

Black Flourishing and Thriving

To flourish and thrive in life looks different for different people. Everyone's journey in life to thrive or succeed is unique and contains many obstacles. Some of these obstacles look easier for some people and to others can seem very difficult. For instance, perceptions of thriving or flourishing are influenced by different perceptions of success. For example, for some people, a simple goal in life might be getting up on time, eating breakfast, making their bed in the morning, and checking things off their daily list. Doing this can make someone feel they are thriving. But for others, thriving or flourishing only comes after building a business, getting a degree, or buying a house. For someone who is Black, being able to succeed and say that *I have succeeded in life* may also entail numerous obstacles.

The article "[Black History Month and Beyond: Black Flourishing](#)" defines Black flourishing and thriving as a multifaceted concept that refers to a state of well-being where Black students and staff can thrive, grow, and prosper unencumbered. The ability to flourish is consistent with one's sense of self-worth and possibility. As Black students, staff, and families flourish, their sense of pride and belonging grows" (Black History Month and Beyond Black Flourishing). As a Black person, it can be difficult in today's world to thrive and flourish when you are constantly trying to prove yourself as worthy, equal to everybody else, and as capable of succeeding in life or the work field.

It is important to thrive and flourish as a Black person for various reasons. To some Black individuals, thriving is defined as being stable mentally, financially, and spiritually. In an article written by the National Library of Medicine, "Black men experience disproportionate mental health challenges due to their exposure to severe psychosocial stressors. Yet, the mental health challenges of Black men have largely been left out of national conversations. Strong

theoretical frameworks are important when generating dialogue about the mental health of Black men, as it helps to validate the work on a larger scale while also grounding the work for more practical use” (Watkins). If mental health is crucial for Black thriving, then the mental health challenges to Black people in today’s world have to be addressed. According to Daphne Watkins,

Studies suggest the compounded effects of race and gender may place Black men at disproportionately high rates of disadvantage across a myriad of risks, such as depression, anxiety, and substance misuse. When taken together, mental health, masculinities (or manhood), and social support among Black men are grossly understudied, yet research suggests that men who are mentally healthy, have progressive definitions of manhood, and engage in social support have better health status, role functioning, psychosocial adjustment, coping behaviors, quality of life, well-being, and self-actualization.

These things are especially important to take into consideration for people in higher education. Higher education can be mentally draining and exhausting for an individual and being mentally stable in higher education has many benefits to it. One of the biggest advantages to mental stability in higher education is being able to thrive or flourish in life. If one Black individual is thriving in higher education, that individual is able to help others who are struggling to succeed academically, professionally, and socially. If, in higher education, we have Black people with strong mental health, then we have more people advocating for equal rights and education rights. If Black students or staff are being acknowledged for the issues they have, it can be incredibly positive for their rate of thriving and flourishing in life. As more Black people thrive and flourish, they can help other people to do the same.

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Works Cited

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