Spring 2008

African American Males and Issues of Fatherhood: An Examination of the Sweat Lodge as a Psychosocial and Spiritual Intervention

Jay E. Darr

AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES AND ISSUES OF FATHERHOOD:

AN EXAMINATION OF THE SWEAT LODGE AS A

PSYCHOSOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL INTERVENTION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Education

Department of Counseling, Psychology, and Special Education

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for

the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Jay E. Darr, M.S. Ed., LPC

December 2008

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Department of Counseling, Psychology and Special Education

Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Executive Counselor Education and Supervision Program

Presented by:

Jay E. Darr
West Virginia University, B.A., 1993
Duquesne University, M.A., 1995
Duquesne University, M.S.Ed., 1999

December 16, 2008

AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES AND ISSUES OF FATHERHOOD: AN
EXAMINATION OF THE SWEAT LODGE AS A PSYCHOSOCIAL AND
SPIRITUAL INTERVENTION

Approved by:

_____, Chair
Lisa Lopez Levers, Ph.D.
Associate Professor

_____, Member
Emma Mosley, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor

_____, Member
Rodney Hopson, Ph.D.
Associate Professor

_____, Member
Nashid Fakhrid-Deen, Esquire
Coordinator - Cultural Diversity, Kentucky Community and Technical College System

ABSTRACT

AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES AND ISSUES OF FATHERHOOD:

AN EXAMINATION OF THE SWEAT LODGE AS A

PSYCHOSOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL INTERVENTION

By

Jay E. Darr

December 2008

Dissertation Supervised by Lisa Lopez Levers, Ph.D., Associate Professor

The emasculation of African American men is illustrated by disparities in the criminal justice system, education, employment, income, and health care, which has an impact on an African American man's ability to be a father. Researchers, policy-makers, and practitioners have struggled with establishing sustainable programs that address the complex issues that face African American men, especially when they have children (Martinson & Nightingale 2008). The emergence of the Sweat Lodge as an intervention for Native Americans has had some promising results (Cohen, 2003; Edwards, 2003, Noe, Fleming & Manson 2003; Smith, 2005). However, there is limited research on the Sweat Lodge for non-native populations, specifically, African American men. This phenomenon was investigated through the lens of 18 African American males in order to gain greater understanding of how participation in the Sweat Lodge has shaped their development as men and fathers.

The primary philosophies that framed this study were the African-centered paradigm (Akbar, 1995, 1998; Asante, 1990, Karanga, 1993; Nobbles & Goddard, 1993); Ryan and Deci's (2006) theory of self-determination theory; Brofenbrenner's (1979, 2004) bio-ecological model of human development, and Generative-fathering (Erikson, 1982; Snarey, 1993). Data were derived from a demographic survey, co-researches' responses to semi-structured focus group and individual interview guides, and the researcher's personal observations and interactions. Seven over arching themes organize meaning and create knowledge of the lived experience of African American males who participated in the Sweat Lodge: initial reactions; changing of worldviews; self reflection; process of confirmation, application, healing and wellbeing; and knowledge and respect for nature.

The findings illuminated key indicators of the lived experience for African American males: acknowledging other perspectives, considering alternative information and making a choice to participate in the Sweat Lodge. African American men were able to redefine themselves and were better equipped to engage in productive and rewarding relationships with their children and significant others as a result of Sweat Lodge participation. Finally, the results provided significant evidence that spirit, universal and inclusive, is central to the Sweat Lodge functioning as a psychosocial and spiritual intervention. In light of these findings, researchers, policy-makers and practitioners can create sustainable programs that truly address the needs of African American men.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Mosley, and Hopson for not only your unwavering support, wisdom, and guidance, but putting up with false starts and procrastination.

Being a man, an African American man and a father, is both a blessing and a struggle. The journey of a dissertation is difficult, but through the countless blessings and support of God, the Ancestors, Family, Elders, close Brothers and Sisters, *we* have accomplished a great task. However, if I don't put what was learned to work, this dissertation was all for not. This is why I give thanks everyday for the blessing of my son and the opportunity I have to fulfill my purpose of being a living example for him. For that I'm thankful and truly blessed!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The scholarly interest in fatherhood emerged in the 1970s and in the late 1980s through 1990s. During these periods extensive research was produced, which expanded social policies and programs that targeted fathers (Lamb, 2000; Marsiglio, Amato, Day & Lamb, 2000). The study of fatherhood has generally focused on four key areas: cultural representations of fatherhood, diverse forms of fatherhood and father involvement, father-child relationships, and the social psychology of paternal identity (Marsiglio et al, 2000). Research has demonstrated that fathers play a significant role in the ongoing development and wellbeing of their children, which is illustrated by a child's behavior, education obtainment, and socioeconomic status (NCOFF, 2000; NFI, 2008; Urban Institute, 2001).

Informed by research, social policies are represented by the notion of responsible fatherhood, which has been institutionalized to mean a man is involved financially and emotionally in his child's life (NCOFF, 2000; NFI, 2008). Over the last twenty-five years programs have evolved to address the lack of father involvement. Specifically, programs were designed to provide interventions to decrease the financial and emotional impact on children and families as a result of limited father involvement. Specifically, Nock and Einolf (2008) indicate that in 2006 alone the Federal Government spent of $99.8 billion to provide assistance to father-absent families.

The primary focus has been on developing and implementing financial interventions to address child poverty in father absent homes. Welfare reform in the 1990s provided several interventions. Interventions included earned income credit, assistance for childcare, food stamps, Medicaid and child support enforcement (Urban Institute, 2001). Additional financial interventions include job training and employment assistance programs for custodial and non-custodial parents. Subsequent emotional interventions grew out of research and best practices. These interventions included assistance with access and visitation, parenting education and counseling. Financial and emotional interventions employed by a number of programs initially focused on assisting custodial parents, primary mothers, and then expanded to include non-custodial parents, which historically have been men, in order to increase their contribution to their child's wellbeing (Martinson & Nightingale, 2008).

Policymakers have focused on efforts to assist single parent headed families because they account for the majority of child poverty and they're the population that are most touched by government programs (Urban Institute, 2001). 70 percent of poor children come from single parent households and over 60 percent of these households are headed by single mothers (2001). Among African Americans, single mothers headed 84 percent of all poor families (2001). As a result, research, policy and program interventions have been influenced by the staggering statistics of African American children, mothers and fathers.

A grim future for African American families, and especially African American men, has been depicted in academia and popular media (Bass & Coleman, 1997; Bush, 1999; Coles, 2003; CNN, 2008; Holzer, 2005; Urban Institute 2001; U.S. Department of Justice Department, 1993). Coles (2003) argues that responsible fatherhood programs' concentration on nonresident single African American fathers has placed these men in a category of being a social problem and as the prototype of an African American man. Volumes of research conducted by the Urban Institute on responsible fatherhood programs have noted that the target population and majority of men being served by these programs are African American men (Martinson, et al, 2007; Martinson & Nightingale, 2008; NCOFF, 2003; NFI, 2006; Nock & Einolf, 2008; Sorensen & Zibman, 2000; U.S. Department of Human Services, 2008).

Bush (1999) states that "the status and meaning of Black [African American] manhood in the United States is a subject matter that should constantly be revisited, examined, and defined because it is out of this framework that Black males construct their behavior and relationships with their wives, children, communities and one another" (p. 49). Scholars contend that how African American men define themselves, construct their behavior and relationships is a function of indigenous systems of knowledge (Akbar 1998, 1991; Asante, 1988; Fannon, 1963; Karenga, 1993; Nobles, 1985; Wynn,1992). Indigenous systems of knowledge are derived from an African American man's diverse ancestry and contemporary experiences, which provides a framework of interpreting the world and for helping (Ellen & Harris, 1996; Levers, 2006; Smith, 1999; World Bank Group, 2008;).

Levers (2006) cautions researchers that a "slippery slope" exists in the discussion of indigenous knowledge verses Euro-American or scientific knowledge because of the complexity of worldviews. Western scientific, biomedical, political, and economic thought has imposed itself on the construction of knowledge as it relates not only to African Americans, but to indigenous people throughout the world. Indigenous systems of knowledge serve as a foundation to put into context the lived experiences as an intervention, without negating other forms of knowledge construction.

Warren et al. (1995) define indigenous knowledge as "the local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society" (p. xv). Most definitions of indigenous knowledge also encapsulate the accumulation of experience and the passing of information from one generation to another in a particular cultural context. As Warren and Rajasekaran (1993) assert, indigenous knowledge is:

> …the information base for a society which facilitates communication and decision-making. Indigenous knowledge is the systematic body of knowledge acquired by local people through the accumulation of experiences, informal experiments, and intimate understanding of the environment in a given culture. (p.8)

The above definitions indicate that indigenous knowledge is linked to a specific context in relation to culture and location; it also changes from generation to generation and is therefore dynamic in nature; it is different from modern or scientific knowledge.

Mundy and Compton (1995) indicate the importance of understanding indigenous communication systems since they:

- Have value in their own right (this is important since the erosion of indigenous communication systems by exogenous education endangers the survival of much indigenous knowledge)

- Exogenous channels have limited range (this is particularly relevant with regard to African Americans who are often neglected in terms of formal education systems and other information as well as learning opportunities)

- Indigenous channels have high credibility because of their familiarity and are controlled locally (in terms of African American and males in particular, this is important in terms of planning and development intervention)

- Indigenous channels are important conduits of change. Informal interpersonal contacts and networks among marginalized groups such as African American men are critical for sharing information and empowerment

- Programs can use indigenous communication for both information collection and dissemination (this implies developing relevant approaches and methodologies)

- Indigenous channels offer opportunities for participation of local people, especially those who tend to be marginalized. (pp. 113-114)

Embracing and asserting indigenous knowledge is central to self-determination. The importance of self-determination, according to Dodson (1994) is:

At the most fundamental level, self-determination is deeply rooted in the ultimate goal of human dignity. It is an inherent right of people which is indivisible, non-negotiable and cannot be raised through non-recognition. At a more

5

pragmatic or instrumental level, the enjoyment of the right to self-determination is essential to our survival as people. It is the pillar which supports all other rights; a right of such a profound nature that the integrity of all other rights depends on its observance (p. 23).

Nobles and Goddard (1993) assert that interventions must develop and/or stimulate the knowledge, skills, ability, attitudes, and character necessary for individuals to undertake socially defined, goal-oriented and culturally meaningful activity designed to allow them to: achieve mastery of all aspects of human functioning; reproduce, refine, and make explicit their personality in the objective world; and validate their self and kind. An intervention that has had some promising results among Native and European American populations is the Sweat Lodge (Amnesty International, 1992; Brown, 1989; Bruchac, 1993; Bucko, 1999; Colmant & Merts, 1999; Eaton, 1978; Madden, 1986; Hibbard, 2005; Vogal 1973).

The Sweat Lodge is a sacred Native American purification rite, which is part of a larger ritual system of Vision Quests, Sun Dances, healing and naming ceremonies (Brown, 1989; Bruchac, 1993; Bucko, 1999; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004). It allows participants to connect with self, ancestral spirits, and Divine and Universal energies by employing fire, air, earth and water (Brown, 1989). Sweat Lodge, sweat baths, and sweat houses have been utilized throughout the world for healing and spiritual purposes (Berger, 1998; Bruchac, 1993, Bucko 1999; Colman & Merta, Hall, 1986; Hibbard, 2005; Madden, 1986; Vogel, 1993). There are accounts of "sweating" for spiritual and healing purposes in Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Mexico, Japan, India, Ireland, and Finland (Colmant and Merta, 1999; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004; Vogel, 1973).

The Sweat Lodge has been utilized for healing, divination, ceremonies, and maintenance of overall health (Bruchac, 1993; Bucko, 1999; Eaton, 1978; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004; Hibbard, 2005).

The efficacy of the Sweat Lodge has included evidence of being effective for aiding sleep, pain relief, and muscle relaxation; helpful in treating insomnia, arthritis, and has been used as an adjunct to cancer treatment (Berger & Rounds, 1998). There is also increasing evidence that the Sweat Lodge is beneficial in the treatment of behavioral health (Colmant & Merta, 1999, 2000; Colmant et al, 2005; Edwards, 2003, Noe, Fleming & Manson 2003; Smith, 2005; Wilson et al, 2000). However, the literature focuses on efficacy of the Sweat Lodge for Native and European Americans.

There has been limited research on the efficacy of the Sweat Lodge as an intervention for African American males, even though there is overwhelming evidence of cultural, political, and economic integration between people of African descent and Native Americans (Bateman, 1990; Forbes, 1993; Minges, 2004). The relationship between, not only European and Native Americans, is controversial, as well as with people of African descent.

The questions for this inquiry therefore are: What is the lived experience of the Sweat Lodge and what does it mean to African American males? How has inclusion of both Native American and African indigenous systems of knowledge impacted the Sweat Lodge experience for African American males? How has participation in the Sweat Lodge affected African American males' ability to address issues related to fatherhood? How has participation in the Sweat Lodge affected African American male engagement in fatherhood and other human service programs? A qualitative approach has been

implemented to respond to these questions in a thoughtful and purposeful way in an effort to shed light on the lived experiences of African American men participating in the Sweat Lodge.

Background of the Problem

Scholars argue that the problem of fatherhood in the African American community starts with the meaning of manhood. Bush (1999) contends that African American men have collectively been "emasculated" because:

1. slavery caused a situation where (African American) men could not protect themselves or their families;

2. a "matriarchal system within the (African American) communities, caused by an absent father or an "overpowering (African American) women" within the context of a patriarchal U.S. society that expects men to be heads of households; and

3. economic oppression rendered the (African American) men unable to provide for their families in a society where manhood and the provider role are inextricable (p. 49).

The emasculation is quantified in academia and popular media. For example, some the statistics presented by KFF (2006) are presented below. One out of every four African American male is in jail or under the supervision by the court system. Nearly 4 out of 10 young African American men lack health insurance. Fewer than eight percent of young African American men, 15 to 29 years old, have graduated from college compared to 17% of whites and 35% of Asians. For young African American men, more deaths are caused by homicide than any other cause. Additionally, HIV is the sixth

leading cause of death for young African American and Hispanic men, yet for other racial groups, HIV is not among the top 10 causes of death. Although the rate declines for older African American men, death rates for homicide among African American men ages 25-44 are still three times that of Hispanics and American Indians of that age group. Homicide rates also are higher than the HIV death rate for African American men ages 25-44 (2006).

The process of emasculation has impacted children and families. Eighty percent of African American children can expect to spend at least part of their childhood living apart from their fathers, which causes increased financial hardship on the families (Nock & Enolf, 2008). Among African Americans, single mothers headed 84 % of all low-income families (Urban Institute, 2001) and 41 % of all nonresident low-income fathers are African American. These nonresident fathers, congruent with the statistics above, tend to have lower education levels, involved with the criminal justice system and faced other challenges such as health issues, substance abuse, housing instability, lack of transportation and mental health problems (Martinson & Nightingale, 2008).

The data presented above have influenced the development of policies and programs to address the issue of "absence" among African American men. Policymakers, practitioners, and researchers agree that assisting low-income fathers, 41% who are African American, "is an important social policy goal," however; it is challenging (Martinson & Nightingale 2008). Evaluations of responsible fatherhood programs by the Urban Institute (2008) have provided several key findings: nonresident fathers still face significant barriers; recruitment and enrollment are key challenges; programs had difficulty establishing employment services that improved how nonresident fathers fared

9

in the labor market; child support orders were often set at levels above what fathers can pay; there was evidence of a lack of collaboration between child support agencies and fatherhood programs;   co-parenting issues need to be addressed; and, lack of long sustainability inhibits the development of program capacity and innovation, which in turn makes systemic change difficult.

Tanfer and Mott (1997) argue that there is evidence that traditional notions about fathers and families do not reflect the experiences of African American fathers and their children. They further state that the prevailing definitions and conceptualizations of fatherhood may not adequately capture the cultural nuances in the presentation of fatherhood roles. Interviews of African American men found that they are not comfortable with the socially defined traditional masculine ideal (Hunter & Davis, 1994; Roberts, 1994; Watts, 1993). Hunter and Davis (1994) stated that four domains emerged out of the study that conceptualizes manhood for African American males: (1) self-determination and accountability; (2) family; (3) pride; and, (4) spirituality and humanism. However, researchers, policymakers, and practitioners have not reconciled the perceived notion of manhood/fatherhood and how an African American man actually conceptualizes himself.

<center>Statement of the Problem</center>

The emasculation of African American men is illustrated by disparities in the criminal justice system, education, employment, income, and health care, which have an impact upon an African American man's ability to be a father. Researchers, policy-makers and practitioners have struggled with establishing sustainable programs that address the complex issues that face African American men, especially when they

<center>10</center>

have children (Martinson and Nightingale 2008). The struggle to establish sustainable programs has yielded some innovative interventions. The emergence of the Sweat Lodge as an intervention for Native Americans has had some promising results (Cohen, 2003; Edwards, 2003, Noe, Fleming & Manson, 2003; Smith, 2005). However, there is limited research on the Sweat Lodge for non-native populations, specifically, African American males.

<div align="center">Purpose of the Study & Research Questions</div>

The purpose of this study is two-fold. The initial purpose is to describe the experiences of African American men participating in the Sweat Lodge. Inherent in addressing this purpose is attending to the first two research questions:

1. What is the lived experience of the Sweat Lodge, and what does it mean to African American males?

2. How has inclusion of both Native American and African indigenous systems of knowledge had an impact on the Sweat Lodge experience for African American males?

The first two research questions provide a point of departure in understanding the lived experience of the Sweat Lodge through the cultural and spiritual lens of African American men. The second purpose is to describe how Sweat Lodge experiences provide African American men with strategies to overcome or cope with issues related to fatherhood. The following questions aim to illustrate such strategies:

3. How has participation in the Sweat Lodge affected African American males' ability to address issues related to fatherhood?

4.   How has participation in the Sweat Lodge affected African American male

engagement in mental health services?

Research questions three and four focus on the application of the lived experience of the

Sweat Lodge as it relates to how African American men deal with their role as a father,

their children, significant others, and societal challenges from an indigenous healing and

helping framework.

Rationale

There are several reasons for this line of inquiry. Studies during the 1990s

demonstrated how the social ecology of race affects men's lives as fathers (Allen &

Doherty, 1996; Furstenburgh, 1995; Gadsden, 1999; Hammer, 1997; McAdoo, 1993;

Roy, 1999). Even though the studies provide recommendations to address challenges that

face African American men, there is little evidence that services were implemented to

address their needs. Martinson and Nightingale (2008) in their evaluations of fatherhood

programs note that engaging fathers in program services was a significant challenge.

The factors that limited father engagement were: narrow eligibility criteria;

fathers' lack of trust; fathers' fear of involvement with the child support enforcement

agency; mismatch between program services and men's perceived needs; difficulty

acquiring referrals from other agencies; and, poorly designed recruitment procedures.

Fatherhood programs that were recently evaluated generally adopt a Western approach to

addressing father issues, even though African fathers through multiple studies have stated

that they do not prescribe to the Western view of fatherhood. The programs and existing

research have missed the opportunity to operationalize and centralize the voices of

African Americans, or the utilization of indigenous knowledge concerning fatherhood. The current study attempts to address this deficiency.

Yeh, Hunter, Madan-Bahel, Chiang, and Arora (2004) argue the need for additional research that "systematically assesses the efficacy of indigenous forms of healing for multicultural populations" (p. 416). The need to study indigenous forms of healing is in direct response to not only the increase of diverse individuals in the United States, but the under utilization of conventional mental health services among non-white populations, despite experiencing mental health problems at similar rates as whites (Chun, Enomoto, & Sue, 1996; Gallo, Marino, Ford, & Anthony, 1995; Leong, Wager, & Tate, 1995, Terrell & Terrell, 1984; Yeh et al. 2004).

Block (1980) and Boyd-Franklin (1989) (as cited in Parham & Parham, 2005) found that African Americans would seek assistance from "traditional support systems" of older relatives, clergy, community elders, or other individuals who are perceived as having gained wisdom through personal experiences. Parham and Parham (2005) state that this support system, "in much the same way as therapy, were thought to provide a listening ear, unconditional acceptance of a person's humanness, empathic consolation, occasional mild confrontation, confident reassurance and sometimes, practical advice" (p.28). The decision making process of whether to engage a help giver from the traditional support system or one from the conventional mental health system has been attributed to trust, being viable resource, personal relationship, ethnicity and race (2005). Parham and Parham assert:

> "Despite the fact that the disciplines of counseling and psychology have made
> significant advances in understanding and treatment of the African American

population, our work appears to be stalled in the ideas and paradigms of the 1980s and 1990s…In order to move our work forward, particularly with African American populations, we argue that new conceptual models and paradigms need to be developed to hel us better understand the mental health of African American people" (p.29).

Finally, there has been limited research on the efficacy of the Sweat Lodge for non Native American populations. Madden (1986) investigated the effects of participating in the Sweat Lodge, or "bonding ritual," on the relationships between pairs of European American (white) adolescent males and their absent fathers. Hibbard (2005) developed a taxonomy of transpersonal experiences of European American males who participated in the Sweat Lodge. Colemant, Eason, Winterowd, Jacobs and Cashel (2005) examined the effects of sweat therapy on groups dynamics and affect. The participants consisted of twenty-four European American male and female undergraduate students. There has been limited evidence of research being conducted on the efficacy of the Sweat Lodge for people of African descent.

Theoretical Framework

This study's theoretical framework is comprised of four major components. The first is the African-centered paradigm (Akbar, 1995, 1998; Asante, 1990, Karanga, 1993; Nobles & Goddard, 1993), which provides the indigenous lenses to view the lived experience of African American males who participated in the Sweat Lodge, and which then assists in the construction of personal knowledge. The second major component is Generative-fathering (Erikson 1982; Snarey, 1993). This model emphasizes the activities and work in which fathers engage, in response to the needs of their children, rather than

in response to the role obligations superimposed upon men by socio-cultural prescriptions. The third major component is the bio-ecological model of human development (Brofenbrenner, 1979, 2004), which is useful in generating understanding of a person's development, their environment, and the evolving interaction between the two. Finally, self determination theory (Ryan and Deci; 2000; 2006) addresses the psychological, personal, and cognitive aspects of an individual.

This framework informs the investigation of the lived experiences of African American males participating in the Sweat Lodge. Through focus group and individual interviews of African American men, I gained greater understanding of their lived experiences as participants in the Sweat Lodge, and how these experiences have shaped their development as men and fathers. In Chapter 2, the theoretical framework is described fully and the integration of the lived experiences with the theoretical framework is discussed in Chapters IV and V.

<div align="center">Significance of the Study</div>

There are four significant reasons for conducting this inquiry. First, knowledge developed through this study is intended to describe experiences that may expand the Sweat Lodge to include the African American experience, while maintaining its sacred Native American foundation. Second, this inquiry can provide a model for integrating indigenous healing with contemporary counseling approaches to address issues related to fatherhood. Third, this study can suggest mechanisms for developing alternate approaches for African American males to engage in services, including fatherhood and mental health services. Finally, this study can add to the counseling literature on how to incorporate indigenous healing when providing services to African American males.

Definition of Terms

The following key terms need to be defined for the purposes of this study: African American male and manhood, fatherhood, indigenous systems of knowledge, psychosocial intervention, spiritual intervention and the Sweat Lodge. The definitions are below:

African American male: African American male, 21 years or older, who at the time of the study resides in either Lexington, Kentucky; Nashville, Tennessee; or Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, has participated in the Sweat Lodge and is a father or is planning to be a father.

African American manhood: the ongoing process of self-determination and accountability; building family; as well as maintaining pride, spirituality and humanism. (Akbar, 1991; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004; Hunter and Davis, 1994; T'Shaka 1995).

Fatherhood: is a function of being a man by taking responsibility to guide a child through life based on indigenous knowledge, whether he is the biological father or not.

Indigenous knowledge: is the systematic body of knowledge acquired by local people through the accumulation of experiences, informal experiments, and intimate understanding of the environment in a given culture (Warren & Rajasekaran, 1993, p.8).

Psychosocial Intervention: A process that stimulates the knowledge, skills, ability, attitudes, and character necessary for individuals to address life challenges and to undertake socially defined, goal-oriented and culturally meaningful activity designed to allow them to: achieve mastery of all aspects of human functioning; reproduce, refine, and make explicit their personality in the objective world; and validate their self and kind (Erikson, 1982; Nobles & Goddard, 1993).

Spiritual Intervention: A process that assists an individual with reconnection to all elements of the universe and manifests the notion of I am because we are, and because we are, therefore I am (Fanon, 1967; Graham, 2005; Nobles & Goddard, 1993).

Sweat Lodge: is a sacred Native American purification rite. It allows participants to connect with self, ancestral spirits, and Divine and Universal energies by employing fire, air, earth and water (Brown, 1989; Bruchac, 1993; Bucko, 1999; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004).

Traditional Healing (Medicine): "is the totality of all knowledge and practices, whether explicable or not, used in diagnosis, prevention and elimination of physical, mental or social disequilibrium and relying exclusively on practical experience and observation handed down from generation to generation, verbally or in writing" (World Health Organization, 1976, p. 3 as cited by Levers & Maki, 1994).

Delimitations of the Study

The sample was delimited to African American males only, who are 21 years old or above, who have participated in Sweat Lodge ceremonies, who are fathers or planning to be fathers, and who reside in either Lexington, Kentucky; Nashville, Tennessee; or Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. These delimitations have been adopted because the study was designed to examine the lived experience of African American male Sweat Lodge participants.

Summary of the Inquiry

The foregoing chapter I presented an introduction that illustrates the need for conducting this study. I also offered the rationale for conducting this study and discussed its significance. The purposes of Chapter II are (1) to introduce the theoretical framework; (2) to provide an overview of relevant literature; and, (3) to provide an overview of the

Sweat Lodge, the controversy surrounding its use and research conducted on efficacy of the Sweat Lodge as a psychosocial and spiritual intervention. In Chapter III, I explain the methodology that was utilized to fulfill the purpose of this inquiry by answering the research questions. Chapter IV presents the data that was collected from focus groups and individual interviews. Key to the presentation of data is the interpretation and analysis. The discussion in Chapter V is guided by the theatrical framework, research questions and results. The significance of the study and recommendations for future research will be highlighted in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This review of the literature has three primary aims: (1) to introduce the theoretical framework that is the foundation of this research; (2) to provide a concise overview of relevant literature that describes key issues related to African American males as fathers; and, (3) to provide an overview of the Sweat Lodge, the controversy of its use by non-native populations, and the research conducted on the efficacy the Sweat Lodge as a psychosocial and spiritual intervention.

Theoretical Framework

When considering the lived experience of African American male's participation in the Sweat Lodge, it would be remiss to frame current understanding of this phenomenon from a non- indigenous way of constructing knowledge and one theoretical approach, as not one way of knowing or theory can take into account the complex nature of the lived experiences of the population under study. This chapter, then, provides a discussion of the four major components of the study's theoretical framework. The African-centered paradigm (Akbar, 1994; 1999; Asante, 1988; 1993; Karanga, 1993; Nobles & Goddard, 1993) provides the indigenous lenses to view the lived experience of African American males who participated in the Sweat Lodge, which then assists in the construction of knowledge. The second major component is self determination theory as articulated by Ryan and Deci (2000; 2006) addresses the psychological, personal and cognitive aspects of an individual. The third major component is the bio-ecological model of human development (Brofenbrenner, 1979, 2004), and which is useful in generating understanding of a person's development, their environment and the evolving

19

interaction between the two. Finally, the forth component is the notion of Generative-fathering (Erikson, 1982; Snarey, 1993) which emphasizes the activities and work fathers engage in response to the needs of their children rather than in response to the role obligations superimposed upon men by socio-cultural prescriptions.

African-Centered Paradigm

The indigenous way of knowing for African American males is complex. It's rooted in diverse ancestry and contemporary experiences, which provides a pathway for interpreting the world. Nobles and Goddard state:

> Based on over 20 years of research on Black family life and culture we have been able to document that Black culture in the United States is the result of a special mixture of our continued African orientation operating in another cultural milieu that is primarily defined by philosophical assumptions and underpinnings of European-American community (p. 116).

The fundamental base of the system of knowing, however, is the continuation of the African orientation which assists in defining the "general design for living and the patterns for interpreting reality" (Noble & Goddard, 1993, p. 116). The term used to classify this system of knowing is the African-centered paradigm or Afrocentricity (Asante, 1988, 1993; Karenga, 1993; Keto, 1991).

An African-centered perspective rests on the premise, as articulated by Keto (1991), that it is legitimately and intellectually useful to treat the continent of Africa as a geographical and cultural centre that will provide the reference point(s) in the process of gathering and interpreting information about people from the African Diaspora. Furthermore, Asante (1993) argues that the geographical scope of

Afrocentricity is not limited to the continent of Africa but wherever "people declare themselves to be Africans' (p.112). The term 'African' understanding that it does not simply refer to skin pigmentation or geographic location but to a heritage, a social creation and a personal identity that is rooted in a common origin, struggle and experience.

African-centeredness implies a viewpoint and perceivable locus from which to derive a coherent and constructive framework which has serious implications for research and what we claim to be knowledge. Research processes, as well as the nature of knowledge production generally, incorporate the centers of the researcher and the research subject(s), whether they are places or peoples.

The African-centered paradigm also critically examines methodological and conceptual framework. That is, how we define issues and approaches we adopt to examine them. In the context of this study, it guides the research by providing insights into some of the issues and approaches pertinent to an examination of "manhood" and "fatherhood" in the African American community (especially in relation to the male perspective) as well as the potential role of Sweat Lodge as an appropriate and indigenous intervention strategy. Thus, the utilization of the African-centered approach as the main theoretical framework revolves around the argument that African experiences and contexts can provide a focus for the scholarship and change of the African community.

The African-centered (or Afrocentric) perspective, as outlined by Keto (1991) and Asante (1988), encourages social scientists to critically appraise the way in which they approach their studies and the epistemological assumptions and theoretical frameworks

that inform these approaches. Furthermore, it asserts that there is a need to move away from 'totalizing' concepts that are Eurocentric and hegemonic. Keto (1991) aptly states that totalizing diverse human experiences result in doors being open to 'holocausts' for the 'different'. African-centeredness gives priority to the experiences of African peoples while also relating these experiences to broader social structures. This viewpoint is seen as a challenge to the established order and to mainstream knowledge that marginalizes people of African descent.

Articulating an African-centered approach implies that research and explanations cannot be monolithic in terms of issues, goals and strategies, since they constitute the political expression of the concerns and interests of people from different regions, nationalities, genders, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Theories cannot be based on a rigid concept of universality that negates the wide variety of people's experiences. An African-centered approach challenges researchers and practitioners to broaden its research methods and implementation techniques.

The African-centered paradigm is rooted in African philosophy, which can be defined as "the quality of thought and practice and practice rooted in the cultural image and human interests of African people" (Karenga, 1993, p. 36). Nobles and Goddard (1993) describe African philosophy in terms of cultural structures of *ontology*, or the nature of being or essence; *cosmology*, or origin or structure of the universe; *axiology*, or primary character of universal relations, *ethos*, or set of guiding principles; i*deology*, or the ideational basis of conduct; *world view*-most comprehensive ideas about order, *values orientation* and *central belief system.* Table 1 illustrates the meaning of cultural structures from an African centered lens.

Table 1: Cultural Structures and African Centered Cultural Precepts (Nobles & Goddard, 1993, p. 116).

Cultural Structure	African Centered Cultural Precepts
Ontology	*Consubstantiation* Notion of all elements (humans, animals, inanimate objects) being of the same substance
Cosmology	*Interdependence* Idea of all elements in the Universe being connected
Axiology	*Egalitarianism* Nature of relations being harmonious and balanced
Ethos	*Collectivism* Codes of conduct based on the idea of group and/or collective survival or advancement
Ideology	*Transformation* Change is movement toward a higher level of functioning
Worldview	*Cooperation* The way things function is based on mutual respect and viability
Values Orientation	*Humaneness* Behavior governed by a sense of vitalism and viability
Central Belief System	*Synergism* Notion that the sum of complementary actions is greater than the total effort of individuals

Akbar (1995) describes a process of knowledge construction from an African-centered paradigm. Akbar (1995) contends that from an African context, particularly ancient Egyptian (*Kemetian*) context, the fundamental principle of psychology is "man know thyself." Akbar argues that the foundation of consciousness, growth and psychological development are rooted in this principle. In order to understand this principle the first step required was to master your lower nature, your passions, taming the inner animal and permitting the higher being to reign. This is illustrated by the Sphinx. The Sphinx has a lower nature in the form of a wild lion, which is tamed under the ruling head or mind of the fully developed human consciousness. The second step

was to become acquainted with the higher powers within. This was accomplished by providing education in the mysteries systems of *Kemet* (Akbar, 1995).

What Akbar describes is the understanding of the African-centered cultural precepts of consubstantiation and interdependence. It is also of value to note that the *Kemet* man (man includes women) was viewed as the fundamental metaphor for all higher truth. Thus, the study of religion, science, mathematics, psychology and government is the study of man and his potential. Subjects such as astrology, alchemy and numerology were employed to understand and create conditions for man's potential to manifest (Akbar, 1995).

Karenga (1993) and Asante (1988; 1993) contend that the African Centered Paradigm is key to (a) critically understanding society and the human experience; (b) that the most effective way of studying and understanding African people is from their own perspective; (c) is a way of approaching and interpreting data; and (d) that the African experience is both a valid and valuable subject of study.

It's important to note that the African-centered paradigm does not reject other forms of knowledge construction. It expands outward to other forms of knowing (DuBois, 1975; Karenga, 1993). Karenga argues:

> For even as there are lesson for humanity in African particularity, there are lessons for Africans in human commonality. And African humanity is enriched and expanded by mutually beneficial exchanges with others (p. 36).

As discussed in Chapter I, a "slippery slope" exists in the discussion of indigenous knowledge verses Euro-American or scientific knowledge because of the complexity of worldviews (Levers, 2006). Indigenous systems of knowledge serve as a foundation to

put into context the lived experiences of an intervention, without negating other forms of knowledge construction.

Karenga (1993) explains that the African-Centered Paradigm has been critiques who either raise challenges from ideological perspective or challenges the paradigm on from an intellectual argument. Karenga submits that the approach needs to "avoid the tendency (1) to project [African-Centered Paradigm] as a dogma of authenticity rather than an orientation and methodology; (2) to deny the reality and value of diversity of the perspectives and approaches within the discipline of Black Studies; (3) to promote a static, monolithic and unreal concept of African culture which denies or diminishes its dynamic and diverse character; (4) to over focus on the Continental Africa past at the expense of recognizing the African American past and present as central to and constitutive of African culture and the Afrocentric enterprise; and (5) to be unable to prove its utility in intellectual production beyond declaration of its presence and aspirations" (Karenga, p. 37-39).

The African Centered Paradigm has proven its utility by being applied to psychosocial and spiritual interventions. The African-Centered Paradigm has is viewd as both a psychosocial and spiritual intervention because when applied, it's a "general design for living and the patterns for interpreting reality" (Nobles & Goddard, 1993, p. 116). Alcohol and other drug (AOD) intervention have applied the African Centered Paradigm. Courtney (1993) describes 19 AOD programs targeted toward African American youth at risk. Some programs specifically cited African Centered principles as guiding the development and implementation of their programs, while others incorporate the principles and stay connected to African American organizations that exhibit the

25

principles. Additional applications can be found in research of African American spiritual institutions. Parham and Parham (2005) state that clergy are amount the group of individuals that African Americans tend to seek out for help instead of seeking a help giver from the conventional mental health system. The African American churches either directly incorporate the African Centered paradigm, or elements of the paradigm can be found in one or more of its ministries (Parham & Parham)

Combing psychosocial and spiritual interventions in the context of the African Centered Paradigm are illustrated by integrating traditional healing and psychotherapy. Graham, 2005, applies the African Centered principles of *MAAT*. *MAAT* incorporates the virtues of truth, balance, harmony, propriety, reciprocity and order, which are a guide for living. Graham argues that the African Centered Paradigm applied as a psychosocial and spiritual intervention addresses a "critical need to engage black communities' own interpretations and understanding of human behavior to assist in the recovery and general maintenance of well-being" (Graham, p. 218).

Assisting African American fathers is another example of combing psychosocial and spiritual interventions in the context of the African Centered Paradigm. Conner (2002) describes an African Centered counseling and education program to increase the involvement of fathers. The program includes both a rites of passage and male mentoring components to meet the need of African American fathers. These components provide both psychosocial and spiritual tools needed to address issues.

The African-centered paradigm is utilized in this study as lens to construct knowledge and understand the lived experience of African American males who have participated in the Sweat Lodge. The lens magnification is intensified by the notion

Generativity (Erikson, 1982; Snarey, 1993), Self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000; 2006) and the bio-ecological model of human development (Brofenbrenner, 1979; 2004).

Self-Determination Theory

Ryan and Deci (2000; 2006) theory of self-determinism encompasses characteristics of self -motivation, autonomy, and competence, which are congruent to the notion of "man know thyself" as argued by Akbar (1995). Self-determined individuals tend to focus more on the internal or intrinsic values. They are autonomous individuals who have a curiosity that drives them to seek knowledge or further understanding of a concept. The use of the self-determination model involves facilitating people in acquiring and/or increasing their internal motivation. Therefore, motivation that is established through self-determination theory becomes an essential part to create conditions to manifest the potential of men.

According to Deci et al. (1994), there are three steps to facilitating the enhancement of internal motivation. The first step towards instilling intrinsic motivation, according to Deci et al., is acknowledging a person's perspective. Numerous authors have written on the importance of acknowledging how a person feels about his or her perspective. Acknowledgement here entails acceptance. Besides just acknowledging a persons' perspective, Armstrong (1998) asserts that a teacher or a leader should honor the person's entire experience. Rogers (1963) wrote that unconditional acceptance of another can be the basis for a motivation to change. Thus, providing acknowledgement/acceptance is the starting point for facilitating internal motivation.

The second step in facilitating internal motivation according to Deci et al. (1994) is providing a person with a meaningful rationale as to why one should consider alternative information to what one already possesses. Weinert (1987) wrote that learners compare what they know to what is being presented to them. If the learner perceives a gap in his or her knowledge, he or she may then either proceed to fill this gap or resign from attempting to understand the new concept altogether due to feelings of hopelessness (Weinert). Therefore, a teacher or leader who wishes to facilitate internal motivation must find the balance between what the participant knows and what he would be willing to strive to know. Deci et al. (1994) noted that the third aspect of the model facilitating internal motivation is providing choice. Armstrong (1998) wrote that those who are not presented choices in their learning tend to either give in and adapt to the current authority figure's style, or just give up all together.

It is also essential that motivation be internal. In fact, Ryan and Deci (2000) go as far as to say that intrinsic motivation is probably the most important phenomenon in evaluating positive performance. Self-determination theory argues that contextual events can influence and enhance internal motivation (Ryan & Deci). For these reasons, self-determination theory is a key element in creating conditions for manhood and thus fatherhood to manifest.

Motivation is a necessary requirement for participation in becoming a man. Bernard and Goodyear (1998) stated that all human relationships are bi-directional and based on mutual influence. The concept of mutual influence is important because men are influenced by the other men role modeling of motivation. Men who role model this commitment toward achievement raise the expectation level. Ryan and Deci (2000) stated

that individuals could be motivated because they value an activity or because there is a strong external coercion.

Ryan and Deci (2000) state that the goal of self-determination theory is to find out what motivates people, and which environments work best to facilitate that motivation. Therefore, it is through a self-determination model that the Sweat Lodge experience can encourage internal motivation in participants. Research has shown that motivation is an important factor that can be derived from the self and other forces. However, men must be cautious not to utilize too much power or authority when creating conditions for other males to manifest their purpose. Research has also revealed that threats, deadlines, directives, pressured evaluations, and imposed goals diminish intrinsic motivation because they conduce toward an external perceived locus of causality (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Enhancing intrinsic motivation has other benefits as well. For instance, Owen et al. (1981) noted that learners assume more responsibility for behavior they view as voluntary, as opposed to behavior they view as compulsory. Therefore, enhancing intrinsic motivation has the ripple effect of also increasing responsibility, which is a necessary part of growth.

Self-determination theory is based on how people internally regulate incoming ideas. Internal regulation of ideas is a concept that Deci, Eghrari, Patrick, and Leone (1994) use to describe how people assimilate ideas that are not their own. Deci et al. (1994) wrote that different qualities of internal regulation occur when viewed through the concepts of introjection and integration. While introjection is reactive process and results

in what Perls (1976) called unquestionably accepting ideas, integration is a proactive process that results in self-determined behavior (Deci et al., 1994).

By definition, motivation is a proactive process. Since an idea cannot be reactive and proactive at the same time, it follows that introjecting ideas cannot lead to authentic motivation. For authentic motivation to occur, previously introjected ideas have to be viewed differently. According to Perls (1976), to counteract introjection one has to question an idea, break it down and own it. Then, as Ryan and Deci (2000) noted, the introjected idea becomes an authentic motivator.

Ryan and Deci (2000, 2006) self-determination theory has been used to gain understanding in education, healthcare, mental health, parenting, organizations and sports and exercise. The purpose of this study two parenting examples will be presented. Grolnick, Deci, and Ryan (1997) applied the theory to the socialization process of children by their parents. Bouchard, Lee, Asgary and Pelletier (2007) examined the degree to which fathers' motivation for involvement with their preschool children was intrinsic versus extrinsic for 205 French-speaking fathers.

Bio-ecological Model

Lynch and Levers (2007) describe how researchers have utilized Brofenbrenner's theory to link with other transactional theories such as Self-Determination Theory. Brofenbrenner's (1979; 2005) bio-ecological model of human development seeks to explain individual knowledge, growth, and competencies in terms of ecological influences and the effects they have on development. The present inquiry seeks to understand the lived experience of the Sweat Lodge and issues of fatherhood through the

cultural and spiritual lens of African American men. This model provides utility in understanding the impact of culture may have on participants.

Brofenbrenner's (1979; 2004) bio-ecological model of human development includes protective factors which are believed to exist within a complex arrangement of relationships between and individual and his multiple environments. Brofenbrenner's model identifies important and fluid systems of which each individual is a part. Brofenbrenner (p. 3) stated, "The ecological environment is conceived as a set of nested structures, each inside the next." These systems are termed the "social context" of human development and begin with the innermost system, the microsystem, being at the center of the set of concentric rings, with the systems ranging from minute inputs of direct interactions with social agents to broad inputs of culture.

The microsystem includes family, peers, and religious settings. The mesosystem is defined by interactions among microystems (for example when fathers and mothers co-parent). The exosystem includes influences from community, health and social service agencies, neighbors, and the mass media; and the macrosystem involves attitudes and ideologies of culture, one's nationality, society and governing political systems. The growth and development of the individual is influenced by each one of these interconnected systems.

The evolution of Brofenbrenner's ecological model produced the process-person-context model. This model describes "the ways in which particular characteristics of the person or the context can influence such processes as mediating factors, moderating factors, or both" (p. 80). The process-person-centered context model also allows for "variations in developmental processes and outcomes associated with different ecological

31

niches" (p.118). Ecological niches refer to "regions in the environment that are especially favorable or unfavorable to the development of individuals with particular personal characteristics" (p.111).

The bio-ecological model of human development (Brofenbrenner, 1979; 2004) has been utilized to investigate adolescent development. Thomas (2007) utilized the theory to reveal the protective factors among African American males who reside in high-risk neighborhoods and their ability to flourish despite the circumstances. The model was also utilized by Levers (2002; 2003; 2006a). The model has "demonstrated cultural elasticity and has been used effectively in the developing contexts" (Levers, Magweva, & Mpofu, 2007, p.7).

Generative-Fathering

The generative perspective emerged in response to the deficit paradigm and a role-inadequacy perspective in investigating father involvement (Marsiglio et al., 2000). Specifically, a grim future has been depicted for African American men by academia and popular media (Bass & Coleman, 1997; Bush, 1999; Coles, 2003; CNN, 2008; Holzer, 2005; U.S. Department of Justice Department, 1993; Urban Institute, 2001).

Coles (2003) argues that responsible fatherhood programs' concentration on nonresident single African American fathers has placed these men in a category of being a social problem and as the prototype of an African American man. Volumes of research conducted by the Urban Institute on responsible fatherhood programs have noted that the target population and majority of men being served by these programs are African American men (Martinson, et al., 2007; Martinson & Nightingale, 2008; Nock & Einolf,

2008; NCOFF, 2003; NFI, 2006; Sorensen & Zibman, 2000; U.S. Department of Human Services, 2008).

Based on the deficit model of investing father involvement, especially for African American fathers, fathering is viewed as a social role which men tend to perform inadequately (Hawkins & Dollahite, 1997 as cited by Marsiglio et al., 2000). To combat this perspective, Snarey (1993) applied the term generativity, from Erick Erikson's (1982) work on the stages of Psychological Development, as a theory to study father involvement. Snarey states that generative fathers are "men who contribute to and renew the ongoing cycle of the generations through the care that they provide as birth fathers (biological generativity), childrearing fathers (parental generativity) and cultural fathers (social generativity)" (p. 1).

Generative-fathering emphasizes activities and work fathers do in response to the needs of their children rather than the obligations superimposed upon men by sociocultural prescriptions (Dollahite & Hawkins, 1998; Hawkins & Dollahite, 1997 as cited by Marsiglio, et al., 2000). Theorists contend that the "generative work of fathers involves a sense of responsible caring, a desire to facilitate the needs of the next generation, and attention to fostering a fit between men's activities and children's needs" (p.1177).

The African-Centered Paradigm provides the indigenous lenses which aids in constructing knowledge. Generative-fathering increases the magnification of the lens in terms of investing issues of fatherhood from a strength based model instead of a deficit model. Self determination theory (Ryan & Deci; 2000; 2006) further increases the magnification in order to understand how to enhance intrinsic motivation. Finally,

Brofenbrenner's (1979; 2004) bio-ecological model of human development provides the clarity to examine the social context of African American fathers. Together, these four major components of the theoretical framework drive the purpose of the study, which is to describe the experiences of African American men participating in the Sweat Lodge and how Sweat Lodge experiences provide African American men with strategies to overcome or cope with issues related to fatherhood.

Review of Relevant Literature

The purpose of the following review of relevant literature is to provide a concise overview of (1) relevant literature that describes key issues related to African American males as fathers; (2) the Sweat Lodge, research conducted on the efficacy and the controversy surrounding the use of the Sweat Lodge by non-native population; and (3) to review the outcomes of evaluations of fatherhood programs servicing African American fathers.

African American Males

This section will focus on literature that describes key issues related to African American males. Specifically, the meaning of manhood for African American males will be addressed. This examination of the definition of manhood for African American males will shed light on relevant issues for African American fathers.

Bush (1999) states that "the status and meaning of Black [African American] manhood in the United States is a subject matter that should constantly be revisited, examined, and defined because it is out of this framework that Black males construct their behavior and relationships with their wives, children, communities and one another" (p. 49). Scholars argue that black men have been collectively emasculated for the

34

following reasons "(1) Slavery [Enslavement] caused a situation were they could not protect themselves or their families; (2) a matriarchal system within Black communities, caused by an absent father or an "overpowering Black woman" emerged within the context of patriarchal American society that expects men to be the heads of households; and (3) economic oppression rendered Black men unable to provide for their families in a society where manhood and provider are inextricable" (Bush, 1999, p. 49).

Akbar (1991) asserts that in order for the slave-holder to maintain control, they had to extinguish any form of real leadership among the slaves. Coming from a patriarchal society the slave-holders viewed the African man as the potential leader, thus the process of dehumanization and suppressing manhood was initiated. Subsequently, parents began to raise their sons to survive in such an environment, not to be outspoken or bold or provide leadership (Akbar, 1991; Bush, 1999). Patterson (1998, p. 27) observes that enslavement was the "most virulent in its devastation of the roles of father and husband." Aird (2003) contends that enslavement had a significant impact on the institution of fatherhood for Africans brought to America. Aird (p. 160) states that the "conditions for Africans in the United States provided exactly the opposite of what is required to establish and preserve the fragile bond between father and child."

As enslavement became institutionalized, there was an increasing lack of knowledge transfer among enslaved Africans about being a man, husband and father. What was learned and enforced, in the context of enslavement, was the notion of not to be responsible and not to provide (Aird, 2003). Scholars argue that enslavement, especially in the United States, intentionally separated procreation by men from the capacity to provide for their children and their children's mothers, which lead to profound

distrust in gender relationships (Aird, 2003; Patterson, 1998). Slave holders created

conditions that would consistently create fear, jealousy, and insecurity in enslaved men.

Willie Lynch, a slave owner in the West Indies, in which he recommended torturing and

humiliating an enslaved man in front of his wife and children. One example cited by

scholars is stripping a man naked and tying each of his ankles to horses who pulled in

opposite directions. Some Slaveholders believed these punishments reinforced the belief

in black women that their men could not protect them. Lynch advised that these methods

would create a condition where "You've got a nigger woman out front and the nigger

man behind and scared" (Aird, p. 161).

These conditions have created a perceived matriarchal system within the African

American community (Bush, 1999). However, the literature reflects four schools of

thought regarding the perceived matriarchal system and its impact on the African

American community. Frazier (1939), Moynihan (1965), Pettigrew (1964) and Hunter

and Davis (1992, 1994) (as cited in Bush, 1999) argue that African American males

failed to learn how to become men in the absence of their fathers. Therefore, the absence

of fathers combined with African American women taking a powerful stand in the family

contributed significantly to the difficulties in the experienced in African American

families and communities.

The second view held by Hare (1971), Liebow (1967) and Staples (1971; 1978)

(as cited in Bush, 1999) contend that economic oppression deprives African American

males of their manhood and causes significant problems in families and communities, not

the absence of fathers. These scholars argue that there are role models present, including

women, who African American males can learn from about how to be men and fathers.

The third view found in the literature suggests the notion of the African American woman as a matriarch is a myth (Bush, 1999). Hooks (1981) (as cited in Bush, 1999) specifically states:

> The term matriarch implies the existence of a social order in which women exercise social and political power, a state which in no way resembles the condition of [African American women] or all women in American society.
>
> (p. 51)

Reed (2003) cites a study by Herbert Gutman (1976), which found between 1750 and 1925 the "[black] family was a strong cultural concept and practiced throughout this period, and two parent households and long lasting marriages had been typical among African Americans for most of their American experience" (p. 131). Reed further states that it was not the "mystical cultural trend such as black matriarchy" that caused the decline of African American families, it was the result of "forces in the second half of the twentieth century not slavery or age-old culture" (Reed, p, 131). Finally, the fourth school of thought argues that key factors that impact on African American males are father absence and the lack of appropriate male role models or elders to teach males how to be a man and fathers (Akbar, 1991; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004; Wright, 1991).

The literature also reveals an ongoing debate on the impact of slavery. The view among scholars on the impact of slavery has on the relationships between African American men, women and children range from enslavement caused little or no damage to self-worth and their familial strengths (Reed, 2003) to enslavement left indelible marks that have been visible over the last 143 years (Akbar, 1991; Patterson, 1998; Reed 2003).

Reed states that the United States Census reveals that from 1890 to 1995 until after 1960, two-parent families in the African American community was the rule (2003).

The marks include Jim Crow, the Civil Rights movement and racism was felt throughout society. Reed (2003) cites Richardson and Wade (1999): "a culture born of the slavery experience has been passed from generation to generation" (p. xx). Levers et al. (2003) described this as transgenrational trauma. Transgenerational trauma largely has been discussed in literature regarding the emotional well-being of Native American Indians (e.g., Duran, Duran, Yellow Horse Brave Heart, & Yellow-Horse-Davis, 1998; Gagné, 1998; Grant, 1996) and concerning Holocaust survivors (e.g., Auerhahn, & Laub, 1998); significantly less has been written about the African American experience (e.g., Apprey, 1998).

The trauma experienced by African Americans has manifested over time into inferiority, self-hatred, shame and made it difficult for African American men and women to establish trusting and loving relationships (Aird, 2003). Aird contends that "African Americans never took the necessary time to heal the deep wounds that had been inflicted by slavery" nor from the "brutalities and indignities of Jim Crow" (p.162). Therefore, the trauma, which has manifested in many ways over time, has been passed from generation to generation. One important manifestation is the notion of "double or dual consciousness" (DuBois, 1903; Fanon, 1967). W.E.B. DuBois which was the first to coin the term and it was expanded by Fanon within the context of the post-colonial experience in Africa. DuBois describes the notion of double conscious:

> …the Negro is sort of the seventh son, born with a veil and gifted with second-
> sight in this American world, --world which yields him no true

self-consciousness, but lets him see himself through the revelation of the other

world. It's a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense of always

looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring ones's soul by the

tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his

two-ness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled

strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone

keeps it from being torn asunder. (p. 2)

Double consciousness is significant for all African Americans, especially men. As

discussed above, the trauma of slavery, Jim Crow and contemporary racism has impact

on the definition and roles of African American men in the family. Many African

American men struggle with the role of a man as prescribed by western society over the

years and their initiate notions of what it means to be a man and a father.

Tanfer and Mott (1997) describe the western view of the "traditional model of

fatherhood", which was shaped by an agrarian society, as a man playing the dominant

role in the lives of their children which included defining and supervising development.

The traditional model is also marketed by the father's moral role of the child into

adult life. As western society moved to an industrialized state men were drawn into the

marketplace to provide for the family, thus women began to take a more active role in the

parenting of children (Tanfer & Mott, 1997). Demos (1986, as cited by Tanfer & Mott)

contend that during this period men continued to act as displinarians, but the emotional

bonds were weekend between their children. Tanfer and Mott further argue that as men

derived their status from the marketplace, his standing in the market place significantly

influenced his worthiness as a husband and father. Additionally, they argue that "the

movement from ascribed value to achieved value throughout the nineteenth century, an erosion in the role of fathers began" (Tanfer & Mott, p. 3).

Tanfer and Mott (1997) stated that the erosion of the role of fathers can be found in custody practices. They found that until the mid-nineteenth century custody was generally awarded to fathers, however, by the end of the century children increasing remained with their mothers. This practice was institutionalized by the doctrine of "tender years" which stated that the "children's interests were best served when they were raised by their mothers, whose parenting skills were superior to those of their husbands" (p. 3). The doctrine led to a more detached form of fatherhood which was generally restricted to being a provider.

Until the 1960s and 70s, western society generally viewed the man as the provider and the woman as the primary nurturer of the children. During this period of number of trends emerged such as definition of roles of men and women, increased economic expansion in the service jobs and increased wages for women and the declining fertility rates and increasing divorce rates, which had an impact on fatherhood (Tanfer & Mott, 1997). Contemporary fathers seem to fall into the following roles: caring, nurturing, fathers who deny paternity, absent fathers, and fathers who are not absent but are not involved with their children.

The African American male experience is that of double consciousness, which has the danger of a person conforming to how others perceive the person. African American men, over time, developed a psyche that evolved out of being economically oppressed and angry about not being able to provide for themselves and their family (Bush, 1999). The masses not being able to fully realize their role, due to continued economic

oppression, became participants and victims of their own destruction by adopting a worldview and roles that was not theirs.

Tanfer and Mott (1997) argue that there is evidence that western notions about fathers and families do not reflect the experiences of African American fathers and their children. They further state that the prevailing definitions and conceptualizations of fatherhood may not adequately capture the cultural nuances in the presentation of fatherhood roles. Interviews of African American men found that they are not comfortable with the societal defined traditional masculine ideal (Hunter & Davis, 1994; Roberts, 1994; Watts, 1993). Hunter and Davis (1994) stated that four domains emerged out of the study that conceptualizes manhood for African American males: (1) self-determination and accountability; (2) family; (3) pride; and (4) spirituality and humanism. However, researchers, policymakers and practitioners have not reconciled the perceived notion of manhood/fatherhood and how an African American man actually conceptualizes himself.

Studies during the 1990s demonstrated how the social ecology of race affects men's lives as fathers (Allen & Doherty, 1996; Furstenburgh, 1995; Gadsden, 1999; Hammer, 1997; McAdoo, 1993), even though the studies provide recommendations to address challenges that face African American men, there is little evidence that services were implemented to address their needs. Martinson & Nightingale (2008) in their evaluations of fatherhood programs note that engaging fathers in program services was a significant challenge. The factors that limited father engagement was narrow eligibility criteria, fathers' lack of trust, fathers' fear of involvement with the child support enforcement agency; mismatch between program services and men's perceived needs;

41

difficulty acquiring referrals from other agencies; and poorly designed recruitment procedures.

Fatherhood programs that were recently evaluated are taking a Western approach to addressing father issues, even though African American fathers through multiple studies have stated that don't proscribe to the Western view of fatherhood (Hunter & Davis, 1994; Roberts, 1994; Watts, 1993). The programs and researchers have missed the opportunity to operationalize the voice of the African American father, or the utilization of indigenous knowledge concerning fatherhood. SenGupta, Hopson, and Thompson-Robinson (2004) convincing argue that cultural competence in evaluation is required. This starts with the conceptualization of social problems, which tends to manifest into the "dominant culture's interpretation of reality that perpetuates the myth of the deficit model" (p. 8). Listening to the voice of the participant during the problem definition, design and planning phases is key to combating the "myth of the deficit model" (2004).

As noted above, the lack of long sustainability inhibits the development of Fatherhood program capacity and innovation, which in turn makes systemic change difficult (Martinson & Nightingale, 2008). House (1999) and Wilson (1987), (as cited by SenGupta, Hopson & Thompson-Robinson, 2004) both have found that European Americans have a difficult time understanding the factors that impact African Americans, which in turn influences their support of programs which leads to less than adequate funding for programs. This approach is inherently focused on fixing the deficits instead of focusing on the identification of individual and community strengthens in order to design programs that meet the needs of participants (SenGupta, Hopson & Thompson-Robinson. 2004).

Nobles and Goddard (1993) contend that the programs must be culturally consist Culturally consistent means "the phenomena (supervision, prevention/intervention programs, training activities and so on) can be judge as congruent with the particular (cultural) precepts that provide consumers (and staff) with a general design for living and patterns for interpreting their reality" (Nobles & Goddard, p. 117). The implementation of a culturally consistent model is called the "Culturally Consistent Service Praxis". This is a "systematic process whereby one develops and/or stimulates the knowledge, skills, ability, attitudes, and character necessary for consumers (and staff) to undertake socially defined, goal-oriented and culturally meaningful activity designed to allow them to: achieve mastery of all aspects of human functioning; reproduce, refine, and make explicit their personality in the objective world; validate their self and kind" (Nobles & Goddard, p. 117).

These finding provide a point of departure to build programs that assist African American males to define themselves as men based on their innate gift skills and talents. Furthermore, programs should challenge the preconceived notions and definitions as well as facilitate self-exploration that leads to self-definition.

The Sweat Lodge

The Sweat Lodge, a sacred Native American purification rite, existed centuries before the first Europeans arrived in Central and North America (Bruchac, 1993; Bucko, 1999; Vogel, 1973). The first observations of the Sweat Lodge were documented by Spanish missionaries in the early sixteenth century (Bruchac, 1993). They describe the Sweat Lodge as:

bath houses that were heated with fire and are like small low huts. Each one can

hold ten persons in a squatting position. The entrance is very low and narrow.

People enter one-by-one and on all fours. (1993, p. 17).

Bucko (1999, see Appendix D) cites accounts by Louis Hennepin who was captured by

Santee Dakotas on April 12, 1680:

Father; this new Father of mine observing that I could not well rise without two or

three to help me, order'd a Stove to be made, into which he casud'd me to enter

strak-naked with four Savages; who before they began to sweat ty'd their

Prepuces about with certain strings made of bark of white wood. This stove was

cover'd with the skins of wild bulls, an in it they put flints and other stones red-

hot. They ord'd me by signs to hold my breath, time after time , as long as I could,

which I did, as well as those what were with me…As soon as the Savages that

were with me had let go their breath, which they did with great force,

Aquipaguetin began to sign with a loud and thundering voice; the others seconded

him; and laying their hands on my body, began to rub it, and at the same time to

weep bitterly. I was like to fall a swoon and so was forc'd to quit the Stove. At my

coming out, I was so week: However, they continu'd to make (me) sweat thrice a

week, which at last restor'd me to my pristine vigor, so I found myself as well as

ever. (p. 26-27)

William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, wrote about a man who used the

sweat lodge in the winter of 1683 to cure himself of a fever (Bruchac, 1993). Penn

observed the sweat of the Lenape people who originally lived in present day northern

Pennsylvania, New Jersey and the lower Hudson Valley. Jesuit and European colonists

made similar observations of the healing power of the Sweat Lodge. Bruchac cites Bossu who described the Choctaw sweat:

> They entered steam cabinets in which are boiled all sorts of medicinal and sweet smelling herbs and where the vapors filled with the essence and slats of these herbs enter the patient's body through his pores and his and restore his strength. (p. 24).

Scholars argue that the Native American form of the Sweat Lodge is the most widespread and studied in the world (Bruchac, 1993; Bucko 1999; Colmant & Merta, 1999, 2000; Colmant et al., 2005; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004; Hibbard, 2005; Madden, 1986; Vogel, 1973). However, descriptions of sweat bath, sweat house, stem bath or water vapor traditions can found in the literature for Finland, Greece, Roman Empire, Russia, Japan, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria (Bruchac, 1993; Vogel, 1973). The best known of the European "water-vapor baths" are the sauna of Finland, Scandinavia, Latvia and Estonia (1993). The Greeks and Romans used water vapor baths or hot air baths. However, it was the Romans who built first large scale stem baths or *thermae*. Bruchac, writes that "after the fall of the Roman empire, the idea of steam baths was embraced by the prophet Muhammad around 600A.D. These Arab *hammams* (Arbic for spreader of warmth) were the parents of the Turkish baths, still found in Istanbul and in some American cites" (p. 14).

The Russian steam bath houses where constructed out of wood with some houses being completely underground or partially submerged. Bruchac (1993) cites Lopatin (1960) who wrote:

The Russian water vapor bath serves purposes other than mere cleanliness of body. Even at the present time peasants use the steam bath for ritualistic purposes, esoteric rites, therapeutic treatment and for even social affairs. (p. 15)

Bruchac (1993) noted that the Russian tradition of sweating is very similar to Native American tradition in that there is pouring of water on heated stones, use of fragrant herbs, and the mixed use for social, therapeutic and ritualistic purposes. In addition to the Russian tradition of sweating, the Japanese form of sweating, *mushi-buro* (meaning steam bath) and *kara-buto* (empty bath) are also similar to the Native American Sweat Lodge in form and function.

The most notable of the descriptions is by Bruchac (1993) during his stay in West Africa from 1966 to 1969. He states that the sweating practices in parts Africa parallel those of North America. Traditional healers explained that "healing ceremonies would use steam from moistened green leafy branches placed in a fire or from direct heat in a small enclosed area to help heal various physical and spiritual ailments" (Bruchac, p. 16). Bruchac observed that the use of heat and steam to induce sweat as part of therapeutic treatment was widely practiced in Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria.

The structures and types of heat utilized to sweat varies, however the general purpose to cleanse, purify and heal the body, physically and spiritually is consistent throughout the world (Bruchac, 1993; Bucko 1999; Colmant & Merta, 1999; Colmant et al., 2005; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004; Hibbard, 2005; Madden, 1986; Vogel, 1973). The Native American form of sweating has gained more attention than other forms throughout the world because of Brown (1989) and Neihardt (1932) which represents the detailed record and interpretation of Lakota ritual by a single practitioner, Chief Black Elk.

Black Elk's description of the Sweat Lodge is the first narrative by an indigenous person whose emphasis is not on efficacy, but on the interpretation of symbols used in the ceremony for physical and spiritual healing. The Lakota form of the Sweat Lodge is a key element of this inquiry (Bucko, 1999).

The Lakota Sweat Lodge, like many others throughout North America and the world where utilized by both men and women to purify and gain strength (Brown, 1989; Bucko, 1999). The Sweat Lodge was conducted with other ceremonies such as the vision quest, the Sun Dance, the Elk ceremony, to prepare boys and girls for manhood and womanhood, and to cleanse murderers returning from exile (Bucko, 1999).

Every aspect of the Sweat Lodge has meaning and contributes to the purification and healing of participants: Black Elk states:

The rite of the *onikare* (Sweat Lodge) utilizes the powers of the universe: earth, and things which grow from the earth, water, fire and air. The water represents the Thunder-beings who come fearfully but bring goodness, for steam which comes from the rocks, within which is fire, is frightening, but it purifies us so that we may live as *Wakan-Tanka (God or Creator)* wills, and He may even send to us a vision if we become very pure. When we us the water in the Sweat Lodge we should think of *Wakan-Takan* who is always flowing, giving His power and life to everything; we should even be as water which is lower than all things yet stronger even than the rocks. (Brown, 1989, p. 31, see Appendix D)

There are generally two phases to the Sweat Lodge ceremonies, which utilize all elements: earth, water, fire and air. The two phases are preparation and the sweat (Brown, 1989; Bucko, 1999). The preparation phase consists of the construction of the lodge,

sacred fireplace, lighting the fire, making the central altar and building the sacred path.

Black Elk provides detail and meaning about the construction of the lodge:

> The Sweat Lodge is made from twelve or sixteen young willows, and these, too
> have a lesson to teach us, for in the fall their leaves die and return to earth, but in
> the spring they come to life again, So too men die but live again in the real world
> of *Wakan-Tanka,* where there is nothing but the spirits of all things…The
> willows which make the frame of the Sweat Lodge are up in such a way that they
> mark the four quarters of the universe; those, the whole lodge is the universe in an
> image, and two-legged, four-legged and winged peoples and all things of the
> world are contained within it, for all these peoples and things too must be purified
> before they can send a voice to *Wakan-Tanka*. (Brown, 1989, p. 32)

Black Elk further explains that door of the Sweat Lodge must always face east because "it is from this direction that the light of wisdom comes" (Brown, p. 32).

The sacred fireplace, which is called *Peta-owihankeshni*, is about ten steps from the lodge. The "fire of no end" or "eternal fire" is where the rocks are heated. Black Elk explains that the rocks "represent Grandmother Earth, from who all fruits come, and they also represent the indestructible and everlasting nature of *Wakan-Tanka*" (Brown, 1989, p. 32). The sacred fireplace is made by first placing for sticks running east and west, then placing four additional sticks running north to south on top. Sticks are then placed vertically, leaning against the horizontal sticks, first in the west, then the north, east on south side of the sacred fire place making a tipi. Finally, the fours rocks are placed in the four directions, west, north east and south and then the remaining rocks our placed on top. Black Elk states that when building the fire prayers should be offered (Brown). Once

the all the rocks and sticks have been placed, the eternal fire should be lit on the side facing east.

The next step is to make the central altar. This altar is made within the center of the Sweat Lodge and is where the hot rocks will be placed during the sweat. Black Elk instructs that "we first push a stick into the earth at the center of lodge, and then around this point we draw a circle with a cord of rawhide" (Brown, 1989, p. 33). A round hole is dug at the center of the lodge. The dirt from the hole is sprkinled on the ground to make a sacred path out of the lodge to the east. At the end of the path the remaining dirt is utilized to make a mound (Brown). Black Elk stresses that as the hole is dug, the scared path and mound are built, prayers must be offered. At this point the Sweat Lodge is covered with animal skins or blankets to keep the heat from escaping and outside light from entering the lodge.

At this juncture, the Sweat Lodge leader or water pourer enters the lodge alone with his pipe. Black Elk explains that the leader enters the lodge on all fours and passes around the lodge in a sun-wise direction and sits at the west. The leader then prays and places pinches of tobacco in the four corners of the central alter (Brown, 1989). The leader is then handed a glowing coal from the eternal fire and is placed in the central alter. Sage or sweet grass is placed on the glowing coal and the leader rubs the smoke over his body and the pipe. Black Elk states that the smoke from the sage or sweet grass purifies the leader, his pipe and the lodge, "everything is made scared, and if there is anything in the lodge that is not good it is driven away by the Power of the smoke" (Brown, 1989, p. 34).

Prior to leaving the lodge the leader fills the pipe with tobacco. Each pinch is accompanied with a prayer to the four directions, and mother earth. Black Elk clarifies that each pinch of tobacco invokes the power of the directions and Mother Earth (Brown, 1989). Once the pipe is filled the leader leaves the lodge and walks the sacred path towards the east. The pipe is placed on the earth mound, the bowl facing west and the stem facing east. This act signals that the Sweat is ready to begin (1989).

The start of the sweat phase is marked by the purification of the participants. Black Elk explains that prior to entering the lodge all participants are purified or smudged with sage or sweet grass, similar to how the leader was purified while in the lodge. All participants enter the lodge on all fours and once inside move around in a sun wise direction (Brown, 1989; Bucko, 1999). The participants in the lodge sit silent; the leader then asked the fire keeper or helper for the pipe. The pipe is handed to the leader. The fire keeper then picks up a hot rock from the eternal fire with a pitch fork or forked stick and walking along the scared path and hands the rock inside the lodge. The rock, which is for *Waken-Taka* is placed at the center of the central alter. The second rock is handed into the lodge and is place on the west side of the sacred alter. The next rock is placed to the north, the next to the east, one to the south and finally one in the center of the earth. Black Elk states that the rocks "represent everything that there is in the universe" (Brown, p. 36).

Black Elk describes that prior to the lodge door being closed the pipe is lit and passed in the lodge, starting with the person sitting in the west and ending with the leader. He explains that the passing of the pipe within the lodge represents how the holy White Buffalo Cow Woman entered the lodge in a scared manner and then left (Brown, 1989).

50

Once the pipe is passed to the leader, the leader then hands it to the fire keeper, who then takes it, fills it in the same manner as the leader and places back on the earth mound. The fire keeper then closes the door of the Sweat Lodge so that it is completely dark inside the lodge (Brown).

The door to the lodge will be opened four times during the course of the sweat lodge, according to Black Elk. Prior to the door being opened, prayers are offered, songs are sung, and water is poured on the rocks to generate heat, this is generally called a round. The first round is to the west, the second round is to the north, the third to the east and the fourth to the south. Black Elk explains that after each round the door is opened, and the pipe is passed in the same manner as when the sweat began (Brown, 1989). It's also important to note that additional hot rocks are usually brought into the lodge in between rounds (Brown, 1989; Bucko, 1999; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004).

Once the fourth round to the south is completed, participants exit the lodge in a sun wise direction. Black Elk describes what has been accomplished by this "most scared rite":

> …those who have participated are as men born again, and have done much good not only for themselves, but for the whole nation…When we leave the Sweat Lodge we are as the souls which are kept, as I have described, and which return to *Wakan-Yanka* after they have been purified; for we too, leave behind in the *Inipi* lodge all that is impure, that we may live as the Great Spirit wishes, and that we may know something that real world of the Spirit, which is behind this one. (Brown, 1989, p. 43)

Black Elk's description of the Sweat Lodge, as recorded by Brown (1989) has had significant influence on contemporary accounts. Bucko (1999) cites several documentary accounts of the Sweat Lodge that are parallel to Black Elk's. In general, the Sweat Lodge is still considered a religious rite and can be conducted prior to other ceremonies or as a solo ceremony. Bucko noted that the accounts of the preparation and the sweat phases varied: the amount of sapling used, building of the sacred fire and lodge, when the rocks are brought into the lodge, the use of the pipe, tobacco, sage, use of spiritual symbols, what was placed on the earth mound, and types of prayers and songs. This held true even when the same people conducted and participated (1999).

Bucko (1999) explains that accounts of the sweat itself, describe the heat, the cold, light, darkness, sound, silence, laughter and tears. He also notes that "the ritual is highly inclusive: the leader delegates tasks such as preparing the lodge and performing certain ritual actions in the sweat so that all participants perform some task" (p. 90). All participants are invited to pray, sing and are encouraged to speak when appropriate. However, what's said in the lodge remains confidential and not repeated outside the lodge (1999). Bucko argues that the physical structure of the lodge bring the participants closer together and causes a physical and emotional rigor that focus attention on the present and the ceremony. This is illustrated by a quote by a Lakota, as cited by Bucko: "You cannot not pray and not pay attention in there. It's the only way you make it through." (p. 90)

The inclusiveness and emotion are carried into post sweat activities. A third phase emerged for the Sweat Lodge ceremony that was not described by Black Elk (Brown, 1989). Bucko (1999) documented in nineteenth-century, twentieth-century and

contemporary description of the Sweat Lodge the restoration or post ritual phase. This phase is viewed as an essential aspect of the ceremony and is just as important as the preparation and sweat phases. The recovery phase includes one or more of these events, smoking of the pipe outside the lodge, having a meal and engaging conversation. Bucko describes his recovery phase experience:

> We left the lodge one by one, counterclockwise, so as not to cross in front of the leader…We all stood in a circle around the alter. The leader lit the second pipe, an we smoked in the cool night air, passing the pipe from person to person, each saying '*makuye oyas'in*' (me and my relations) as he or she finished smoking…After we all shook hands, the women went up to the leader's house to dress and the men dressed behind the lodge, and then we went to the leader's house for a dinner of soup, crackers, and pie…There was lively conversation and joking… (Bucko, 1999, pp. 11-12)

Bucko cites accounts of Edward Curtis, a photographer in 1908; Robert H. Ruby, a physician stationed at Pine Ridge in the 1950s; and, a European American, who was interviewed during the course of his work. All accounts describe participants taking part in a meal post sweat. Often it was the traditional meals dog, kidney or the belly of a cow or in one instance vegetarian.

The preceding accounts of Sweat Lodge, preparation, the sweat, and restoration phases, paint a vivid picture of the ceremony and its importance to Native Americans (Bruchac, 1993; Bucko, 1999; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004; Hibbard, 2005). The accounts of the Native American Sweat Lodge were from Europeans who observed the ceremony in Central and North America. There are accounts of sweating traditions throughout the

world. However, the use of the Native American Sweat Lodge is controversial. The next section will discuss the controversy surrounding the use of the Sweat Lodge by non-Native Americans.

The Lakota Sweat Lodge and Non-Native People

The Oglala Sioux or Lakota, which means allies, are part of what was known as the "great Sioux Nation", this includes the Nakota and Dakota Nations. The Lakota inhabited much of North and South Dakota and the Nakota and Dakota inhabited portions of Colorado, Nebraska, Montana, and Wyoming. Some Lakota live on Pine Ridge Reservation which is located in southwestern South Dakota. Despite many hardships imposed on the Lakotas by non-native people, the Lakota have historically been open to explain their cultural to non-native people.

There are volumes of work documenting the Lakota tradition of conducting the Sweat Lodge (Brown, 1989; Bucko, 1999). Bucko states that Lakotas have historically interpreted their ceremonies and rituals for missionaries, agents, anthropologists, and a continually growing group of nonprofessionals. Bucko further argues that the Lakota interpretation is linked to a key principle in Lakota culture, "incorporation" (p. 16). Written records show not only the Lakota but other nations actively incorporating outsiders into the core of their culture, whether captives, other nations, traders or missionaries (Bucko, 1999; Forbes, 1993; Minges, 2004).

The historical record and accounts of the Sweat Lodge provide evidence that no two Sweat Lodge experiences are similar (Bruchac, 1993; Bucko, 1999; Hibbard, 2005; Lake, 1999). Bucko states that "individual Lakotas are quite aware of the broad variations in practice between groups. They hold, however, that there exists a proper form for the

ritual and that fidelity to form is important in ritual practice" (p. 169). The proper form consists of the preparation phase-construction of the lodge and scared fire, and smudging of participants; the sweat phase-four rounds, praying singing and poring water on the rocks; and restoration phase-a meal once the sweat has concluded (Bruchac, 1993; Bucko, 1999; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004; Hibbard, 2005). The prayers and the songs are derived from an individual's dreams or visions and are not devolved in the accounts of the Lakota and other native Sweat Lodge experiences (Bucko, 1999). However, there have been accounts of when Lakotas have deviated from the ritual they were isolated on the reservation.

Since there has been a significant amount of documentation and openness among the Lakota about the Sweat Lodge and the other six rites, a large number of non-Native Americans have been conducting the Sweat Lodge. This has lead to ongoing controversy not only among the Lakotas but between the Lakotas and non-Native Americans. The controversy stems from the fact that the Native American cultural and spiritual practices where banned from 1646-1979 and the appropriation of the Sweat Lodge by non-natives after 1979 (Hibbard, 2005).

Hibbard (2005) cites Utter (2001) and Bruchac (1993) in his discussion of the 1646 American colonial policy that suppressed the practice of native religion (Utter, 2001, p. 150). In 1883, in its program of assimilation of the indigenous population, sweat baths were forbidden to all Native Americans by the United States government, and actively suppressed by church and civil authorities into the 1930s (Bruchac, 1993). Following the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 and the Congressional Resolution on American Indian Religious Freedom of 1978, the Sweat Lodge experienced resurgence

amongst native peoples, as well as a proliferation beyond traditional native groups. The latter happened in three ways: (1) a limited initiation of non-natives as Sweat Lodge leaders by traditional, qualified native persons, (2) an appropriation by non-natives, and (3) a marketing to non-native people by native peoples themselves (Green, 1988; Whitt, 1995). The Lakota form, or *Inipi* (which means "to live again"), is the most popular (Weil, 1982).

Hibbard (2005) argues that the debate falls into two camps, the exclusionists and the anti-exclusionists. Hibbard contends that the exclusionist position is grounded in the Native Americans 500 year experience of colonization, genocide and cultural imperialism. The anti-exclusionists position is rooted in the core teachings of Native Americans. Hibbard's stated that the exclusionists are opposed to the use of the Sweat Lodge or any other Native American religious practices by non-natives. Churchill (1992) quotes Russell Means:

> Our religions are ours. Period. We have very strong reasons for keeping certain things private, whether you understand them or not. And we have every human right to deny them to you whether you like it nor not. . . . If you do not [respect our proprietary rights], you are at best a thief. . . . And believe me when I say we're prepared to deal with you as such. (p. 221)

Similarly, the Center for the SPIRIT (Support and Protection of Indian Religions and Indigenous Traditions)-a non-profit organization of American Indian people dedicated to the preservation and revitalization of American Indian spiritual practices and religious traditions-has begun to "systematically address the momentous problem of 'New Age' exploitation and expropriation of the sacred traditions of American Indian nations [and]

56

calling for an immediate end to the cynical, sacrilegious spectacle of non-Indian 'wannabes,' would-be gurus of the 'New Age,' and 'plastic medicine men' shamelessly exploiting and mocking our sacred traditions by performing bastardized imitations of our ceremonies. They are promoters of spiritual genocide against Indian people" (as quoted in Churchill, 1992, pp. 279-280).

The problem, however, is not simply one of non-natives appropriating native spirituality. For several decades some natives have been bringing their spirituality to non-natives, usually for a profit (Hibbard, 2005). Hibbard states that as early as October 5, 1980, a Resolution of the Traditional Elders Circle, written and signed by traditional elders, decried the open display and expropriation of native ceremonies by native people to non-natives.

In general, exclusionists argue that "Indian religions should be for Indians only" (Buhner, 1999, p. 6 as cited by Hibbard, 2005). Specifically, they argue that the appropriation--or, "misappropriation", of native religious practices by non-native peoples is a form of commodification that results in cultural imperialism:

> Whether peddled by white shamans, plastic medicine men and women, opportunistic academics, entrepreneurs, or enterprising New Agers, Indian spirituality-like Indian lands before it--is rapidly being reduced to the status of a commodity, seized, and sold. Sacred ceremonies and ceremonial objects can be purchased at weekend medicine conferences or via mail order catalogs. . . . When the spiritual knowledge, rituals, and objects of historically subordinated cultures are transformed into commodities, economic and political power merges to produce cultural imperialism. (Whitt, 1995, pp. 2-3)

Exclusionists also argue that the appropriation of native religious practices by non-natives is simply inappropriate because it decontextualizes the practices; that is, native religious practices are meaningful only within the larger gestalt of the community and culture. Additionally, to many natives, it is arrogant, offensive, blasphemous and, most importantly, dangerous. In fact, Hagan (1992) argues that "it is not a question of dispute over who is right and who is wrong and who owns spirituality," rather, "playing around with rituals is a dangerous game and in this regard Westerners who play at being Indians . . . are fooling around with mental health and in ways for which they are not properly trained by experts" (p. 8).

Additionally, exclusionists reject the various claims to ceremonial authority of non-natives who lead their own Sweat Lodges, including: being adopted by an Indian family, learning the ceremony from a native, marrying into an Indian family, studying ethnohistorical texts, or being supposedly a reincarnated Indian. The fact of the matter, according to Hagan (1992), is that "there are no known real Native American Medicine Men and Women who have come forth in the non-Indian world to ask others to conduct and perpetuate Indian rituals and ceremonies" (p. 5).

Anti-exclusionists argue that the exclusionist position runs counter to native teachings. For example, in the Lakota tradition the four colors represent the four races; therefore, it stands that no one can be excluded from a religious ceremony on the basis of ethnicity. Additionally, Bucko (1999) notes that "some Lakotas interpret the universal dimension of Lakota belief to include universal participation. They see ceremonies restricted to Indians alone as a violation of the universality of Lakota religion" (Bucko, p. 243). And Avis Little Eagle, writing in the Lakota Times, states that "Lakota spiritual

beliefs and ceremonies were given to the Lakota freely by *Wakan Tanka*, 'the holiness of all that is.' They must, in turn, be shared freely" (as cited in Bucko, p. 243).

Furthermore, anti-exclusionists cite Black Elk, who said that the sharing of Indian religious traditions was not only permissible but essential. Brown (1989) writes that most of the material regarding the sacred rites of the Sioux, told to him by Black Elk,

> As in the past, been very closely guarded by the Indians. It was believed, and rightly so, that these things are too sacred to be told indiscriminately; but it is now said by those few old wise men of the Sioux who are still living that, when we are nearing the end of a cycle, when men everywhere are falling away from an understanding of, and participation in, the truths which had been revealed to them in the beginning, and when, as a result of this, disorder and chaos reign in every sphere of life--then it is permissible and even desirable to give out this knowledge, for they believe that the truth, by its very nature, will protect itself against profanation, and it may even be that it will reach those who are qualified to understand it deeply, so that they may then be able to strengthen the bridge which must be built, leading out of this dark age. (p. xii)

The use of the Sweat Lodge by non-natives is generally referring to European Americans. The controversy becomes more complex when including African Americans in the debate. Bateman (1990), Forbes (1993), and Minges (2004) argue that the pre and post colonial period had a significant impact on how Native Americans and people of African descent interacted and were classified. At times Native Americans and people of African descent lived together in harmony, intermarried, shared culture, functioned as one nation and fought against British, Spanish and American forces. At other times

during that period Native and people of African descent fought against and captured each other for slave owners (Bateman, 1990; Forbes, 1993; Minges, 2004). When Native people were removed from what is now the Southeastern United States, Natives, African Slaves and Freedmen walked together on the Trail of Tears to the Indian Territory (Minges, 2004). The commencement of Civil War divided the Five Nations in the Indian Territory, where slavery not only continued, but in some Nations law were passed to enslave all people of African descent in their respective Nations. (Bateman,1999; Minges, 2004).

Minges (2004) text Black Indian Slave Narratives illustrates the contentious relationship between Natives and people of African descent. Below are excerpts from the text of interviews from the W.P.A. Slave Narrative Project:

Eliza Whitmire in Estella Oklahoma by W.P. A field worker James Carseloway in 1938:

…I was born into slavery in the state of Georgia, my parents having belong to a Cherokee Indian of the name of George Sanders, who owned a large plantation in the old Cherokee Nation, in Georgia. He also owned a large number of slaves, but I was too young to remember how many he owned. (p. 33)

Kiziah Love was in interviewed in Colbert Oklahoma in the summer of 1937:

…Frank Colbert, a full-blood Choctaw Indian, was my owner. He owned my mother, but I don't remember such about my father. He died when I was a little youngun. (p. 175)

George Fortman was interviewed in Evansville, Indiana.

…After a long dreary journey, the Indians reached Alabama…when they neared the can lands, they heard the songs of Negros slaves as they toiled in the cane. Soon they were in sight of the slave quarters of Patent George's plantation. The Negroes made the Indians welcome, and the slave dealer allowed them to occupy the cane house; thus the Indians become slaves of Patent George. (p. 5)

After the Civil War, former slaves and freedmen became members of their respective nations. Minges (2004) cites the Report of the Commissioner for Indian Affairs in 1866:

Most of these freedmen have oxteams, and among them blacksmiths, carpenters, wheelwrights, etc…I have the honor to report that the existing relations between the freedmen and Indian Territory and their former masters are generally satisfactory. The rights of the freedmen are acknowledged by all; fair compensation for labor is paid; a fair proportion of crops to be raised on the old plantations are allowed; labor for the freedmen to perform is abundant, and nearly all are self supporting. (pp. 383-84)

This changed when the Jim Crow laws where enacted. For instance, Natives in Okalahoma where now classified as white and people of African descent where classified as "black" and where not allowed to mix with whites, even though many had Native and African ancestry (Batemen, 1993; Forbes, 1999; Minges, 2004). This continued the contentious relationship among Natives and people of African descent to present day. Native American Nations have enacted laws and policy that make it difficult for African Americans to claim their Native American heritage.

61

Historical records and documented narratives illustrate the complex interconnection among Native and people of African descent; the controversy persists on the utilization of scared spiritual practices between Native Americans and African Americans. Unfortunately, the problem is compounded because the native community itself is divided not only on the status of people of African descent in respective Nations, but their right to practice and incorporate Native rituals. The researcher has observed the use of the Metu Neter, Yuruba, Buddhist, Christian and Islam throughout the Sweat Lodge experience. There was not only Native American chanting and singing, but chanting and signing in the African tradition. Specifically, Yoruba, Metu Neter, Buddhist chants and songs were brought to the experience not only by the Sweat Lodge leader, but by participants. This would be deemed controversial by the exclusionist, however, anti-exclusionist would view this individual expression as a powerful and necessary component of the lodge and it's Leader.

Amongst the Lakota the issue of who legitimately may officiate and participate in Sweat Lodge ceremonies remains a matter of debate and contention. According to Bucko (1998) "there is no clear and consistent source for validation of leadership and participation, making the question of legitimacy and who may legitimately operate these ceremonies even more thorny" (p. 102). For legitimacy in officiating Sweat Lodge ceremonies, some Lakota appeal to kinship (e.g., being taught by one's grandfather), others to pedagogy (e.g., being taught by a recognized Sweat Lodge leader), yet others to the authority of dreams or visions.

For legitimacy in participation in Sweat Lodge ceremonies, Bucko concludes that few Lakota "would exclude [African Americans] who were intimate friends, but at the same time most would exclude [African Americans] as a class of people" (p. 102).

Efficacy of the Sweat Lodge

Fakhrid-Deen (2004) contends that "all spiritual traditions should be honored and protected from cultural bandits and oppressors but somehow, these same spiritual traditions can be vehicles of universal healing" (p. 31). The universal healing of the Sweat Lodge is a balance and blended among medical/healing, psychosocial and spiritual interventions. This section will present accounts and research that employed the Sweat Lodge as a medical, psychosocial and spiritual intervention.

Bucko (1999) explains that the efficacy of the Sweat Lodge in the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries was discussed in terms riding the body intrusion, harmful matter, and acknowledging its physical advantages. It's important to note that missionaries and Native Americans did not speak about the spiritual efficacy of the Sweat Lodge during this period. The medicinal use of the Sweat Lodge was stressed: "the men of our tribe have always taken sweat baths to keep well: they do so today…"(Bucko, p. 50).

Bucko (1999) cites an account of William Bordeaux egarding the medical efficacy of the lodge: "the sweat bath method is used by all *Wa-Piye's* (curer). These vapor baths are taken to open up the pores, enabling the poison to escape. Following the vapor process, proper herbs and roots are administered" (p. 50).

A contemporary account of the Sweat Lodge expands its healing role to assist with social interaction. Erodes (as cited in Bucko, 1999) quotes Lame Deer:

When two enemies participate in the putting up of the little beehive-shaped lodge,

their old hatreds are forgotten. Envy and jealousy disappear. The two men laugh

and josh each other; they joke about the fights they had…all bad feelings and

thoughts are driven out, and when someone emerges from the sweat at the end of

the ceremony, that person has a new mind. (p. 78)

Bucko further explains that the role of the sweat as a healer of interpersonal relationships

is very important today. Purification is not only linked to physical cleansing, but to moral

cleansing as well (1999).

Stolzman (as cited by Bucko, 1999) a Jesuit, discuss the spiritual efficacy of the

Sweat Lodge, which was omitted from the Sweat Lodge literature until after the 1950s. In

his account Stolzman focuses upon healing as being more spiritual than physical. Bucko

states that: "prayers in the sweat are directed to divine intervention in illness" (p. 78),

together, spiritual and physical provide health benefits to lodge participants. Bucko

argues that:

There is no consensus concerning the source of efficacy within the lodge. In fact,

this is not an overt concern among contemporary practitioners and participants.

The focus is on the experience provided by the sweat itself and the resultant

change in the lives and situations of the individuals. (p. 92)

The result change in the lives and situations of individuals who have participated

in the Sweat Lodge have lead to studies being conducted in the three key areas, medical,

psychosocial and spiritual. For the purposes of this study, the review of medical research

will be brief. The balance of this section will focus on the psychosocial and spiritual

research.

Berger and Rounds (1998) contend that the medical or healing effects of the Sweat Lodge include deeper sleep, pain relief, and muscle relaxation; sweating has been helpful in treating insomnia, arthritis, and has been used as an adjunct to cancer treatment. Colmant el al. (2005) cites Hannuksela & Ellahham's (2001) meta-analysis on physiological effects sauna bathing, which is very similar to the Sweat Lodge experience. The researchers stated that the physiological effects included an increase skin and rectal temperature, sweating, skin blood flow, heart rate, cardiac output, cardiac stroke volume, and systolic blood pressure; there is also a decrease in diastolic blood pressure and blood flow to internal organs and muscles. The meta-analysis also found that sauna bathing decreases pulmonary congestion and increases the vital capacity, tidal volume, minute ventilation and forced expiratory volume of the lungs. The researchers drew the following conclusions about the physiological benefits and risks of sauna use "For most people, as well as for most patients with stable coronary heart disease, sauna bathing is well tolerated and safe" (Colmant et. al., p.118). As noted above, there is evidence of the medical benefits of hyperthermia (Bruchac, 1993; Colmant et al., 2005; Hooper, 1999). Smith contends that the Sweat Lodge is psychotherapeutic.

Four key studies demonstrate the efficacy of the Sweat Lodge as a psychotherapeutic or psychosocial intervention, Madden (1986), Colment and Merta (1999, 2000), and Colmant, Easton, Winterowd, Jacobs, and Cashel (2005). As defined in Chapter I, psychosocial intervention is a process that stimulates the knowledge, skills, ability, attitudes, and character necessary for individuals to address life challenges and to undertake socially defined, goal-oriented and culturally meaningful activity designed to allow them to: achieve mastery of all aspects of human functioning; reproduce, refine,

and make explicit their personality in the objective world; and validate their self and kind (Erikson, 1982; Nobles & Goddard, 1993).

The first study that demonstrates the efficacy of the Sweat Lodge as a psychosocial intervention is Madden's (1986) fatherhood study. Madden conducted an experimental workshop in which the Sweat Lodge was introduced to six fathers and their sons who all had been affected by divorce and the fathers did not live with their sons. The purpose of the workshop was to observe its impact upon relationships between the adolescents and their fathers. The questions that guided Madden's research were:

1. To what extent is intimacy between father and son affected by participation in a "Sweat Lodge" ritual?

2. To what extent is the self-concept of the male adolescent affected by participation in a "Sweat Lodge" ritual?

3. What changes take place in the male adolescent as a result of participating in a "Sweat Lodge" ritual? (p.7)

Five instruments were selected to answer the research questions: (1) The Intimacy Attitude Scale (IAS), was used to measure the individual's inner orientation toward intimacy; (2) The Self-Intimacy Characteristics Survey (SICS was used to measure the individual's appraisal of the extent to which he possessed certain attractive characteristics or traits; (3) The Life Script Information Test (Holloway) focused on the influence of parents as a source of role models; (4) the Parent-Child Relations Questionnaire II (Siegelman & Roe) was utilized because it is designed to measure the behavior of fathers toward their sons as perceived by the adolescent; and (5) The Intimacy Attitude Scale

which measures the individuals orientation toward intimacy, indicating a person's attitude toward close relationships (Madden, 1986).

Madden (1986) found that there are slight indications that intimacy among these fathers and sons was improved. He also stated that the results of the study tend to indicate that the self-concept of the male adolescent could be improved through participation in the Sweat Lodge. The study offered some evidence that male adolescent can be caused to assume a more active, positive, and intimate role in his relationship with his father. The sharing of the Sweat Lodge "ordeal" can serve as a "ceremonial aid in the maturing of troubled relationships" (p. 104).

Madden recommended the following for future research:

1. Studies making use of the Native American "Sweat Lodge" ritual might draw from a sample population of fathers and sons living together, bonded family members not undergoing the stress of divorce.

2. The study of gender arrangements should include Mother/Son, Mother/Daughter, and Father/Daughter.

3. A valuable extension of the present study would include more focus on the relationships outside those of the workshop members

4. Research should consider the influence of each facilitator, how individual applications of the ritual vary and to what extent they are different.

5. The design should be applied with the same limitations and instrumentation repeated to include all variables and measures. (p. 105)

Colmant and Merta (1999) Navajo youth study is the second key study that demonstrates the efficacy of the Sweat Lodge as a psychosocial intervention. Their study

compared the Sweat Lodge ceremony to group work by identifying Yalom's (1995) 11 therapeutic factors of group therapy within the ceremony. Yalom defined therapeutic factors as "the actual mechanisms of effecting change in the patient" (p. xi). The Sweat Lodge was conducted near a Navajo-owned residential treatment center by a Native American traditional counselor who was trained to conduct the lodge by a Navajo traditional healer (1999).

The Sweat Lodge was utilized with Navajo youth, 6-15 years of age, with disruptive behavior disorders who resided at a Navajo-owned residential treatment center. Colmant and Merta state that the Sweat lodge was utilized as an intervention because "modern treatment modalities are not well adapted to accommodate Native Americans" (p. 69). They further argue "that psychotherapy formats necessitate ways of interacting that are much different from how Native Americans interact" (p. 69).

Colmant and Merta (1999) fund that of Yalom's therapeutic factors, Instillation of Hope, Universality, Catharsis, Imparting of Information, Altruism, Development of Socializing Techniques, Imitative Behavior, Group Cohesiveness, and Existential factors were more apparent. Instillation of Hope is the notion that recovery is possible (Yalom, 1995). For the Navajo youth, participation in the Sweat Lodge meant that their ancestors were available to listen, help, bless and protect them.

Universality and Catharsis are interdependent factors (Yalom, 1995). Colmant and Merta (1999) assert that what is important regarding these two factors is the "sharing of one's inner world with the acceptance of others" (p. 61). They observed that during the ceremony that youth, who were often seen with little insight into their own motivations, suddenly appeared to be very wise when participating in the Sweat Lodge. In fact, the

researchers explained that the Sweat Lodge seemed to have been the only place the youth have shared their deepest concerns with others (1999). Colmant and Merta describe the interaction of the participants:

> For example, the boys often find comfort in the similarity of strong emotions expressed related to chaotic conditions at home and lost loved ones. In the sweat lodge ceremony, respect is highly regarded. When one discloses a concern, the group responds only with acceptance and appreciation of their participation.
> (p. 61)

Imparting of information was accomplished by storytelling during the Sweat Lodge. The researchers stated that the stories entertained, promoted edification and included themes of the importance of living healthy, socially responsible lives (Colmant & Merta, 1999). Altruism was observed by the researcher in the form of the youth helping to set up for the ceremony, praying for one another, being supportive in and outside of the lodge (1999).

The corrective recapitulation of the primary family group is the act of identifying & changing the dysfunctional patterns or roles one played in primary family. Colmant and Merta (1999), reported that this was difficult to observe, however this therapeutic factor was observed by the participants referring to the counselor as "grandfather". The researchers noted that the support and consistent behavior of adult participants provided opportunities for the youth to have "corrective emotional experiences" as an outcome of participation in the Sweat Lodge.

The Navajo youth developed socializing techniques by following instructions and feedback from the traditional counsel throughout the ceremony. The participants learned

to respect each other's problems by silently attending and not interrupting, how to speak in a genuine manner and how to transfer these skills to treatment meetings and family sessions (Colmant & Meta, 1999).

Colmant and Merta (1999) stated that traditional Navajo healers emphasized the importance of adult role models participation during the Sweat Lodge, which creates the condition of imitative behavior to manifest. The adult participants in the Sweat Lodge modeled respect; disclosed their genuine concerns for themselves and their families; and, the youth participants. The presence of the adults seemed to increase the youth's ability to understand and approach the Sweat Lodge in a serious manner (1999).

Interpersonal learning during a group experience is illustrated by when a group member displays inappropriate behavior that characterizes their normal thinking outside of the group; receiving feedback, positive and negative, from other group members, and then responding with catharsis, insight and commitment to behavioral change (Colmant & Merta, 1999; Yalom, 1995). Colmant & Merta observed Navajo youth responding to disclosure and behavior of their peers with only positive feedback and support rather than conflict. The researchers note that that the youth's only positive responses are a cultural manifestation of the preference for group harmony and cooperative behavior.

The Navajo youth were observed as having strong group cohesiveness at the conclusion of the Sweat Lodge. Colmant and Merta (1999) stated that the experience was so profound that the participants "considered one another as being brothers" (p. 66). This not only translated into positive relationships between the facility staff and youth, but into existential factors of recognizing the importance of "living in a moral way, learning that

there is no escape from life's pain and from death, and that life stays in balance and harmony by participating regularly in ceremony" (p. .66).

Colmant and Merta (1999) assert that other prominent therapeutic features were identified in the Sweat Lodge. The participants reported, with assistance from the traditional counselor, that they were able to transfer what was learned in the Sweat Lodge to there every day life and to treatment. This observation is consistent with experiential groups were group members are presented with sequential and challenging experiences that focus on transferring what was learned into application in life (Colmant & Merta; Gass, 1993). The researchers described moral-cognitive development as another important therapeutic feature of the Sweat Lodge. This featured was illustrated by the use of prayer, meditation, development of frustration tolerance and by discussions of moral reasoning. Finally, greater cultural identity was demonstrated by the youth's participation in the Sweat Lodge with elders, who were applying "traditional values to contemporary activities" (Colmant and Merta, p. 70).

The Navajo youth study is one of four key studies that demonstrate the efficacy of the Sweat Lodge as a psychosocial intervention. In fact, Colmant and Merta (1999) stated that based on their observations, "the boys who regularly participated in the Sweat Lodge ceremony made more progress in treatment than those who did not" (p. 70). Encouraged by these finding Colmant and Merta (2000) conducted a follow up study.

Colmant and Merta's (2000) follow up study, which was conducted in New Mexico, is the third key study that demonstrates the efficacy of the Sweat Lodge as a psychosocial intervention. They study participants were six adolescent males, 13 to 18 years of age, of European American and/or Hispanic descent. The youth resided in a

group home in New Mexico. The youth commonly received a diagnosis of one or more disruptive behavior disorders: conduct disorder, oppositional-defiant disorder; or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The authors noted that the IQ scores fell in the normal range, six youth began the study, two of whom were discharged prior to the end of the study, and another two boys joined the study for the last three sessions (2000).

Colmant and Merta (2000) discussed the controversy surrounding the use of the Sweat Lodge by non-Native Americans: "in the authors' experience, American Indian representatives require that sweat lodges be built and ceremonies be facilitated only by American Indian people qualified to do so" (p. 32). Colmant and Merta contend that:

> …what has better potential for widespread use with non-Indians is to combine the sweating process with psychotherapy while leaving aside all other sacred ritualistic aspects of the ceremony…with non-Indians a sweat therapy session could take place in a sauna or sauna-like structure rather than a sweat lodge. (p. 32).

It's important to point out that what Colmant and Merta are suggesting does have some merit in terms of ensuring that the Sweat Lodge is kept sacred. However, their recommendation is not aligned to the facts that the similar traditions are found throughout the world (Bruchac, 1993; Bucko 1999; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004; Hibbard, 2005; Madden, 1986; Schiff & Moore, 2007; Vogel, 1973); that spirituality and ritual are at the center of the Sweat Lodge experience; finally, they contradict findings from Colmant and Merta (1999), which identify therapeutic factors and observed manifestation of spirituality and ancestry.

The New Mexico youth study is the attempt to study the sweat experience without a sacred or spiritual component. The purpose of Comant and Merta's (2000) study "was to explore sweat therapy as an experiential group work activity with non-American Indian youth with disruptive behavior disorders" (p. 33). Sweat therapy included the combining of group sweating with group counseling. Colmant and Merta (2000) investigated the effects on self-esteem, progress in the group home during treatment, participant perceptions of therapeutic factors (Colmant & Merta, 1999) and participants' overall perceptions of the sweat therapy sessions. The investigators utilized the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories (SEI) (Coopersmith, 1989 as cited in Colmant & Merts, 2000); The FYI Boy's Group Home Level System; The Weekly Group Form; and, the Termination Questionnaire (2000).

The authors of the New Mexico study, based on their findings in the Navajo youth study (Colmant & Merta, 1999), used a Bloch, Reibstein, Crouch, Holroyd, and Themen (1974) method of identification of therapeutic factors in group therapy. This method consisted of classifying critical incidents reported by group members into therapeutic factors (Colmant & Merta, 2000).

The participants identified experiential group work, catharsis, imitative behavior, interpersonal learning and universality as being important therapeutic factors (Colmant & Merta, 2000). The youth viewed enduring the heat as a positive accomplishment and assisted them with their frustration tolerance. Participants also reported that sweating helped them to relax and relieve stress. Finally, the participants reported that the counseling portion of sweat therapy was useful for discussing the week and having open discussion (2000).

Colmant and Merta (2000) contend that "the combing group sweating with group counseling appears useful as an experiential group work activity" (p. 37). The authors stated that the "advantages of sweat therapy are that it offers more opportunity for therapist-facilitated processing while engaged in a physically challenging activity and by accommodating a wider range of physical ability" (p. 37). Based on the finding from the New Mexico study, Colmant and Merta recommended that future research should use control groups, larger number of participants, investigate the effects of temperature and humidity, and compare other forms of experiential group activities, such as rope course to the sweat therapy.

Finally, the forth key study that demonstrates the efficacy of Sweat Lodge as psychosocial intervention was Colmant, Easton, Winterowd, Jacobs, and Cashel (2005) undergraduate study. Colmant et al. investigated the effects of sweat therapy on group dynamics and affect. Utilizing the same definition of sweat therapy as Colmant and Merta (2000), the participants, twenty-four undergraduate students, ranging from 18 to 45 years of age, of which 17 were European American, three Native American, two Hispanic, one African American and one Asian American were separated by gender and randomly assigned to eight sessions of either a sweat or non-sweat group counseling condition (Colmant et al., 2005). The undergraduate study used the *Critical Incidents Questionnaire* (CIQ), the *Harvard Community Health Plan Cohesiveness Scale Version II* (GCS), and the *Positive and Negative Affect Scale* (PANAS) as measures (2005).

Colmant et al. (2005) were encouraged by the results of the undergraduate study. However they used caution when interpreting the findings due to the small sample size. *Critical Incidents Questionnaire* (CIQ) measures the effect of the group from each

member's perspective and assesses how specific therapeutic factors influence group effectiveness. The therapeutic factors were identified by Colmant et al. by coding the responses of participants using the eleven therapeutic factors (Colmant & Merta, 1999; 2000; Yalom, 1995). The CIQ revealed that there were twice as many therapeutic factors identified for the sweat groups than non-sweat groups. There were 42 therapeutic factors identified men's sweat group and 16 therapeutic factors identified for the men's non-sweat group. Colmant et al state:

> The largest differences between the men's groups were Acceptance (sweat=12 vs. non-sweat=3), Interpersonal Learning (sweat=9 vs. non-sweat=3) and Self-understanding (sweat=5 vs. non-sweat=0). For the women's groups, 31 therapeutic factors were identified and 22 therapeutic factors for the non-sweat group. The largest differences between the women's group were Experiential Features (sweat=7 vs. non-sweat=0) and Self-Disclosure (sweat=6 vs. non-sweat=1). (p. 335)

The CIQ also revealed experiential features such as the sweat caused relaxation, relief from stress and a feeling of accomplishment. The authors of the study noted that the preceding features were not reported as benefits by any of the non-sweat participants.

Harvard Community Health Plan Cohesiveness Scale Version II (GCS) measures cohesion in therapy groups (Colmant et al., 2005). The two variables of global cohesion and trust increased from moderate to strong from session two to four for the men's sweat group. Global cohesion stayed strong for session seven, and increased to very strong for trust. In contrast, the men's non-sweat group the global cohesion and trust remained in the slight range across all sessions (2005). The women's sweat group's global cohesion

and trust moved from strong to moderate by session four and remained in that range for the rest of the sessions. The women's non-sweat group global cohesion and trust was at the moderate range by session three, but then dropped to slight from session four through the last session for global cohesion and very slight by session six for trust (2005).

Colmant et al. (2005) administered the *Positive and Negative Affect Scale* (PANAS) at the end of each session. This instrument measures positive and negative feelings and emotions. The investigators conducted two repeated ANOVAs to assess the change in positive affect across session one and eight, and the second ANOVA was conducted to assess the change in the negative affect (2005). The only significant effect were males, which illustrated that males had more change in affect across sessions than females. Additionally, there was no significant change for positive and negative affect for sweat/non sweat participants (2005).

The results for the undergraduate study demonstrate that participants who experienced the sweat therapy sessions reported more therapeutic factors, which impacted upon their group counseling experience, rated sessions as more beneficial, and had more group cohesion than non-sweat participants (Colmant et al., 2005). The investigators stated that the "group sweating promoted the operation of therapeutic factors and served as a stand-alone therapeutic feature" (2005, p. 33).

Additional research supports the findings of the four key studies presented above. Smith (2005) states that more than 50% of United States Indian health Services facilities use the Sweat Lodge as complementary to other forms of treatment. Cohen (2003), as cited by Smith) observes that the common practice prior to counseling or medical treatment is to participate in the Sweat Lodge. As a method of traditional healing, "The

76

Sweat Lodge helps provide meaning to experience, promotes self-esteem, and promotes solidarity in the group (Smith, 2005, p.206). Smith cites Duran & Duran, (1995) and Gone (2000) who argue that traditional healing can renew moral strength and help individuals to come to terms with trauma in a manner consistent with their sense of self and community, which the Sweat Lodge creates.

Scholars further note that the Sweat Lodge has been utilized as a component of behavior health treatment (mental health and substance abuse) among Native Americans (Edwards, 2003; Noe, Fleming, & Manson 2003; Smith, 2005). Participants in these programs, by increasing their cultural and spiritual connections through the Sweat Lodge experienced tended to complete the programs and maintain sobriety (Edwards, 2003). The literature further suggests that rituals, such as the Sweat Lodge, may facilitate not only an intervention, but prevention and intervention of disorders, such as substance abuse. The Sweat Lodge has also been cited as a method to assist Native American service members who are returning from Afghanistan and Iraq wars to cope with PTSD (Gross, 2007; Edwards, 2003; Wilson et al., 2000).

Colmant et al. (2005) argues that there is a growing consensus that psychosocial interventions need to be adapted to a multicultural perspective. However, the use of the Sweat Lodge as a psychosocial intervention for non-Native Americans is controversial despite the fact that similar traditions are found throughout the world and there is a connection, specifically between Native and African Americans that cannot be overlooked (Brown, 1989; Bucko, 1999; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004; Gross, 2007; Hibbard, 2005; Minges, 2004; Vogel, 1973; Weil, 1982).

The four key studies represent the efficacy of the Sweat Lodge as a psychosocial intervention. This practice, as described above, has significant healing potential. Colmant et al. (2005) convincingly argue that:

Group sweating and other indigenous practices have strong potentials that are typically unrecognized by modern counseling and psychology. Universal practices complementary to modern psychology have the potential to transform conventional therapeutic interventions into more meaningful and effective approaches. (p. 340)

There is considerable research on the psychosocial dimension than on the spiritual dimension of the Sweat Lodge. As stated in Chapter I, spiritual intervention is a process that assists an individual with reconnection to all elements of the universe and manifests the notion of I am because we are, and because we are, therefore I am (Fanon, 1967; Graham, 2005; Nobles & Goddard, 1993). The spiritual aspect of the lodge was not widely researched due to the oppression of Native Americans and their spiritual beliefs of the lodge (Bucko, 1999). However, it is recognized by many scholars that spirit is at the center of the lodge (Brown, 1989; Bucko, 1999; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004; Gross, 2007; Hibbard, 2005; Schiff & Moore, 2007; Weil, 1982; Vogel, 1973). This section will present two key studies that describe the Sweat as a spiritual intervention.

Hibbard (2005) investigated the transpersonal experiences of non-native practitioners of the Sweat Lodge ceremony. The purpose of the study was to contribute to the literature of transpersonal experiences by accomplishing the following objectives; "(a) to identify the types of transpersonal experiences of non-native practitioners reported during the Sweat Lodge ceremony, (b) to develop a taxonomy of the reported

experiences, and (c) to compare this taxonomy to Grof's taxonomy of transpersonal experiences" (p. 2). Transpersonal experiences, as defined by Grof (1988 as cited by Hibbard) states "experiential expansion or extension of consciousness beyond the usual boundaries of the body-ego and beyond the limitations of time and space" (p.38). "This includes include almost all reported nonordinary, anomalous, mystical, spiritual, and religious experiences, and altered states of consciousness" (Hibbard, p. 3).

Hibbard (2005) states that Grof's divides transpersonal experiences into two large categories. The first category--Experiential Extension within Consensus Reality and Space-Time--deals with the experience of space-time. This category consists of three subcategories: The first subcategory includes experiences that involve transcendence of spatial barriers (of which there are 11 specific types); the second subcategory includes experiences that involve transcendence of the boundaries of linear time (of which there are 8 specific types); and the third subcategory involves physical introversion and narrowing of consciousness (of which there are no differentiated types).

Hibbard (2005) explains the second and third categories: the second category--Experiential Extension Beyond Consensus Reality and Space-Time--deals with experiences in which "the extension of consciousness seems to go beyond the phenomenal world and the time-space continuum as we perceive it in our everyday life" (Hibbard, p. 105). This category includes 13 specific types of transpersonal experiences. In the third category, Grof includes experiences and phenomena that represent "strange hybrids" between different levels of consciousness, what he calls transpersonal experiences of the psychoid type. This category includes experiences and phenomena reported in the literature, but that Grof has not observed in his own work.

79

The participants for Hibbard study were 30 non-native American practitioners who from Montana, who utilized the Cree tradition as the foundation of the Sweat Lodge, Texas, participates, utilized a more eclectic and non-traditional form of the Sweat Lodge and Arizona, participants who employed a Navajo based tradition. The participants were selected if they have participated in at least 50 Sweat Lodges. The rationale was that a practitioner with this level of participation would have had a transpersonal experience (Hibbard). The sample was homogeneous with regard to ethnicity all were of European American descent with an age ranging from 27 to 65 with an average age of 50. There were 13 males and 17 females. Participation in the Sweat Lodge ranged from 80 to 1000, with an average of 271.

Hibbard (2005) found that from the review of the interview data revealed 186 experiences that represented 32 types of transpersonal experience. Hibbard explained that these experiences were then sorted into 18 categories and 18 subcategories. Further analysis yielded that "14 (forty three percent) of the 32 types of experience are represented in Grof's taxonomy, and that 10 (twenty four percent) of Grof's 42 types were experienced by practitioners" (Hibbard, p. 105). Hibbard also found that practitioners' noted that "(a) their experiences meant that there is a spiritual reality; (b) they explained their experiences as interactions with that spiritual reality; (c) they regarded their experiences as real; (d) they trusted their experiences; (e) 80% retained some doubt about some of their experiences; (f) 10 claimed an Exceptional Human Experience; and (g) the majority had at least one negative experience in the Sweat Lodge" (Hibbard, p. 106).

The most interesting conclusion Hibbard made was that several practitioners stressed that the primary purpose of the Sweat Lodge is a place to pray, which Hibbard contends is consistent with native views, and not necessarily to have a transpersonal experience. Hibbard found that this was surprising at first, but realized that generation of transpersonal experiences is not a purpose of the Sweat Lodge. It stands to reason that there was not a greater overlap with Grof's taxonomy.

Hibbard forward the following recommendations for future research:

1. Use a larger practitioner sample. Optimally, interviews should continue until saturation is reached; that is, until no new reports of transpersonal experience are received.

2. Use a larger sample of traditions.

3. Use a simpler and shorter Interview Guide that focuses on eliciting the types of experiences. Forget all the questions about meaning, explanation, evaluation, etc. Answers proved to be too superficial and predictable; no one had really thought about their experience in a disciplined, critical way, and I believe that there is little to be gained from pursuing this line of questioning. As far as this sample is concerned, I believe saturation was basically reached with regard to these questions.

4. Incorporate any number of psychological instruments as part of the research design (e.g., Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator).

5. Given that there are different types of Sweat Lodge ceremonies (e.g., healing, divination, sun dance, peyote, each with its own purpose, songs,

prayers, and rituals), it would be revelatory to broaden the sample to test for an association between types of experience and type of Sweat Lodge ceremony (pp. 110-111).

The second study that sheds light on the spiritual dimension is Schiff and Moore's (2007) work on the impact of the Sweat Lodge ceremony on the dimensions of well-being. This study was in response to The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) call for new investigations in indigenous health. The Sweat Lodge is part of a larger body of traditional medicine. Schiff and Moore cite Velimirovic (1990) and RCAP (1996) description of traditional healing: practices designed to promote mental, physical and spiritual well-being that are based on beliefs which go back to the time before the spread of western, 'scientific bio-medicine'" (p. 49). Levers and Maki site the World Health Organization for the definition of traditional medicine:

> The totality of all knowledge and practices, whether explicable or not, used in diagnosis, prevention and elimination of physical, mental or social disequilibrium and relying exclusively on practical experience and observation handed down from generation to generation, verbally or in writing. (World Health Organization, 1976, p. 3)

In the United States traditional medicine is also classified as either complementary and alternative medicine. Complementary and alternative medicine is defined by National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM), "as a group of diverse medical and health care systems, practices, and products that are not presently considered to be part of conventional medicine" (NCCAM, 2003). While some scientific evidence exists regarding some CAM therapies, for most there are key

82

questions that are yet to be answered through well-designed scientific studies--questions such as whether they are safe and whether they work for the diseases or medical conditions for which they are used (NCCAM, 2003).

NCCAM also explains the differences among complementary, alterative and integrative medicine. Complementary medicine is used with conventional medicine. For instance, a complementary therapy is using aromatherapy to help lessen a patient's discomfort following surgery (NCCAM, 2003). On the other hand, alternative medicine is used instead of conventional medicine. Utilizing a special diet to treat cancer instead of undergoing surgery, radiation, or chemotherapy that has been recommended by a conventional doctor, is considered alternative medicine. Integrative medicine, as defined by NCCAM, combines mainstream medical therapies and CAM therapies for which there is some high-quality scientific evidence of safety and effectiveness (NCCAM, 2003). The definitions of traditional healing, complementary, alternative and integrative medicines provide a framework for exploring the Sweat Lodge as a vehicle for helping.

The universal description of traditional healing provides the foundation for Schiff and Moore (2007). The authors point out however,, that "while heat and water (in a sweat) are universal in the various manifestations of the cleansing processes, only a few cultures have incorporated them into a carefully prescribe ceremony which emphasizes the spiritual element in addition to the physical healing and cleansing that are universally acknowledged" (p. 49). Schiff and Moore primary hypothesis was that "the Sweat Lodge ceremony will have a measurable positive impact on one or more of the four principal components of the well-being (physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual) of participants" (p. 51).

Schiff and Moore (2007) designed the study in close collaboration with a traditional healer and two elders. In respect of the sacredness of the Sweat Lodge, the investigators did not report detailed descriptions of the Sweat Lodge and did not detail any aspect of the ceremony or its impact upon the participants. The two instruments selected by Schiff and Moore to measure the four components of well-being were the SF-36 (Ware et al., 1998) and The Heroic Myth Index (Pearson, 1991). The investigators stated that the SF-36 provides a measure of physical and mental health. Schiff and Moore discussed the difficulty of selecting an instrument to measure emotional and spiritual well-being of indigenous participants. The Heroic Myth Index (HMI; Pearson, 1991) was chosen due to the instrument appropriate use within an indigenous context. Both instruments were administered pre and post Sweat Lodge.

Forty-two participants participated in the well-being study. The majority (59%) of the participants were indigenous. The authors note that there were more female respondents (72%) than males (Schiff & Moore, 2007). The participant responses illustrated that the physical health outcomes did not change, in part, because the majority of participants self-reported that they were in good health prior to and after the sweat. The investigators stated that the SF-36 was not well received by the participants due to its design. However, the results from the HMI "indicated a change in spiritual and emotional well-being as a result in participating in the Sweat Lodge ceremony and that participants are more similar in spiritual and emotional dimensions after the ceremony than before" (Schiff & Moore, p. 64). Observing changes in spirituality are significant because such changes are a "fundamental component of healing within an indigenous paradigm" (p. 64). Schiff and Moore conclude:

Connection to spirit is the beginning of the healing journey for many Aboriginal

people, who recognize that healing involves a in (the four dimensions of physical,

mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being). The balance cannot be attained until

a person has become aware of and responsive to the spiritual component of his or

her own life. To the extent that healing begins with this spiritual connection, the

Sweat Lodge ceremony creates a positive change in the participant's self-reported

sense of connection to life. (p. 65)

Summary

Scholarly interest in African American males and issues of fatherhood has

expanded social policies and programs over the last 25 years. However there is still is

much to be learned. There is a deficit in the research that examines African American

males participation in the Sweat Lodge within the context of an African Centered

Paradigm (Akbar, 1995, 1998; Asante, 1990, Karanga, 1993; Nobbles & Goddard, 1993),

Generative-fathering (Erikson, 1982; Snarey, 1993), self determination theory (Ryan &

Deci; 2000; 2006), and bio-ecological model of human development (Brofenbrenner,

1979, 2004). The purpose is to describe the experiences of African American men

participating in the Sweat Lodge and to describe how Sweat Lodge experiences provide

African American men with strategies to overcome or cope with issues related to

fatherhood, within this theoretical context. This will aid in attempting to answer the

research questions inherent in the dual purpose of this study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology that was utilized to fulfill the purpose of this inquiry by answering the research questions. The purpose and research questions are qualitative in nature. However, it is important to understand how theory has informed the selection of qualitative methodology. Equally important is the qualitative techniques and strategies employed in the research design to answer the research questions. Specifically, this Chapter will describe the methodology of this inquiry by discussing, theory in research, why a qualitative inquiry, techniques and strategies used for this inquiry, and finally, the research design.

Theory in Research

Moodley (2002) asserts that the common view of research is that it is a neutral, technical process. Researchers use this process to reveal or discover knowledge. However, as illustrated by Morgan (1983), technical knowledge is not the sole criteria because knowledge of techniques should be complimented by an appreciation of the nature of research as a fundamental human process through which knowledge is obtained. This implies the research process but incorporate approaches to understanding and viewing the world which goes beyond a focus on method alone. Moreover, Moodley indicates that it is inadequate to justify a particular style of research as different strategies of social research that generate different kinds of knowledge.

Therefore, the criterion as to what is significant knowledge varies according to the approach used in research, with the commonly used term being a paradigm. A paradigm is generally defined as a means of breaking down the complexity of the real world and

thus revealing to practitioners essential aspects of a theory or discipline that are important (Morgan, 1983). More specifically, Rosenberg (1998) asserts that a paradigm provides a conceptual framework from which to view reality. Von Maltzahn and van der Riet (2006) state that the paradigm chosen by a researcher will guide what questions are asked, what problems are important and what methods of data collection to adopt. Theory is therefore of fundamental importance in the research process and thus a few comments on theory are undertaken below.

According to Morgan (1983) and Moodley (2002), the use of theory in research cannot be divorced or used separately from the research process. They indicate that there is a constant interplay of theory throughout the research process, from the initial selection of the research problem, the methods of investigation, data collection, data analysis and evaluation. The initial use of theory is to provide a focus for any study and provide ideas for investigations. Theory also provides alternate perspectives for field research and assists researchers to formulate and reformulate problems posed during research. For example, in the hypothetical-deductive method, progress is made by empirically testing deductions from a universal statement and results obtained are used to verify or falsify the original theory. Theory is therefore indispensable in the entire research process. Theories are formulated using different world-views or paradigms (Moodley, 2002).

Mouton and Marais (1990, p.7) define social sciences research as "a collaborative human activity in which social reality is studied subjectively with the aim of gaining understanding of it." This definition emphasizes the five dimensions of research, namely:

- Sociological: which views scientific research as a concerted human activity.

87

- Ontological: research is directed at an aspect of social reality, that is, it always has an object whether empirical or non-empirical.

- Teleological: research is purposive and goal-oriented with the intention of understanding and gaining insight and explanation of a certain phenomena.

- Epistemological: The aim is to further provide a valid and reliable understanding of reality.

- Methodological: objectivity of the research is based on it being critical, balanced, unbiased, systematic and controllable.

In social science research the most commonly used instruments are questionnaires, interview schedules, observational forms and standardized tests (Mouton, 1996; Neuman, 2000). The methods employed in this study are guided by the research questions presented in Chapter I with the aim to describe the experiences of African American men participating in the Sweat Lodge and describe how Sweat Lodge experiences provide African American men with strategies to overcome or cope with issues related to fatherhood. The next section discusses the process of selecting the primary method of this study, qualitative.

The Qualitative Inquiry

The debates between quantitative and qualitative methods are not only disagreements over the advantages and disadvantages of the different approaches to understanding specific issues and undertaking research, but are contestations over methodological paradigms as well. Each method, according to this viewpoint, is associated with a separate and unique paradigm that is in conflict. The quantitative paradigm has a positivistic, hypothetical-deductive, objective, outcome orientated and

rational world-view whilst the qualitative paradigm has an inductive, holistic, subjective and process-orientated world-view (Moodley, 2002). Because these two paradigms were assumed to be rigid and fixed, the conclusion was that they could not be used together and researchers had a choice of one or the other.

These assumptions seem to be incorrect as the two paradigms can be used simultaneously, as their purposes do not clash; their methods build on each other and are complimentary. It is clear that a quantitative understanding presupposes qualitative knowledge and when used together, each method will provide in-depth perceptions that neither would be able to provide by itself (Bryman, 1984; Reichardt & Cook, 1979). The use of combining qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques is referred to as triangulation. Several researchers discuss the importance of methodological pluralism (for example, Carter & New, 2003; Danermark, 2002; Olsen, 2004; Sayer, 2000). Olsen (2004) specifically asserts that it refers to a pluralism of methods that enables the researcher to use different techniques to get access to different facets of the same social phenomena. This is particularly useful to examine multi-faceted phenomena with personal and private aspects as well as publicly recorded aspects (Olsen, 2004). For the purposes of this study the qualitative approach is used. This is examined in greater detail below. However, within this approach a range of techniques, discussed later, are employed.

Conventional research that focus on numbers and empirical data (quantifying phenomena) deals more with the measurement and description while neglecting experiences, perceptions and meanings; the main focus of exploring impacts of Sweat Lodges on African American males. The use of qualitative techniques and the subjective

experiences of people in relation to health and wellbeing is gaining prevalence (Moodley, 2002). This approach to research emphasizes the social, relational and recursive dimensions of lived experiences. Furthermore, this approach is more wholistic and provides an alternative way of thinking and viewing health and social issues more generally. Qualitative methods are increasingly being used to understand place sensitive and subject-orientated analyses of health and wellbeing (Moodley, 2002).

It is not suggested in this discussion that qualitative approaches could or should replace quantitative approaches in health intervention research. They are complimentary and can be integrated, as argued earlier. Patton (1990) argues that the guiding principle should be appropriateness in the research context. He stated that:

> ... I advocate a paradigm of choices. A paradigm of choices rejects methodological orthodoxy in favor of methodological appropriateness as the primary quality criterion for judging methodological quality. (Patton, p. 39)

For the purposes of this study and specifically the research questions outlined in Chapter I, qualitative research was deemed the most appropriate, specifically the use of self-ethnography and in-depth interviews as the primary data collection methods. Linked to the primary methods were other techniques include in-depth interviews and participant observations. Dyck (1999) indicates that the value of these strategies is in their capability of understanding experiences, perceptions, attitudes and meanings in space or place that go beyond pure description. They provide flexibility and different strategies for exploring the numerous dimensions of a phenomenon. In addition, focus groups and in-depth interviews provide rich accounts of the context of African American males' experiences.

Therefore, the approach adopted in this study is a subject-centered perspective that investigates individual perceptions. The focus on individual perceptions, actions and experiences places emphasis on the central role of agency in negotiating the meaning of health (and in this study fatherhood) in specific contexts (Dyck, 1999).

Cutchin (1999) argues that most researchers have turned to qualitative methodologies to investigate aspects passed over by quantitative approaches because this entails a change in the philosophical and conceptual basis of such studies, new dimensions to empirical knowledge are added. Together with this development, there is presently a resurgence of pragmatism within the humanities and social sciences. The use of pragmatism assists in clarifying a philosophical orientation to deal with practical and theoretical problems that are present. Pragmatism, place integration and the concepts of social capital, core participation and community reconstruction add focus and value to important and sometimes overlooked research questions studied by qualitative research (Cutchin, 1999).

Silverman (1993) asserts that the advantage of qualitative research is that it recognizes the inherently subjective nature of social relationships including the very act of interviewing which is regarded as a meeting of two subjectivities. Olsen (2004) adds that "people construe others' behavior through their own subjective lens of perception, and the others' behavior, too, is framed within their own subjective and discursive frame of reference" (p. 7). Harre (1998) supports this position by arguing that since the knower is embedded in the social scene of the interview, they are not independent of the respondent's responses.

The qualitative approach offers the opportunity to study human interaction, historical processes and social reality in an in-depth way in order to obtain valid and detailed data, which is beyond the scope of the social research inquiry (Bailey, 1994; Feagin et al., 1991; Kellehear, 1993). For the purpose of gaining access to human experiences, qualitative researchers are encouraged to allow the research situation to guide research procedures (Griffin, 1985; Moodley, 2002; Neuman, 2000). Qualitative methods also offer an effective way to challenge generalizations and understand complex realities, as Chambers (1992) argues:

> The recognition of multiple realities and identities of real life means carefully and sensitively collecting qualitative data which seeks to differentiate rather than to homogenize, to focus on diversity rather than universality, on variability rather than averages. (p. 14)

The emphasis on people's perceptions and experiences ensures that these methods focus on people's lived realities, thereby reducing the risk of making false assumptions about life. By embracing complexity and context-specificity, and acknowledging change over time, such methods move away from the tendency to construct inanimate 'facts' (Gumede, 2005).

The need to include qualitative techniques is based on the assertion that conventional methods used in data collection are often inadequate to unpack underlying meanings and processes (Chambers, 1997; Fortmann, 1995; Guijt & Shah, 1998; Perry, 2007; Slocum et al., 1995). Perry (2007) also asserts that qualitative research is consistent with many of the approaches that focus on subjectivity and knowledge stemming from everyday experiences. Borghi et al. (2007) indicate that the use of qualitative methods

considers the range of knowledge levels of respondents. Additionally, these methods bridge the gap between the researcher's and respondents' conceptualization of the problems and issues. Qualitative methods focus not only on what people think about a particular issue but why they think the way they do. Furthermore, it is possible that new concerns and issues will emerge during discussions and interactions with the researcher and the subjects (Perry, 2007).

Qualitative methods were used in the research effort as the study concentrated on unquantifiable concepts like life experiences, attitudes and perceptions. Bob (1999) states that the strength of adopting a qualitative approach, lies in the ability of the researcher to capture people's experiences in their own terms and to begin to tease out underlying meanings and processes. Jewkes and Abrahams (2002) state that questionnaire may not be well suited to capture experiences. Qualitative research is a valuable method in capturing those experiences.

The above discussion clearly centralizes the importance of local knowledge and experiences. Van Vlaenderen and Nkwinti (1993) indicates that local knowledge is a collection of ideas and assumptions that are used to guide, control and explain actions within a specific context. Von Maltzahn and van der Riet (2006) indicate that local knowledge is highly contextualized knowledge which develops from everyday activities in specific settings. They indicate that focusing on local knowledge or personal experiences has several implications which include:

- The increase in the validity of the research as it allows for the emergence of information considered important by the participants.

- The categories that are emergent from the context are not the result of a framework imposed by the researcher. This approach therefore exposes and makes explicit the knowledge and concerns of the research subjects and not simply those of interest to the researcher.

Thomas (2007) provides a convincing justification for utilizing qualitative methods to investigate phenomenon concerning African American males. Thomas specifically cites Maxwell (2005) and Merriam (1988) whose work on qualitative inquiries is relevant to this study. In particular, Maxwell's "three goals of qualitative research design" and Merriam's qualitative assumptions are useful concepts.

The three goals of qualitative research design are personal, practical and intellectual goals (Maxwell, 2005; Thomas, 2007). What motivated me to conduct this study is directly related to my personal goals. As an African American man and father I know first-hand the blessings and challenges of being who I am. As a former administrator of a Fatherhood program and a practicing counselor, I experienced, with the participants, seemingly overwhelming challenges and victories that made the work a priceless enterprise.

As a Sweat Lodge leader I have experienced the personal transformation and have witnessed the universal healing of the Sweat Lodge over the past 16 years. I wish to better understand the meaning of the Sweat Lodge experience and how it impacts on the development of men and fathers, because, I too need insight on how to see the blessings and overcome the challenges of being who I am. This investigation will inform my work to develop programs and services to meet the needs of African American men and their families. As illustrated above, my personal goals are inherently connected to my work. It

is imperative that I monitor personal subjectivity that could arise while conducting this inquiry. I will discuss the steps employed to monitor subjectivity later in this chapter.

The practical goal of this inquiry, as describe by Maxwell (2005) and Thomas (2007) of "accomplishing something" are to describe, from a strengths-based perspective, how Sweat Lodge experiences provide African American men with strategies to overcome or cope with issues related to fatherhood. These strategies can be used to develop effective and appropriate models for integrating indigenous healing within contemporary counseling approaches and to increase the level of engagement African American men have with helping services.

Thomas (2007) cites Maxwell's (2005) intellectual goals for qualitative inquiries which are: 1) understanding the *meaning*; 2) understanding the particular *context* within which the participants act and the influence that this context has on their actions; 3) identifying *unanticipated* phenomena and influences and generating new ideas from this information; 4) understanding the *process* by which events and actions take place; and 5) developing *causal explanations* (p. 58)

Personal, practical and intellectual goals provide insight to why this inquiry is congruent with a qualitative inquiry. Further justification is found in Merriam's (1988, as cited in Thomas, 2007) five assumptions for qualitative inquiry:

1. Qualitative researchers are concerned primarily with process, rather than outcomes or products.

2. Qualitative researchers are interested in meaning – how people make sense of their lives, experiences, and their structures of the world.

95

3. Qualitative research involves fieldwork. The researcher physically goes to the people, setting, site, or institution to observe or record behavior in its natural setting.

4. Qualitative research is descriptive in that the researcher is interested in process, meaning, and understanding gained through words or pictures.

5. The process of qualitative research is inductive in that the researcher builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses and theories from details (pp. 19-20).

Qualitative methods provide the path to understanding the meaning of the Sweat Lodge experience for African American males.

Techniques and Strategies

Qualitative techniques and strategies range from passive observation and personal reflection to intervention, with a common theme of shared meanings and subjective understanding (Smith, 1994). Qualitative researchers are encouraged to allow the research situation to guide research procedures in order that they may gain access to human experiences. The analytic view of outsiders is important for understanding. Researchers are positioned subjects who are consciously thinking about what and where they are and what and how they do things (Moodley, 2002).

Furthermore, it allows for conscious deliberation of what they do, how they interpret and how they relate to subjects. Concern is with understanding and analysis of meanings in specific contexts. Qualitative researchers view the world of individuals or groups as they themselves see it and attempt to develop representations and constructions that take place within the social world (Baxter and Eyles, 1997). According to Henning et al (2004), the true test of a competent qualitative researcher comes in the analysis of the

data, a process that requires analytical craftsmanship and the ability to capture meaning in writing.

Phenomenology of Lived Experience

Central to capturing meaning is the notion of phenomenology. Phenomenology, as defined by van Manen (1990) "is the study of the life-world—the world as we immediately experience it pre-reflectively rather than as we conceptualize, categorize, or reflect on it…phenomenology aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences" (p. 9). The "life-world" or lived experience is the start and finishing points of phenomenological research. "Lived experience is the breathing of meaning" (van Manen, p. 36). The lived experiences of African American males who participated in this study provided meaning of the experience of the Sweat Lodge in relation to being a son, a "black" man, a father and member of the community. Thus, my goal is to uncover and describe the structures of the lived experience of African American males' participation in the Sweat Lodge and to gain understanding of the meaning and significance of this experience in the context of manhood and fatherhood.

To accomplish this goal I employed van Manen's (1990) six research activities:

1. Turning to a phenomenon which seriously interests (me) and commits (me) to the world;

2. Investigating experience as we live it rather than as we conceptualize it;

3. Reflecting on the essential themes which characterize the phenomenon;

4. describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting;

5. maintaining a strong and oriented pedagogical relation to the phenomenon; and

6. balancing the research context by considering parts and whole (pp. 30-
    31).

As described in my personal and practical goals, the phenomenon of African American males and the Sweat Lodge seriously interests me. My intellectual goals (Maxwell, 2005) are met by employing van Manen's research activities, specifically 1, 2, and 3 above. The interest in understanding the "essence" of this experience is a driving force of my intellectual goal to understand meaning. Essence is a description of the phenomenon that constructs meaning of the lived experienced (Patton, 2002; van Manen, 1990). Therefore, as a researcher, I have not just raised the questions, but have "lived" and "became" the question (van Manen).

I first came into contact with the Sweat Lodge experience in 1992 during a leadership conference sponsored by the Center for Black Culture and Research at West Virginia University. The person who explained the Sweat Lodge to the conference attendees was Nashid Fakhrid-Deen, JD. Fakhrid-Deen (personal communication, February 8, 2005), having been guided by spirit and Shaw Sky Bull in the Lakota form of the Sweat Lodge, has been incorporating African spiritual and healing elements into the Sweat Lodge process to address issues of manhood and fatherhood among African Americans.

Fakhrid-Deen stated that the Sweat Lodge ceremony was a Native American purification process, which must be kept sacred and held in high regard. He further explained that the Sweat Lodge has been utilized throughout history by many cultures including African and European. However, the foundation that he utilizes for the Sweat Lodge is Lakota. As the Sweat Lodge leader, Fakhrid-Deen asked the researcher to be the

fire keeper, the person who maintains the fire to heat the rocks and brings the hot rocks into the lodge. The research accepted the task.

Fakhrid-Deen strongly encouraged the sweat participants to assist in the gathering and cutting of wood, to collect a minimum of 15 rocks, each about the size of a grape fruit; construction of the *Inipi*, and the building of the scared fire. The tools, tarps, blankets, tobacco, herbs, spiritual implements, and the majority of the wood is obtained by the Sweat Lodge leader, fire keeper and other experienced sweat participants prior to the day of the sweat (Bruchac, 1993; Bucko, 1999; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004).

An important aspect of the preparation phase is seeking the guidance of the Creator and the Ancestors in conducting the sweat. One method is through prayer and meditation, another is seeking guidance through an oracle or divination system, such as the Metu Neter or Ifa (Fakhrid-Deen, 2004). The Metu Neter and Ifa are African divination systems which are employed by a priest or priestess or an initiate (a person in training) to determine the energy governing or purpose of the lodge and herbs to use during the sweat phase. Fakhrid-Deen, being a Priest in the Yoruba tradition and a Shaman utilized the Metu Neter and the Ifa to determine the energy governing the lodge. Fakhrid-Deen stated the energy governing the lodge was to assist the participants with identifying their purpose in life.

Sweat Lodge participants were instructed by Fakhrid-Deen of their tasks. One group of participants is to work to constructed the lodge (*Inipi*), the second group of participants were instructed to work to collect the rocks, kindling, and to split or cut fire wood. The group of participants that were working on constructing the lodge were first instructed to find and cut 16, eight to twelve foot saplings about one to two inches in

diameter. The saplings make the frame of the Sweat Lodge. Fakhrid-Deen instructed the participants that prior to cutting the sapling they must touch the tree, say a prayer, and thank the tree and mother earth for providing them with the resource needed to build the *Inipi*. Then Fakhrid-Deen requested that when cutting the sapling, leave a tobacco offering and leave about a foot of the tree of the tree from the ground so it will grow back. The next step in the construction of the *Inipi* was to dig out the whole in the center, that center of the universe. Prior to the digging the whole Fakhrid-Deen placed his hand on the earth and asked Mother Earth for forgiveness for piercing her skin and then placed tobacco on the ground. The dirt from the hole would be utilized for the earth mound. At the conclusion of the Sweat Lodge, the dirt was returned to Mother Earth.

Additional holes were dug to construct the frame of the lodge to represent the four quarters of the universe, thus, as Black Elk (as cited in Brown, 1998) states:

…the whole lodge is the universe in an image, and the two legged, four-legged and winged peoples and all things of the world are contained within it…p. 32

Once constructed with sapling a Sweat Lodge can last up to one year. As an alternative measure, the purchase of 16 eight to ten foot, two by two wooden planks or dials from a local home improvement store instead of using a sapling.

Once the saplings are in place the Sweat Lodge leader and the participants cover the lodge with large tarps, then a layer of blankets and then one or two large tarps. The goal is to ensure that the heat will stay contained, and that no light will be able to be seen from inside the *Inipi*.

During the construction of the *Inipi*, and with guidance from Fakhrid-Deen, we prepared the fire. Prior to building the scared fire, I prayed at the fire site and mad a

tobacco offering. I then laid two split logs parallel to each other, starting to form the foundation for the rocks. A seconded layer of logs were place on top and perpendicular to the first layer of logs. I created a third layer of logs following the same procedure. Fakhrid-Deen then took seven rocks representing the Grandfather or Grandmother Earth, the source of fruition (Black Elk & Lyon, 1990; Bucko, 1999) and prayers to God (*Wakan Tanka*), mother earth, ancestors, to west, north, east and south respectively, were offered. Upon the completion of the prayer each rock was placed on the log foundation. The remaining rocks were placed on the first seven rocks creating a tip structure. Kindling was placed against the rocks in layers to allow for the hot coals to fall to the base of the fire to generate intense heat.

Fakhrid-Deen lit the fire with a natural fire starters, dried leaves and straw. Once the sacred fire was lit, Fakhrid-Deen announced that all conversations should be focused on spirituality, purification and change. I continued to place wood on the scared fire. It took about two hours for the rocks to "cook", reaching a point of being white hot and glowing red from the center.

During the two hours while the rocks were cooking, Fakhrid-Deen and other participants prepared the flags, prayer (tobacco) ties and rested before the sweat. The flags were strips of red, yellow, black, white and blue cloth. Red represents the east, yellow the south, black the west, white the north, and blue father sky (Brown, 1989). The prayer ties were prepared by either Fakhrid-Deen or individuals requesting special healing. Tobacco was placed into small pieces of cloth then a person tied the cloths while saying a prayer for healing. Prior to the opening of the Sweat Lodge. Fakhrid-Deen stated that the flags and prayer ties would be hung in the lodge.

Once the preparation phase was completed, Fakhrid-Deen oriented the participants to the Sweat Lodge. Fakhrid-Deen told the participants that the structure, the Sweat Lodge, was called an *Inipi* and that it represents the womb of the "Earth Mother". He further stated that the *Inipi* is aligned with the four cardinal directions, west, north, east and south. The small path that leads from the *Inipi* to the mound of earth is called the scared path or spirit trail. The fire pit is called the sacred fireplace or "fire of no end" or eternal fire.

At that point Fakhrid-Deen took a shovel and obtained several hot coals or ambers from the scared fire and placed sage on the coals. He stated that sage was being used to purify a person's aura before entering the lodge, it is called smudging. He waved the smoke from the sage with a hawk feather fan around his body and then researchers. Fakhrid-Deen then took the shovel, sage and some tobacco inside the lodge. Participants could hear praying inside the lodge. Fakhrid-Deen then exited the lodge and instructed the researcher to smudge the Sweat Lodge participants. Once I completed that task the researcher was then instructed on how to remove the hot rocks, or grandfathers, as Fakhrid-Deen called them from the sacred fire. At that point the Sweat Lodge participants were asked to line up by alternating female and male. Fakhrid-Deen reentered the lodge in clock or sun wise direction. Once all the participants were inside the lodge, Fakhrid-Deen requested four hot rocks from the scared fire. I brought him the hot rocks and placed them in a dug out hole in the center of the lodge, which represents the center of the universe.

Fakhrid-Deen opened the lodge. It was the first round to the West. Fakhrid-Deen explained that in Native American pantheon that the west represents the falling leaves

time, or the fall. It's a time for introspection. He further stated that the animal totem for the west is the Grizzly Bear. Fakhrid-Deen proceeded by giving thanks to God or *Wakan-Tanka* and the Ancestors for the Sweat Lodge ceremony. He then offered a prayer in Arabic and then in English, the pray was from the Holy *Qur'an,* Surah 1: *Al Fatihah* (The Opening). He prayed in the Christian tradition giving thanks to God for allowing the participants to be present. He then asked a young lady to offer a prayer and told her to let spirit be the guide. She offered a prayer from the Christian tradition. This was the first time that the researcher observed the synergy of religion, it was a spiritual awaking, and it was only the start of the sweat.

Bucko (1999) also observed that the Sweat Lodge is a vehicle for spiritual healing no matter what faith:

Spiritual intervention is effected in two ways in the Sweat Lodge. Certain spiritual leaders have access to specific spirits, which they are able to summon into the lodge. These spirits cooperate with the wishes of the spiritual leader and respond to the needs of those whom the leader is attempting to help. Other leaders do not invoke specific spirits, relying on the sweat itself and the concomitant prayers to draw in the appropriate spirits or the power of God. General spirits, such as those of the directions, are mentioned in prayer. . . . Along with spirits, if the individual leading the sweat is a Christian, the spirit of Jesus is sometimes invoked. In sweats held by Native American Church members, Christ and the Holy Spirit are invoked exclusively. (p. 117)

I continued the task as the fire keeper for the subsequent three rounds, to the north, east and south. The researcher observed an integration of culture and spiritual

103

concepts, specifically Native American, African, and African American traditions. It was difficult to understand what was really happening, but there was a sense of peace all around. At the conclusion of the Sweat Lodge the participants returned to the conference room to process the Sweat Lodge. It was a powerful experience for all. Some said they just could not get over the heat, others said it was like attending church. However, overall participants stated it was nothing like they had experienced in their life and would participate again.

In a private moment with Fakhrid-Deen, I inquired about learning more about the lodge. Fakhrid-Deen then he asked me a question, "If I were an Alien and asked you what an apple taste like what I would say?" I replied "it could taste sweet, but sometimes is it sour". Fakhrid-Deen said that "a person must taste the apple for themselves, they must experience it. It is the same for the Sweat Lodge, in order to learn you must continue to experience the Sweat Lodge because not one sweat experience is the same."

The next five years, the researcher participated in average of five sweats per year and was given suggested reading by Fakhrid-Deen. The reading included the Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's account of the seven rites of the Oglala Sioux, Earth Medicine, Of Water and The Spirit: ritual, magic and the initiation in the life of an African shaman; Metu Neter, Tradition and Transformation: A philosophical treatise based on the Ifa religious system, and Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief. These texts provided the philosophical framework for how I would conduct and possibly experience the Sweat Lodge. Then from 1998 to 2002, Fakhrid-Deen advised researcher how to conduct Sweat Lodges utilizing the Oglala Sioux or Lakota tradition as the foundation.

I initially conducted the Sweat Lodge with a small group of colleagues. I then began to incorporate the Sweat Lodge in counseling Welfare to Work participants, adolescents, and fathers. In the spring of 2002, Philip Rayzer and I were initiated as Sweat Lodge Fire Keeper and Leader respectively by Fakhrid-Deen, a Peruvian Shaman and Robin "Osunnike" Manna a Yoruba Priestess. The experience as a participant and as a Sweat Lodge leader has produced several key observations. First and foremost, the foundation of the Sweat Lodge must remain Native American, whether it is Lakota, Dakota, Cree, Navajo or another nation's approach to the Sweat Lodge. The most important aspect is the protection and preservation of this sacred rite (Bucko, 1999; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004). Second, the participants must be engaged in the preparation, the sweat, restoration phases of the experience. Finally, the details of how each phase of the Sweat Lodge is conducted will vary based on The Leader, Fire Keeper and participant's culture.

This cannot be understated for two very important reasons, the construction of knowledge and the sacredness of the Sweat Lodge. In Chapter two, it was discussed that the African-centered perspective was utilized as the lens for this inquiry. This center of knowledge production provided a path for indigenous inquiry that assists in understanding meaning of the Sweat Lodge experience for African American males. The Sweat Lodge is a scared Native American spiritual tradition, which has to be "honored and protected from cultural bandits and oppressors" (Fakhrid-Deen, 2004, p.) As a Sweat Lodger leader, African American man, who has Native American ancestors, I must protect this tradition; therefore, I lived and became the question, I became oriented to the phenomenon.

Becoming oriented to the phenomenon is a point of departure for reaching my second intellectual goal of understanding the context of the phenomenon. This was accomplished by investigating the experience as it was lived. This means establishing a renewed contact with the original experience under study (van Manen, 1990). The renewed contact with the Sweat Lodge for participants of this inquiry shaped the collection of data from the context in which the participants acted and were influenced by the experience. The collection of data is discussed later in this chapter.

Investigating the lived experience of the African American males' participation in the Sweat Lodge provided the opportunity for phenomenological reflection. van Manen (1990) states "the purpose of phenomenological reflection is to try to grasp the essential meaning of something" (p. 77). Reflecting on the essential themes which characterize the phenomenon, as described by van Manen, aids in accomplishing my intellectual goals of identifying *unanticipated* phenomena and influences and generating new ideas from this information; understanding the *process* by which events and actions take place; and developing *causal explanations.* Gaining understanding of the essential meaning of the Sweat Lodge experience for African American males, through phenomenological reflection, will be discussed later in this chapter as well as in Chapters IV and V.

Self-Ethnography

Alvesson (2003, p.167) states that it is rare that academics study their own "lived realities." This study is central in my personal experiences as an African American father who is a counselor and who has had positive experiences linked to the Sweat Lodge. This study therefore adopts as one of the main methods of data collection a self-ethnography approach. This approach, as highlighted by Alvesson (2003), also means that the

researcher tries to get relatively close to the meanings, ideas, discursive and/or social practices of a group of people that the researcher is approaching, in this study, African American males who participate in the Sweat Lodge.

Atkinson and Hammersley (1994) indicate that some researchers define ethnography as a study of an explorative nature, working with unstructured data, being case-orientated and expressing an interest in meaning. Silverman (1985) regards ethnography as any study involving observation of what is referred to as naturally occurring events. Alvesson (2003) expands on this definition and asserts that ethnography should be reserved:

> …for studies involving a long period of fieldwork in which the research tried to get close to the community (organization, group) being studied, relies on their accounts as well as on observations of a rich variety of naturally occurring events (as well as on other material, e.g. documents or material artifacts) and has an interest in cultural issues (meanings, symbols, ideas, assumptions). (p. 171)

A central part of the ethnographic process in this research was participant observation. Participant observation and ethnography are closely linked. In relation to ethnography, the concept of 'thick description' is also relevant. Geertz (1973) defines 'thick description' as careful accounts of social phenomena in which layers of meaning are expressed.

Ethnographic research has several advantages and disadvantages which are summarized by Alvesson (2003). The advantages include: observations of naturally occurring events avoid or at least reduce the researcher's dependence on the accounts of respondents and the researcher may discover aspects which the interviewees may be

107

unaware of or which, for other reasons, they find it difficult to articulate. The disadvantages include them being time-consuming, often personally tiresome and stressful to carry out. Additionally, a challenging aspect which characterizes other qualitative research techniques as well, concerns the difficulties in handling all the empirical material and in producing a text that does justice to it. Several authors have highlighted this problem including Alvesson (2003), Geertz (1988) and van Manen (1990).

Since I was involved directly in all aspects of the Sweat Lodge experience under study, as explained earlier, the research technique specifically employed is self-ethnography. Alvesson (2003) defines self-ethnography as:

> …a study and a text in which the researcher-author describes a cultural setting to which s/he has a 'natural access', is an active participant, more or less on equal terms with other participants. The researcher then works and/or lives in the setting and then uses the experiences, knowledge and access to empirical material for research purposes. The research, however, is not a major preoccupation, apart from a particular time when the empirical material is targeted for close scrutiny and writing. (p. 174)

Alvesson (2003) asserts that this is more than participant observation which is not a good term to describe this process since participation comes first and is only occasionally complemented with observation in a research-focused sense. Alvesson (2003) further highlights that self-ethnography has two potential rationales: it has the capacity to come up with novel and interesting empirical material and the deeper and more profound

knowledge of the setting may lead to theoretical development that is more well grounded in experiences and observations than is common.

Despite Alvesson's aversion to using the concept of participant observation, some of the discussion in the literature pertaining to participant observation is relevant to this study and are worth briefly discussing. Several authors indicate that that participant observation entails the researcher immersing himself/herself in the subject being studied over a relatively long period of time (Adler et al., 1994; Bruyn, 1966; Jorgenson, 1993; Reiss, 1971). They indicate that by participating in the processes/activities related to the field of study, a better understanding of the phenomena emerges. Furthermore, participant observation is more reliable and valid since the researcher is "actually there". It can also be a relatively simple and inexpensive method.

The authors also concur that participant observation is particularly useful when the subject being studied include interpersonal group experiences, as is the case with the Sweat Lodge. Bruyn's (1966) identification of the four elements associated with the phenomenological approach to participant observation, although more than four decades ago, is worth recounting and relevant to this study:

- Awareness of time: recording the temporal phases of research according to the sequence of the experience of the observer in relation to the milieu.

- Awareness of the physical environment: recording the relations of people to their physical environment as they perceive it, not as he researcher conceptualizes or even experiences it.

- Awareness of contrasting experiences: recording the experiences of people under contrasting social circumstances; meanings cannot be assessed under one set of circumstances because they are relative to the setting.

- Awareness of social openings and barriers: recording the changed in meaning as the participant observer transitions from stranger to member to insider. This includes determining vocabulary concepts with the intention of illuminating intersubjective meanings of critical terms.

Corley (2006) underscores that self-ethnography is not about the researcher (it does not put the researcher's experiences at the center), rather it draws attention to the particular cultural context under study. The focus is on the researcher being a critically reflective practitioner/participant. Reynolds (1997) presents the following four characteristics of critical reflection:

- Concerned with questioning assumptions: focuses on questioning taken-for granted beliefs and values which reflect the view of the majority, or those in power, so persuasively that they become unquestioned 'common sense'.

- Focus is social rather than the individual: emphasizes social constructionist perspectives on learning and communities of practice; acknowledging that individuals' reflections on thought and action are situated within a 'community' which reflects and constitutes values, beliefs and norms.

- Pays particular attention to the analysis of power relations: Draws attention to the relationship between power and knowledge and how an individual's perspective is influenced by their position in hierarchies of power and privilege.

- Concerned with emancipation: espouses an ideology that a just society might be created through reasoning which entails both a historical and contextual perspective. (p. 189)

Focus Groups

According to Baum (1995), the goals of participative research are the production of: "... context bound knowledge for use by participants in research," the role of the researcher being able to "... assist the community in finding out information they want to know and taking action to change the status quo" (p. 465). One of the major strategies in participative research is the use of focus groups. Focus groups are used in group settings to engage in collective inputs. This method of data collection, using methods such as story-telling, is becoming very popular. Researchers and practitioners use this method to create local histories and translate the local aspirations of people into development strategies that work (Goss, 1996; Kearns, 1997; Longhurst, 1996). The stories provided by people and reflections on personal experiences assist in constructing knowledge of the more nuanced aspects of health and healing.

Morgan (1996) states that focus groups and group interviews have emerged as a popular technique for gathering qualitative information. Furthermore, Morgan (1996) asserts that focus groups are used as a self-contained method and in combination with surveys and other research methods. Kreuger (1988) argues that focus group interviews were born in the late 1930s by social scientists who had doubts about the accuracy of traditional information gathering methods. Specifically, Rice (1931, p. 561 as cited in Kreuger,1988, p.18) indicated:

A defect of the interview for the purposes of fact-finding in scientific research, then, is that the questioner takes the lead ... data obtained from an interview are likely to embody the preconceived ideas of the interviewer as the attitude of the subject interviewed.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) state that "Merton et al. coined the term 'focus group' in 1956 to apply to a situation in which the interviewer asks group members very specific questions about a topic after considerable research has already been completed" (p. 365). Furthermore, Kreuger (1988) defines a focus group as a "carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions in a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment" (p. 18). The focus group interview is a qualitative data gathering technique that finds the interviewer/moderator directing the interaction and inquiry in a very structured or unstructured manner, depending on the interview's purpose (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Merton et al (1990) suggest that the focused interview with a group of people "... will yield a more diversified array of responses and afford a more extended basis both for designing systematic research on the situation in hand" (p. 135). Additionally, Knodel (1993, as cited in Borghi et al., 2007) state that focus groups are a more straight forward approach to explore a broad spectrum of individual views. Also, the group approach benefits from the interaction between participants and the researcher's as well as among participants themselves in a less formal environment. Gibbs (1997) states that the benefits of focus group research include gaining insights into people's shared understandings of everyday life and the ways in which individuals are influenced by others in a group situation.

In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews provide evidence on the way people deal with health and fatherhood This technique has the advantage of grounding the everyday experiences of people. It involves direct contact with people and this permits an investigation of people's feelings and experiences in a socio-spatial context (Wilton, 1999).

Conducting and interpreting interviews, as Alvesson (2003) states, provides a rich set of accounts of the interviewee's experiences, knowledge, ideas and impressions. Furthermore, Alvesson (2003) states:

> An interview is a social situation and that which is said is far too context-dependent to be seen as a mirror of what goes on outside this specific situation – in the mind of the interviewee or in the organization 'out there'. Interviewees speak in accordance with norms of talk and interaction in a social situation. The research interview is thus better viewed as the scene for a social interaction rather than a simple tool for the collection of 'data'. (p. 169)

Fontana and Frey (1994) suggest that many researchers reject approaches to conducting research that centers on objectivity and avoids getting involved or providing personal opinions. These researchers desire to engagie in real and meaningful conversations with the research subjects.

> This makes the interview more honest, morally sound, and reliable, because it treats the respondent as an equal, allows him or her to express personal feelings, and therefore presents a more 'realistic' picture that can be uncovered using traditional interview methods. (Fontana & Frey, p. 371)

Alvesson (2003) asserts that interviews (in combination with other techniques such as ethnography discussed below) may provide richer results as the researcher over time develops his/her understanding, can ask better questions and may get better contact with the research subjects.

ESDS Qualidata (2007) states that semi-structured interviewing is more flexible than other standardized methods, such as the structured interview or survey. Semi-structured interviews generally have agreed topics/ themes for discussion, open ended questions and/or some structured questions. ESDS Qualidata (2007) asserts that this approach allows for the exploration of emergent themes and ideas rather than relying only on concepts and questions defined in advance of the interview. They also indicate that the researcher would usually use a standardized interview schedule with set questions which will be asked of all respondents. Furthermore, the questions are generally asked in a similar order and format to make a form of comparison between answers possible.

Research Design

The research design is informed by the theoretical framework, purpose and research questions discussed in Chapter I. The qualitative methods, techniques and strategies outlined above, further inform the research design of this study. This section will describe the research design. Specifically, purposeful section, demographics, procedures, data collection, instrumentation, and limitations will be presented.

Purposeful Selection

The sampling method that was used was reflective of the personal, practical and intellectual goals as articulated by van Manen's (1990) notion of lived experience and six research activities, and Self-Ethnography (Alvesson, 2003; Geertz, 1988). Purposeful selection (Patton, 2002) was used to select the participants for this study. Patton (2002) describes purposeful sampling as a method of selecting "cases for study (for example, people, organizations, communities cultures, events, critical incidences)…because they are information rich and illuminative, that is they offer useful manifestations of the phenomenon of interest; sampling then, is aimed at insight about the phenomenon, not empirical generalization from a sample population" (p. 41).

Three metropolitan areas were selected based on the largest population of African American males who participated in the Sweat Lodge. The areas were Lexington, Kentucky; Nashville, Tennessee and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This provided a homogeneous group not only from an ethnic perspective, but from a Sweat Lodge perspective. The Sweat Lodge leaders and fire keepers were all trained in the Lakota tradition of the Sweat Lodge and incorporated not only the Native American systems of knowing but the African systems as well. Thus, each participant met the following selection criteria: (a) they are African American males over the age of 21 years, (b) they resided in one of the following metropolitan areas at the time of the study: Lexington, Kentucky; Nashville, Tennessee and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, (c) they have participated in at least two Sweat Lodges, and (d) they are or planned to be fathers. Subsets of participants were randomly selected from each focus group for in-depth interviews.

Demographics

There were a total of 18 participants for the focus groups, with six participants in each metropolitan area. Nine of the18 participants were randomly selected to participate in the in-depth interviews or three from each metropolitan area. The mean age of the population was 32 years. The mean number of children was three. Eight participants were married and two of the eight participants were on their second marriage. Three participants were divorced, only one of the divorced participants didn't have contact with his children at least once a month. Each of the divorced participants were involved with the court system for child support.

There were eight single participants, three of which had no children, however, were planning on becoming fathers in the future. Two of the eight single participants did not have children of their own, but took on the responsibility as father to their significant others' children. Three off the eight single participants were engaged in the court system for child support.

More than half of the participants have had previous experiences or encounters with the criminal justice system at least once in their lifetime. Two participants served at least twelve months in an adult correctional institution. There were four participants that self identified as having mental health and substance abuse issues.

Procedures

I established contact with the "formal gatekeepers" of the Sweat Lodge, the Sweat Lodge leaders in order to recruit participants for this study as described by Morgan (1998) and Seidman, (1998). All the leaders were connected because of their training in the Lakota tradition of Sweat Lodge by Nashid Fakhrid-Deen, JD. Through an iterative

process of conversations involving Sweat Lodge Leaders, participants were identified in each of the metropolitan areas. The Sweat Lodge leaders made initial phone calls to all potential participants to solicit their participation. The leaders then provided me with a list of participates who were willing to participate in the study.

I contacted the participants initially by phone as a means of inviting them to participate in the study. I advised them at the time of the call that (1) they are being invited to participate in a focus group; (2) they may also be requested to participate in an individual interview, in addition to the focus group; and (3) they will be required to complete a consent-to-participate form if they agree to participate in the study. The challenge was working through the logistics to ensure participation and account for the travel time between cities. It was in inevitable that the schedule had to be adjusted several times because of availability of space, inclement weather that prohibited travel and life situations.

The schedule was confirmed and I was able to travel to Lexington, Kentucky; then Nashville, Tennessee, and then back Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. At the time of the various interviews, each participant was asked if their participation was voluntary. If it was, each was requested to sign the consent to participate in the study. The consent protocol included a verbal discussion of each element, by the researcher, of the document to ensure that the participant understood all rights, risks and benefits, as well as the nature of his consent. My expectations were that I would complete the interviews within a month. However, data collection was completed within a week because of the cooperation, support and commitment of the Sweat Lodger leaders and other participants to ensure that I was able to collect the data and be part of their lived experiences.

Data Collection

The data were obtained for this inquiry by employing Rapid Assessment Process or Methods (RAMs) (Beebe, 2001; Dale, Shipman, Lacock & Davies, 1996; Levers, 2003; 2006) to extrapolate the lived experience of African American males' participation in the Sweat Lodge. RAMs is a combination of qualitative methods which includes: focus groups, key informant interviews, community interviews, consultative workshops, direct observation and mini-surveys (Levers, 2006). The benefits of RAMs are flexibility, rapid deployment and effectiveness (USAID, 1996). The RAMs for this inquiry included focus groups and in-depth interviews of purposefully selected focus group participants.

Krueger (1994, p. 18) defines focus groups as "carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions in a defined area of interest in a permissive, nonthreatening environment". The focus group was chosen based on Berg's (2001) seven advantages to using focus groups as a research strategy. Specifically, the focus group strategy "allow(ed) the researcher to access substantive content of verbally expressed views, opinions, experiences and attitudes" (p. 126). This strategy was a means to "getting at difficult to obtain data," that is, the lived experience of African American males' participation in the Sweat Lodge (Levers, 2006).

In-depth phenomenological interviews (Seidman, 1998) were employed as strategy to build upon and explore responses from purposefully selected participants during the focus group interactions. The strategy complemented the focus group in terms of providing insight and "deeper" themes which added in constructing meaning.

The focus groups lasted on average 75 to 90 minutes and the individual interviews lasted for 60 to 45 minutes. The focus groups and interviews were recorded on DVDs and

"text that can be read and coded in similar ways to a transcript" (Levers, 2006, p. 393).

The data was then organized thematically for interpretation (See Data Analysis, Chapter IV). The focus group and in-depth interview question guides (see Appendixes B and C) are based on the study's purpose, research questions, theoretical framework, and NCOFF's (2003) The Fathering Indicators Framework (FIF). According to NCOFF, FIF is designed to help researchers, practitioners, and policymakers conceptualize, examine, and measure change in fathering behaviors in relation to child and family wellbeing. NCOFF further states that the FIF may be adapted for multiple purposes and used with different populations of fathers (i.e., married fathers present in the home; never-married fathers; noncustodial, nonresidential fathers involved with their children; and noncustodial, nonresidential fathers making the transition to responsible fatherhood). The question guides were semi-structured in order to provide the flexibility to explore responses of participants during the focus groups and interviews (Patton, 2002; Seidman, 1998).

The guides for the focus groups and in-depth interviews were divided into the following sections, each linking to specific research question:

- Lived experience
  - What is the lived experience of the Sweat Lodge and what does it mean to African American males?

- Impact of indigenous systems of knowledge
  - How has the inclusion of both Native American and African indigenous systems of knowledge impacted the Sweat Lodge experience for African American males?

- Ability to address issues related to fatherhood

    o How has participation in the Sweat Lodge affected African American males' ability to address issues related to fatherhood?

- Engagement in Mental Health Services

    o How has participation in the Sweat Lodge affected African American male attitudes towards and engagement with mental health services?

Instrumentation

As is often the case in qualitative inquiries, the researcher is the instrument (Levers, 2002; Patton, 2002; Silverman, 2000; van Manen, 1990). This means that the researcher asks the questions, takes notes, and makes observations. Patton (2002) states that "the credibility of qualitative methods, therefore hinges to a great extent on the skill, competence, and rigor of the person doing the fieldwork - as well as things going on in a person's life that might prove a distraction" (p. 14). At this juncture, it's appropriate for me to provide an overview of my experience and qualifications that establish my credibility as a qualitative researcher.

My interest in African American males and the Sweat Lodge is rooted in my own experiences as an evolving African American man. I have experienced the high and the lows of being the youngest child in my family. I have experienced attempted emasculation from education, military, family, work and relationships, some of which was by my own actions and choices. However, collectively these experiences have shaped my life to this point. Through the ongoing struggle of knowing self, I have been blessed with the completing three college degrees, and earning a commission in the

United States Army. These blessing have continued to open the way for me to work in the helping enterprise.

Notwithstanding being an African American man, my professional experiences as a Licensed Professional Counselor, Program Manager, Administrator, Officer, and Educator has prepared me for the rigor of conducting qualitative research. Specifically, my work over a 16 year period of developing and implementing programs for men and their families qualifies me to investigate what it means to be a man and a father of African descent. As an initiated Sweat Lodge Leader in the Lakota and Ancestral tradition, which required ten years of study and conducting Sweats as well as continuing my personal studies to evolve as a man according to my purpose provides the context for me to be the indigenous researcher and become the questions, as discussed by Smith (1999) and van Manen (1990) .

As a Counselor Educator, I am aware that biases and assumptions will undoubtedly surface during the course of this investigation and my analysis of data. I have the responsibility as the instrument of this inquiry to process, reflect and report these discoveries in order to honor the Creator, the Ancestors, the Sweat Lodge and participants in this study.

Data Analysis

Investigating the lived experience of African American males' participation in the Sweat Lodge provided the opportunity for phenomenological reflection. van Manen (1990) states "the purpose of phenomenological reflection is to try to grasp the essential meaning of something" (p.77). Grasping the essential meaning becomes a process of analyzing the thematic aspects of the experience. Thematic aspects or themes are the

structures of the experience that provide meaning. The themes themselves don't provide meaning, but guide the phenomenological inquiry toward meaning.

Data analysis started with the first question posed during the focus groups and in-depth interviews. Krueger (1998) argues that the researcher has to determine if the questions are working, meaning that analysis starts with listening. This is not an in-depth analysis, which will happen later in the process, but analysis guided by the responses of the participants. This provided the opportunity to reshape the questions and to extrapolate meaning - the lived experience as the focus groups and interview continued. The results of qualitative research are evidence based. Since I made DVD recordings of the focus groups and in-depth interviews, I preferred this approach of the DVD recordings because it served as the "text that can be read and coded in similar ways to a transcript" (Levers, 2006, p. 393).

Audit Trail

Through phenomenological reflection the DVD recordings of the focus groups and interviews were analyzed. This was accomplished by utilizing van Manen's (1990) guide for reflections (p.101): lived space (spatiality), lived body (corporeality), lived time (temporality, and lived human relation (relationality or communality), which created structures for the lived experience of African American males. Thick descriptions (Geertz (1973) were constructed from the emerging themes or structures and notes.

As I conducted the analysis, I consulted the African-centered and Sweat Lodge literature as well as with my Dissertation Chair, Committee and experts to ensure authenticity of the findings. I communicated with the aforementioned team by email, which provides an audit trail of authenticity. This is an approach advocated by Patton

(2002). As with all inductive analysis, I continued the analysis process until no new themes emerged from the data. Once this happened I considered the analysis complete.

Limitations

My attempt to answer the research questions through focus groups, interviews and observations add to the validity of the study. However, there are three major limitations to this study. The first is my interpretation of the data. I have attempted to present the lived experience of participants from an African-centered perspective and authentic light, however, my interpretation is only that of one researcher. The second major limitation is generalizability of the phenomenon under study. A relatively small sample of African American men who were purposefully selected participated in this study. Additionally, the two major components of this study (African American males and the Sweat Lodge) are generally under-researched. This is a limitation, but illustrates the importance of the study and indicates the ground breaking contribution to the field of counseling in terms of knowledge production.

<center>Summary</center>

The purpose, research questions and theoretical framework of this study drives the methodology, which is phenomenological. As a qualitative method, phenomenology undergirds the research design which provides the opportunity to extrapolate meaning of the lived experiences of African American males who participated in the Sweat Lodge. Understanding the meaning of this experience from the voice of African American males informs us on how the Sweat Lodge experience has affected their lives as men and fathers. There voice provides a point of departure for reexamining the meaning of manhood, fatherhood and interventions for African American males.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter is concerned with presenting data that was collected from focus groups and individual interviews. Key to the presentation of data is the interpretation and analysis. Peshkin (2000) described the interpretation and analysis of qualitative data as a "retrospective account of the unfolding course of ideas" (p. 5). Peshkin's five conceptualizations shaped my analysis in the following ways: (a) interpretation is grounded in the wonderings, questions, and ideas that have been present from the outset of the investigation; (b) analysis of data emerges from a vantage point determined by how the researcher chooses to look at the phenomenon; (c) interpretation of data relates to the researcher's decisions about what data to collect in light of hypotheses about the experiences being researched; (d) analysis is related to what the researcher chooses to write that substantiates the research hypotheses; and, (e) interpretation is a way to account for what the researcher learned through his or her interactions with co-researchers, their stories, and other data gathered through the research. The results of this inquiry are offered with these five assumptions about the interpretive process in mind.

It is also important to note that decisions made about the interpretation of data and what experiences mean was guided by the theoretical framework, and the review of relevant concerning African American males and the Sweat Lodge. As discussed in Chapters I and II, the African-centered paradigm (Akbar, 1995, 1998; Asante, 1990, Karanga, 1993; Nobbles & Goddard, 1993) provides the indigenous lenses to view the lived experience of African American males who participated in the Sweat Lodge, which then assists in the construction of knowledge. The second major component is the notion

of Generative-fathering (Erikson 1982; Snarey, 1993) which emphasizes the activities and work fathers engage in response to the needs of their children rather than in response to the role obligations superimposed upon men by socio-cultural prescriptions. The third major component self determination theory as articulated by Ryan and Deci (2000; 2006) addresses the psychological, personal and cognitive aspects of an individual. Finally, the forth component is the bio-ecological model of human development (Brofenbrenner, 1979, 2004) which is useful in generating understanding of a person's development, their environment and the evolving interaction between the two.

The literature review for African American males, in Chapter II, provided insight into the meaning of manhood and the issues they face as fathers. Specifically, the interpretation of data and what experiences mean was shaped by the notions of emasculation (Aird, 2003; Bush, 1999; Patterson, 1998), transgenrational trauma (Levers, et al, 2003), and dual consciousness (DuBois, 1903; Fanon, 1967). The work of scholars, such as Akbar (1984), Fakhrid-Deen (2004), Hunter and Davis (1994), Martinson and Nightingale (2008), and, Watts, (1993) provide insight into key issues that shape fatherhood for African American males.

The accounts and descriptions (Bruchac, 1993; Bucko 1999; Colmant & Merta, 1999, 2000; Colmant et al., 2005; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004; Hibbard, 2005; Madden, 1986; Vogel, 1973) of the Sweat Lodge presented in Chapter II, aids in the interpretation of data and what the Sweat Lodge experience means for African American males. The controversy of use the Sweat Lodge by non-Native Americans and research on the efficacy of the Sweat Lodge (Bruchac, 1993; Bucko 1999; Colmant & Merta, 1999, 2000;

125

Colmant el al. 2005; Hibbard, 2005; Schiff & Moore, 2007) aids in the analysis of the as a psychosocial and spiritual intervention for African American males.

It was important to protect the identities of the participants of this inquiry. The participants were provided assurances that their privacy would be maintained. Thus, pseudonyms were used for participants and any identifying information and detail have been omitted. Additionally, details regarding the Sweat Lodge, such as divinations, chants, songs, herbs used in the Sweat Lodge have been omitted to protect the sacred nature of this ritual.

Organization of Results

The demographics of the co-researchers are presented next. Following the demographic section, the main themes that emerged from the three focus groups and the nine individual interviews are offered. Specifically, the themes from the focus group and individual interviews for a respective location are presented in the same section and then summarized together. The rationale is that because the participants from the individual interviews were randomly selected from the respective focus group, and because since the individual interviews were iterative, it is appropriate to report the individual interview results in this manner. At the end of the respective focus group and individual sections a summary of the themes are presented. Finally, I discuss the finding and how they relate to the theoretical framework.

Demographics

The data that were collected for this study came from 18 participants living in three metropolitan areas of Lexington, Kentucky; Nashville, Tennessee; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Three participants from each focus group were randomly selected to

participate in an individual interview following the focus group. There were a total of 16 fathers and the average number of children was three. Demographic data including education level, martial status, employment, engaged with family court, had contact with criminal justice system and participated in formal counseling services (mental health) are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Demographic Data

Education Level	Number of Participants
High School	3
Career School	2
College	9
Graduate/Professional School	4
Marital Status	
Married	8
Divorced	3
Separated	0
Single	7
Employment	
Employed	15
Self-Employed	3
Unemployed	0
Family Court Involvement	6
Contact with Criminal Justice System	9
Counseling Services	4

Two of the eight married participants are on their second marriage. One of the divorced participants did not have contact with his children at least once a month. Each of the divorced participants was involved with the family court for child support. Three of the single participants had no children, however, were planning on becoming fathers in the future. Two single participants did not have children of their own, but took on the responsibility as a father to their significant others' children. Three off the seven single participants were engaged in the court system for child support. Nine of the participants have had previous experiences or encounters with the criminal justice system at least

once in their lifetime. Two participants served at least twelve months in an adult correctional institution. There were four participants that self identified as having participated in formal counseling services (i.e. receiving services from a licensed provider).

<center>Focus Group and Individual Interviews</center>

This section will present comments on the process and data collected from focus group and individual interviews from the three metropolitan areas. First, Lexington, Kentucky data will be presented followed by Nashville, Tennessee then Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

<center>*Lexington, Kentucky*</center>

Comments on the Process

Initially, we were to conduct the focus group at a local community college, but there was no space available on the day we needed to conduct the focus group and interviews. The Sweat Lodge Leader graciously opened his home to conduct the focus group and individual interviews. I'm going to refer to this Sweat Lodge Leader as Baba and the other co-researchers as Brothers. Six co-researchers, total, participated in the focus group and three co-researchers from the focus group participated in individual interviews. At first we were interrupted by phone calls from two participants who were running late, but with the assistance of the co-researchers we were able to stay on task. When the other two participants arrived, the group welcomed them and brought them up to where we were in the process. I had to stop and explain the consent protocol, but the other group members did not seem to mind the interruption.

We conducted the focus group on the floor in Baba's living room. Meditation music was playing low in the back ground, which assisted with creating a calm and safe

<center>128</center>

environment for the co-researchers. I feel this was important even though most of the participants know me and the other co-researchers. All the co-researchers were very open and willing to participate, which is not typical for focus groups, let alone African American men. Once we concluded the focus group and randomly selected three participants for the individual interviews. The individual interviews were conducted in a private room, Baba's office.

Focus Group

Four chief findings emerged that gave meaning to the lived experience of the Sweat Lodge for participants of the Lexington focus group. An *emotional start* was the first theme that emerged for the participants. The second theme was *Sweat Lodge is universal, but yet personal.* The third theme was *removing the masks and healing.* Finally, *application* was another major theme that emerged..

Theme 1: Emotional start. Baba stated that he did his first Sweat in 1986 with Caucasians. He reported the following:

> My initial response was anger and then jealously…I wanted what they had…saying why do they always get to have everything and we don't…the anger and jealousy I was carrying ran me up out the lodge…as soon as got out of the lodge after I did my first round it seemed that spirit said…yah, you may be mad, but they're in the lodge and you couldn't hang…I got in my car and left and I cried all the way back home for four hours, but after that it became a calling for me and it transformed my life.

Brother Tim stated that his initial Sweat was in 1996, and he also experienced an emotional start:

I was a Minister and my other brothers had decided to go a Sweat, since my brothers we're going I said I got to go. So when I got there they we're building the Inipi tent, it looked small and I'm a big brother…I don't know about this (laughter). Everyone got in and got settled and all of the sudden hot rocks came in…Baba began to speak and when he said we're going to go around the room, I said to myself how long was this going to take, you know, because its hot in here…I began to justify whether I should stay or go out and as it got hotter and hotter and steam was coming out…I got out of the lodge and left and got in my car and drove off. The whole way I was angry and I was just saying that this don't mean nothing, you know…I just went through the whole thing…I'll go back to the manhood issue, when your supposed to be a leader of a group of men and an you don't feel like you're not a man yet yourself because of your experience you had in the lodge it weighs on you…but I did go back and overcome those things…

When Brother John did his initial Sweat Lodge he was going through significant life changing events:

I did a sweat back in 2000, it was a transitional time for me in my life. I just got out of the joint, me and my wife just broke up, my mother was dying at that time…I had a lot of anger with me too, it was like the cross roads. I said to myself, we'll are you going back out to streets and be some kind of predator or are you going to really… like tap into those gifts skills and talents…are you going to do it the easy way or hard way. So I'm up here with the (brothers) out here in the woods, I was a little frustrated, it was cold, I didn't really know what the

130

process was, I'm up here walking through the woods, chopping down saplings and giving respect to the saplings given up some herbs to the sapling, I'm saying why are we giving respect to a sapling…so the whole process it was different. As far as going up in the Sweat lodge, it was shock, I was choking, in the dark, like when are they going to finish, pride held me in there, but I was not where I needed to be, I'm like I wasn't getting what I needed out of this yet, I'm still trippen on the heat. But when I went back up in there again, I calmed down and then I said ok…I'm feelin this…

Theme 2: Sweat Lodge is universal, but yet personal. The Sweat Lodge is universal, but yet personal was a major theme that emerged in the context of ancestry and religion. Baba states "Realizing that the Sweat Lodge it was a native American ritual and that the majority of us have Native American ancestry, put me in contact with that part of my heritage, but it didn't prepare me for the battle with the dogma". The dogma that the co-researchers defined was that of Native Americans challenging the right for the co-researchers to conduct the lodge. Baba submitted that "you got to understand that that Native people have been strip of their culture, that they carry a lot of anger, and they view these rituals are theirs and you have no right to deal with it". However, it was agreed by the group that "you have to step out on and trust in what spirit has given us". It was explained that "the more we trusted in spirit", the more the Native Americans would open the door for the co-researchers to learn about the Sweat Lodge. It was also explained that the more the co-researchers "stepped out on spirit" additional information about the connection of the sweat lodge throughout the world was revealed. Baba explains:

Spirit is showing me that your brothers are doing it in Africa, Senegal, The Gambia, you know they do a steam purification ritual amongst the Sangoma's in South Africa, the more I came into that knowledge, I began to say hold up here…no, no, no…I represent both worlds and I can do this. I represent t both worlds, hey I can do this…the more you do that the more spirit will bless you…The conflict is really not the conflict, because we bring the tradition as strong as you can bring it and we embellish it with our African Ancestry and that brings a whole new thing, that's why we call it the Ancestral Lodge.

The co-researchers further explored the Sweat Lodge is a place for all with no ownership or labels. Brother Mike said "I learned through the Sweat Lodge, that spirituality and wisdom is not owned by anybody…its free following" Brother Ben added the following:

The lodge is one of the few places I know that you come in with the coat you ware. Whether you coming in there praising Allah, whether you're coming in there saying thank you Jesus, or whether your coming in there saying you knew what ever, whatever you saying… you bring it. Because we understand that in the Lodge all these walls are broken down…you understand that hey we're all going to that one spot…and there's more than one way to get to that spot, depending which way you come…but as long as we understand that we're going here, we're going to get there. I find myself saying thank you Jesus, thank you dying on the cross, I find myself saying thank you Buddha for going on your journey…in the Lodge it all comes together.

Brother Tim said:

The Sweat Lodge is one place that I felt, that I can mix with a whole lot of different human beings, with different life experiences, and truly feel that like I'm here with a bunch of people and it's not I'm from this culture or that culture, this religion or that religion, I'm just here with a bunch of human being trying to be righteous and loving each other. That's what helps me grow.

The co-researchers explained that the Sweat Lodge is universal, put yet it is a very personal experience. Brother Tim further elaborated:

The Sweat lodge is not the Christen thing, it's not Islam thing, it's the Brother Tim thing, you take what you have and go up in there…I've been in the Mosque, The Synagogue, the Church, this (the lodge) right here is more dealt toward just you…you're dealing with it. It's not just listening to the word, a word is good, but when ever get the chance to deal with the words that come from you…whenever you can speak and learn from yourself it's a powerful piece.

Many of the participants concurred with Brother John who explains that he is directly connected to his ancestor. He believes that he does not have to go through another man or a religion to be connected, explaining in the following way:

For the first time in my life when I went up in the Sweat Lodge, I felt like WOW. I don't have to knock on the door to say St. Peter can I talk to my folks, because they made it there and you're not letting me in the gate. In the Lodge I can go in and say mom how you're doing, uncle how you're doing, Granddad, how you doing, and hey family how you doing…I have some issues down here can you help me out…it was good for me.

Theme 3: Removing the masks. The co-researchers explained that when you participant in the Sweat Lodge the masks will come off and you have to be sincere. Brother Ben states it best:

> All the masks have to come off…you can't hind in the Lodge. The fact that I'm talking about talking about lifting weights, but when I come to lodge and take off my shirt…instead of a six pack…I have a baby keg…you have to be honest with yourself… you have to take all the stuff off…you have to be sincere.

Being sincere while you're in the lodge is very important aspect of the experience. Brother Tim states that "people have to deal in a sincere manner, you have no choice with heat and those rocks, after a while the pretenders have to go." Brother Jim built upon the theme by removing masks to deal with self

> What the Sweat gave me a venue where I can leave all my issues and problems, and everything that goes on in my head…being a Black male, all that things that you see about yourself in the media, in the movies, in reports. Then you talk about, issues with different religious sects, and growing up with my father and seeing what he was going through and that going to the Mosque and Church and always worrying about acceptance, I'm I alright okay here? I remember, going to Sunday school and kids going around talking about the Bible, I never read the bible I came up Muslim and the looks and stuff I got when I said my name and how insecure I felt about myself and trying to find somewhere where I was accepted and not how I look, or my name, or who my father was or what I did last week. The Sweat Lodge allows me to leave all that stuff outside and truly just deal with me. It helps me focus on me so I can become better.

Brother Mike further articulates the removal of masks:

> We got so much to shed off with past experience as a brother, a black man living in America. The Lodge is symbolic of going back into the womb…a place of safety and comfort a place to focus on self. As it gets hotter and hotter, I start to go into myself to find peace…the more I go inside self, I find things that I need to address, as these things come up, we begin to purify…we begin to remove the masks.

The co-researchers disclose that when you're in the lodge you open up because you feel safe, you're not worried about standing your ground, about whether or not this other brother is going to do harm you or ridicule you. You're able to remove the mask of masculinity as it is defined by society. A new definition of manhood is being developed in the lodge, one that stresses the balance between the masculine and feminine sides of men. This is illustrated best by Baba's and Brother Mike's remarks. Baba stated the following:

> We go around giving thanks for the women in our lives, before we get half way around the emotions come out… we ask the Creator and the ancestors to forgive me for doing wrong to the women in my life…We realize that we have allowed the sexual drive to hurt the women, this is very important…I have a whole new respect for the women in my life, but also for the women that's in me…a whole difference respect for being balanced…knowing both the masculine and feminine.

Brother Mike states that the "Sweat Lodge is used as a stepping stone in understanding the dual powers we have as men, the masculine and feminine…strong and nurturing.

Theme 4: Application. The co-researchers were very clear on how the Sweat Lodge was applied in their lives. Brother Tim said:

> The lodge has helped me to be stronger. When I think about situations that are hard in my everyday life, I think about the hard times in the lodge, when the Fire Keeper, would bring in more rocks, when I thought I have reached my limit…then I start thinking should I stay or should I go? When I decide to endure and stay, I end up being blessed, when I leave, I miss the blessing or lesson. I take this in my relationships…when I have situations with my wife, I used to not deal with it, then things would build up and explode, when I make the right decision to stay and endure…my wife and I blessed and we learn more about ourselves and our relationship.

The co-researchers articulate that the lodge assists with their behavior and leading by example for their families. Brother John explained that the Sweat Lodge is a vehicle to help him remain calm and to be a spiritual leader for his family:

> The Sweat Lodge helps me stay focus on the responsibility and obligations I have to this little girl…the lodge helps me stay chilled and not do have those negative thoughts or act out with those behaviors that landed me in the institution…Being a father, an uncle and then having younger folks in the family they have issues with their spirituality, to be able to give them a vehicle of the Sweat Lodge to express themselves in a spiritual way that's pure and true, without all the demons, all the hate and negativity, it was a like a bolder being lifted off my back., I can be a spiritual leader in my family.

Brother Ben disclosed the following:

I don't have any biological children yet, but my girl as two kids from a previous marriage…I'm coming into this thing thinking you clam you're the man, then you have to buck up and take care of this children like their your own or step away. The Sweat Lodge has helped me realize that I must step up and anything that makes me a better man helps the kids be better. Were I'm becoming better is around nurturing…I find myself as being disciplinarian and I never would give the kids a hug, I found that I have to mellow out with them as opposed to being ruff all the time…I just had to give the kids a hug. I'm still trying to find a balance…ruff verses being soft…this is very important because what I do is passed on to the kids…I can pass on the knowledge of self on to them, how to balance …being a living example.

The Lexington, Kentucky focus group themes of *Emotional Start, the Sweat Lodge is Universal, but yet Personal, Removing the Masks and Healing,* and finally *Application.* The themes provide a point of departure for the individual interviews. Three participants were randomly selected from the focus group participants. The findings from the individual interviews are below.

Individual Interviews

The three participants that were randomly selected were Baba, brothers Ben and Mike. The purpose of the individual interviews was to "understand contextual issues better, and elaborate upon and clarify the results of the focus group" (Levers, 2006, p.401). There were three themes that emerged were *spiritual calling, harmony and healing.*

Theme 1: Spiritual calling. Baba and the Brothers articulated that it's a spiritual calling to participate in the lodge. Baba stated that he was called to the Lodge because of his near depth experiences and lack of success in dealing with a therapist, as he states, the therapist had became "fascinated with his near depth experience" and he felt he was not getting the help that he needed. Baba stated that when he started to "confront the dark aspects of myself...purifying self, dealing with the liar, the cheater, the fraud, the pretender, to deal with the desire to have an affair, in the lodge I became freer…freer to be myself."

Baba continued to discuss that spirit or the universe guides people to the Sweat Lodge. He stated that he used to harbor fears about the Lodge and the people participating in it. Baba explained it in this way:

> I used to be fearful that the lodge will be commercialize, I see now the lodge is safe guarded by Ancestors…yes, there will be people who come out and participate once or twice and have what I call spiritual tea talk that I participated in the Sweat, but the mysterious will not be reveled until you demonstrate your sincere desire …you have to Sweat for 10 years every month…this is nothing to play with…this thing changes people lives, let alone, when Ancestors come up in there, when spirit beings come up in there…it took me 15 years for me see how…

The calling of the Sweat Lodge came to Brothers Ben and Mike, through an introduction to Baba through workshops in the metropolitan area. Brother Ben stated that he met Baba at a college workshop and got to know him and then Baba told him about the Sweat Lodge and invited him to participate. Brother Ben said at that time in his life "I was struggling with being in college and not knowing how to deal with being a black man

and at the same time trying to work toward the so-called American dream". Brother Mike had a similar experience. Brother Mike stated that he was a high school dropout and was trying to get a GED when he met Baba. He stated that he build a relationship with Baba, because he seemed to be "a valuable Elder who always had his door open". After a period of time he stated that Baba invited him to participate in the Sweat Lodge and from the point to present he continued to participate in the Sweat Lodge.

Theme 2: Harmony. Baba stated that the integration of African spiritual concepts was guided by spirit. He stated when he first started conducting the lodge it was an experiment to see what worked best. It was not until he divined through an oracle system that it became clearer on what to incorporate in the lodge. Baba said:

> As I matured in my process, I started to divine to find out what energy was governing the lodge and each round. Spirit guided the process of equating Native American totems to the Egyptians deities, and the Yoruba Orisha. Then we started to introduce the herbs of that where particular to that Orsiha. We continued to incorporate drumming, the pouring libations in the lodge, and doing chants to evoke the Ancestors.

Baba further stated that the process of the Sweat Lodge has evolved to the point where if it is a coed Sweat, a man and woman are leading, which is symbolic of Ausar and Auset who are said to have ruled equally in Egypt. Baba…

> Whenever we have a coed Sweat there are two leaders, a man and a woman running the lodge. She speaks with equal fervor…she chants a scared mantra to bring the level of vibration up in the lodge which creates greater opportunity for healing.

Baba explained that the brothers will continue to incorporate other forms of spirituality; However the base and foundation of the lodge will always remain in the Lakota tradition. Baba said that "the introduction of African spiritual concepts only speaks to who we are…the lodge accommodates that and is useful for all."

Brother Ben explained that the Sweat Lodge is an interconnection among Native American spiritual concepts, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Yoruba, and the Metu Neter (Egyptian). He articulated this by offering that "the Lodge lets you know that it's okay to be different, to think outside the box. The lodge is a place where you can see many paths leading to one truth." Brother Mike provided the following elaboration on the theme of integration:

During any given Sweat, we're in there with Buddhist, Muslims, Christians, brothers and sisters who practice indigenous faiths…there is no space that I can think of that brings all those people together…in the Lodge there is there is no division of religion…we come together as spiritual beings having human experiences…we leave having a heightened world view and even one world view.

Theme 3: Healing. Baba and the Brothers explain that healing takes place throughout the entire process of the Sweat Lodge experience. Specifically, they describe that healing takes place for them through the preparation, the Sweat, and the connections that are developed. Baba stated:

It's almost like your setting in a movie… seeing your life on a movie screen when you're in the lodge…spirit shows you what a fool you've been acting with your wife…spirit shows you this is how it should be…this is you with your son…look at you…spirit allowed me to see ..when you open up you become an observer

and spirit teaches you about you and the key is go into the entire process as an observer like you're in a show…you have to pay attention to everything that takes place in and outside the Lodge…spirit is always teaching and healing. Once you open yourself up to spirit you realize your oneness with spirit and you begin to heal yourself. It's a hell of a therapeutic experience!

Brother Ben stated that he experienced mental cleansing in the Sweat Lodge, and that this has provided him with the opportunity to be a better mate and a father to his children. He explained it in this way:

I've been able to sit in the Lodge on let go, let of baggage that was holding me back, to achieve balance, to find ways of dealing with situations with my girl and kids better than before, to utilize the balance between the masculine and feminine to humble myself to be healed...to receive the tools to truly represent the ancestors and leave a legacy for my children.

Brother Mike discussed the healing in terms of being apart of the preparation process, that is building the lodge, cutting down saplings, gathering the rocks, chopping wood, and making the prayer ties. He noted that this is just as important as being in the lodge itself, thus explaining:

It's power to see creating something out of nothing…building the lodge, the people working together, gathering materials, building the fire, being close to nature…you can see the area being transformed…it was and continues to be a transformation for me each time I participate.

Brother Mike stated that the Sweat Lodge has healed him as father and has provided a process for his children to understand manhood. He came to the following conclusions:

The lodge has given me confidence to understand my purpose …to understand myself as a spiritual being…I'm spiritual being… the Lodge has given me the strength to talk openly with my children, about school, the music they listen too, their friends…it has also forced me to look at women differently…not just as pretty faces, but as spirit…to notice their strength and power…we, us men, we're lying down all over the lodge because of the heat and the women were sitting up and calm and not affected by the heat, that was a powerful lesson…that lesson resonated with my son and he has been able to observe men in the lodge become emotional which has begun to open him up to find the balance between the masculine and feminine sides of self.

Interpretation and Analysis Summary

The themes generated by Lexington, Kentucky focus group and individual interviews are shaping the understanding of the lived experience of African American male's participation in the Sweat Lodge. Table 3 depicts the themes, thematic content and research question alignment. The four research questions presented in Chapter I are illustrated by their respective number and a short phrase comprised of question text. The interpretation and analysis of themes are summarized below Table 3.

Table 3: Lexington, Kentucky Summary of Themes

Theme	Thematic Content	Research Question Alignment
Emotional & Psychical Start	Initial Sweat Lodge is characterized by several emotions: frustration, fear, joy, confusion, anger, jealousy, envy, surprise and sadness. There was initial psychical discomfort associated with having to chop wood, gather rocks, and build the *Inipi*. The Sweat itself produces extreme heat and creates apprehension to crawling into a small space.	1-Lived Experience
Sweat Lodge is Universal	The Sweat Lodge is a sacred ritual that must be protected. The foundation must remain Lakota. This sacred rite is also a place where all the barriers of culture, religion, economic status and gender are removed. A person can be who they are without judgment or prejudice. The Sweat Lodge creates a condition of harmony amongst the participants and spirit which allows the barriers to be removed and for people to learn and grow.	2-The Impact and 4-Mental Health
Healing	The Sweat Lodge is a vehicle for healing on a personal and collective level. The healing seems to extend into the families of the participants and into their extended relationships.	4- Mental Health
Application	What was learned in the Sweat Lodge is applied in the participants' lives. Participants have learned to use spirit to guide their lives by reflecting on experiences and lesson from the Sweat. These lessons also shape how other people are called to participate in the Sweat.	2-The Impact and

The thematic content for *Emotional and Psychical Start* is similar to accounts and descriptions of the Sweat Lodge by Bruchac (1993), Bucko (1999), and Vogal (1973). Thick descriptions were provided by the co-researchers of struggle and pain during their first encounter with the Sweat Lodge. Feelings being inadequate and anger emerged for

some of the co-researchers. There is evidence that these feelings seem to stem from how the co-researchers defined themselves as men and the pain that they carry. The co-researcher's expression of inadequacy and anger provide insight to how emasculation (Aird, 2003; Bush, 1999; Tanfer & Mott 1997) and transgenrational trauma (Levers, et al., 2003) manifest. The first encounter with the Sweat Lodge seems to have challenged the co-researchers to deal with how they viewed themselves as men starting with the preparation phase and especially during the sweat.

The *Sweat Lodge as Universal* theme illustrates the integration of Native American and African indigenous systems of knowing, and demonstrates the process was a spiritual and psychosocial intervention. Co-researchers stressed the importance of keeping the foundation of the Sweat Lodge Lakota and scared, as describe in the literature (Brown, 1989; Bucko, 1999; Colmant & Merta, 1999, 2000;

Fakhrid-Deen, 2004, Hibbard, 2005; Schiff & Moore, 2007). However, the co-researchers described the incorporation and linkages among Native American spiritual concepts, Egypitan Deities, Yoruba Orishas, Christianity, Buddism, and Islam during the entire Sweat Lodge process. The inclusion of other forms of indigenous systems of knowing, especially spiritual philosophies seems to enhance the sacredness of the Sweat Lodge and created a very personal experience.

The co-researcher's explained that the Sweat Lodge severed as a vehicle for all people of every ethnicity and spiritual belief system to not only come together, but have a very personal experience to reconcile their beliefs. There was significant evidence from the Lexington focus group and individual interviews the Sweat Lodge was a spiritual intervention. Therapeutic factors emerged from the data (Colmant & Merta, 1999; 2000;

Colmant et al., 2005; Yalom, 1995) that were congregant with observation in the Navajo youth study. Moral-cognitive development was one of the therapeutic features that emerged. Prayer, meditation, chanting, and spiritual discussions seemed to reinforce moral behavior. Altruism was another therapeutic factor that emerged from the data. Participants not only prayed for themselves, but provided assistance through prayer and support to other participants.

The co-researchers describe that *healing* takes place for not only themselves, but extended into their families. Descriptions included addressing dual consciousness (DuBois, 1903; Fanon, 1967). The co-researchers described the Sweat Lodge as a safe place to heal, to take off the mask, leaving the man who has to act one way with European Americans and another with African Americans at the Sweat Lodge door. The data demonstrated that the therapeutic factors of Universality and Catharsis (Colmant & Merta, 1999; 2000; Colmant et al., 2005; Yalom, 1995) developed and the co-researchers became aware of their "masks" and realized that as African American men it was difficult to remove the masks outside of the Sweat Lodge experience.

Imparting information and imitative behavior manifested through spirit manifested into *application* for participants. Co-researchers described how they applied what was learned in the Sweat Lodge to they're lives. They explained that they had the responsibility to utilize the Sweat Lodge as a vehicle to assist their families, to lead by example and be better men and fathers. Their descriptions are also congruent with the notion of Generative-fathering (Erikson, 1992; Snarey, 1993).

Comments on the Process

The focus groups and individual interviews where conducted at a community center in Nashville, Tennessee. The community center was the location the co-researchers come together to meet and participate in community programs. The individual interviews were conducted first, because co-researchers where running late and there was a time constraint on the space. Six co-researchers participated in the focus groups and three of the six participants were individually interviewed. It is important to note that the Sweat Lodger Leader for Nashville, who I will refer to as Baba Bill was trained by Baba in Lexington.

Focus Group

There were five themes that emerged that gave meaning to the lived experience of the Sweat Lodge for participants of the focus group in Nashville, Tennessee. The first theme that emerged was *preparation*. The second theme was i*ntensity.* The third major them was *spirit as a guide*. The forth theme was *nurturing.* Finally, the *lessons* were another major theme that emerged during the process.

Theme 1: Preparation. The co-researchers explained that preparation is key to the Sweat Lodge experience. The Brothers stated that there is a rule, "No work no Sweat". To them this meant that if one did not participate in the preparation of the Sweat Lodge, that is gathering rocks, chopping wood, and building the Inipi and the fire, then this person did not Sweat. Brother Ed stated that when he participated in his first sweat with the brothers, he was thinking, "what in the hell did I get myself into?" Brother Ed thus noted: "It was like a Chinese fire drill…how is this going to work…my initial reaction

146

that this is a lot of work…it takes you out of your comfort zone…the heat, the culture shock." Baba Ken explained that the lodge preparation beings about a week prior with divinations. He stated that: "We ask spirit what needs to be done and how it needs to be done… and ask what are the lesson and who needs to teach those lessons….divine to see what herbs need to be utilized in the lodge."

The co-researchers reported that if they were going to Sweat at 7:00pm, they would gather about 2:00pm, to collect the materials, rocks, build the lodge, and teach new brothers about the lodge. Baba Ken describe that "there is a lot of preparation before going into the Lodge…its reverent preparation…it's not all fun and games".

Baba Ken described the utilization of different spiritual systems in the preparation of the Sweat Lodge. He offered the following:

The Yoruba system is used for divinations…we use the Native American system praising the mother earth father sky…we utilize a combination of Native American and Yoruba systems to cleanse your aura and to give offering…we utilize the Riki which is an Asian system that facilitates energy work…this is the beauty of the lodge…

Theme 2: Intensity. The co-researchers discussed the intensity of the Sweat Lodge. Brother Ali stated that, "I was surprised of how hot it was …it keep on getting hotter and hotter…I was wondering if I could make it." Brother Rod explained that "whoever has the most on them at that time, whether mentally or spiritually it will come out in the lodge…they're going to have the most intense experience…it's going to show, it's going to show you who needs it the most" Brother Ed said that he has a difficult time

Sweating with women, "it seems to get hotter, it's women's energy, not the rocks, there vibe elevates the heat in the lodge…it's tough for me."

Theme 3: Spirit as a guide. Spirit as a guide came up several times during the focus group. The co-researchers described the guidance of spirit to be an integral aspect of the Sweat Lodge. Baba Ed stated:

> We let spirit guide us…if spirit says you need to talk about Sheba, this time, from the Hindu system, we do it…if spirit says you need to talk about Christ, from the Christian tradition, then we do…we have all come to the point where we let spirit guide us… we listen to spirit…

Brother Ken observed that there are "no titles are labels…we use a little of everything…because we realize that people who come to the Sweat Lodge are Muslim, Christians…and a lot of people from different paths" Brother Rod clarifies that "the one thing we don't get into is converting or conforming…..that's not are thing. Brother Ken provided further clarification:

> We want you to practice your path and want people to understand the path that there taking…we honor the fact that people are coming with different paths…that's the beauty of lodge…we have been able to listen to spirit.

Brother Rod shared that at one point he was not even thinking about spirit and ended up in a crisis situation. He stated that the Sweat Lodge has helped him be more open and to listen to spirit, continuing with::

> …no matter what sect or religion your in what the Sweat Lodge has helped me to answer the why…because no matter what religion your in, you don't always get all the answers from church, from scripture, groups or what have you…what the

148

Sweat has did for me has bridge the gap…it was no more guess work…you mediated, you prayed…you got confirmation on every step you took…I listened.

Brother Ed said it well in describing the major lesson of listening to spirit:

….one thing I have learned by listening to spirit and now we stress is that if you come into the Sweat Lodge as Christian, that you come out more Christ like…if you come in Muslim, you come out more Mohammad like, if you're Buddhist, and you're more Buddha like. The lodge is an enhancement of what you already are and profess, rather than saying will you have to put everything down what you have learned and follow us…what this has done is freed me and most people who have done the Sweat…this gives the opportunity for people to worship there God while their in the lodge…they don't have to worship my God, or his God, they worship there God while in the Sweat.

Theme 4: Nurturing. The co-researchers illustrated the nurturing aspect of the Sweat Lodge in terms of helping them to understand and balance their masculine and feminine sides, which redefines manhood, redefines how brothers support each other and their families. Brother Rod said:

….We have a feminine side and a masculine side…the feminine side is the nurturing and giving side, it's really hard for most men to grasp…that's what this whole concept of the Lodge and the brotherhood is all about…it helps you come to grip with your feminine side…coming to grips with it helps when especially when you're a father, because we don't know how to express ourselves to our families…so by understanding our feminine side this elevates our masculinity…your able to nurture your family and reach out to your

149

community…instead of thinking about self…the Lodge…the brotherhood has taught me to give to self, family and community, I thank God everyday for the Sweat and the brotherhood …I wish I could have found this a long time ago…

Brother Jim states that there has been a redefinition of manhood: j"Manhood is not macho; those two things are not synonymous anymore. Manhood is being responsible for yourself and but also for your brother". Brother Mark explained how the Sweat Lodge has enhanced the brotherhood:

….what the lodge has done is enhance the brotherhood…to support each other, correct each other…I've been in fraternities and other groups but never have I had experienced brotherhood at this level….we're very honest with each other, we're very upright, we support each others family, when a brother does wrong there is no short cuts about it…brothers don't get sensitive…when your wrong your wrong…the sweat lodge has helped us focus on us… when my mother died, the brother's where right there…..the Sweat Lodge has brought us together…we take the truth of the lodge to the essence of the brotherhood.

Brother Ed illustrates how the Sweat Lodge has assisted him as a father and in his relationship with the brothers. Brother Ed offered the following:

Fatherhood is something that's on the job training…one of thing the Sweat Lodge and the brotherhood have done is create an out let for us to let things out that was troubling us. I seek and get advice from the brothers…I look to these guys for assistance and inspiration…men in general need men…when you become a man you need that manly nurturing…That is what has happen with the Sweat Lodge we have become nurtures of men….in the United States we don't have a rites- of-

passage…it's like Pop, I'm a man…now what…what does that mean to be man…it's not defined by age…we all have to grow into being a man…we need help….what we're doing know through our relationships and the Sweat lodge is a rites-of-passage. I have my son involved…I need help with fathering…because I don't have all the answers and if can send him to one of the brothers…or he can go by himself…I have no problem with my son talking to these brothers…I have trust in them that they have me and my son's best interest at heart….

Brother Mark brought up the notion of truth and how it has had an impact upon the men. He shared the following insights:

The sweat lodge made us focus on truth…before you become a good man, a good father, a good brother…you have to be truthful with self…you can front outside the Lodge, but when you get inside the lodge, spirit has a way of taking over where you can't lie or front on things…so when you're in the lodge we take that truth and apply to manhood, to the brotherhood and who we are and that makes us more focus on the path we're walking as man, fathers and brothers.

Theme 5: The lessons. The co-researchers discussed the lessons that the lodge has taught. Brother James stated that: "what the Sweat Lodge does is make you reevaluate all those things you need to do to correct yourself in order to be in alignment with your destiny so you don't have to relearn those lessons again and again". The lesson that Brother Rod learned, was to redefine what destiny meant. Brother Rod, said, "I define destiny now as what I have come to this world to do, not as a notion of control, this will happen, this is what I'll do… but based on spirit".

Baba Ken explained that the discovery of the lessons for each round of the Sweat Lodge. He explained it in this way:

One of things that we have discovered through divinations are the four lessons, one for each round or more depending on what we're dealing with…some of lessons have been forgiveness, truth, honesty to others, honesty towards ourselves…those are hard lessons not only for men, but women too, we have dealt with forgiving our fathers, cutting the umbilical cord from our mothers…the lesson we deal are really the focal point to help us to be better men, brothers and fathers.

The themes generated from the Nashville focus group were *Preparation, Intensity, Spirit as a Guide, Nurturing and Lessons Learned.* The focus group was conducted after the individual interviews due to some co-researchers scheduling conflicts.

Individual Interviews

Participants for the individual interview where selected based on there presence at the community center at the time of the interviews. Three participants were selected to participate in the individual interviews Brothers Ed, Mark and Baba Ken. Focus groups were used to gain better understanding and to clarify results (Levers, 2006). Two themes emerged out of the individual interviews that were different form the focus group themes, *connection* and *major change.*

Theme 1: Connection. Baba Ken, Brothers Ed and Mark all articulated how the Sweat Lodge has facilitated the connections with brothers. Baba Ken states that "gathering around a spiritual center, the earth, sky, unseen force, angelic beings, spirit …it made me believe in the power of group healing…I'm, in a fraternity this type of

brotherhood is much different than a fraternal brother, its more substantive, its about true spirituality., the Sweat lodge facilitated that.

Brother Ed stated the following:

There is a connection to men that I have not experienced before. I always been always kind of a loner, I'm involved in organizations with fraternities, other organizations at school and work. And thing like, especially during church…but never have I experienced the brotherhood, openness, some having my best interest at heart as well as theirs as I learned in the sweats…I got this really tight group now…out of all the experiences you had…you meet people, you gain notoriety you accomplish things, but in the when you go into lodge that means nothing…you leave it outside…your striped of everything in the lodge…it's just you and the Creator…your faced with self, how to a deal with self…what is it that I need to gain and give up…it's always a give and take…to know you got guys surrounding you in the lodge who are going through a similar thing....it fosters a connection that is deeper than blood brothers…It's a powerful process….

Brother Mark's connection was similar to that of Baba Ken and Brother Ed, in that the creator or spirit is at the center of the connection. Brother Mark explained:

What you try to do in the Lodge is make the higher connection to spirit to remove those things that are holding you back …what's happen in our society we don't rely on spirit, when you're up in the lodge with spirit you realize, hey I need to correct some things. When you're inside the lodge you face spirit face it head on…head on and you realize you need to correct and remove those things…when you look at how the lodge is built, the sacredness, the hard work, you can take the

153

sacredness in apply it yourself in terms of you keeping the connection with the creator, you can take the hard work you're putting into the fire together, building the lodge and applying it to your life by making those everyday sacrifices…

Theme 2: Major change. Baba Ken and Brothers Ed and Mark disclosed that they have experienced major change from participating in the Sweat Lodge. Baba Ken said:

I have two biological sons and one by marriage…the Sweat Lodge is good for them because it prepares them for what manhood is all about. They don't understand it fully, but they hear what men are talking about and how they need to act. In the development of the lodge they get a concept of what men do at their highest level. The men are not shooting ball and not talking about pussy…it's conversation at the highest levels that's what young men should see and be apart of…they can reflect and see manhood at its highest level. Participating and observing in the Sweat Lodge has revitalized my belief in what men do, their potential, it also gave me a purpose to work with men this fulfillment this is why I participate in the Sweat Lodge.

For Brother Ed's major change is illustrated by how the Sweat Lodge has had an impact on his relationship with his children. He described it this way:

I got five kids this transition has allowed me to give them something that they didn't have before…me…I used to be by myself…but when it came to nurturing, the Sweat lodge has helped, it allowed me to open up to them…to get them to sweat …my children sweat, my wife has did a sweat but she didn't like it, .but the sweat may not be for everyone,. You ought to try it at least once…it set me on a better and more rightness path…It has contributed to everything that I have done

since doing my first sweat…enhance is mild word to describe what the sweat has

done for me…

Brother Mark provided the following description:

The sweat lodge has helped me define manhood and fatherhood in ways I never

imaged….it's been teaching me about truth. Before we can step into fatherhood or

manhood or fatherhood with our children or fatherhood with the community we

need to be truthful with ourselves…truth has been always shown to me in the

lodge…the lodge makes you face all things head on, what your about, how you

walk, how you talk…when you come out you say…hey I got to be a better man

and better father, a better husband, a better community person, because I've been

shown truth…once you leave out of there you have to take that back.

Interpretation and Analysis Summary

The themes generated by the Nashville, Tennessee focus group and individual

interviews continue are similar to the Lexington, KY group. Table 4 depicts the themes,

thematic content and research question alignment. The interpretation and analysis of

themes are summarized below Table 4.

Table 4 Nashville, Tennessee Summary of Themes

Theme	Thematic Content	Research Question Alignment
Preparation	A very important component of the Sweat Lodge is the preparation phase. This phase consists of the Sweat Lodger Leader or other participants conducting divinations to determine the purpose of the lodge, what needs to be done for each round, and herbs to be utilized in the Sweat. The participating in this phase (e.g. chopping wood, building the Inipi, gathering rocks) is a prerequisite for participation in the Sweat. The rule is" no work no Sweat". The preparation phase is also the time when the connection to spirit is initiated.	1-Lived Experience and The Impact
Intensity	The heat from the hot rocks, the gender of the lodge participants, and what you bring into the Lodge emotionally, spiritually or physically has a significant impact on the intensity of the Sweat.	1-Lived Experience
Spirit as a Guide	The Sweat Lodge Leader, Fire Keeper and other participants are encouraged to listen to spirit during the Sweat. Spirit frames or the experience for all participants	2-Impact
Nurturing	A product of the Sweat Lodge is men begin the process of awareness, understanding and balancing their masculine and feminine sides. This has an impact how participants define themselves as men, how they interact with their significant other, their children, other men and the community	3-Participation
Lessons Learned	The Sweat Lodge facilitates lessons to be learned, whether it's discovering or redefining your destiny, or learning specific things during each round.	3-Participation
Connection	Connections are generated in the Sweat Lodge by spirit which takes the form of a personal connection to how a participants views the Creator, connection with other participants in the lodge, connection with their children or other family members	2-Impact and 3-Participantion
Major Change	Major change is an event in the lodge that facilities a total change in direction for a participant, such as a change in behavior with family members.	1-Lived Experience and 4-Engagement

It is important to note that the Nashville co-researchers were trained by the Baba in Lexington. As to be expected, similar themes emerged from the focus group and interviews. I have discussed the significant differences and have pointed to the

similarities among the findings. The thematic content that emerged for *preparation* is different from what emerged for the Lexington Group. The thematic content illustrates the therapeutic factor of group cohesion (Colmant & Merta, 1999; 2000). The co-researchers explained how they come together during the preparation phase and work together. The group established the rule "no work no sweat," because they felt that the preparation is just as important as sweating, and connection to spirit and one another is an initiated and maintained throughout the experience. The description of the Nashville group of the preparation phase was consistent with experiential groups were group members are presented with sequential and challenging experiences that focus on transferring what was learned into application in life (Colmant & Merta, 1999; Gass, 1993).

Additional data that emerged demonstrated the integration of Native American, African, and Asian indigenous systems of knowing, specifically the spiritual systems during the preparation phase of the Sweat Lodge, which is similar to the Lexington group, however, it seems that there was more emphasis on the preparation phase of the Sweat Lodge, than from the Lexington group. I would further contend that the spiritual intervention is also initiated during the preparation phase.

Another key difference that emerged between the Nashville and Lexington groups is that co-researchers in Nashville specifically described how the intensity of the sweat is determined by not only the rocks, but by the gender of participants, and what participants bring with them to the sweat. The co-researchers explained that when women are participating, the sweat become more intense because of their power and connection to spirit, it's not the rocks. The co-researchers seemed to honor and respect women more

157

based on this discovery. The therapeutic factors of interpersonal learning and corrective recapitulation of the primary family group seem to emerge from the intensity not only the participant's gender, but what they bring with them into the lodge. The co-researchers pointed out consistently that the Sweat Lodge forces you to deal with your behavior.

The most profound data that emerged from the Nashville co-researchers was that they explained how the Sweat Lodge was nurturing. They described that the lodge provided a means to become more aware of their feminine sides, in order to bring balance in their lives. The co-researchers explained that by brining balance between the masculine and feminine sides has changed their definition of what it means to be man and a father. They're communication and relationships improved with their families and significant others. The men began to dispel notion of emasculation (Aird, 2003; Bush, 1999; Tanfer and Mott (1997) and start to heal from transgenrational trauma (Levers, et al, 2003) from participation in the Sweat Lodge.

<div align="center">Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania</div>

Comments on the Process

The Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania focus groups were conducted at a local university. Six men participated in the focus group and three of the six participants were randomly selected for the individual interviews. Unlike the Nashville focus group, this focus group was conducted prior to the individual interviews. One focus group member arrived late, but we were able to continue with the focus, with minimal disruption. It's important to note that the Sweat Lodge Leader in Pittsburgh was also trained by the Lexington, KY Sweat Lodge Leader, Baba. The Sweat Lodge Leader for Pittsburgh will be referred to as Baba Rob.

Focus Group

There were three themes that emerged that gave meaning to the lived experience of the Sweat Lodge for participants of the focus group in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The first theme that emerged was *apprehension.* The second theme was *a power experience.* The third major them was *confirmation.* The forth theme was *preparing children.* Finally, *our fathers* was another major theme that emerged during the individual interviews.

Theme 1: Apprehension. The theme of apprehension was reported by co-researchers when they experienced they're initial Sweat. Brother Eric stated that, "I was saying to myself…I need to figure out how to get myself out of this." Baba Rob describe his fear in this way:

> …My first experience…it was at night when we approached the Sweat Lodge …I had a fear of going to this small place, it was so small, with about 20 people…about to go up into this small tent…I thought how I'm I going to go through this experience in this small place with all these people…

Brother Frank stated that, "what I remember it was cold…and then we had to take off our clothes down to our shorts….I was in a hurry to get up in there….it was like snowing…I was hesitant about getting undressed, because the male thing…you don't know who all is up in there."

Theme 2: A powerful experience. The co-researchers explained that once they were in the Lodge, and the Lodge concluded, they then reflected back on the experience and realized that something powerful had taken place. Baba Rob explained:

> ….I was in search of further spiritual enlightenment…a tool or process to gain a higher level of spiritual conscious…right after the first sweat I realized that it was

159

a powerful tool…I felt that there was more to learn more and how I could get further involved…the first sweat was so profound for me…

Brother Nick said that, "when we came together and did it…it was like no experience that I had before…it was a spiritual experience". Brother Frank stated that the Sweat Lodge caused a major shift for him

It was a paradigm shift in the way I had existed prior to that point…my worldly experience with religion and constructs of spirituality where changed in ways for me to be more spiritually connected and at the same time it caused me to ask more questions …it pricked my conscious in a way that caused me to examine my purpose…the Sweat Lodge experienced brought out the parts of you that are not in alignment with your purpose.

Brother Dave explained that:

the sweat lodge was the opportunity to shed a lot of things I had…I had a lot of fears…the Sweat Lodge shed away my fears to be able to have the confidence to overcome anything that came up in my life……it is spiritual experience…this transcends you to another place…it removes your fears and let's see your purpose.

Brother Sam described his experience in this way:

the Sweat Lodge enabled me to see the things my life that were excess baggage, it's almost as if you saw yourself outside of yourself, you got to take a good look…and realize that I was a kid who has ADHD with all these distractions around him, that if you got ride of them your more able to focus on what you're

160

here for…once I came out of the lodge there were four things that I needed to work on immediately".

Brother Frank described a powerful experience he had with the Sweat Lodge:

I went to Sweat Lodge to deal with one thing but once I got in the sweat lodge the ancestors wanted me to deal with other…I was like WOW…it was brought to me in the lodge that I will never be able to fully exact my purpose if I don't create harmony with my White ancestors because they are apart of me just like the African ancestors are apart me… what's even deeper is that one of children looks like he's white…my other children are dark…when you here something in the Sweat…the connection is that as it happens in Spirit, it happens in reality.

Brother Eric stated that after he overcame his initial reaction, he was able to observe and participant in a powerful communal experience. He provided the following observations:

Brothers and Sisters working together as a community to build the lodge, build the fire, chop wood, and gather rocks. We also worked together as a community in the lodge providing support, encouragement and comfort…it was power…I never experienced anything like it!

Theme 3: Confirmation. The Sweat Lodge seemed to be a vehicle for confirmations that the co-researchers needed in their lives. Baba Rob stated that, "one of the things the Sweat Lodge helped me do was to confirm the omni presence of God…and the continued influence the ancestor have in my life". Brother Nick further elaborated:

As a black man…the Sweat Lodge has confirmed my existence as a man at a very fundamental level, it help me understand my connection to the universe….my connection with my Ancestry…African, Native American and

European Ancestry…help me deal with my European Ancestry that I continue to struggle to embrace.

Theme 4: Preparing Children. The co-researchers discussed how the Sweat Lodge has provided insight on how to prepare their children, Brother Eric stated that, "the Sweat lodge experience has made me begin to understand what I need to give my children in order to reduce the stress they will experience…to prepare them for the future". Brother Dave continued with:

> Not having your father there or having your father there…there are still questions of what I need to give to my future children and I look at the Sweat Lodge as a tool and the brothers to help guide me to things I need to provide…the knowledge I need to provide to my children.

Brother Nick stated that, "what I have also gained is to understand that fatherhood is about wisdom, it doesn't matter if you have a biological child or not…I can now pass on fatherly wisdom not only to my child but to other children too."

Theme 5: Our fathers. The co-researchers explored how the Sweat Lodge has had an impacted on their perceptions of their own fathers. Brother Dave stated:

> The Lodge allowed me to see how I'm much like my father but has also shown me that I have moved on …the lodge experience has brought me a little closure to my father and opened me up to be able to talk with him about what I did and didn't get

Brother Nick shared some thoughts remarks about his father and the Sweat Lodge. He said that, "the lodge has allowed me connect and even become closure to my father by

showing him that there are more ways to connect besides the giving of monetary thing".

Brother Frank also discussed his relationship with his father. He said:

> I had a lot of ill feeling toward my father because I didn't think I got what I needed to get, even though it made me who I'm, but I thought I could done much better if he gave me more…I carried this with me for a long time…the Sweat Lodge allowed me to see my dad for who he was and was not…what I wanted him to be…I realized he was not capable of providing me what I needed because he didn't get it…I struggle with not having the foundation with my dad that I need to have with my children…the Sweat Lodge has taught me to be patient with myself…but it's a struggle because I have high expectations for my children…the Sweat Lodge is helping me with patience by pealing away the fears of not really having a point of reference for fatherhood and let spirit guide me on the right path.

Individual Interviews

The individual interviews were conducted with participants from the focus group. My initial plan was to randomly select participants, but due to scheduling conflicts, individual interviews were conducted with the remaining participants: Baba Rob, Brothers Dave and Eric where selected. To elaborate on results and to understand contextual issues, focus groups were used (Levers, 2006). This set of individual interviews did not yield any new finding, but rather the interviews reinforced the data from the focus groups, thus establishing a higher level of trustworthiness for this inquiry (2006). I decided not to report the individual data separately for this location.

The themes generated by the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania focus group have contributed to the understanding of the lived experience of African American male's participation in the Sweat Lodge. Table 5 presents themes, thematic content and research question alignment for Pittsburgh focus group. The interpretation and analysis of themes are summarized below.

Table 5 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania Summary of Themes

Theme	Thematic Content	Research Question Alignment
Apprehension	The initial reaction of participants to the Sweat Lodge experience. Participants reported fear, hesitation, uneasiness, and misgivings about the Lodge.	1-Lived Experience
A powerful experience	The Sweat Lodge was an experience that opened participants to something new. It was enlightening. It was a paradigm shift. It was an opportunity to shed fears and baggage.	1-Lived Experience
Confirmation	Confirmation for participants came through as confirming the presence of God, confirmation of they're existence as an African American man, confirming the connection to spirit, confirmation of the connection with the Ancestors, African , Native American and European.	1-Lived Experience and 2-The Impact
Preparing our children	Knowledge was gained on how to prepare children for life. The Sweat Lodge and the other participants were viewed as tools to assist in the preparation of their children for their lives.	3-Participation
Our fathers	Participants reported that the Sweat Lodge initiated the process for them to explore their connection and lack of connection with their fathers and how it could impact how they interact with their children.	3-Participation and 4-Engagement

Similar themes of *apprehension* and *a power experience* have emerged from the Lexington and Nashville co-researchers. Co-researchers expressed becoming aware of emotions and taking steps to cope as a result of participating in the Sweat Lodge. Colmant and Merta (1999) in their writing about Navajo youth, point out that the Sweat Lodge provides the opportunity to become aware, learn, and then apply. The Sweat Lodge experience, as describe by the co-researchers, challenged them to deal with their fears, and then take what was learned and apply it to their everyday life. The themes that significantly differed from the Lexington and Nashville co-researchers were *confirmation*, *preparing our children*, and *our fathers.*

The Sweat Lodge seemed to assist the co-researchers in confirming their existence as men and their connection, not only to each other but to the Universe. The theme of *confirmation* provides insight to understanding how African American view themselves and define their reality. The thematic content seemed to reveal therapeutic factors of Instillation of Hope, Universality and Catharsis (Colmant & Merta, 1999; 2000; Yalom, 1995).

Other themes emerged, *preparing our children* and *our fathers.* The thematic content illustrates the notion of generative-fathering. The co-researchers describe how the Sweat Lodge provides a vessel for them to learn the importance of preparing their children. The co-researchers expressed that it was important to learn from their fathers whether they were present or not, and do a better job at being a father for their children. The co-researchers were realized that their work, as fathers, is in response to their children's needs rather than the obligations superimposed upon men by sociocultural

prescriptions (Dollahite & Hawkins, 1998; Hawkins & Dollahite, 1997 as cited by Marsiglio, et al., 2000).

Summary of Results

The presentation of data was guided by Peshkin (2000) five conceptualizations decisions concerning the interpretation of data were guided by the theoretical framework, literature review and methods of this inquiry. Seven over arching themes emerged from the data. The themes were based on the results and interpretation from the three locations, and they assisted me in organizing meanings and illuminating the knowledge that arose from the lived experiences of African American males who participated in the Sweat Lodge. These seven themes included the following:: *Initial Reactions*; *Changing of Worldviews*; *Self reflection*; *Process of confirmation*, *Application*, *Healing and Wellbeing; and Knowledge and Respect for Nature.* The thematic content and Table 6, which illustrates research question alignment, are presented below.

Initial Reactions

Initial reactions range from apprehension and fear to an empowering experience that changes one's life forever. For the participants who continue on this journey (as is the case with all the respondents in this study), the apprehension is replaced by a feeling of power and liberation. The discomfort with physical chores (chopping wood, gathering rocks, building the *Inipi*) associated with the Sweat Lodge was also noticeable. The heat of the Sweat and sometimes being almost naked in the presence of others (both men and women) is also a source of discomfort. However, what was once physically taxing is now clearly a source of pride for the participants.

Changing of Worldviews

The Sweat Lodge experience influences participants to rethink their worldviews about themselves, their family and their community. It also represents a process of spiritual awakening or self-reflection. For most the Sweat Lodge experience is about the participants strengthening their existing understanding of their Creator embedded in a particular religion (whether being Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, etc.) but in a manner that provides them with a profound respect for all religions and most importantly spirit.

Self Reflection

For most respondents the Sweat Lodge experience forced them on a difficult journey to look at themselves critically and honestly. However, the process gave the power to do this and the other members provided them with the support to embark on this difficult and continuous journey. From the interviews and discussions, this was perhaps the most powerful change experienced by the participants – the desire to improve self and become better people. The process of self exploration also entailed them addressing notions of what is "manhood" and "fatherhood". The Sweat Lodge experience and participants allowed them to embrace more meaningful and healthy concepts that enhanced their capacity to interact more constructively with their partners, children, fathers, community, etc. What was also interesting is the manner in which masculinity and femininity is deconstructed. The focus is on what makes one a better, healthier (in the physical, psychological, emotional and social sense) person rather than macho or westernized notions of what is means to be a man.

Process of Confirmation

Linked to the above is the process of confirmation – confirming one's place and purpose in the world. What also emerges as being critically important is centralizing the presence of God/ Spirit and connection with the ancestors. This is also part of the spiritual journey that transcends religion. What is also important is embracing being an African American male but struggling to come to terms with other ethnic ancestry as well, especially for those participants who have European ancestry.

Application

All participants used the skills that they learned and knowledge gathered during the Sweat Lodge experience to change their behavior and thought patterns. This was particularly evident in relation to the way in which they interacted with their children (interestingly and in particular with their sons), fathers and partners. The Sweat Lodge has a profound impact on the everyday lives of the participants. It seems that they are better able to deal with conflicts and tensions, especially in the home. A common theme that seems to emerge in one way or another in all localities is "preparation for life". The Sweat Lodge experience appears to provide African American males with the necessary tools/skills to deal with a complex and ever changing world. Most participants wanted to share this knowledge with their children and wanted them to participate in the Sweat Lodge since they perceived it as an appropriate rites-of-passage.

Healing and Wellbeing

Most participants view the Sweat Lodge experience as a healing process - in the physical, emotional, spiritual and social sense. They experience personal healing as a starting point. However, the experiences and lessons help them to heal their families and

communities. They adopt a proactive stance to deal with the problems they experience. From a health point of view, clearly the Sweat Lodge "family" (especially the Sweat Lodge leader) appears to play a role with counselling the participants. Thus, it can be viewed as an alternative healing system that draws on indigenous knowledge.

Knowledge and Respect for Nature

Knowledge and respect for nature also emerged as a component of being connected to the spirit and the universe. This is part of the connectedness that is a major focus of the Sweat Lodge experience. The Sweat Lodge itself is respected as part of the Native American heritage that has been passed on from generation to generation.

Table 6 Overarching Themes

Overarching Theme	Research Question Alignment
Initial Reactions	1. Lived Experience of African American Males
Changing of Worldviews	2. The Impact of Native American and African Indigenous Systems of Knowledge and 1. Lived Experience of African American Males
Self Reflection	4. Engagement in Mental Health Services and 1. Lived Experience of African American Males
Process of confirmation	2. The Impact of Native American and African Indigenous Systems of Knowledge
Application	3. Participation in the Sweat Lodge and Fatherhood
Healing and Wellbeing	4. Engagement in Mental Health Services
Knowledge and Respect for Nature	2. The Impact of Native American and African Indigenous Systems of Knowledge

The knowledge that arose from the "thick descriptions" strongly suggest that the Sweat Lodge was a psychosocial (Colmant & Merta, 1999; 2000; Colmant et al., 2005; Madden, 1986; Yalom, 1995) and spiritual (Hibbard, 2005; Schiff & Moore, 2007) intervention for the participants. Chapter V offers a discussion that further elaborates on the results and subsequently how the seven overarching themes organize meaning and illuminates the knowledge that arose from this inquiry. The discussion is supported by the theatrical frame work, the relevant literature, and methodology for this inquiry.

Chapter Summary

The results reported in this chapter emerged from the three focus groups and nine individual in-depth interviews. A total of 18 co-researchers who resided in the three metropolitan areas of Lexington, Kentucky; Nashville, Tennessee; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, participated in this inquiry. The co-researchers were a homogeneous group of African American males, of which, the Sweat Lodge leader and fire keepers were all trained in the Lakota form of the Sweat Lodge. They also incorporated both Native American and African systems of knowledge.

Throughout the data collection process, I took notes about my experiences that related to the focus groups and in-depth interviewees. My notes also included the intersection of data with the theoretical framework constructed for this inquiry, and questions and hypotheses that began to arise as I reflected on and organized the data. The focus groups and interviews were recorded on DVDs, which were coded in a similar manner as transcripts (Levers, 2006). This method provided me with the opportunity to identify themes that resonated with other co-researchers or the theoretical framework adopted for this inquiry.

The themes that surfaced for each location were grouped in categories and aligned to the four research questions. The themes from each location were combined into seven overarching themes for all locations: (1) Initial Reactions; (2) Changing of Worldviews; (3) Self Reflection; (4) Process of Confirmation, (5) Application, (6) Healing and Wellbeing; and, (7) Knowledge and Respect for Nature. The overarching themes were then aligned to the research questions. All categories were created through the triangulation of data from the focus groups and the individual interviews with the theoretical framework already identified for this investigation and informed by the literature. Therapeutic factors (Colmant & Merta, 1999; 2000; Colmant et al., 2005; Madden, 1986; Yalom, 1995) and spirituality (Hibbard, 2005; Schiff & Moore, 2007) emerged in all seven categories. The themes assisted with organizing meaning and illuminating the knowledge that arose from the lived experience of African American males who participated in the Sweat Lodge.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Introduction

The emasculation of African American men is illustrated by disparities in the criminal justice system, education, employment, income, and health care, which has an impact on an African American man's ability to be a father. Researchers, policy-makers, and practitioners have struggled with establishing sustainable programs that address the complex issues that face African American men, especially when they have children (Martinson & Nightingale 2008). The struggle to establish sustainable programs has yielded innovative interventions. The emergence of the Sweat Lodge as an intervention for Native Americans has had some promising results (Cohen, 2003; Edwards, 2003, Noe, Fleming & Manson 2003; Smith, 2005). There is, however, limited research on the Sweat Lodge for non-native populations, specifically, African American males. My goal was to investigate this phenomenon through the lens of African American males in order to gain greater understanding of how participation in the Sweat Lodge has shaped their development as men and fathers. The results of this qualitative investigation emerged from semi-structured focus groups and individual interviews with 18 African American males, over 21 years of age, who resided in either Lexington, Kentucky; Nashville, Tennessee; or Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

In this chapter, I open a discussion about the preliminary findings by reflecting on the co-researcher experiences and the new information that emerged in the study. The discussion is framed within the four research questions:

172

1. What is the lived experience of the Sweat Lodge, and what does it mean to African American males?

2. How has inclusion of both Native American and African indigenous systems of knowledge had an impact on the Sweat Lodge experience for African American males?

3. How has participation in the Sweat Lodge affected African American males' ability to address issues related to fatherhood?

4. How has participation in the Sweat Lodge affected African American male engagement in mental health services?

The discussion is further framed by the seven overarching themes that surfaced in the focus group and individual interviews: (1) initial reactions; (2) changing of worldviews; (3) self reflection; (4) process of confirmation, (5) application, (6) healing and wellbeing; and, (7) knowledge and respect for nature. It is important to note that there is overlap of the alignment of themes with research questions. More than one theme organizes meaning and creates knowledge for a respective research question.

For each of the research questions and aligned seven over arching themes, I first draw conclusions from the data and then offer hypotheses and questions for further research. Hypothesis generation is inherent to qualitative research (Levers, 2002). Details of the data and the nuances of the experiences that are able to be observed through qualitative methods open up opportunities for the researcher to "enhance understanding of phenomena, inform relevant questions, and generate new hypotheses" (Levers, 2002, p. 30). Finally, counseling and fatherhood program implications are considered, and recommendations for future research are proposed.

Interpreting Finding 1: The Lived Experience of African American

Males Who Participate in the Sweat Lodge

It can be argued that all seven overarching themes provide meaning and create knowledge of the lived experience of African American men who participate in the Sweat Lodge. I contend the themes of changing of worldviews, initial reactions, and self reflection best describe the lived experience of African American males for this inquiry. The discussion below focuses on facilitating internal motivation which aids in answering the first research question.

According to Deci et al. (1994), there are three steps to facilitating the enhancement of internal motivation. The first step is acknowledging a person's perspective. The second step is providing a person with a meaningful rationale as to why one should consider alternative information to what one already possesses. The third step is providing choice. Each co-researcher shared how their perspective was acknowledged through the entire Sweat Lodge process. Some co-researchers also shared that they began to understand the importance of acknowledging another perspective, as theirs has been acknowledged. The Sweat Lodge as describe by the co-researchers, brings alternative information to the forefront for consideration in a meaningful and direct way. The co-researchers describe how choices where provided throughout their experience. Acknowledging other perspectives, considering alternative information and choice will be discussed next in the context of the respective themes that emerged from the data.

Numerous authors have written on the importance of acknowledging how a person feels about his or her perspective. Acknowledgement here entails acceptance. Besides just acknowledging a persons' perspective, Armstrong (1998) asserts that a teacher or a leader should honor the person's entire experience. Rogers (1963) wrote that unconditional acceptance of another can be the basis for a motivation to change. Thus, providing acknowledgement/acceptance is the starting point for facilitating internal motivation. Table 7 presents the respective themes that emerged from the data that reflect this aspect of internal motivation.

Table 7: Acknowledgment Themes

Theme	Thematic Content
Overarching Theme: Changing of Worldviews	
Removing of Masks	The Sweat Lodge is a safe place where participants can remove the masks they wear daily and be accepted for who they are. The Sweat Lodge requires that you are sincere, thus the removal of masks is necessary. The removal of the mask of how men are defined in society is important to understanding both the masculine and feminine sides of being a man.
Sweat Lodge is Universal, but yet personal	The Sweat Lodge is a sacred ritual that must be protected. The foundation must remain Lakota. This sacred rite is also a place where all the barriers of culture, religion, economic status and gender are removed. A person can be who they are without judgment or prejudice. The Sweat Lodge creates a condition of harmony amongst the participants and spirit which allows the barriers to be removed and for people to learn and grow.

Weinert (1987) wrote that learners compare what they know to what is being presented to them. If the learner perceives a gap in his or her knowledge, he or she may then either proceed to fill this gap or resign from attempting to understand the new concept altogether due to feelings of hopelessness (Weinert 1987). Therefore, a teacher or leader who wishes to facilitate internal motivation must find the balance between what

the participant knows and what he would be willing to strive to know. Co-researchers reported that their initial reaction to the Sweat Lodge, this new information, was mixed. However, the acceptance by the other participants and in some instances ego caused them to fill the knowledge gap about the Sweat Lodge and continue to participate. Table 8 presents the themes that illustrate this dichotomy.

Table 8 Alternative Information Themes

Theme	Thematic Content
Overarching Theme: Initial Reactions	
A powerful experience	The Sweat Lodge was an experience that opened participants to something new. It was enlightening. It was a paradigm shift. It was an opportunity to shed fears and baggage.
Apprehension	The initial reaction of participants to the Sweat Lodge experience. Participants reported fear, hesitation, uneasiness, and misgivings about the Lodge.
Emotional & Physical Start	Initial Sweat Lodge is characterized by several emotions: frustration, fear, joy, confusion, anger, jealousy, envy, surprise and sadness. There was initial physical discomfort associated with having to chop wood, gather rocks, and build the Inipi. The Sweat itself produces extreme heat and creates apprehension to crawling into a small space.

Armstrong (1998) wrote that those who are not presented choices in their learning tend to either give in and adapt to the current authority figure's style, or just give up all together. The Sweat Lodge experience as describe by the participants provide choices every step of the way. Participants have the opportunity to consistently choose whether or not to view the same ideas they had about self, their children, their fathers and their significant others in the same way or question that idea, break it down and own it (Perls 1973). That idea therefore becomes the motivator, but first the participant must make the choice. The respective themes that capture the notion of choice are in Table 8 below.

Table 9 Choice Themes

Theme	Thematic Content
Overarching Theme: Self Reflection	
Our fathers	Participants reported that the Sweat Lodge initiated the process for them to explore their connection and lack of connection with their fathers and how it could impact how they interact with their children.
Preparation	A very important component of the Sweat Lodge is the preparation phase. This phase consists of the Sweat Lodge Leader or other participants conducting divinations to determine the purpose of the lodge, what needs to be done for each round, and herbs to be utilized in the Sweat. The participation in this phase (e.g. chopping wood, building the Inipi, gathering rocks) is a prerequisite for participation in the Sweat. The rule is" no work no Sweat". The preparation phase is also the time when the connection to spirit is initiated.
Nurturing	A product of the Sweat Lodge is men begin the process of awareness, understanding and balancing their masculine and feminine sides. This has an impact how participants define themselves as men, how they interact with their significant other, their children, other men and the community.

Acknowledging other perspectives, considering alternative information and choice facilitates internal motivation. It is also essential that motivation be internal. Self-determination theory argues that contextual events can influence and enhance internal motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The Sweat Lodge experience has clearly influenced and enhanced internal motivation of the co-researchers.

Interpreting Finding 2: The Impact of Native American and African American

Indigenous Systems of Knowledge on the Sweat Lodge Experience

Underlying this research questions is the social context in which the Sweat Lodge takes place. Specifically, controversy surrounding the use of the Sweat Lodge by non-Native Americans and the influence of the co-researcher's world-view on what happens during the Sweat Lodge process. As discussed in Chapter II, the relationship

between Native and African Americans is tumultuous. The co-researchers have acknowledged not only acknowledged their African ancestry, but their Native American ancestry. They have also acknowledged the sacredness of the Sweat Lodge and the importance of keeping the Lakota form as the foundation. Influencing the Sweat Lodge process is the co-researchers worldview. The social context discussion below will illustrate how the combining of indigenous systems of knowledge had an impact upon the Sweat Lodge experience. The discussion will include thematic categories of changing of world view; self reflection; process of confirmation; and, knowledge and respect for nature.

Brofenbrenner (2004, 1979) stated, "The ecological environment is conceived as a set of nested structures, each inside the next" (p.3). These systems are termed the "social context" of human development and begin with the innermost system, the microsystem, being at the center of the set of concentric rings, with the systems ranging from minute inputs of direct interactions with social agents to broad inputs of culture.

The microsystem includes family, peers, and religious settings. The mesosystem is defined by interactions among microystems (for example when fathers and mothers co-parent). The exosystem includes influences from community, health and social service agencies, neighbors, and the mass media; and the macrosystem involves attitudes and ideologies of culture, one's nationality, society and governing political systems. The growth and development of the individual is influenced by each one of these interconnected systems.

When considering the social context of the lived experience of African American male's participation in the Sweat Lodge, it would be remiss to discuss this from a non-

indigenous way. As discussed in Chapter II, the African-centered paradigm guided this inquiry by providing insights into some of the issues and approaches pertinent to an examination of "manhood" and "fatherhood" in the African American community. The African-centered paradigm is rooted in African philosophy, which can be defined as "the quality of thought and practice and practice rooted in the cultural image and human interests of African people" (Karenga, 1999, p.36). Nobles and Goddard (1993) describe African philosophy in terms of cultural structures of *ontology*-the nature of being or essence; *cosmology*-origin or structure of the universe; *axiology*-primary character of universal relations, *ethos*-set of guiding principles; i*deology*-the ideational basis of conduct; *world view*-most comprehensive ideas about order, *values orientation* and *central belief system.*

The cultural structures outlined above provide meaning to the social context for African American male. They provide a framework to construct knowledge and define how to interact with the world. In the context of the Sweat Lodge, this translated into incorporation and linkages among Native American spiritual concepts, Egyptian Deities, Yoruba Orishas, Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam during the entire Sweat Lodge process.

Participants expressed a change in how they view the world. The Sweat Lodge experience influences participants to rethink the way they view themselves, their family and their community. It also represents a process of spiritual awakening or self-reflection. For most the Sweat Lodge experience is about the participants strengthening their existing understanding of their Creator embedded in a particular religion (whether being

Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, etc.) but in a manner that provides them with a profound respect for all religions and most importantly spirit.

For most, respondents the Sweat Lodge experience forced them on a difficult journey of self-reflection, to look at themselves critically and honestly. However, the process gave the power to do this and the other members provided them with the support to embark on this difficult and continuous journey. From the interviews and discussions, this was perhaps the most powerful change experienced by the participants – the desire to improve self and become better people. The process of self exploration also entailed them addressing notions of what is "manhood" and "fatherhood". The Sweat Lodge experience and participants allowed them to embrace more meaningful and healthy concepts that enhanced their capacity to interact more constructively with their partners, children, fathers, community, etc. What was also interesting is the manner in which masculinity and femininity is deconstructed. The focus is on what makes one a better, healthier (in the physical, psychological, emotional and social sense) person rather than macho or westernized notions of what it means to be a man.

Linked to the above is the process of confirmation – confirming one's place and purpose in the world. What also emerges as being critically important is centralizing the presence of God/ Spirit and connection with the ancestors. This is also part of the spiritual journey that transcends religion. What is also important is embracing being an African American male by the co-researchers, but also struggling to come to terms with other ethnic ancestry as well, especially for those participants who have European ancestry. The Sweat Lodge provided a vehicle for incorporating and linking other systems of knowing, besides Native American and African.

Knowledge and respect for nature is a component of being connected to the spirit and the universe. This is part of the connectedness is a major focus of the Sweat Lodge experience. The Sweat Lodge is held sacred as a Native American ritual with universal connection to other spiritual traditions, which together, it can be past passed on from generation to generation.

Interpreting Finding 3: Participation in the Sweat Lodge and Fatherhood

The co-researchers provided several examples of how they applied what was learned in the Sweat Lodge to their lives. Specifically, they described how they utilized the lessons to be a better father. The co-researcher's experiences illustrate generative fathering. Generative-fathering emphasizes activities and work fathers do in response to the needs of their children rather than the obligations superimposed upon men by sociocultural prescriptions (Dollahite & Hawkins, 1998; Hawkins & Dollahite, 1997 as cited by Marsiglio, et al., 2000).

Theorists contend that the "generative work of fathers involves a sense of responsible caring, a desire to facilitate the needs of the next generation, and attention to fostering a fit between men's activities and children's needs" (p.1177). Snarey (1993 as cited by Marsiglio et al (2000) states:

> …By good I mean generative fathers: men who contribute to and renew the ongoing cycle of the generations through the care that they provide as birth fathers (biological generativity), childrearing fathers (parental generativity) and cultural fathers (social generativity). (p.1176)

The notion of generative-fathering provides a tool for discussing the overarching themes of application and healing and wellbeing.

All participants used the skills that they learned and knowledge gathered during the Sweat Lodge experience to change their behavior and thought patterns. This was particularly evident in relation to the way in which they interacted with their children (interestingly and in particular with their sons), fathers and partners. The Sweat Lodge has a profound impact on the everyday lives of the participants. It seems that they are better able to deal with conflicts and tensions, especially in the home. The Sweat Lodged was viewed as preparation for life.

The experience provides African American males with the necessary tools/skills to deal with a complex and ever changing world. Most participants wanted to share this knowledge with their children and wanted them to participate in the Sweat Lodge since they perceived it as an appropriate rites-of-passage. Additionally, the experiences and lessons helped the co-researchers to heal their families and communities, i.e. application. They adopted a proactive stance to deal with the problems they were experiencing.

Application and healing and wellbeing gives meaning and creates new knowledge to how the participates contributed to and renewed the ongoing cycle of generations. In addition, the contributions and renewal provides insight to how participation in the Sweat Lodge had impact upon the co-researchers ability to address issues related to fatherhood.

Interpreting Finding 4: Engagement in Mental Health Services

The purpose of this research question was to gain insight into the co-researchers attitudes towards the conventional mental systems and why they choose to used the Sweat Lodge to obtain help with issues. In Chapters I and II, I discussed that African Americans would seek assistance from "traditional support systems" of older relatives, community elders, or other individuals who are perceived as having gained wisdom

through personal experiences (Parham & Parham, 2005). Some co-researchers stated that they initially came in contact with the Sweat Lodge through an elder or the Sweat Lodger leader during a conversation or a close personal friend. However, the majority of the co-researchers described how they first came in connect with the Sweat Lodge as a spiritual calling. I realized through the triangulation of data from focus groups and individual interviews with the theoretical framework and informed by the literature, that the Sweat Lodge was therapy in its truest form. The synergy of psychosocial and spiritual factors

The inherent in the seven overarching themes are therapeutic factors (Colmant & Merta, 1999; Yalom, 1995). The most prominent factors that emerged were Instillation of Hope, Universality, Catharsis, Imparting of Information, Group Cohesiveness, and Existential factors. Similar to the results of the Navajo youth study (Colmant & Merta, 1999) spiritually is at the centre of healing for the co-researchers. This is congruent with the African Centred Paradigm, the accounts and descriptions of the Lakota Sweat Lodge and traditional healing (Asante, 1990, 1991; Brown, 1989; Bucko, 1999; Fakhrid-Deen, 2004; Gross, 2007; Hibbard, 2005; Karenga, 1993; Keto, 1991; 1993Schiff & Moore, 2007; Weil, 1982; Vogel, 1973).

Key to the healing power of the Sweat Lodge rests in spirit. Removing the spiritual component of the Sweat Lodge significantly reduces the healing power of the lodge. Colmant et al. (2005) conducted a study on sweat therapy. They authors removed the ritual or spiritual aspect of the sweat. There were some promising results, however, as Schiff and Moore (2007) contend, the "connection to spirit is the beginning of the healing journey "The balance cannot be attained until a person has become aware of and

responsive to the spiritual component of his or her own life" (p.65). The Sweat Lodge, for co-researchers, provided a way to build or renew their spiritual connection.

The Sweat Lodge is a psychosocial and spiritual intervention. The results from this inquiry are similar to the finding of the six studies discussed in Chapter II. It is important to that the result of this inquiry resembles more closely the findings of the studies whose participants were predominantly Native American. It my contention that the psychosocial and spiritual healing power of the Sweat Lodge is directly related to a participants ability to identify with their spiritual and culture centre.

<center>Hypotheses Generated</center>

This section reviews the major hypotheses that emerged in this inquiry. Most of the hypotheses are tied closely to the themes that embody the results of this investigation, and thus, directly relate to the lived experiences of African American males. Other hypotheses about broader, systemic issues related. The following hypotheses emerged from the discussion: (a) education session prior to Sweat Lodge reduces participant anxiety for their first sweat; (b) participation in every phase of the Sweat Lodge, preparation, sweat and restoration is key to the obtaining the maximum benefits of the experience; (c) the Sweat Lodger leader and fire keeper need to be well educated and /or going through and initiation process on the Lakota form of the Sweat Lodge and incorporating and linking the Sweat lodge to other systems of knowing; (d) African American are redefining manhood and fatherhood through participation in the Sweat Lodge and interacting in a positive why with other men; (e) the Sweat Lodge is a vehicle for rites-of-passage for not only young boys and girls, but men and women.

Implications for Counseling and Fatherhood Programs

Researchers, policy-makers and practitioners have struggled with establishing sustainable programs that address the complex issues that face African American men especially when they have children (Martinson and Nightingale 2008). This inquiry provides valuable insight on how African American men address complex issues when internal motivation is facilitated. This is can only be accomplished when the practitioner or healer "anchors their intervention strategy in a set of culturally specific assumptions that inform both the direction of the intervention and the role of the healer in facilitating that outcome" (Parham, 2002, p. 102). The African centered paradigm provides the "set of culturally specific assumptions" that will aid in the process of understanding the meaning of African American males' perspective; the ability to provide meaningful rationale as to why one should consider alternative information to what one already possesses; and provides choice, thus facilitating internal motivation.

In other words, practitioners must take in account indigenous knowledge when providing services. As presented in Chapter I and II, indigenous knowledge is "the local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society" Mundy and Compton (1995) indicate the importance of understanding indigenous communication systems since they…

- Have value in their own right (this is important since the erosion of indigenous communication systems by exogenous education endangers the survival of much indigenous knowledge)

- Exogenous channels have limited range (this is particularly relevant with regard to African Americans who are often neglected in terms of formal education systems and other information as well as learning opportunities)

- Indigenous channels have high credibility because of their familiarity and are controlled locally (in terms of African American and males in particular, this is important in terms of planning and development intervention)

- Indigenous channels are important conduits of change. Informal interpersonal contacts and networks among marginalized groups such as African American men are critical for sharing information and empowerment

- Programs can use indigenous communication for both information collection and dissemination (this implies developing relevant approaches and methodologies)

- Indigenous channels offer opportunities for participation of local people, especially those who tend to be marginalized (pp. 113-114).

Embracing and asserting indigenous knowledge is central to self-determination. The importance of self-determination, according to Dodson (1994) is:

> At the most fundamental level, self-determination is deeply rooted in the ultimate goal of human dignity. It is an inherent right of people which is indivisible, non-negotiable and cannot be raised through non-recognition. At a more pragmatic or instrumental level, the enjoyment of the right to self-determination is essential to our survival as people. It is the pillar which supports all other rights; a right of such a profound nature that the integrity of all other rights depends on its observance (p. 23).

The results of this inquiry convincing depict the importance of indigenous knowledge and how it initiated the process of becoming self-determined for the African American men who participated in this investigation. Yen et al. (2004) argued the need for additional research that "systematically assesses the efficacy of indigenous forms of healing for multicultural populations" (p.416). The need to study indigenous forms of healing is in direct response to not only the increase of diverse individuals in the United States, but the under utilization of contemporary mental health services among non-white populations, despite experiencing mental health problems at similar rates as whites (Chun, Enomoto, & Sue, 1996; Gallo, Marino, Ford, & Anthony, 1995; Leong, Wager, & Tate, 1995, Terrell & Terrell, 1984; Yen et al 2004). Therefore, the Sweat Lodge, as an indigenous intervention, must be considered as a viable solution to address the complex issues facing African American males.

<center>Recommendations for Additional Research</center>

Four recommendations emerged from the findings of this investigation. The first recommendation involves utilizing Brofenbrenner's (2004, 1979) bio-ecological model as a component of the theoretic framework to conduct a qualitative inquiry on the meaning of the Sweat Lodge experience for the participants significant others. It would be interesting to determine the affect of the Sweat Lodge on the participant's microystems and possibly exosystems. The second recommendation is conduct an investigation into the long term affect the Sweat Lodge experience has on these participants. The third recommendation is to increase the sample size and instances where the Sweat Lodge conducted to assess the efficacy. The final recommendation that emerged was to conduct

a comparative study on the efficacy of "Sweating" in different countries, comparing the efficacy of the Sweating in the United States and South Africa.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is twofold. The initial purpose was to describe the experiences of African American men participating in the Sweat Lodge. Inherent in addressing this purpose is attending to the first two research questions:

1. What is the lived experience of the Sweat Lodge and what does it mean to African American males?

2. How has inclusion of both Native American and African indigenous systems of knowledge had an impact on the Sweat Lodge experience for African American males?

The first two research questions provide a point of departure in understanding the lived experience of the Sweat Lodge through the cultural and spiritual lens of African American men.

The second purpose is to describe how Sweat Lodge experiences provide African American men with strategies to overcome or cope with issues related to fatherhood. The following questions aim to illustrate such strategies:

3. How has participation in the Sweat Lodge affected African American males' ability to address issues related to fatherhood?

4. How has participation in the Sweat Lodge affected African American male engagement in mental health services?

Research questions three and four focus on the application of the lived experience of the Sweat Lodge as it relates to how African American men deal with their role as a father,

their children, significant others, and societal challenges from an indigenous healing and helping framework.

In order to answer the research questions I conducted focus groups and individual interviews of 18 total participants in Lexington, Kentucky; Nashville, Tennessee and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The co-researchers had participated in several Sweat Lodges and seemed to perfectly suited to share their lived experience. The participants where very honest and forthcoming about their experience, which assisted in shedding light on the meaning of the Sweat Lodge for African American males and how they address issues of fatherhood.

The over arching themes, self-reflection; knowledge and respect for nature; and the changing of worldviews, application, process of confirmation, healing and wellbeing create indigenous knowledge that has application beyond the helping enterprise. This knowledge can be utilized to decrease the disparities in the criminal justice system, education, employment, income, and health care, which has an impact on an African American man's ability to be a father.

References

Aird, E. G. (2003). Making The Wounded Whole: Marriage As Civil Right and Civic

   Responsibility. In O. Clayton, R. B. Mincy, & D. Blankenhorn (Eds.),

   Black Fathers in Contemporary American Society: Strengths, Weaknesses, and

   Strategies For Change (pp. 153-164). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Akbar, N. (1991). *Chains and Images of Psychological Slavery.* Jersey City: New Mind

    Productions.

Akbar, N. (1999). *Know thy self.* Tallahassee, Florida, United States of America:

   Mind Productions & Associates, Inc.

Akbar, N. (1995). *Light from ancient Africa.* Tallahassee: Mind Productions &

   Associates, Inc.

Akbar, N. (2004). *The community of self.* Tallahassee: Mind Productions &

   Associates, Inc.

Allen, W. D., & Doherty, W. J. (1996). The responsibilities of fatherhood as perceived by

   African American teenage fathers. *Families in Society: The Journal of*

   Contemporary Human Services (77), 142-155.

Alvesson, M. (2003). Methodology for close up studies: struggling with closeness and

   closure. *Higher Education*, *46*, 167-193.

Amen, R. U. (1990). *Metu neter* (Vol. I). Brooklyn: Khamit Corporation.

Anderson, M. (2005). Psychotherapy as ritual: Connecting the concrete with the

   Symbolic. In R. Moodley, W. West, R. Moodley, & W. West (Eds.), *Integrating*

   Traditional Healing Practices Into Counseling and Psychotherapy (pp. 282-292).

   Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Apprey, M. (1998). Reinventing the self in the face of received transgenerational hatred. *Mind and Human Interaction , 9* (1), 30-37.

Armstrong, T. (1998). *Awakening genius in the classroom.* Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Asante, M. K. (1992). *Afrocentricity.* Trento: Africa World Press.

Asante, M. (1993). *Malcolm X as cultural hero and other afrocentric essays.* New Jeresy: Africa World Press.

Atkinson, P., & Hammersley, M. (1994). Ethnography and participant observation. In N. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Auerhahn, N. C. &. Laub, D. (1998). Intergenerational memory of the Holocaust. In *International handbook of multigenerational legacies of trauma* (pp. 21-41). New York: Plenum Press.

Aung, S. K. (2006). The sweat lodge healing experience: An integrative medical perspective. *The Rose & Croix Journal, 3*, 17-27.

Baily, K. (1994) (Ed.). *Methods of social research*. New York: The Free Press.

Bass, C., & Coleman, H. L. (1997). Enhancing the cultural identity of early adolescent Male African-Americans. *Professional School Counseling , 1* (2), 48-51.

Bateman, R. B. (1990). Africans and Indians: A compairitive study of the Black Carib and Black   Seminole. *Ethnohistroy: The bulletin of the Ohio valley Historic Indian conference , 37* (1), 1-24.

Baum, F. (1995). Researching public health: Behind the qualitative-quantitative methodological debate. *Social Science and Medicine , 40*, 459-468.

Baxtor, J., & Eyles, J. (1997). Evaluating qualitative research in social geography: Establishing rigor in interview analysis. *Trans Institution , 22*, 505-525.

Beebe, J. (2001). *Rapid assessment process.* Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira.

Berger, L. R., & Rounds, J. E. (1998). Sweat Lodges: A medical view. *The IHS primary careprovider: A journal for health professionals working with American Indians and Alaska Natives , 23* (6), 70-75.

Bernard, J. M., & Goodyear, R. K. (1998). *Fundamentals of clinical supervision.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Black Elk, W., & Lyon, W. S. (1990). *Black Elk: The Sacred Ways Of A Lakota.* New York: HarperCollins.

Bloch, S., Reibestein, J., Crouch, E., Holroyd, P., & Themen, J. (1979). A metod for the study of therapeutic factors in group psychotherapy. *British Journal of Psychiatry, 134*, 257-263.

Bob, U. (1999). *African rural women and land reform in South Africa: Case studies from The Midlands Region of Kwazulu-Natal Province.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, West Virginia University.

Borghi, J., Shrestha, D. L., Shrestha, D., & S., J. (2007). Using focus groups to develop contingent valuation scenarios: A case study of women's group in rualk nepal. *Social Science and Medicine , 64*, 531-542.

Bouchard, G., Lee, C. M., Asgary, V., & Pelletier, L. (2007). Fathers' motivation for involvement with their children: A self-determination theory perspective. *Fathering, 5* (1), 25-41.

Brodsky, M., & Hui, K.-K. (2006). Complementary and Alternative Medicine.

In D. Wedding & M. L. Stuber, *Behavior & Medicine* (4th ed., pp. 281-285).

Cambridge: Hogrefe & Huber Publishers.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (2004). The bioecological theory of human development.

In U. Bronfenbrenner (Ed.), *Making human beings human: Bioecological*

perspectives (pp. 3-15). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature.*

Cambrige, MA: Harvard University Press.

Browder, A. (1997). *Survival Strategies For Africans In America: 13 Steps To Freedom.*

Washington, D.C., United States of America: The Institute of Karmic Guidance.

Brown, J. E. (1989). *Black Elk's Account of the Seven RItes of the Oglala Sioux.*

(J. E. Brown, Ed.) Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Bruchac, J. (1993). *The Native American sweat lodge history and legends.* Freedom:

The Crossing Press.

Brucker, P. S., & Perry, B. J. (1998). American Indians: presenting concerns and

considerations for family therapists. *The American Journal of Family Therapy,*

26 (4), 307-319.

Bryman, A. (1984). The debate about quantitative and qualitative research: A question

of method or epistemology? *British Journal of Sociology, 35* (1), 75-92.

Bucko, R. A. (1998). *The Lakota ritual of the sweat lodge: History and contemporary*

practice. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Bush, L. V. (1999). Am I a man?: A literature review engaging the sociohistorical dynamics of black manhood in the united states. *Weastern Journal of Black Studies, 23* (1), 49-57.

Cable News Network (CNN) (2008). *CNN Presents: Black in America: The Black Man*. Altanta, GA: CNN

Callister, L. C., Bond, A. E., Matsunmura, G., & Mangum, S. (2004). Threading Spirtuality throughout nursing education. *Holistic Nursing Practice*, *18* (3), 160-166.

Carter, B., & New, C. (2003). *Realism and empirical research.* London: Routledge.

Chambers, R. (1997). Rural appraisal: Rapid, relaxed and participatory. Institute of Development Studies Discussion Paper 311. *Sussex:* HELP.

Chambers, R. (1997). *Whose reality counts: Putting the first last.* London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Chun, C., Enomoto, K., & Sue, S. (1996). Health-care issues among Asians Americans: Implications of somatizations. In P. M. Mann (Ed.), *Handbook of diversity issues in health psychology* (pp. 347-366). New York: Plenum.

Churchill, W. (1992). *Fantasies of the master race.* Monroe: Common Courage Press.

Coffey, A. (1999). *The Ethnographic self: Fieldwork and the representation of identy.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Cohen, K. B. (1998). Native American Medicine. *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine. 4* (6), 45-57.

Cohen, K. (2003). *Honoring the medicine: The essential guide to Native American healing.* New York: Ballantine Books.

Coles, R. L. (2003). Black single custodial fathers: factors influencing the decision

        to parent. *Families in Society*, *24* (2), 247-258.

Colmant, S. A., & Merta, R. J. (2000). Sweat therapy. *The Journal of Experiential*

        Education, 23 (1), 31-38.

Colmant, S. A., & Metra, R. J. (1999). Using the Sweat Lodge ceremony as group

        therapy for Navajo youth. *Journal for Specialist in Group Work , 24* (1), 55-79.

Colmant, S. A., Eason, E. A., Winterrowd, C. L., Jacobs, S. C., & Cashel, C. (2005).

        Investingating the effects of sweat therapy on group dynamics and affect. *Journal*

        for Specialists in Group Work , 30 (4), 329.

Connor, M. (2002). Counseling African American fathers: A program for active

        involvement. In T. A. Parham (Ed.), *Counseling Persons of African Descent*

        (pp. 119-153). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Courtney, R. L. (1993). Prevention and intervention programs targeted toward

        African-American youth at high risk. In L. L. Goddard (Ed.), *An African-*

        Centered Model of prevention for African-American youth at risk (pp. 93-102).

        Rockville: U.S. Departmentr of Human Services.

Cutchin, M. (1999). Qualitative explorations in health geography: Using pragmatism and

        Related concepts as guides. *Professional Geographer , 51* (2), 265-274.

Danermark, B. (2002). *Explaining society: Critical Realism in the social sciences.*

        London: Routledge.

Deci, E. L. & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human.*

        New York: Plenum.

Deci, E. L., Eghrari, H., Patrick, B., & Leone, D. R. (1994). Facilitating internalization: the self-determination theory perspective. *Journal of Personality, 62* (1).

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research .* London: Sage.

Dodson, M. (1994). Voices of the people - voices of the earth: Indigenous peoples subjugation or self-dertermination. In L. van der Vlist (Ed.), *Indigenous Peoples, New Partners and the Right to Self-Determination in Practice.* International Books.

Dole, C. C. (2003). Trails of Navajo youth: Identity healing and the struggle for maturity. *Ehtos , 31* (3), 357-384.

DuBois, W. (1994). *The Souls of Black Folk.* Mineola: Dover Publications.

Duran, E., Duran, B., Yellow Horse Brave Heart, M., & Yellow-Horse-Davis, S. (1998). Healing the American Indian soul wound. In Y. Danieli (Ed.), *International handbook of multigenerational legacies of trauma* (pp. 341-354). New York: Plenum Press.

Dyck, I. (1999). Using qualitative mehtods in medical geography: deconstructive moments in a subdiscipline? *The Professional Geographe , 51* (2), 243-253.

Eaton, E. (1978). *I Send a Voice.* Wheaton: The Theosophical Publishing House.

Edwards, Y. (2003). Cultural connection and transformation: Substance abuse treatment At Friendship House. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs , 35* (1), 53-58.

ESDS Qualidata (2007). *Survey data in the 21st century: Challenges and opportunities*. Retrieved January 15, 2009, from ESDS Qualidata: http://www.esds.ac.uk/qualidata/news/pastevents.asp

Ellen, R. & Harris, H.(n.d.) *Concepts of indigenous environmental knowledge in scientific and development studies literature: A critical assessment.* Draft paper East-West Environmental Linkages Network Workshop 3, Canterbury (p. 1996).

Erikson, E. H. (1982). *The Life Cycle Completed: A Review* (1st Edition ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Fakhrid-Deen, N. A. (2004). *Reaching blackmales through spirituality: A rites-of- passage imperative.*

Fanon, F. (1967). *Black Skin White Masks.* (C. L. Markmann, Trans.) New York,: Grove Press.

Fanon, F. (1963). *The Wretched of the Earth.* (C. Farrington, Trans.) New York: Grove Press.

Feraca, S. E. (1998). *Wakinyan: Lakota Religion in the Twentieth Century.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Fontana, A. & Frey, J. (1994). Interviewing: The art of science. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.). *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Forbes, J. D. (1993). *Africans And Native Americans: The Language of Race and the Evolution of Red-Black Peoples* (2nd Edition ed.). Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Fortmann, L. (1995). Women's rendering of rights and space: reflections on feminest Research methods. In R. Slocum, L. Wichhart, D. Rocheleau, & B. Thomas-Slayter (Eds.) *Power, Process and Participation: Tools for Chance.* London: Intermediate Technology.

Foundation, T. H. (2006). *Race, ethincity and health care: Young African American men in the United States.* Washington, DC: The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

Furstenburgh, F. F. (1995). Fathering in the inner city: Parental participation and public policy. In W. Marsiglio (Ed.), *Fatherhood: Contemporary theory, research and social policy* (pp. 119-147). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Gadsden, V. (1999). Black families in intergenerational and cultural perspective. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *Parenting and child development in "nontraditional" families* (pp. 221-246). Mahwah: Erlbaum.

Gagné, M. A. (1998). The role of dependency and colonialism in generating trauma in first. In Y. Danieli (Ed.), *International handbook of multigenerational legacies of trauma* (pp. 341-354). New York: Plenum Press.

Gallo, J. J., Marino, S., Ford, D., & Anthony, J. C. (1995). Filters on the pathway to mental health care: II. Sociodemographic factors. *Psychological Medicine*, *25*, 1149-1160.

Garbarino, J. (2000). The soul of fatherhood. *Marrage & Family Review , 29* (2/3), 11.

Geerts, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures.* New York: Basic Books.

Gibbs, J. (1996). Focus groups. *Social Science Research Update, 19*.

Goss, J. (1996). Introduation to focus groups. *Area, 28*, 113-114.

Gossage, J. P., Barton, L., Foster, L., & Etsitty, L. (2003). Sweat lodge ceremonies for jail-based treatment. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs, 35* (1), 33-42.

Graham, M. (2005). Maat: An African-Centered paradigm for psychological and

spriritual healing. In R. Moodley, W. West, R. Moodley, & W. West (Eds.).

Integrating Traditional Healing Practicies Into Counseling and Psychotherapy

(pp. 210-220). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Grant, A. (1996). *No end of grief: Indian residential schools in Canada.* Winnipeg,

Manitoba, Canada: Pemmican Publications.

Green, R. (1998). The tribe called wannabee: Playing Indian in America and Europe.

Folklore , 99 (1), 30-51.

Griffin, C. (1985). *Field methods in the study of education: qualitative methods and

cultural analysis.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Grills, C. (2002). African-Centered Psychology, Basic Principles. In T. A. Parham (Ed.).

*Counseling Persons of African Descent: Raising the Bar of Practioner

competence* (pp. 10-24). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Grolnick, W., Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1997). Internalization within the family:

The self-determination theory perspective. In J. E. Grusec, & L. Kuczynski (Eds.).

*Parenting and Children's Internalization of Values: A Handbook of

Contempoaray Theory* (pp. 135-161). New York: John Wiley & Son's, Inc.

Gross, L. W. (2007). Assisting American Indian veterans of Iraq and Afhanistan cope

with posttraumatic stress disorder: Lessons from Vietnam and the writings of Jim

Northrup. *American Indian Quarteky , 31* (3), 373-409.

Group, W. B. (2008). *Indigenous Knowledge for Development Results.* Retrieved

May, 23, 2008 from World Bank Group: http://web.worldbank.org/

Guijt, I. & Shah, M. K. (1998). The myth of community: Gender issues in participatory development. In I. Guijt, & M. K. Shah (Eds.). London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Gumede, N. P. (2005). *Rural women, technology and indigenous knowledge systems in South Africa: Case studies from Kwazulu-Natal.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Hagan, H. (1992). The plastic medicine people circle. *Sonoma Country Free Press. Retrieved August 30, 2008, from http://www.sonomacountyfreepress.com/features/spirg-hagan.html* .

Hammer, J. F. (1997). The fathers of "fatherless" black children. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services* , *78*, 564-578.

Harre, R. (1998). When the knower is also the known. In T. Mau & M. Williams (Eds.), *Knowing in the Social Wolrd.* Philadepphia: Open University Proess.

Henning, E. & Van Rensburg, W. S. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research* Durban, South Africa: Van Schaik.

Hibbard, W. S. (2006). *Reports of tramspersonal experiences of non-native practiitioners of the Native American Sweat Lodge Ceremony. (Doctoral dissertation, Sonoma State University, Saybrook Gradduate School, 2006).* San Fransico, CA: (UMI No. 3199688).

Hill, P. J. (1992). *Coming Of Age: African American Male Rites-Of-Passage* (1st Edition ed.). Chicago: African American Images.

Holzer, H. J. (2005, July 15). Expanding the African American middle class: Improving labor market outcomes. *Testimony to the United States Civil Rights Commission*. Washington, DC.

Hopper, P. L. (1999). Hot-tub therapy for type 2 diabetes mellitus. *New England Journal of Medicine , 341*, 924-925.

Hunter, A. & Davis, J. (1994). Hidden voices of Black men: The meaning, structure and complexity of manhood. *Journal of Black Studies , 25*, 20-40.

Institute, U. (2001). *Preparing young men for fatherhood.* Washington, DC: Urban Institute .

Jeffries, E. B., Hollowell, M., & Powell, T. (2004). Urban American Indian students in a nonpunitive alternative high school. *American Secondary Education, 32* (2), 63-78.

Jewkes, R. & Abrahams, N. (2002). The epidemiology of rape and sexual coercion in South Africa: An Overview. *Social Science and Medicine , 55*, 1231-1244.

Johns, D. J. (2007). Re-imagining black masculine identity: An investigation of the "problem" surrounding the construction of Black masculinity in America. In S. J. Jones, L. B. Malone, R. Jefferson-Frazier, V. R. Wilson, R. V. Sharpe, & M. McArdle (Eds.), *The State of Black America 2007* (pp. 59-84). Silver Spring, Maryland: Beckham Publications Group.

Justice, U. D. (1993). *Juvenile victimization and offending, 1993-2003.* Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics Publications.

Karade, B. I. (1994). *The Handbook of Yoruba Religious Concepts.*York Beach: Samuel Weiser, Inc.

Karade, B. K. (2001). *Tradition And Transformation: A Philosophical Treatise Based On The Ifa Religious System.* Brooklyn: Kanda Mukutu Books.

Karenga, M. (1993). *Introduction to Black Studies* (2nd Edition ed.). Los Angeles: The University of Sankore Press.

Kerns, R. A. (1997). Narrative and metaphor in health geographies. *Progress in Human Geography , 21* (2), 269-277.

Keto, C. (1991). *The african centered perspective of history: An introduction.* New Jersey: K.A. Publications.

Kitchin, R.& Tate, N. j. (2000). *Conducting research in human geography.* London: Pearson Education.

Kreuger, R. A. (1988). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research.* London: Sage.

Krueger, R. A. (1998a). *Analyzing & reporting focus group results* (Vol. 6). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.

Krueger, R. A. (1998b). *Developing questions for focus groups* (Vol. 3). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Krueger, R. A. (1998c). *Moderating foucs groups* (Vol. 4). Thousand Okas: Sage Publications.

Krueger, R. A. & King, J. A. (1998). *Involving community memebrs in focus groups* (Vol. 5). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Laura, W. & Sorensen, E. (1998). Reducing welfare costs and dependency: How much bang for the child support buck? *Georgetown Public Policy Review.*

Lenog, F. T., Wanger, N. S., & Tata, S. P. (1995). Racial and ethinic variations in

 help-seeking attitudes. In J. G. Ponterotto (Ed.). *Handbook of multicultural*

 counseling (pp. 416-438). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Levers, L. L. (2006a). Focus groups and related rapid assessment methods: Identifying

 psychoeducational HIV/AIDS interventions in botswana. In C. Fischer (Ed.).

 Qualitative research metrhods for psychologists: Introduction through Empirical

  Studies (pp. 378-409). Boston: Elsevier.

Levers, L. L. (2006b). Identifying psycholoeducational HIV/AIDS interventions in

 Botswana: Focus groups and related rapid assessment methods.

 In C. Fischer (Ed.).*Qualitative research methods for professions* (pp. 377-410).

 New York: Elsevier Press/Academic Press.

Levers, L. L. (2006c). Samples of indigenous healing: The path of good medicine.

 International Journal of Disability, Development and Education , 53 (4), 479-488.

Levers, L. L. (2006d). Traditional healing as indigenous knowledge: Its relevance to

 HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa and implications for counselors. *Journal of*

 Psychology in Africa , 87-100.

Levers, L. L. (2002). Northern Namibian teachers on the effects of violence, poverty,

 andprivation on the young children's development: School-based ountermeasures.

 Journal of Children and Poverty (8), 101-140.

Levers, L. L., Magweva, F. I., & Mpofu, E. (2007). A literature review od distric health

 systems in east and southern Africa: Facilitators and barriers to participation in

 health . *Discussion Paper for the Regional Network for equity in Health in East*

 and Southern Africa (EQUINET) .

Levers, L. L., Mosely, E., Conte, C., Darr, J., Moore, H., Shafer, D., et al. (2003).

    Experiences of racism and transgenerational trauma in one African American

    Community: Portraiture of historical-stirrings-within-a-democratic-context in

    response to witnessing, "Without Sanctuary". *Presented at the 14th Ethnographic*

    and Qualitative Research 2002 Annual Confernce, June, Pittsburgh, PA.

    Confernce monograph.

Longhurst, R. (1996). *Refocusing groups: pregnant women's geopraphical expreiences of*

    Hamilton. Aotearo, New Zealand: AREA.

Loury, D. E. (1997). *Through their eyes: An Afrocentric ethnographyof African American*

    single fathers. (Doctoral dissertation, Temple University, 1997).

    (UMI No. 9737966).

Lynch, E. M. & Levers, L. L. (2007). Ecological-transactional and motivational

    perspectives in counseling. In J. &. Gregoire (Ed.). *The counselor's companion:*

    What every beginning counselor needs to know (pp. 586-605). New York, NY:

    Routledge.

Madden, M. E. (1985). *A Study of A Male Bonding Ritual and Its Impact On Adolescent*

    Males. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States of America.

Marsiglio, W., Amato, P., Day, R. D., & Lamb, M. (2006). Scholarship on fatherhood in

    the 1990s and beyond. *Journal of Marriage and the Family* , 1173-1191.

Martinson, K. & Nightingale, D. (2008). *Ten key findings from responsible fatherhood*

    initiatives. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

Martinson, K., Nightingale-Smith, D., Holcomb, P. A., Barnow, B. S., & Trutko, J. (2007). *Partners for fragile families demostration projects: Employment and child support outcomes and trends.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

McAdoo, J. L. (1993). The roles of African American fathers: an ecological perspective. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Service* (74), 28-35.

McCormick, R. (2005). The healing path: What can counselors learn from Aboriginal People About How to Heal? In R. Moodley, W. West, R. Moodley, & W. West (Eds.), *Integrating Traditional Healing Practices Into Counseling and Psychotherapy* (pp. 293-315). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Meadows, K. (1989). *Earth Medicine: A Shamanic Way To Self Discovery.* Trowbridge, Wiltshire, Great Britain: Element Books Limited.

Meadows, K. (2002). *Where Eagles Fly: A Shamanic Way To Personal Fulfilment.* Edison: Castle Books.

Mehl-Madrona, L. (1997). *Coyote medicine.* New York,: Scribner.

Mehl-Madrona, L. E. (1999). Native American medicine in the treatment of chronic illness:. *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine: Developing an integraded program and evaluating its effectiveness , 5* (1), 36-44.

Merton, R. K., Fiske, M., & Kendalll, P. (1990). *The focused interview: a manual of problems and procedures* (2nd ed.). London: Collier MacMillan.

Minges, P. (2004). *Black Indian slave narratives.* Winston-Salem,: John F. Blair.

Moodley, V. (2002). *The geography of health in durban metropolitan area (DMA).* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Unversity of Durban-Westvillle.

Morgan, D. L. (1996). Focus groups. *Annual Review of Sociology , 22*, 129-152.

Morgan, D. L. (1998). *Planning focus groups* (Vol. 2). Thousand Oaks:

    Sage Publications.

Morgan, D. L. (1998). *The focus group guidebook* (Vol. 1). Thousand Oaks:

    Sage Publications.

Morgan, G. (1983). *Beyond method: strategies for social research.* (G. Morgan, Ed.)

    Bevery Hills, CA: Sage.

Mouton, J. & Marais, H. C. (1990). *Basic concepts in the methodolgy of social sciences.*

    Pretoria: HSRC.

Mundy, P. & Compton, L. (1995). Indigenous communication and indigenous

    knowledge. In D. M. Warren (Ed.). *The Cultural Dimensions of Development:*

    Indigenous Knowledge Systems. London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

National Center on Fathers and Families (NCOFF) (2003). *The fathering indicators*

    framework: A tool for quantitative and qualitative analysis.

    Philadelphia, PA: NCOFF.

National Center on Fathers and Families (NCOFF) (2000). *State Policy Series on Family*

    Support and Father Involvement: A summary of activities and issues in

    Mid-Atlantic and New England States. Philadelphia, PA: NCOFF.

National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) (2006). *Father attitudes survey.* Washington, DC:

    NFI.

Neuman, W. L. (2000). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative*

    approaches. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Nobles, W. W. (1985). *Africanity And The Black Family: The Development of a Theoretical Model* (2nd Edition ed.). Oakland, California, United States of America: The Institute for the Advanced Study of Black Family Life and Culture.

Nobles, W. W. & Goddard, L. L. (1993). An African-Centered model of prevention for African-American youth at high risk. In L. L. Goddard (Ed.), *An African-Centered Model of Prevention for African-American Youth at High Risk* (pp. 115-129). Rockville: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Nock, S. L. & Einolf, C. (2008). *The cost of father absence.* Washington, D.C.: National Fatherhood Initiative.

Noe, T., Fleming, C. & Manson, S. (2003). Healthy nations: Reducing substance abuse in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs , 35* (1), 15-25.

Olsen, W. (2004). Triangulation in social research: qualitative and quantitative methods can really be mixed. In M. Holborn (Ed.), *Development in Sociology.* Ormskirk: Causway Press.

Owen, S. V., Froman, R. D., & Moscow, H. (1981). *Educational psychology.* Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Parham, T. A. & Parham, W. D. (2002). Understanding African American Mental Health: The Necessity of New Conceptual Paradigms. In T. A. Parham (Ed.). *Counseling Persons of African Descent: Raising the Bar of Practioner Competence* (pp. 25-51). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Patterson, O. (1998). *Rituals of blod: Consequences of slavery in two American Centuries.* Washington, D. C.: Civitas.

Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.).

    Thousand Oaks Sage Publications.

Perls, F. S. (1976). *The gestalt approach and eye witness to therapy* . London: Bantam.

Perry, E. C. (2007). *Socio-economic and environmental perceptions and impacts of*

    violence and crime in residential areas in Durban, South Africa. Unpublished

    doctoral dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Reed, W. L. (2003). Fatherlessness in African American families: Primary, secondary

    and teriary prevention. In O. Clayton, R. B. Mincy, & D. Blankenhorn (Eds.)

    Black Fathers in Contemporary American Society. New York: Russell Sage

    Foundation.

Reichardt, C. S. & Cook, T. d. (1979). Beyond qualitative versus quantitative methods.

    In T. D. Cook, & C. S. Reichardt (Eds.). *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in*

    Evaluation Research (pp. 160-172). Sage.

Roberts, G. (1994). Brother to Brother: African American modes of relating among men.

    Journal of Black Studies (24), 379-390.

Rodgers, C. R. (1963). *On becoming a person.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Rosenberg, A. (1988). *Philosophy of social science.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Roth, B. P. (2003). Nursing interventions for parasuicidal behaviors in female offenders.

    Journal of Psychosocial Nursing & Mental Health Services , 41 (9), 20-29.

Ryan, R. M. & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of

    intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*

    (55), 68-78.

Ryan, R. M. & Deci, E. L. (2006). Self-regulation and the problem of human autonomy: Does psychology need choice, self-determination, and will? *Journal of Personality , 74* (6).

Sayer, A. (2000). *Realism and social science.* London: Sage.

Schiff, J. W. & Moore, K. (2006). The impact of the swaet lodge ceremony on dimensions of well-being. *The Journal of the National Center American Indian and Alaska Programs , 13* (3), 48-69.

Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.

SenGupta, S., Hopson, R., & Thompson-Robinson, M. (2004). Cultural competence in evaluation: An overivew. *New Directions for Evaluation* (102), 5-19.

Services, U. D. (2008). *More about the Dads: Exploring associations between nonresident father involvement and child welfare case outcomes.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Shinya, H., Yosikazu, N., Eiji, K., I., M., S., Y., Tatsuya, N., et al. (2008). Effects of charcoal kiln saunas (Jjimjilbang) on psychological states. *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice* (14), 143-148.

Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Silverman, D. (1993). *Interpreting qualitative data.* London: Sage.

Silverman, D. (1985). *Qualitative methodology and sociology.* Aldershot: Gower.

Sima, R. G. & West, W. (2005). Sharing Healing Secrets: Counselors and Traditional
Healers in Conversation. In R. Moodley, W. West, R. Moodley, & W. West
(Eds.). *Integrating Traditional Healing Practices Into Counseling and
Psychotherapy* (pp. 316-325). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Smith, D. (1994). *Geography and social justice.* Blackwell: Oxford.

Smith, D. P. (2005). The sweat lodge as psychotherapy: Congruence between
traditional and modern healing. In R. Moodley, & W. West (Eds.). *Integrating
Traditional Healing Practices Into Counseling and Psychotherapy* (pp. 196-207).
Thousand Oaks, California, United States of America: Sage Publications.

Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methologies: Research and indigenous peoples.* New
York: Zed Books.

Snarey, J. (1993). *How fathers care for the next generation.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard
University Press.

Snyder, D. M. & Kunstadter, P. (2006). Culturally competent health care.
In D. Wedding, & M. L. Stuber (Eds.).*Behavior & medicine*
(4th ed., pp. 273-280). Cambridge: Hogrefe & Huber Publishers.

Sollod, R. N. (2005). Spiritual and Healing Approaches in Psychotherapeutic Practice.
In R. Moodley, W. West, R. Moodley, & W. West (Eds.). *Integrating Traditional
Healing Practices Into Counseling and Psychotherapy* (pp. 270-281).
Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Sorensen, E. (2002). *Helping Poor nonresident dads do more.* Washington, DC:
Urban Insitute.

Sorensen, E. & Zibman, C. (2000). *A look at poor dads who don't pay child support.*
Washington, DC: Urban Insitute.

Steinhauer, E. (2002). Thoughts on an indigenous research methodology.
Canadian Journal of Native Education , 26 (2), 69-80.

Tanfer, K. & Mott, F. (1997). The meaning of fatherhood for men. *NICHD Workshop:*
Improving data on male fertility and family formation. Washington, DC:
Urban Institute.

Terrell, E. & Terrell, S. (1984). Race of counselor, client sex, cultural mistrust level,
and premature termination from counseling among Black clients. *Journal of*
Counseling Psychology , 31, 371-375.

Thomas, C. (2007). *School success among African American male adolescents:*
An existential exaimination of protective factors.
(Doctoral dissertation, Duquesne University) (UMI No. 3270983).

Thomason, T. C. (1991). Counseling Native Americans: An introduction for non-native
american counselors. *Journal of Counseling and Development , 69* (4), 321-327.

Urban, I. (2003). *Poor children see thier dads more often than commonly assumed.*
Washington, DC: Author.

Useem, B. & Goldstone, J. A. (2002). Forging social order and its breakdown:
Riot and reform in U.S. prisons. *American Sociological Review; , 67*, 499-524.

Utter, J. (2001). *American Indians: Answers to today's questions* (2nd ed.). Norman:
University of Oklahoma Press.

van Maanen, J. (1995). *Respresentation in ethnoraphy.* (J. van Maanen, Ed.)
Thousand Oaks: Sage.

van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science an action sensitiv pedagogy.* London, Ontario: The Althouse Press.

van Vlaenderen, H. & Nkwinti, G. (1993). Participatory research as a tool for community development. *Development Southern Africa , 10* (2), 211-228.

Vogal, V. (1970). *American Indian medicine.* Norman: University of Oaklahoma Press.

von Maltzahn, R. & van der Riet, M. (2006). A critical reflection on participatory methods as an alternative mode of inquiry. *New Vocies* , 108-128.

Voss, R. W., Douville, V., Soldier, A. L., & Twiss, G. (1999). Tribal and Shamanic based social work practice: A Lakota perspective. *Social Work , 44* (3), 228-241.

Warren, D. M., Slikkerveer, L. & Broker, D. (1995). *The cultural dimensions of development: Indigenous knowledge systems.* (D. M. Warren, L. Slikkerveer, & D. Broker, Eds.) London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Warren, D. & Rajasekaran, B. (1993). Putting local knowledge to good use. *International Agricultural Development , 13* (4), 8-10.

Watts, R. (1993). Community action through manhood development: A look at concepts and concerns from the front line. *American Journal of Community Psychology* (21), 333-359.

Weil, A. (1982). The Indian sweat: Traditional purification ritual brings benefit to mind. *The American West , 19* (2), 42-49.

Weinert, F. E. (1987). Metacognition, motivation and understanding. In F. E. Weinert, & R. Kluwe (Eds.), *Metacognition, motivation and understanding* (pp. 1-19). Hillsdale: Lawerence Erlbaum Associates.

Whitt, L. (1995). Cultural imperialism and the marketing of native America. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 19* (3), 1-31.

Wilton, R. D. (1999). Qualitative health research: Negotiating life with HIV/Aids. *The Professional Geographer , 51* (2), 254-264.

Wynn, M. (1992). *Empowering African-American Males To Succeed: A Ten-Step Approach For Parents And Teachers* (1st Edition ed.). Marietta: Rising Sun Publishing.

Yalom, I. D. (1995). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (4th ed.). New York: Basic Books.

Yeh, C. J., Hunter, C. D., Madan-Bahel, A., Chiang, L., & Arora, A. K. (2004). Indigenous and interdependent perspectives of healing: Implications for counseling and research . *Journal of Counseling and Development: JCD, 82* (4), 410-419.

Appendix A

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

600 FORBES AVENUE ♦ PITTSBURGH, PA 15282

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

TITLE:	**The Sweat Lodge and Issues of Fatherhood: A Transformation Process for African American Males**
INVESTIGATOR:	Jay E. Darr, 211 N. Whitfield Street, Suite 240, Pittsburgh, PA 15206, 412.362.1225x16
ADVISOR:	Lisa Lopez Levers, Ph.D. Duquesne University Counseling, Psychology, & Special Education Canevin Hall 410-B, 600 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15282 412.396.1871
SOURCE OF SUPPORT:	This study is being performed as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctoral Degree in Counseling Education and Supervision at Duquesne University.
PURPOSE:	You are being asked to participate in a research project that seeks to investigate the experiences of African American males participating in the Sweat Lodge and how those experiences provide African American males with strategies to overcome or cope with issues related to fatherhood. You will be asked to participate in one focus group. In addition, you may be asked to participate in an additional individual interview. The focus groups and individual interviews will be conducted at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Kentucky Community College, Lexington, Kentucky, and Middle Tennessee State University, Nashville, Tennessee.

The focus group is a one-time event and will last about one-and-a-half to two hours. Most individual interviews will last about one hour. The focus group will be video taped; the individual interviews will |

215

be video taped and transcribed. You may be asked if you would like to read the transcript of your individual interview for accuracy.

These are the only requests that will be made of you.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: Only minimal risks are associated with this study. These include the possibility that you may experience some discomfort, sadness, or grief from discussing your experiences while participating in the Sweat Lodge or reflecting upon personal and family experiences.

However, you will be offered information about culturally sensitive counseling if you feel that there is such a need for help now or in the future. You may stop the interview at any time if you feel that your discomfort becomes unbearable.

The potential benefits of this study include developing a better understanding of the Native American and African American cultural and spiritual connection through the Sweat Lodge; offers an opportunity for exploring how to incorporate indigenous forms of healing into the counseling enterprise; and to inform the following question: What does the lived experience of the Sweat Lodge *mean* to African American males.

COMPENSATION: There is no monetary compensation for your participation in this study. Your participation in the study will require you to cover transportation costs to the respective research site in your city. No additional monetary cost will be required of you to participate in the study.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Your name or other identifying information will never appear in the written transcripts or in reports of this research. When tapes are transcribed, all identifiers of you and anyone you talk about will be deleted. All written materials and consent forms will be stored in a locked file in the researcher's office. Your response(s) will only appear as

216

aggregate data in descriptions about the investigation and in narrative summaries. All audio and video tapes will be destroyed immediately upon transcription. All written materials will be destroyed five years following completion of the research.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW: You are under no obligation to participate in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, your data will not be used.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS: A summary of the results of this research will be supplied to you, at no cost, upon request.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT: I have read the above statements and understand what is being requested of me. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time, for any reason. On these terms, I certify that I am willing to participate in this research project.

I understand that should I have any further questions about my participation in this study, I may call Dr. Lisa Lopez Levers, Faculty Advisor (412.396.1871) or Paul Richer, Chair of the Duquesne University Institutional Review Board (412.396.6326).

_____   _____

Participant's Signature   Date

_____   _____

Researcher's Signature   Date

APPENDIX B

Focus Group Question Guide

The focus group question guide is based on the Sweat Lodge literature, NCOFF's (2003) Fathering Indicators, study purpose and research questions. The question guide is semi-structured and will be used as probes that guide more refined questions as they emerge from participant responses.

A. **Lived Experience**

1. What was your initial response to participating in the Sweat Lodge?
2. Describe your experience
3. What were your reasons for participating in the Sweat Lodge
4. How would you describe the Sweat Lodge experience to someone who has not participated?

B. **Impact of Cultural and Spiritual Concepts**

1. Describe your cultural identity
2. Describe your spiritual or religious identity
3. What was your initial response to Native American cultural and spiritual concepts introduced during the Sweat Lodge experience
4. What was your initial response to African cultural and spiritual concepts introduced during the Sweat Lodge experience

C. **Ability to Address Issues Related to Fatherhood**

1. What was your definition of manhood and fatherhood prior to participating in the Sweat Lodge?
2. What is your definition of manhood and fatherhood after experiencing the Sweat Lodge?
3. What issues do African American men face as fathers?
4. Describe your interaction with your children and/or significant other before and after you participated in the Sweat Lodge.
5. How has the Sweat Lodge experience impacted your role as a father?

D. **Engagement in Mental Health Services**

1. Describe your spiritual, mental and physical health before and after you participated in the Sweat Lodge.
2. Describe your interaction with "formal" (agencies, psychologists, etc) mental health services.
3. Describe your interaction with "informal" (church, healers, friends, etc) mental health services.
4. What impact has the Sweat Lodge had on your mental health?

APPENDIX C

Individual Interview Question Guide

The in-depth interview question guide is based on the Sweat Lodge literature, NCOFF's (2003) Fathering Indicators, study purpose and research questions. The question guide is semi-structured and will be used as probes that guide more refined questions as they emerge from participant responses.

A. **Lived Experience**

1. How did you come to participate in your first Sweat Lodge?
2. Please reconstruct your experience as a participant in your first Sweat Lodge form the time you woke that day and the time you fell asleep.
3. Once at the Sweat Lodge site, talk about what you did.
4. Talk about your relationship with other participants in the Sweat Lodge.
5. Talk about your relationship with the Sweat Lodge leader and Fire Keeper.
6. Reconstruct your experience(s) directly after the Sweat Lodge concluded.
7. Please reconstruct your experience in the most memorable Sweat Lodge.

B. **Impact of Cultural and Spiritual Concepts**

1. What cultural and spiritual or religious concepts where integral to your life prior to participating in the Sweat Lodge?
2. How has the introduction of Native American and African cultural and spiritual concepts impacted your life?

C. **Ability to Address Issues Related to Fatherhood**

1. Please reconstruct your experiences with your mother and father up until the first time you participated in the Sweat Lodge.
2. Please reconstruct your experiences with your children prior to the first time you participated in the Sweat Lodge.
3. Given what you have said about your life before and your experience(s) in the Sweat Lodge, how do you understand fatherhood and manhood?
4. Given what you have said about your life before and your experience(s) in the Sweat Lodge, how do you understand your interaction with your children, significant other, mother and father?

D. **Engagement in Mental Health Services**

1. Describe your experience as an African American men
2. How have your experiences as an African American male affected your mental health?
3. What types of mental health services, formal and informal have sought and why?
4. Given what you have said about your life before and your experience(s) in the Sweat Lodge, how do you understand your mental health?

APPENDIX D

Note. From *Black Elk's Account of the Seven RItes of the Oglala Sioux.* J. E. Brown

Editor. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. Copyright 1989 by the University of

Oklahoma Press adopted with permission.

Note. From *The Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge: History and Contemporary*

Practice. By Raymond A. Bucko by permission of the University of Nebraska Press.

Coppyright 1998 by the University of Nebraska Press.