AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE US

9 Essential Components of a Black Nationalist Movement:
1. Unity among all Black throughout the World
2. Black self-determination. The right to control their own lives
3. Community Control. Strong, all black communities and organizations to fight justice
4. Education. Black led institutions raising people to levels of excellence and self-respect.
5. Economic security: Black control of the economy for the benefit of Blacks.
6. Armed self-defense. The ability to fight back when unlawfully attacked.
7. Social and moral uplift: The need to get rid of the effects of years of exploitation, neglect, an apathy, and to fight against police brutality, or organized crime, and drug addition.
8. Rediscover of the African Heritage: Opening up community with Africa
9. International of the black struggle.

Black Families, 5 Assets
1. Having a kinship bond with each other
2. Having a strong desire to achieve
3. Having a willingness to adapt to family roles
4. Being strongly influenced by religion
5. Having a strong work orientation

Values/Worldviews

Values
Time - present, immediate short range goals
Personal space - closer
Non verbal language important
   gestures, postures, direct eye contact when speaking, less when listening
Harmony with environment
Extended family
Age - elders and youth
Cooperative vs. competitive

World Views
Communal and interpersonal
Relationships are most valued
Respect for elders
Collective and communal efforts - It takes a child to raise a village
Role flexibility with parents and siblings
Open discussion with children about oppression and racial socialization
Black Racial Identity Development Model

Preencounter
The African American has absorbed many of the beliefs and values of the dominant White culture, including the notion that “White is right” and “Black is wrong.” Though the internalization of negative Black Stereotypes may be outside of his or her conscious awareness, the individual seeks to assimilate and be accepted by Whites, and actively or passively distances him/herself from other Blacks.

Encounter
This phase is typically precipitated by an event or series of events that forces the individual to acknowledge the impact of racism in one’s life. For example, instances of social rejection by White friends or colleagues (or reading new personally relevant information about racism) may lead the individual to the conclusion that many Whites will not view him or her as an equal. Faced with the reality that he or she cannot truly be White, the individual is forced to focus on his or her identity as a member of a group targeted by racism.

Immersion/Emersion
This stage is characterized by the simultaneous desire to surround oneself with visible symbols of one’s racial identity and an active avoidance of symbols of Whiteness. As Thomas Parham describes, “At this stage, everything of value in life must be Black or relevant to Blackness. This stage is also characterized by a tendency to denigrate white people, simultaneously glorifying Black people…” (1989, p. 190). As individuals enter the Immersion stage, they actively seek out opportunities to explore aspects of their own history and culture with the support of peers from their own racial background. Typically, White-focused anger dissipates during this phase because so much of the person’s energy is directed toward his or her own group and self exploration. The result of this exploration is an emerging security in a newly defined and affirmed sense of self.

Internalization
While still maintaining his or her connections with Black peers, the internalized individual is willing to establish meaningful relationships with Whites who acknowledge and are respectful of his or her self-definition. The individual is also ready to build coalitions with members of other oppressed groups.

Internalization-Commitment
Those at the fifth stage have found ways to translate their “personal sense of Blackness into a plan of action or a general sense of commitment” to the concerns of Blacks as a group, which is sustained over time (Cross, 1991, p. 220). Whether at the fourth of fifth stage, the process of Internalization allows the individual, anchored in a positive sense of racial identity, both to perceive and transcend race proactively.

SEVEN PSYCHOLOGICAL STRENGTHS
OF AFRICAN AMERICANS

Dr. Joseph L. White

1. Improvisation. The ability to be resourceful, imaginative, creative and innovative as we meet life challenges. From a child forward, we internalized a way of being that facilitated our ability to seek out opportunities, find opportunities, create opportunities and seize opportunities. Opportunity does not come directly to Black folks in many cases. We have to go out, find it and seize it.

2. Resilience. The capacity to rebound from a setback and become stronger in the broken places. In the Black experience, psychological maturity cannot be achieved until one has paid their dues and come through the storm. No way a Black person can get through 75 years of living in America without a few disappointments, setbacks, loss and disillusionment.

3. Connectedness to others. The deepest of all human needs. I differ with Freud on this one because I think human closeness is a deeper need than sex. From the cradle to the grave. It has operated in our life in four ways: family and extended family, strong peer relationships, romantic relationships and periodically mentors entering our life. Through connectedness to others across the life span, we learn how to build successful mutual relationships.

4. Spirituality. More important than the Church or established religions, there is a spiritual theme that runs through the Black experience. There is a soul force, a life affirming force which is responsible for strength in the face of adversity, inspiration, vitality and hope for a brighter tomorrow.

5. Emotional vitality. Emotional vitality in the Black community and in our life is characterized by a zest for life, high energy, exuberance & a life style that fully embraces life. This exuberance and high energy can be found in Black music both secular & Church.

6. Gallows humor. The ability to laugh and cry as we move through a storm. Crying about the tragedy and the ability to see some comedy in the midst of human dilemmas. Check out Langston Hughes & a character he used to write about that he called "Jesse B. Simple."

7. Healthy suspicion of Whites. I'm not talking about Black paranoia, but a healthy suspicion of people who have made broken promises since 1619. We have to be careful when we trust these folks since they've made some promises they didn't keep.