



**CONSIDERING INTIMATE  
PARTNER VIOLENCE,  
CULTURAL COMPETENCE  
AND  
AFRICAN AMERICAN FAITH  
COMMUNITIES**

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## **PRAYER**

“Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary: pure and holy, tried and true. And with thanksgiving, I’ll be a living sanctuary, Lord, for you.”

Amen

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## **PSALM 55:1-15 (NIV)**

Listen to my prayer, O God, do not ignore my plea; hear me and answer me. My thoughts trouble me and I am distraught at the voice of the enemy, at the stares of the wicked; for they bring down suffering upon me and revile me in their anger. My heart is in anguish within me; the terrors of death assail me. Fear and trembling have beset me; sorrow has overwhelmed me. I said, “Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest- I would flee far away and stay in the desert; I would hurry to my place of shelter far from the tempest and storm.”

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## **PSALM 55:1-15 (NIV)**

Confuse the wicked, O Lord, confound their speech, for I see violence and strife in the city. Day and night they prowl about on its walls; malice and abuse are within it. Destructive forces are at work in the city; threats and lies never leave its streets. If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it; If a foe were raising himself against me, I could endure it; I could hide from him. But it is you, a man (human) like myself; my companion, my close friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship as we walked with the throng at the house of God. Let death take my enemies by surprise; let them go down alive to the grave, for evil finds lodging among them."

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## **PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES:**

- Address the need for culturally competent Intimate Partner Violence interventions in faith communities of color
- Inform participants of barriers to effective culturally competent practice with African American faith communities
- Provide a multi-systems model for Intimate Partner Violence intervention that emanates from research and discussions with African American faith community leaders
- Consider cultural competence with other communities impacted by Intimate Partner Violence

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Following this workshop, participants will be able to:

- ◎ 1. articulate the relevance of cultural competence when working in the area of Intimate Partner Violence with African American faith communities.
- ◎ 2. identify key barriers surrounding cultural competence with African American faith communities surrounding Intimate Partner Violence.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ◎ 3. describe a culturally-sensitive, multi-systems approach to addressing Intimate Partner Violence in African American faith communities.
- ◎ 4. explain how to engage faith communities, educational institutions and community-based social services in collaborative work related to Intimate Partner Violence advocacy.

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## QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- What is your understanding of cultural competence?
- What is your understanding of intimate partner violence?
- How are African Americans impacted by intimate partner violence?
- What is the relationship between intimate partner violence and cultural competence?
- What is the role of the church?

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## CULTURAL COMPETENCE

- What is cultural competence?

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## DEFINING CULTURAL COMPETENCE

- Cultural Competence can be defined as:
  - The demonstration of knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors based on diverse, relevant cultural experience. It is the incorporation of cultural diversity, experience, awareness and sensitivity in practice” (Schim, Doorenbos, and Borse, 2006).
  - “A process” or a “journey” where the individual continuously seeks to work effectively within the cultural specifics of a client (Campinha-Bacote, 2003; Cross, 1998).
  - The ability to work in an effective manner “within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by consumers and their communities (Cross et. al 1989).

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## DEFINING CULTURAL COMPETENCE

- Cultural competence requires learning new behaviors, techniques, respects and affirms and values the “dignity and worth of diverse individuals, groups, families, and communities while protecting and preserving the “dignity of each” (National Association of Social Workers, 2001).

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## INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

- ◉ What is Intimate Partner Violence/Domestic Violence?

## DEFINING INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

- ◉ Intimate Partner Violence/Domestic Violence
  - “The term ‘intimate partner violence’ describes physical, sexual, or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse. This type of violence can occur among heterosexual or same-sex couples and does not require sexual intimacy” (CDC, 2013).
  - “IPV can vary in frequency and severity. It occurs on a continuum, ranging from one hit that may or may not impact the victim to chronic, severe battering” (CDC, 2013).

## **DEFINING INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE**

- ◉ Intimate Partner Violence
  - A type of interpersonal violence that involves the physical, emotional/verbal/psychological, and/or sexual harm or threat of harm between current or former intimate partners. It is also understood that Intimate Partner Violence emanates from a perpetrator's need for power and control and is demonstrated through controlling, oppressive behaviors that impact intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships and society at large (Brade, 2009).
- ◉ Intimate Partner Violence is primarily about:
  - Power
  - Control

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## **CONSIDER THIS...**

- ◉ Judges 19 (Dis-membered woman)
- ◉ 2 Samuel 13 (Tamar)

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## INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE STATISTICS

- It is difficult to know with specificity the actual number of intimate partner violence incidents (NIJ, 2010),
- The World Health Organization reported that between 15% and 71% of women in their study of 24,097 women in fifteen sites around the world had experienced intimate partner violence (Garcia-Moreno et.al., 2006).
- According to the CDC, one in three women and one in four men have experienced rape, physical violence and/or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime, and over five million Americans experience intimate partner violence, most of them being women (Black et al., 2011).

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## INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE STATISTICS

- The World Health Organization looked at women's health and Intimate Partner Violence in ten (10) countries and noted that "15 to 71 percent" of women experienced the effects of physical and sexual abuse (Garcia-Moreno, Jasen, Elsberg, Helse, & Watts, 2005).
- The issue of Intimate Partner Violence is of equal concern in the United States.
- The prevalence and impact of intimate partner violence remains taboo for some communities, especially in communities of color and communities of faith (Brade, 2009; Fortune, 1999; Ellison et.al. 2007; Miles, 2011).

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## **INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE & AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY**

- How does intimate partner violence impact the African American community?
- How does Intimate Partner Violence impact the African American faith community?

## **INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND AFRICAN AMERICANS**

- While most African-American homes are violence free, we also know that there are higher reported rates of intimate partner violence in the African American families(174/1,000) than in White families (115/1,000), and that Intimate Partner Violence in the African American community is more lethal.
- African-American women face severe forms of intimate partner violence, various obstacles with seeking treatment, decreased health and other socio-economic situations.

## **INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE, AFRICAN AMERICAN FAITH COMMUNITY**

- ⦿ African American women seek support from African American clergy and faith congregations.
- ⦿ African American faith leaders respond to Intimate Partner Violence with...
  - Holy Hush
  - Silence
  - Forgiveness (with no accountability)
  - Use of "Submission" Texts
  - Protection of men/ "family"
  - Theological Paradox

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## **BARRIERS: INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND AFRICAN AMERICANS WOMEN AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE**

- ⦿ A lack of cultural competence is an apparent theme in the literature surrounding African American women and Intimate Partner Violence.

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## **BARRIERS: INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE**

- ◉ Four themes pertinent to African American women and barriers to seeking Intimate Partner Violence treatment:
    - Lack of access to services
    - Service providers' lack of cultural competence
    - Racial Loyalty
    - Gender Entrapment
- (Bent-Goodley, 2005)

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## **BARRIERS: INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND AFRICAN AMERICANS WOMEN AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE**

- ◉ Women of color tend to respond to various contexts as a result of experiences and "historical and contemporary trauma" (Bent-Goodley, 2009, p. 264):
  - Moaning (developing a rapport during assessment phase)
  - Mourning (addressing issues of grief and loss)
  - Morning (having a significant breakthrough)

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## **BARRIERS: INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND AFRICAN AMERICANS FAITH COMMUNITIES AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE**

- ◎ Racial Loyalty
  - Need to address issues related to protecting the race
- ◎ Ministerial Loyalty (Ole' Boy Network w/ Black Male Preachers)
  - Need for a person who can move beyond the gatekeepers
- ◎ Self-Protection (Offender, Victim, Clergy and Congregation)
  - Need to recognize the historical and contemporary practices that have led to the perceived necessity of self-protection

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## **BARRIERS: INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND AFRICAN AMERICANS FAITH COMMUNITIES AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE**

- ◎ Holy Hush
  - Need to understand that the issue of DV is still taboo, especially within faith communities of color
- ◎ Policy Inconsistency
  - Need for greater awareness and consistency surrounding DV
- ◎ Cultural Nuances
  - Need to respect the importance of communal sharing, food, use of positive language (ie. healthy relationship versus Intimate Partner Violence), implementation of spiritual beliefs)

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## **BARRIERS: INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND AFRICAN AMERICANS FAITH COMMUNITIES AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE**

- ◎ Theological Paradoxes
  - Need to be aware of the challenges of clergy to “work through” theological paradoxes: male supremacy, family privacy and preservation, women’s roles, holiness, sin, etc.
- ◎ History of Exploitation
  - Need to understand the history of exploitation for women, people of color and faith community
- ◎ Limited Knowledge
  - Need for more knowledge surrounding Intimate Partner Violence (red flags, policies, related agencies, etc.)

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## **BARRIERS: INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND AFRICAN AMERICANS FAITH COMMUNITIES AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE**

- ◎ Results of “Running into Walls”:
  - Limited participation of clergy in DV related research
  - Limited participation from clergy in “training sessions”
  - Limited knowledge related to this population disseminated to the greater community

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## THE S.T.A.R.T. MODEL

- ◉ Once we implemented more culturally competent practices we were able to gather necessary information which led to the development of the S.T.A.R.T. model.
- Data collected from previous research helped to develop a conceptual model that:
  - Focused on individual, family and community
  - Included faith communities
  - Addressed awareness and educational needs of community
  - Utilized available social service providers
  - Respected cultural values

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## S-SHATTER THE SILENCE

- Take personal inventory
- Acknowledge the "fact"
- Recognize the influence that the misapplication of scripture has had on women (children).
- Consider church's philosophy regarding the role of women
- Acknowledge the facts regarding minority women

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## **T-TALK ABOUT “IT”**

- Discuss the issue with other church members and ministers
- Form a Intimate Partner Violence task force or an abuse support group
- Develop/reframe the church’s policy on Intimate Partner Violence/abuse
- Reconsider the role of women

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## **A-ALERT THE PUBLIC**

- Insert public service announcements in church bulletins
- Conduct media blitzes (radio, newspaper, television, world wide web, posters, bumper stickers, etc.)
- Institute regular church panel discussions
- Organize an annual Intimate Partner Violence/Abuse Awareness Day (Sermon)
- Make special assignments to existing church committees

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## **R-REFER**

- Collaborate with
  - Local agencies
  - Local College/University
  - Faith Communities
- Utilize church/community professionals
- Conduct informal referrals
  - Leave information in easily accessible locations (restroom)
  - Drop “hints”
- Provide a “Shelter/Safe Place” for crisis situations

## **T-TRAIN YOURSELVES AND OTHERS**

- Provide resources for others via presentations at churches, social service agencies, college campuses, dorm worships etc.
- Attend training seminars to receive current information:
  - Crisis Services of North Alabama (CSNA)
  - Men Stopping Violence (MSV)
  - The Institute on Intimate Partner Violence in the African American Community (IDVAAC)

## **CLOSING THOUGHT**

- “The role of the church is to examine how the spirit is affected by the abuse, shining the light (on the abuse), and offering the hope of healing through Jesus Christ” (Jordon).
- Our responsibility is to consider how culture impacts our ability to work with those who have been abused within our faith community from their cultural context.
- We are menders of the torn robes.