



Be Healthy - Be Wealthy - Be Wize



In the news - p-3

My inner spirit guided me through another storm. - p-3

The Tuskegee Effect - p-7

Transformational beauties - p-10

Health Tips - p-12

Sponsors - p-13 - Call for submissions p-14

www.HealthyOnTheMove.com



Download our App

Volume I - Issue 01

From the editor...

Barry Sermons December 2024

Dear Health-Conscious Reader,
Have you ever felt lost in your health journey, overwhelmed by illness, or unsure of where to turn for support? I've been there too. My wife Roni was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2008, and as her caregiver for seven years, I often felt way in over my head. Thanks to the support of others, we fought together, and she lived seven meaningful years. I was there for her last breath, and when she was gone, I felt lost, confused, and overcome with grief. But in that darkness, I found purpose. I'm fighting back.

Many people struggle with barriers to care, often because they lack access to the right information or support. I believe we can change that. By connecting with others and learning from each other, we can improve health outcomes and live fuller, healthier lives. This magazine, *Healthy on the Move*, is an invitation to join a community where we lift each other up, share knowledge, and provide support. Whether you're battling illness or looking to support someone who is, there's hope and healing in connection. I've overcome disease and found strength through the stories and advice of people who have walked a similar path. Now, I'm paying it forward and want to help you do the same. Are you sick, lost, or confused? Find hope by browsing the pages of *Healthy on the Move*.

Live Well – Share Love – Serve Others

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON STIGMA

Howard University November 2024



Barry Sermons moderates the "Facing their Fears" panel at the Annual International Conference on Stigma, held Nov. 19-21.



Felix Siris (left), an HIV counselor, takes part in the "Facing Their Fears" panel, along with Pedro Benitez, a bilingual community leader, and Vernon "Rasmir" Thomas, a community health worker.

By Patricia McDougall
Special to the AFRO

The 15th Annual International Conference on Stigma, hosted by the Howard University Department of Pediatrics and Child Health, took place Nov. 19-21 at the institution's Blackburn Center. The conference included both in-person and virtual offerings, with more than 450 registrants.

Each year, the event addresses health-related stigma and discrimination with a special emphasis on HIV, mental health,



substance abuse stigma and other health conditions like sickle cell, epilepsy and obesity. Healthcare professionals joined with researchers, governmental organizations and community members in efforts to cut down on stigma.

The theme for this year's event was "Stigma No More, It's 2024!," and featured an art contest, a scientific abstracts contest, and more than 25 sessions and panels. Topics of discussion included "Facing their Fears,"

a heterosexual men's panel, "Trust of Mistrust: Sickle Cell Warriors Unraveling Medical Mistrust," and a plenary session featuring long term survivors of HIV. Marvin Anderson was also present to perform his rap anthem, "Living Beyond the Red," which won second prize in the 2024 Stigma Art Contest.



Shown here at the 15th Annual International Conference on Stigma, Maranda Ward (left), assistant professor at George Washington University; Reggie Smith, executive director of the Reginald and Dionne Smith Foundation; Dionne Smith, deputy director of Reginald and Dionne Smith Foundation; Cecilia Chung, a senior adviser for the Transgender Law Center, and David Fancett, a psychotherapist.



Download our App

Courtesy of Afro Magazine - Page D4
November 3, 2024 - December 6, 2024
www.Afro.com

My inner spirit guided me through another storm.

Barry Sermons - December 2024

My inner spirit guided me through another storm.

In 2008, the housing market crashed. Within nine months, my wife, Roni, lost her job, and we received devastating news: she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Our lives were forever changed, and the dreams we had carefully planned were put on hold. Overnight, I went from being her partner to becoming her full-time caregiver, advocate, and emotional anchor. Roni was my best friend. She was the strongest and most determined person I knew. Her strength couldn't protect us from the storms ahead..

I wasn't prepared for the emotional and spiritual toll this journey would take. Quickly I realized that my ability to care for her required more than just physical endurance. Caregiving demanded healing my mental, emotional, and spiritual wellness. It reminded me of the instructions flight attendants give on an airplane: "In the event of an emergency, when the oxygen masks drop...put your mask on first. Then help the person next to you."

This experience taught me how to invest in the mental, emotional, and spiritual pillars of health. These investments don't just transform individuals; they spread outward to family and inspire change.

Wholistic health goes beyond the physical. It's about caring for the mind, heart, and soul. Many of us focus on diet and exercise, but neglecting mental, emotional, or spiritual well-being can leave us unbalanced. I became aware of imbalance during my caregiving journey.

-continued on page 5-

At first, I thought I could power through by focusing solely on Roni's physical care. But I quickly learned that ignoring my inner wellness left me drained, ineffective, and sometimes angry. It wasn't until I began prioritizing my own mental and emotional health by attending 12-step meetings, sharing with family members, relying on a support network, and meditation that I could truly show up for her.

Paradoxically focusing me didn't just help me; it helped how I interacted with my wife, my family, and the world. Here was the lesson I carry with me: care for your inner self, to create space for growth, healing, and service.

Inner wellness is like a puzzle. For me, it began with putting together the mental border, which meant structuring my time to include exercise and respite. Walking the dog became a vital part of my routine. I scheduled my day to balance caregiving tasks like cooking, cleaning, paperwork, and quality time with Roni, alongside moments for myself by reading positive affirmations, attending support meetings, and engaging in activities that renewed my energy.

Next, I worked on emotional wellness. Weekly therapy sessions became a lifeline. Sharing my feelings with friends was helpful, but there's a unique clarity that comes from working with a trained professional. They helped me untangle the spaghetti of emotions and face the closet full of fears.

Finally, I focused on spiritual wellness. There were times I was furious with God—my father had died from a stroke when I was a sophomore in high school, and now this? But my faith, centered on what I call "the Most High," allowed room for my anger and disappointment. By expressing my frustration, I could return to a place of trust.

Each morning, I started with a prayer followed by meditation. Even two minutes of meditation can clear the head and shift perspective from fear to faith. It reminded me that in that moment, everything was okay. I didn't need to regret the past or fear the future.

Giving attention to my mental, emotional, and spiritual wellness didn't just benefit me; it transformed how I showed up for others. As I grew more balanced internally, my relationships shifted and balanced as well. Caregiving was no longer just a task, it became an opportunity to connect more with Roni and my family.

When I prioritize my mental wellness, I become more present. Simple things, like taking a walk with Roni or sharing a meal, became moments of genuine connection rather than tasks to check off a list. My emotional wellness work helped me stay patient and understanding during hard conversations or when emotions ran high. And spiritually, I began to see caregiving as more than an obligation. Caregiving is an act of love and service.

I also noticed how these changes affected Roni. Though she was the one physically ill, my inner work seemed to bring her peace. My peace of mind shifted her anxiety, and gave her hope, even on the hard days. Caring for myself allows me to care for others.

This ripple effect extended beyond caregiving. My friends, family, and support network could feel the difference. Conversations became richer, and my ability to empathize deepened. When I invested in my inner wellness, it not only transformed my life but also created a foundation for stronger, more meaningful relationships with those around me.



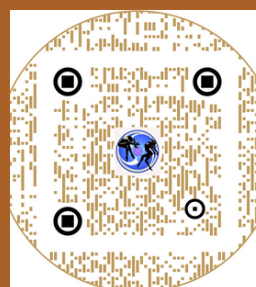
By the Editor
- Previously Published in Inspire Magazine December 2024

HEALTHY on the MOVE Mobile APP

Healthy on the Move educates and engages underserved communities to strive for healthier outcomes. High rates of debilitating diseases are prevalent for black and brown people. This app connects people in need with community partners, social groups, advocates, holistic healers and healthcare professionals.

Through the embedded Internet Fabulous TV channels the app provides educational content, and engages those striving for healthier outcomes by focusing on reduced disparities, decreased barriers to care and strategies to overcome stigma.

The app includes a community health calendar as the hub for opportunities to network and participate in health and wellness events or watch recorded video content. The educational content, surveys and anonymous self-assessment tools generate a Recommended Action Report with links to provider intake contacts for scheduling appointments



This is not a scientific study. It is my observation of healthcare attitudes among Black men in America. Many men avoid visiting a doctor for regular checkups and wait until a condition worsens before seeking medical care. Healthcare in Black communities often lacks the resources available in wealthy, mostly white areas. There are fewer doctors, fewer hospitals, and lower rates of health insurance, even though the Affordable Care Act has helped more low-income Americans get coverage.

Men are taught to be tough and not show weakness. Little league coaches often say, "Shake it off and get back in the game." Some injuries cannot be shaken off and need medical attention. No young boy wants to be seen as weak, so we learn to act invincible. That mindset stays with many men as they grow older.

Some children fear doctor visits because of the trauma of shots and vaccinations. Others have seen family members go to the hospital and never return. For them, hospitals become symbols of death instead of treatment and recovery. Fear like this can explain why Black men are less likely to seek medical care.

According to Wikipedia, "The Tuskegee Syphilis Study was a clinical study conducted by the U.S. Public Health Service between 1932 and 1972 in Macon County, Alabama. The study involved 600 Black men, 399 with syphilis and 201 without, under the false promise of free healthcare." This unethical study still fuels distrust of doctors, the government, and the healthcare system itself. Whether it is fear, a sense of invincibility, or distrust of the system, these attitudes are what I call **The Tuskegee Effect**.

Medical breakthroughs have extended life expectancy in America, but only for those who seek medical advice. This series will explore key obstacles to Black men's health and offer solutions to overcome them.

Obstacle 1: Too Busy to Go to the Doctor

When I was in high school, my father, James Sermons, complained of headaches and dizziness for months. My mother scheduled appointments for him, but he always canceled, saying he was too busy.

One Friday evening, after a long business trip, Daddy passed out in a colleague's office and was rushed to the emergency room.

Two days later, I was brought into the ICU to see him alive for the last time. He was in a coma and on life support. My father died from a brain aneurysm, and my family was devastated.

Losing him left me confused and hopeless. Through high school and college, I tried to numb the pain with alcohol and drugs. That only led to years of suffering. Eventually, I found help 35 years ago in 12-step groups. Today, I share my experience, strength, and hope to help others find solutions to their problems.

Inspired by my journey, I created the Healthy on the Move app to connect people with resources that can help them address their health issues. If you or someone you know is struggling, take the first step. Download the app and join the movement.

One last thought. A few years ago, I had a headache that lasted for days. I went to the doctor, got tested, and found a treatment plan that works. I can't stop wondering: What if my father had gone to see a doctor?

This ends Obstacle 1: Too Busy to Go to the Doctor. Stay tuned for Obstacle 2 in the next issue of Healthy on the Move.



*Barry Sermons
-December 2024*

The transformational beauties waiting to be discovered within...

The transformational beauties waiting to be discovered within... From a teenager well into the beginning stages of my adulthood, I was very aware of the psychological, emotional and spiritual dilemmas suffered from inwardly, due to the environmental conditioning and behavioral patterns of family members, communities, religious beliefs etc., within my childhood.

I always felt the desire for improvement within my way of being, but never really put a full effort into changing due to time spent on surviving the repetitive patterns of unconscious developments that I wasn't sure on how to break free from. It wasn't until I became a mother and began realizing how important it was to invest in my psychological, emotional and spiritual well-being to which all plays a big role in the outer world of my physical well-being. I had to seriously address these matters of self, in order for me to effectively raise my children from a holistic point of view.

It revealed to me that the way I think, react and believe has a huge impact on how my children will grow and develop into the young adults of their futures. I also didn't like how the important matters of inner wellness weren't prioritized within the rearing of the children in my family. Due to the lack of attention in said areas, it has caused the younger generation to have to go seeking their own inner wellness to effectively maneuver within society throughout their adulthood developmental processes.

So now as an adult and parent, responsible for my own children, I understand the importance of implementing good nutrition, exercise, emotional and mental wellness within their developments. My journey to discovering the transformational inner beauties of a renewed mind, emotional healing and spiritual cleansing helped to shift the outer dynamics of my holistic well-being. I have found myself now spending family fun times, exercising more, taking on new hobbies, exploring new travels, investing in higher education and developments etc.

The transformational beauties waiting to be discovered within...

My overall experience, and the empowering transformational effects from the inner applications thereof, has done healing wonders for my holistic inner and outer world health. It not only changed the dynamics within myself, but inspirations from it thereof, has empowered change within my family and extended family dynamic. This shows that all it takes is for one person to get serious about addressing their well-being instead of settling and being content with the passing down of the unhealthy generational patterns within the family. Your testimonials of overcoming could inspire others to put in the vital work needed towards their holistic care and wellness.

Athena Yisrael
GSU Perimeter College



Health Tip:

Is your **doctor** a **partner or director** of your health journey?

What should I expect in my first appointment with a healthcare provider?

The information collected during your first visit is used to help make decisions about an HIV treatment for you. Your first visit with a healthcare provider may include:

- A review of your health and medical history
- A physical exam
- Several lab tests

Starting treatment right away can offer important health benefits. Sticking with treatment is an important way to live healthier with HIV because it can help lower your viral load to undetectable, which means there is so little virus in the blood that a lab test can't measure it. Current research shows that taking HIV treatment as prescribed and getting to and staying undetectable prevents transmitting HIV through sex.

Talk to your healthcare provider to find out about treatment options that may easily fit into your routine.

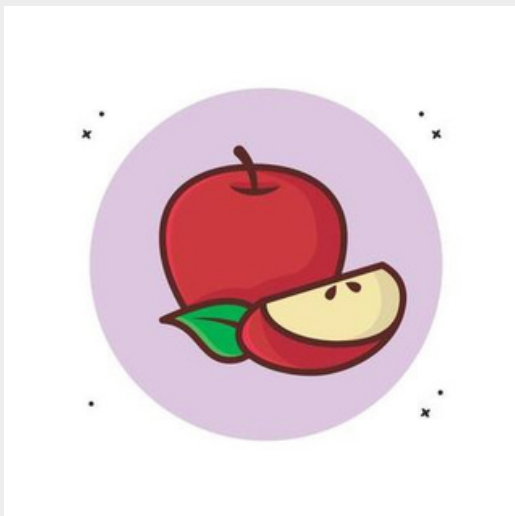


Advertisements

Healthy on the Move, provides Mental, Physical and Spiritual solutions by offering free listings to health professionals, service providers and businesses in exchange for services and relevant content. We exchange content for listings. Businesses can upgrade to customized listings with logos, website links and special features.



Tuesday 7:30 Eastern - Zoom



Healthy Diet



Exercise

Call for Submissions!

We are excited to announce the launch of Healthy on the Move, a magazine dedicated to improving healthcare access, health outcomes, and quality of life for underserved communities. Our mission is to empower readers with the information, resources, and the connections to promote longer, healthier lives.

We invite healthcare professionals, researchers, advocates, and individuals with personal stories to contribute articles, essays, and research-based content on the following topics:

- Health Equity and Access: Challenges, solutions, and innovations in healthcare access for marginalized communities.
- Nutrition, Wellness, and Preventative Care: Practical advice and success stories on achieving quality of life health through nutrition, exercise, mental wellness, and preventive care.
- Chronic Disease Management: Insights on managing chronic conditions and co-morbidities prevalent in underserved communities, from diabetes to heart disease, HIV, mental health, cancer and substance use disorders (addiction) emphasizing practical, affordable solutions.
- Community Health Programs: Profiles and success stories from programs and organizations making a real difference in health outcomes for vulnerable populations.
- Personal Journeys: Inspiring stories from individuals who have overcome significant health challenges, as well as caregivers sharing experiences and advice.
- Innovative Health Solutions: Exploration of new technologies, treatments, or community-based initiatives aimed at reducing health disparities and improving life expectancy.

Submission Guidelines:

- Length: Articles should range from 800 to 1,500 words.
- Style: Submissions should be informative, engaging, and accessible to a general audience.
- Format: Please submit your article as a Word document.
- Contact: Please send your submissions or inquiries to the editor bsermons1@student.gsu.edu

•

Healthy on the Move aims to be a platform for voices that are often underrepresented in the conversation around health.

Together, we can create a healthier, more equitable future.

We look forward to your contributions!