporary history of Africans/African Americans making Religion is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

85. Having knowledge of ancient and contemporary history of Africans/African Americans making athletics is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

86. Having knowledge of a God concept is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

87. Having knowledge of African/African American culture as told or presented by other Africans/African American interpreters is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

88. Having knowledge of the larger environment/community in which one lives is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

89. Having knowledge of African American builders of American society is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

90. Having knowledge of African/African American explorers is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

91. Having knowledge of African/African American culture in general is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

92. Having knowledge of Math is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

93. Having knowledge of Science is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

94. Having knowledge of Geography is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

95. Possession of any valued knowledge, i.e., knowledge valued by society at large is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

96. Having knowledge of ecology/nature is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

SKILL

97. Demonstrating good study skills is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

98. Possessing good reading skills is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

99. Having an ability to conceptualize ideas is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

100. Possession of life skills, e.g., self-reliance or courage is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

101. Exhibiting effective communication skills, i.e., verbal and written is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

102. Having an ability to relate well to opposite sex is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

103. Having an ability to express gratitude is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

104. Having an ability to receive constructive criticism is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

105. Having an ability to give kind constructive criticism is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

106. Having an ability to secure and maintain employment is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

107. Being skillful in the performing arts, dancing, drama, playing an instrument is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

108. Being skillful in the fine arts, i.e., painting, drawing, etc. is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

109. Possession of productive leisure skills is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

110. Possession of athletic skills, i.e., basketball, football, swimming, etc. is an indicator of positive self-esteem.

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