Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11: 28 (NLT)
DISCUSSION

• When I say the word stress, what does it mean for you?
• What causes stress in your life?
• How do you cope with stress?
• How did you see the women (mothers, grandmothers) in your life cope with stress?
• What is a Strong Black Woman
• What are her characteristics?
• Is being a Strong Black Woman/Black Superwoman a good thing?
• Is there anything bad about being a Strong Black Woman/Black Superwoman?
Benefits of the Black Superwoman

- Empowers & Counteracts Stereotypes
- Resilience & Self-Efficacy
- Preservation of the Black Family
- Preservation of the Community
- Reliance on God, Faith, & Spirituality
Consequences: “Black DON’T Crack, But…”

- Higher levels of stress related diseases
- Blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Heart Disease
- Higher rates of unrecognized, undiagnosed, & underreported mental disorders
- Early death

“In other words, we are dying internally because our internal age is so much older than our physical age.” (Leaphart-Williams)
“I WAS TODAY YEARS OLD WHEN...”
DO YOU HAVE AN ‘S’ ON YOUR CHEST?

5 ARCHETYPES OF A SUPERWOMAN ROLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Archetype 1</th>
<th>Archetype 2</th>
<th>Archetype 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I have an obligation to present an image of strength ALWAYS.”</td>
<td>“I have an obligation to suppress my emotions.”</td>
<td>“We are not vulnerable to anything or dependent.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collective idea of how I am presenting at all times.</td>
<td>• I am going to look like I always have it together.</td>
<td>• I am not a weak person, I can do it on my own.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ARCHETYPE 4**

“A Motivation to succeed against all odds.”

- The idea that YOU can always make a way out of no way.
- I always have to figure it out.

**ARCHETYPE 5**

“It is my responsibility to put others before myself.”

- I will deal with me later. (And we never deal with us!)
- Network Stress (rescue syndrome)
- Picking “projects” instead of partners
“...Cause ain’t no body got time for a breakdown!”
(Where to begin)

- Spiritually (Biblical parallels):
  - Being strong at all times: 2 Corinthians 12:7-10
  - Supressing my emotions: John 11:33-35 (Sorrow), Mark 4:35-41 (Frustration), Luke 5:16 (Exhaustion)
  - Not vulnerable or independent: 2 Corinthians 12:7-10
  - YOU can always make a way out of no way: 2 Corinthians 3:5
  - I will always put others before myself (lack of self-care): 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
“You cannot pour from an empty cup!”

• Physically
  • Eat well, Sleep well
    • You will need to update your data surrounding food and rest
    • What are your competing commitments? (Dissonance)

• Mentally
  • It is time to RE-DEFINE STRENGTH!
  • Interrogate the ‘Strong Black Woman’ narrative

“…For when I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Corinthians 12)
“You don’t have to set yourself on fire to keep other people warm!”

• Emotionally:
  • Therapy
    • *Take off your cape for 50 minutes!!*
  
• Pay attention to yourself
  • Look INWARD *first* and then out. Acknowledge your trauma!
  • Awareness of the things that cause you stress. (somatic symptoms)
  • Do not let others put you on a pedestal!

• Learn how to set limits
  • *NO IS A COMPLETE SENTENCE!*
  • Learn to say good no’s in service to your higher yes.
REST AS RESISTANCE

“IT IS A REVOLUTIONARY AND RADICAL ACT FOR WOMEN TO BE STILL.”

Dr. Thema Bryant-Davis
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