

Healing for the Mind, Body & Soul

News Notes from California Black Women's Health Project

Volume 2, Issue 4

Superwomen Need Support Too!

By Gloria Morrow, PhD.

The pressures and demands of everyday life will continue to be with us in 2004, especially as we maintain our fast paced lives. The stressors we often face lead to physical and psychological distress, which can ultimately impact our overall quality of life in negative ways.

I have been watching this phenomenon with great interest, because so many men and women are increasingly afflicted with debilitating physical impairments, such as hypertension, diabetes, and cancer, in addition to psychological impairment, such as depression and anxiety. While there are many scenarios I could focus on today reflecting the impact of stress on our lives, I would like to highlight three distinct groups of "Superwomen" - (professional women; women in business and pastors' wives) who may be highly vulnerable to poor mental and physical health because of the stressful lives they lead with sometimes limited to no support. The term "Superwomen" is used to depict women who are constantly attempting to do a balancing act between work, home, spouse, children, and self-care, although self-care is usually rarely achieved on a consistent basis.

Let's look at the professional woman who may be in business for herself or a corporate power broker for a major corporation. She may be stressed out by the need to compete in a business world that is usually

dominated by males, along with the responsibility of going home at the end of the day to manage a home and family. For African American women, the problem may be even more complex, especially if they are victimized by racism and sexism. Many times these "Superwomen" are highly stressed out with neither adequate support from the workplace nor her family. I would like to take a minute to affirm those major corporations that understand the importance of family, and those spouses who are secure enough to lend support and understanding to "Superwomen." But all too often, professional women are left depleted and drained by the demands of life, and many are struggling in silence because they may not believe anyone will understand.

Women in ministry represent another kind of "Superwoman". One would think that these women would have it made. After all, they are called by God to do God's work. Well, women in ministry are also attempting to juggle the demands of family and work. They are also forced to negotiate in a predominantly male, sometimes sexist, environment and sometimes there is no one to talk about it. Women in the ministry who are married sometimes have marital problems because the couple

has not received wise counsel helping them to deal with some of the issues that are inevitable when a female spouse is a minister or pastor. Once again, these "Superwomen" may not have the kind of support they really need to successfully maintain a healthy sense of self.

The pastor's wife is a long overlooked "Superwoman," whose major responsibilities include: (1) ministering to and caring for her husband who may be victimized by ungodly church members, (2) loving, supporting, and nurturing children who sometimes feel neglected because the primary focus in the family is on the church and its members, (3) loving and understanding the church, especially the women in the church, and (4) finding her own place in the ministry. This picture becomes even more complex when the pastor's wife also works outside the home. These "Superwomen" are silent sufferers who may not have anyone they can talk to, not even their spouses.

Further, they may not have had wise counsel from the beginning of their husband's pastorate to help prepare them for such an awesome calling.

I know you are asking yourself by now, "When can I get the support I need to avoid falling victim to a lethal effects of stress? Or, "I am suffering from emotional problems, and where can I get help?" For starters, women must acknowledge what's going on in their lives and begin to talk about their thoughts and feelings.



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FOUNDATION

**Charles R. Drew University of Medicine
& Science/Research**

**Program on Ethnicity, Health &
Behavior**

**120 Depressed Adults needed for an
NIMH-funded study**

*Researchers to evaluate the different
responses of African Americans &
Caucasians to a medication for*

ns and Caucasian
on are needed to
y at the Charles R.
Drew University of Medicine & Science.
This innovative study is exploring ethnic
differences in response to a medication
for depression.

The study is funded by the NIH/National
Institute of Mental Health and will evalu-
ate what factors influence how de-
pressed African American and Caucasian
adults respond to the antidepressant
medication called Celexa. Celexa is an
antidepressant medication known to
help improve a person's mood. Addi-
tionally this study will look at what
background, clinical and cultural factors
are associated with differences in how
well this medication works to improve
depression.

According to Trudi Butts, R.N., the
study's nurse coordinator, the Drew
study provides participants with many
health benefits - all free of cost.
These include free medical exams, free
medication and compensation up to
\$320.00. All participants will be

for the study. Interested persons must
be either African American or
Caucasian, at least 18 years of age and
depressed. If interested, please call the
study office at (323) 563-4979. All
personal information will be held in
strict confidence.

**Eat Healthy
in the New Year!**
Join the
**California Black Women's
Health Project**
as we partner* with
Baja Fresh
10250 Santa Monica Blvd.
Suite 604
Los Angeles, CA 90067
(inside the Century City Mall)
On
January 24, 2004
From 1:30 pm to 10 pm

*Purchase food from this Baja Fresh
location and a portion of your total pur-
chase will go to support the work of the
CABWHP. Please be sure to inform the
cashier that you are there to support the
CABWHP before paying for your food or
bring in this ad.

For more information or to have a flyer
faxed or mailed to you call:
310 412-1828

**Continued from cover story...
Superwomen Need Support Too!**

It may be a good idea to connect with women
who share similar struggles, who can
understand and relate to what you are going
through. However, please avoid affiliating
yourself with women who are so bitter and
angry that your encounters will be
counterproductive. Some of you
"Superwomen" need more professional
support. Seek wise counsel from a
professional who is equipped to provide the
necessary support and care you need, as well
as to help you to develop strategies for
change and growth. Some of my sisters are
indeed suffering from depression and anxiety,
and it is affecting everything in your life. If
you are experiencing physical challenges, this
would be a great time to seek consultation
from your physician. Don't let the New Year
come and go without you taking responsibility
for addressing your mental and physical
health needs. Remember, "Superwomen need
support too." If you would like to make an
appointment to schedule a consultation with
me for individual or group therapy, please
call (909) 392-6955.

Dr. Morrow is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist
in a private practice (Psy. Lic. No 18135).

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The Law Offices of Dori N. Bye



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website first - www.cabwhp.org -
click on the Amazon logo and shop
like you always do EXCEPT this
time you'll be donating 15% of your
purchase total to improving
Black women's health!

As always, thanks so much for your
support!!

A Word from the Executive Director

Greetings!

On behalf of our staff and board, I wish you happy holidays and a wonderful new year. In 2003, CABWHP promoted our mission by uniting wellness and advocacy. Through our town hall meetings, live chats, publications and events, you learned that emotional health and well being is vitally important to how we live everyday. But if you don't take steps towards living the best life you can, you'll miss your birthright - a healthy and happy existence.

So, in this time of renewal, make sure you take time to commit to yourself. Commit to having a healthier life no matter what. Make your appointments, do your research, get a second opinion and my favorite "move more and eat less". It's simple really, but in this complicated world, sometimes simple matters are lost. So take heed and take care. Your life - lived in wellness and in good health - is worth it.

Peace & Blessings,
Latonya

**We Are Doing Our Part!
In an effort to save trees
and resources in 2004,
we will no longer mail our
publications.**

**Beginning in 2004 our
Newsletters and Issue
Guides will be available
online at**

www.cabwhp.org

**If you do not have access to the
internet please contact our office.**

**Don't forget to join
our list serv at:
www.cabwhp.org
(click on the "join mailing list" tab)
for regular policy and
advocacy updates!**

Help Wanted

The Association of Black Women Physicians is currently seeking a part time Executive Assistant. All interested applicants, are asked to email your resume to: srieuxmd@yahoo.com

Celebrate Black History Month by Eating Well!

The California Black
Women's Health Project
will partner* with

Derrick's Jamaican Cuisine
6806 La Tijera Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90045

On

February 28, 2004

From 8:00 am to 10 pm

**Have a meal at Derrick's Jamaican Cuisine and a portion of your total purchase will go to support the work of the CABWHP. Please be sure to inform the cashier/waiter that you are there to support the CABWHP before paying for your food or bring in this ad.

**For more information or to
have a flyer faxed or mailed to
you call:
310 412-1828**

Happy Holidays and

Seasons Greetings

And

Well Wishes for a

Prosperous New Year

From all of us at the

**California Black Women's Health
Project**

*Our offices will be closed starting Decem-
ber 22 and will reopen January 5, 2004.*

SisterSong Conference

A national conference on Women of Color Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights organized by the **SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Health Collective** was held **November 13-16** at **Spelman College**, Women's Research & Resource Center in Atlanta, GA.

The conference was organized to bring together women of color activists, providers, policymakers, allies, and men to discuss and develop strategies for improving the reproductive health of women of color in the United States.

This conference was significant because women of color have not come together in a national conference to discuss these issues since 1989. Because of the many social and scientific developments that have taken place, it was urgent that women of color come together to discuss the implications of these issues.

Over 800 women of color came together to develop analyses, agendas, and strategies for addressing our issues such as:

- (1) The lack of health care coverage for women of color;
- (2) The inadequate provision of governmental health care options for women of color and all low-income women (including the right to abortion);
- (3) The relationship between human rights and reproductive rights;
- (4) The lack of cultural competence in the health care system to effectively address the needs of women of color;
- (5) The failure of the mainstream abortion rights movement to address our concerns;
- (6) The promotion of right-wing strategies in our communities including abstinence-only sex education;
- (7) Population control strategies directed towards women of color; and
- (8) The role of men of color in working for reproductive health and sexual rights.

The conference was an exciting national opportunity to discuss these and other critical issues to ensure healthier communities of color in the United States.



"Committed to improving the health of Black women and girls in California"

We're on the Web!
www.cabwhp.org

101 N. La Brea Ave, Suite 610
Inglewood, CA 90301
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News Notes from California Black Women's Health Project



NOW IS THE TIME TO START THE NEW YEAR!

Tired of getting stuck in long term contracts with gyms that you don't even attend? Then **BODY BY GWEN** is the solution to your problem!

BODY BY GWEN offers flexible and affordable fitness packages for the New Year:

- Two memberships for the price of one (so bring a friend!)
- Pay - per session
- Pay - per month

BODY BY GWEN OFFERS THE FOLLOWING:

- Group Classes: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 6 - 7 a.m. and 7 - 8 a.m.
- Gwen's Boot camp: Saturday 7:30 - 9 a.m. (call for location)
- One on One Fitness Training: Upon availability
- Abdominal Work
- Circuit Training: You will learn how to properly operate free weights and weight machines
- Food Plans and Nutritional Support
- Kids Fitness classes also available

At the tender age of 39 with the rock hard abs of a 25 year old, fitness guru Gwen Bolden has over 12 years of physical fitness experience and training. She trains a clientele that reads like a who's who list of top entertainers and professional athletes. As a fitness coach her goal is to inspire others to fulfill their personal goals. To find out more about Gwen, visit www.blackweekly.com

BODY BY GWEN
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4371 Glencoe Avenue Suite B -13, Marina Del Rey, CA 90292
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(Located near Jamba Juice and Aunt Kizzy's Back Porch)