HE WHO FEEDS YOU: THE MALES PLACE COMMUNITY GARDEN AS A
FACILITATOR OF DEVELOPMENT IN BLACK MALE YOUTH

by

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ABSTRACT

ALEXANDER J. SIMMONS. He Who Feeds You: The Males Place Community Garden as a Facilitator of Development in Black Male Youth
 (Under the direction of DR. ANDREW D. CASE)

Recent theory and findings suggest that even while enduring adverse social

circumstances such as poverty, Black male youth exhibit strengths that can aid in their

development. Some frameworks maintain that youth strengths can be fostered through

involvement in youth programs that emphasize civic engagement. One form of civic

engagement that is receiving increased attention is community gardening (CG). This

study examined how a manhood development organization, The Males Place INC.

(TMP), utilized community gardening to promote development among Black male youth.

Drawing on Positive Youth Development (PYD) and Sociopolitical Development (SPD)

frameworks, I analyzed 11 interviews with graduates of the program and observations of

current participants to describe how community gardening within TMP helps Black male

youth cultivate important strengths. Results indicate that CG facilitated development in

Black male youth by promoting gains in the 5 C's of PYD: *competence*, *confidence*,

connection, *character* and *caring*. Additionally, my analysis suggests that as Black male

youth contributed to their community, they contemporaneously developed the 5 C's. I

highlight broad implications of how these results can inform how community programs

use community gardens to promote healthy development among Black male youth living

in challenging environments.

DEDICATION

To the ancestors who sacrificed so that we can live freely. To my parents, Raymond

Simmons and Viveca Atkinson, who have always positioned me to excel. To my queen,

Yasmine Huggins. To Baba Austin Roper who shared the importance of a man's

commitment to family and the mantra "no stinky thinking." To everyone who believed in

me. To the billions of Black boys who must make their way in the world then, now and

forever.

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I would like to show my appreciation to Baba Reggie Singleton who has helped me grow as I reach my hand out to Warriors while simultaneously reaching up to the Elders and looking to the ancestors. Thank you for allowing me to conduct this study.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are likely to face challenges as they develop into responsible adults. However, some Black youth[1] face additional challenges in their journey that are related to their social environment such as poverty and crime. That said, research suggests Black youth often exhibit remarkable resilience and strength, which may offset these challenges to development (Jones & Neblett, 2016). Ginwright (2007), for example contends that Black youth can develop critical social capital and important connections to community platforms through civic engagement. Further, Black youth can grow through meaningful contribution to social issues in their communities. In that sense, protective factors in Black youth's social environment can help mitigate the effects of environmental risk factors (Bowers, 2010). While there is some research that examines civic engagement as a facilitator of development among Black youth, this literature covers select forms of community engagement such as political action (Ginwright, 2007; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007). In comparison, emergent forms of civic engagement such as civic agriculture in urban settings have received little attention. The goal of this study was to expand this literature by investigating the role of youth participation in community gardening as a facilitator of strengths-based development.

1.1 Context of Black Youth Development

On average, Black youth, compared to White youth, are at heightened risk for experiencing poverty and educational challenges. In 2013, the median annual income for

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[1] Black youth include all groups of people originating from Africa and the Caribbean whether arriving in the U.S. through slavery or voluntary immigration before or after the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. Classified as Black non-Hispanic in the U.S. Census

Black households ($36,898) was approximately $26,000 less than White households which places Black youth at greater risk for poverty (United States Census Bureau, 2013). In terms of education, 87.1% of Blacks graduated from high school compared to 89.5% Whites. This disparity only increased further up the academic ladder. By age 25, 22.7% of Black students report completing four or more years of college compared to 33.75% of White students (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013).

These challenges can have adverse consequences for the development of Black youth. Several studies link poverty with negative outcomes, such as depressive symptoms in adolescents (Dashiff, DiMicco, Myers &Sheppard, 2009; Wickrama, Merten, & Elder, 2005) and increased involvement in criminal activity (Davis, Banks, Fisher, & Grudzinsksa, 2004; Murry, Berkel, Gaylord-Harden, Copeland-Linder, 2011; Phillips & Pittman, 2003). Similarly, poor educational outcomes can impede the development of Black youth. Tomlinson and Walker (2010) found that family income is related to educational orientation (e.g., number of books read, perceptions of likelihood of success in school) and youth with lower educational orientation are less likely to pursue post-secondary education.

1.2 Reformulations of Development

The strengths that Black youth develop and employ in the face of social adversity and the community settings that fosters these strengths have received limited scholarly investigation. Two approaches to adolescent development that account for the environmental challenges that Black youth face and the unique strengths they express, are Positive Youth Development (PYD) and Sociopolitical Development (SPD). These frameworks emphasize the capabilities youth possess as resourceful actors and assume

youth development occurs within a set of environmental systems including families, schools and communities (Lerner, 2002; Watts, Williams & Jagers, 2003). PYD posits that youth possess strengths that make them resources in their environment while SPD adds that youth from marginalized communities must recognize and address systems of oppression to successfully mature to adulthood (Lerner, 2002; Watts, Williams & Jagers, 2003).

1.3 Community Gardening as a Facilitator of Development

Communities and community-level processes help to facilitate PYD and SPD. The PYD framework, for example, recognizes the role of "external" assets to development, including youth programs and supportive communities (Benson, 2006). Likewise, SPD emphasizes the change-making capabilities of youth as facilitated through different forms of civic engagement (Watts, 2003). Given the important role community plays in fostering strengths in Black youth, scholars and practitioners are increasingly giving attention to community-level facilitators of development (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). One potential community facilitator that has not been adequately investigated is civic agriculture. Lyson (2012) describes civic agriculture as "locally organized systems of agriculture that connect producers and consumers in communities" (pg. 63). Community gardening (CG) is a type of civic agriculture that involves community members collaborating to develop and maintain a common space for growing food. This locality-based design is largely a variation of subsistence farming in which gardeners grow food to feed themselves and important others.

While scholars suggest that community gardening may promote youth development and facilitate education (Alexander, North & Hendren, 1995; Demarco,

1997; Miller, 2005; Pranis, 2008), few studies have investigated *how*, and in what ways it promotes the development of youth who experience environmental risk. Inquiry into community gardening as it relates to Black youth development, using PYD and SPD frameworks, may identify effective ways to address the ramifications of poverty and poor education that impact many Black youth. Moreover, these findings can inform the efforts of youth programs and initiatives that incorporate community gardening in their approach to serving Black youth.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Early Perspectives of Development

Early models of development were limited in addressing the psychosocial development of Black youth for three reasons. First, these models and theories often established the White middle-class child as the archetype for the normative development of cognitive and social competencies (García Coll et al., 1996). Second, this literature focused primarily on issues or deficits that arose in the lives of adolescents (Matthews, Kizzie, Rowley, & Cortina, 2010; Swinton, Kurtz-Costes, Rowley, & Okeke-Adeyanju, 2011) such as drinking and drug use; learning disabilities; antisocial behavior; low achievement; and risks of neglect, abuse, and economic deprivation (Damon, 2004). Subsequently, researchers paid little attention to the strengths youth possess. Third, early models did not account for the role of extra-individual factors in youth development such as schools, social organizations and community programs. In contesting this convention, scholars have since argued that development is affected by many social and structural factors (ecological factors) that occur in the lives of youth (see Brofenbrenner, 1977).

2.2 Positive Youth Development

The Positive Youth Development (PYD) framework departs from early models by focusing on the value that youth possess as actors in their environment. Specifically, this framework posits that children and adolescents maintain a variety of strengths that help them navigate their social environment and make them resources for their communities (Damon, 2004; Lerner, Lerner, von Eye, Bowers, Lewin-Bizan, 2011; Travis & Leech, 2013). The guiding perspective of positive youth development assumes that youth

possess strengths in the face of adversity (Damon, 2004; Lerner et al., 2011; Travis & Leech, 2013). Moreover, these strengths which youth possess can be internal or external (Benson, 1997; Damon, 2004). Internal strengths represent the innate qualities of adolescents that demonstrate positive traits to include social skills, positive values, and positive identity and sense of purpose (Benson, 1997; Damon, 2004; Mariano & Damon, 2008). Conversely, external strengths include the factors that exist outside of the individual young person (Benson, 1997; Damon, 2004). External strengths can include high expectations for youth from elders and peers, community openness and opportunities for empowerment. The internal and external strengths emphasized by the PYD model address the capabilities that Black youth display and external factors that foster development.

    2.2.1 The Five C's. A common model for understanding strengths associated with PYD is the Five C's (5 C's) model. The Five C's model was developed to highlight how internal strengths might work together in the positive development of young people (Damon, 2004; Lerner, 2000; Lerner, 2002; Lerner, 2009; Lerner et al., 2011; Travis & Leech, 2013). The Five C's construct is comprised of competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring/compassion—all useful elements in PYD. These strengths represent common components of positive youth development.

    Bowers and colleagues (2010) define competence as the perceived ability that youth have of themselves in terms of specific domains such as cognitive, social, and vocational capability. Confidence is operationalized as the perception of self-worth and overall ability that youth possess (Bowers et al., 2010; Lerner, 2002; Lerner, 2005; Travis and Leech, 2013). Character is the combination of attitudes that youth have towards

established social conventions and morality (Bowers, 2010; Lerner, 2002; Lerner, 2005; Travis and Leech, 2013). Connection is defined as the positive interactions that youth have with others in their environment with an emphasis on the quality of these exchanges (Bowers et al., 2010; Lerner, 2002; Lerner, 2005; Travis and Leech, 2013). While the construct of caring can be interchanged with compassion, itis characterized as the concern that youth show for others (Bowers, 2010; Lerner, 2002; Lerner, 2005; Travis and Leech, 2013).

Previous scientific inquiry has established The Five C's model as a valid framework for understanding youth development (Bowers et al., 2010; Heck & Subramaniam, 2009). Moreover, the presence of these strengths has been associated with improved school performance as well as reduced teen pregnancy and illicit substance use (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). Through complex processes, the strengths which comprise the Five C's interact with one another as youth proceed through life stages (Bowers et al., 2010; Lerner, 2002; Lerner et al., 2011). Recent findings have identified a sixth C, contribution, which emerges in the presence of the other five (Bowers et al., 2010; Lerner, 2004). That is, when youth display competence, confidence, character, connection and caring they also serve as assets in their ecological environment. Youth ecological environments can include families, communities and outside-of-school-time programs. When youth possess the strength of contribution, they exercise a positive influence on the surrounding ecology (Case, 2017). Thus, the Five C's model with the addition of contribution has shown to be a useful framework for understanding how youth make gains through positive youth development.

2.3 Sociopolitical Development

Sociopolitical development is the progression of an individual from a general lack of awareness to relative cognizance of social and political systems with an intent of changing systems that oppress (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007; Watts, Griffith & Abdul-Adil, 1999; Watts, Williams & Jagers 2003). Therefore, SPD reflects the transformation that individuals make as they become aware of unjust conditions and resolve themselves to make a change. As such, Watts, Williams and Jagers (2003) argue that there is a role for social context in the formation of SPD. The course of SPD is influenced by the relative social position, lived experiences and socioeconomic status of youth including race and an impoverished standing. Awareness of these factors can lead to an increase in critical consciousness (Freire, 1990; Watts, Williams & Jagers, 2003), which is important to Black youth as they undergo sociopolitical development. Critical consciousness is vital for Black youth and represents their recognition of the obstacles that confront them and their capacity to overcome them.

2.3.1. Critical consciousness. Freire (1990) coined the term conscientization, which parallels critical consciousness in United States literature (Diemer & Hsieh, 2008; Kirshner & Ginwright, 2012; Murray & Milner, 2015; Watts, Williams & Jagers, 2003; Watts & Flanagan, 2007; Watts, Griffith & Abdul-Adil, 1999). Asymmetry, the imbalanced distribution of resources, is a staple of oppression which has been defined as unjust use of power by one group over another to create and maintain inequity (Freire, 1990; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007; Watts, Griffith & Abdul-Adil, 1999). Critical consciousness allows marginalized individuals to identify the oppressive structures they face through recognition of asymmetry and to subsequently seek their own liberation

(Diemer, et. al., 2015; Watts, Williams & Jagers, 2003). Liberation involves challenging gross social inequities between social groups and creating new relationships that dispel oppressive social myths, values, and practices (Watts, Williams & Jagers, 2003, p.186). Watts and Flanagan (2007) contend that this challenging process which is derived from increased critical consciousness is instrumental for liberatory action, which are efforts to address asymmetry.

Watts, Diemer and Voight (2011) argue that critical consciousness is comprised of three components: critical reflection, political efficacy, and critical action. The first component, *critical reflection* is a challenging process that occurs in the mind as individuals analyze various social conditions, such as neighborhood poverty. Accordingly, individuals take notice of disparate conditions and contest asymmetry as the norm. Often, critical reflection leads individuals to consider their own political efficacy. *Political efficacy* is the perceived ability to create a change to oppressive conditions either individually or collectively (Watts, Diemer & Voight, 2011). The belief of an individual that she or he can make a difference is key to that individual taking the initiative to make that change. The third component of critical consciousness is critical action—concerted efforts to transform the systems of oppression that marginalize people (Watts, Diemer & Voight, 2011). Critical action is significant because without this crucial component of critical consciousness, no systemic change will take place. Common forms of critical action include voting as well as forms of civil disobedience, such as protesting, which can be a useful strategy for Black youth to address inequities. Critical consciousness is demonstrated when these three components are present (Watts, Diemer & Voight, 2011).

According to Watts et al. (1999) youth progress through five stages of critical consciousness.   The first stage, the *acritical stage*, is described as a complete lack of cognizance of the systemic asymmetry of resource distribution and disparate treatment of oppressed people. In the *acritical* stage, youth attribute the conditions that face oppressed groups of people to natural differences and chance, and also assume the advantages between groups and individuals are based solely on merit (i.e., hard work). Following this stage, youth begin to realize the disparities that accompany asymmetry, but do not recognize large social and political systems as creating and perpetuating the disparities. This stage is the *adaptive* stage because individuals tend to change some aspect of themselves to keep a positive self-regard and attain resources. Subsequently, individuals enter the *precritical* stage of critical consciousness in which they begin to grow concerned about the differences in access to resources and other outcomes that affect oppressed people. In the *critical* stage newfound concerns about asymmetry mature into a desire to learn more about discrimination and other issues which confront those who have been oppressed. Finally, individuals may progress to a fifth stage, *liberation*, in which the longing to learn more about asymmetry materializes into a change in behavior and orientation towards action (Watts, Griffith & Abdul-Adil, 1999).

Research suggests that settings may play an important role in youth's SPD (Diemer & Hsieh, 2008; Kirshner & Ginwright, 2012; Murray & Milner, 2015; Watts, Williams & Jagers, 2003; Watts & Flanagan, 2007; Watts, Griffith & Abdul-Adil, 1999). One type of setting, outside-of-school-time programs, has shown potential to facilitate SPD (Murray & Milner, 2015; Watts, Griffith & Abdul-Adil, 1999). Murray and Milner's (2015) study supports that a similar construct, sociopolitical consciousness,

emphasizes a culturally relevant perspective that increases awareness of injustices among youth in outside of school programs. In practice, program directors of manhood development organizations that cater to Black youth interviewed in Watts (1993) study reported using two perspectives to address oppression. The perspectives are Black consciousness, the raising of cultural awareness and self-efficacy, and social policy which aims to address policies and practices that perpetuate oppression (Ferguson, 1990; Watts, 1993). Watts et al. examined a youth program for high school Black boys by measuring gains in critical consciousness (1999). Findings suggested that the program had some success in increasing the level of critical thinking in Black youth participants. In a later study, the role of youth-adult partnerships was illuminated as they relate to healthy sociopolitical development in youth (Watts & Flanagan, 2007). It was suggested that healthy youth-adult partnerships may aid youth as they develop an increasing critical consciousness and community engagement. Other literature explores the role of SPD in youth organizing, vocational expectations, civic engagement, and other forms of community involvement (Diemer & Hsieh, 2008; Kirshner & Ginwright, 2012; Murray & Milner, 2015; Watts, Williams & Jagers, 2003; Watts & Flanagan, 2007; Watts, Griffith & Abdul-Adil, 1999). Findings on SPD and its benefits underscore its potential as an asset for Black youth programs.

2.4 Civic Agriculture as a Developmental Asset

Civic agriculture may provide a setting in which PYD and SPD can be fostered in Black youth. Lyson (2012) defines civic agriculture as a locally organized system of agriculture and food production characterized by networks of producers who are bound together by place. Civic agriculture is based in community problem-solving and the

interdependence of community members in producing, processing, and distributing food. Several common values are central to the various forms of civic agriculture. Among them are sustainability, a holistic approach to farming, social and economic equity, and civic engagement. These values reflect an opposition to the large, commercial, profit-driven farm operations that dominate the current market, and an investment in proximal, community-based institutions. As such, civic agriculture represents locality-based food systems which reduce the spatial distance between producer and consumer (Wright, 2006).

In addition to common values, several characteristics define civic agriculture. A fundamental characteristic of civic agriculture is that farming practices (e.g., types of produce grown) are directed at local markets, and community members are the consumers. Similarly, the practice of gardening is viewed as a part of the community life and is not simply a means of production. Third, growers focus on producing high quality food as opposed to the high yield of products. For example, farmers, gardeners, and consumers involved in civic agriculture systems value food grown using organic means. Another defining characteristic of civic agriculture is the focus on labor-intensive and land-intensive practices. This characteristic is opposed to the use of land-extensive and profit-based practices by industrial farms. Lyson (2012) claims that growers in civic agriculture adopt a crop management strategy based on insights gained from the specific site being worked. Finally, the sixth characteristic of civic agriculture is its communal nature in which growers facilitate direct connections with consumers through bringing the produce directly to those who want to buy it.

2.4.1. Findings in civic agriculture. To date, most of the exploration of civic agriculture is concerned with outcomes for adults and community level indicators (e.g. health outcomes and commodities; Lyson, 2005; Lyson & Guptill, 2004; Zanko et. al, 2014). Much of the literature involving youth and civic agriculture is focused around theories of youth learning (Henness, Ball & Moncheski, 2013). In these studies, the focus is on environmental education (Krasny, 2015). For instance, to teach the concept of decomposition of matter, instructors had students study animals that scavenge and identify the actions of microorganisms that facilitate decomposition (California Department of Education, 2001; California Department of Education, 2002; Ozer 2007). Research has shown that educators have also developed garden-based curricula to support learning in math, social sciences, history, and other areas (Henness, Ball & Moncheski, 2013; Krasny 2015). Finally, student nutrition and performance have also been focal points of some scientific inquiry (Ozer, 2007; Neumark-Sztainer, Story, Resnick, & Blum, 1996; Pollitt & Mathews, 1998) given that insufficient levels of vegetable intake among adolescents is associated with poorer health and academic outcomes including lower academic performance, drug use, and weight dissatisfaction (Ozer, 2007; Neumark-Sztainer, Story, Resnick, & Blum, 1996). These studies do not fully explore the role of civic agriculture in youth development.

There exists some anecdotal evidence that participation in forms of civic agriculture can lead to increases in psychosocial development, motivation to learn and educational achievement (Pranis, 2008). However, very little attention has been afforded to the developmental processes that Black youth experience in youth programs which engage them in civic agriculture.

2.4.2. Community gardening. Civic agriculture can assume many forms including community gardens, farmer's markets, community-supported agriculture, school gardens and roadside stands (Lyson, 2012). Community gardens are distinguished from other forms of civic agriculture by the fact that they are public spaces with shared access, ownership, and a degree of democratic control (Ferris, Norman & Sempik, 2001). For instance, churches, hospitals, schools, and neighborhoods are all settings that maintain community gardens (Teig et al., 2009). Teig et al. (2009) assert that CG participants reconnect with nature through restorative processes as they cultivate fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers. In many cases the produce grown in CG is distributed among community garden members and other neighborhood stakeholders, but also for those in need and at farmer's markets.

The purpose of community gardens has been altruistic and solution-oriented since their origins in the United States. As early as the nineteenth century, CG was visible in Detroit due to its role in addressing the economic strife and food insecurity that the city was experiencing (Lyson, 2012). Similarly, Lyson (2012) states that during both World Wars and the Great Depression community gardens (known as Liberty and Victory gardens) helped feed people when the United States government implemented food rations. Thus, CG has always been directed at addressing issues facing individuals, communities, and society. Contemporarily, community gardens involve the creation and maintenance of sustainable food systems, community development, and efforts to influence policies that support healthy outcomes (Lyson, 2012; Schusler, Krasny, Peters & Decker, 2009; Teig et al., 2009). Community gardens serve as platforms for people to assume a public purpose and immerse themselves in a space that addresses needs

(Schusler, Krasny, Peters & Decker, 2009). Therefore, community gardening provides opportunities to get involved in collective action by engagement in civic life (Krasny & Tidball, 2009).

A limited number of studies have explored outcomes for youth involved in CG activities and programs. Miller (2005) found that community gardens facilitate the interaction between youth and elders which helps children learn about their communities. In a study about youth environmental education, authors found that the learning that takes place in CG augments community goals by helping youth to become scientifically literate and to practice resource stewardship (Krasny & Tidball, 2009). Others assert that CG can occur as community strategies which seek to increase social capital and collective efficacy in youth and other community members (Lyson, 2012; Schusler, Krasny, Peters & Decker, 2009; Teig et al., 2009).

The study of Black youth development in community gardening is important. Based on my review, only one study has investigated the potential of CG in the development of Black youth. Researchers interviewed Black youth and adults including gardeners, neighborhood residents and police officers, who participated in a violence prevention initiative in a Midwest city that involved community gardening (Allen, Alaimo, Elam & Perry, 2008). Findings suggest that Black youth engaged in CG benefited by participating in a constructive activity that enabled them to contribute to others while they develop skills, relationships and other behavioral competencies as well as improve nutrition (Allen et al., 2008). Though these findings contribute to our understanding of how CG might affect Black youth development, the focus of their interviews was CG generally instead of *how* CG facilitates development. While not fully

exploring the potential for CG to progress SPD, this study did display that CG may help Black youth build strengths related to PYD. Thus, from a positive youth development perspective, CG may provide a crucial avenue for youth to develop strengths, such as viewing themselves as competent, through acquiring knowledge and a skillset for growing and managing produce. Further research is needed to explore how CG might foster other aspects of PYD. In addition, from a SPD perspective, research is needed to examine whether CG help youth to envision and experience themselves as agents of change in their families and communities. The current study, informed by PYD and SPD frameworks, used a qualitative case study methodology to explore these research topics. The specific research question investigated was: In what ways might community gardening facilitate development (PYD and SPD) among Black youth?

3. METHOD

The purpose of this study was to gain insight into *how* community gardening (CG) might foster the development of strengths in Black adolescent males. Informed by positive youth development (PYD) and sociopolitical development (SPD) framework, the specific aims of this study were to: (1) retrospectively investigate the ways in which men who were agriculturally engaged in a youth development program as adolescents gained important strengths through that experience; and (2) to observe the current involvement of youth in the program to ascertain how community gardening facilitated development through the lenses of PYD and SPD.

3.1 Context of the Study

The setting of this study was The Males Place, INC., selected for its focus on engaging Black male youth in community gardening. This 501 c(3) organization has operated since 1993 and targets male youth or "Warriors" 12-18 years of age. The Males Place has three components, or pillars, that are viewed as equally important: manhood development, social justice, and agriculture. The manhood development pillar affords Warriors the opportunity to receive guidance and relevant information from men or "Elders" to aid in their journey to adulthood. Concurrently, Warriors are exposed to various concepts pertaining to social justice through participation in numerous community events and interactive activities such as the Sankofa Educational and Cultural Enrichment trips to destinations including Alabama, Washington D.C. and Ghana. These experiences provide Warriors and Elders with knowledge about civil rights struggles and contemporary issues facing Black people throughout the diaspora. Notably, agriculture is the third component of TMP program.

The Males Place established and maintains a 5,000-square foot garden that functions exclusively by the labor of Warriors and Elders. Community gardening takes the form of planting and harvesting seasonally and culturally appropriate (i.e. African-inspired) organic, pesticide-free produce for families of program participants and community members. Situated in West Charlotte in the Beatties Ford Road corridor, TMP community garden serves an area where only 29% of housing units are within a half mile of a full-service chain grocery store (City of Charlotte, 2017). Additionally, this 56.2% Black area is home to residents who experience food insecurity (City of Charlotte, 2017). Almost a quarter of the population (24%) receives Food and Nutrition Services such as SNAP benefits, which attempt to make healthy food options more affordable (City of Charlotte, 2017). Given these socioeconomic challenges, TMP uses community gardening to address community needs.

Guided by an Afrocentric worldview, The Males Place utilizes a "kingdom" structure with African-influenced titles for members and hosts ceremonies celebrating the Black experience. Four kingdoms distinguish TMP, each named to honor a different group of African people. The Nubian, Dogon, Ashanti and Zulu Kingdoms, each led by an Elder or Mshauri—which translates from Swahili as advisor—represent the intentionality of highlighting African roots within the program. The plural form of Mshauri is "Washauri." The Males Place holds meetings twice weekly; one in a classroom setting at the local health department and one at the program's community garden, where participants partake in several agricultural activities from soil preparation through fresh food preparation. Meetings held in the classroom setting follow a loose curriculum that includes an African-inspired griot or story-telling session, speakers from

a variety of fields, career exploration, group discussions, life-skills seminars, and family night events when family members of Warriors and Elders are encouraged to participate in sessions. Additionally, TMP facilitates annual ceremonies such as Kwanzaa and Umoja Karamu celebrations and a Black History Month Black Icon project whereby Warriors and Elders are assigned a notable Black figure in history whose life story they recreate in a presentation.

3.2 Subjectivities Statement

My life experiences provided me with understandings and assumptions that influenced how I approached this study. First, I assumed that all the Black males involved with The Males Place had an understanding that their identity as a Black male comes with some challenges. This assumption is informed by TMP's acknowledgement of obstacles to successfully reaching Black manhood. I also assumed that much of participants' knowledge about Black identity and history was gained through participation with the program because of the deliberate Afrocentric focus of The Males Place, and the relative inexperience with other forms of exposure to Black identity rhetoric among program participants. Another assumption I made is that due to my identity as a Black man and Mshauri (Elder) with The Males Place, I will be more readily accepted as a researcher. I felt that this status would increase the level of comfort that participants had with data collection process because they were familiar with me personally. Last, I assumed that my Black identity would form the foundation for an important critical lens that I employed in the study.

3.3 Philosophical Orientation

In qualitative research, it is imperative that inquiry be grounded in a coherent philosophical foundation and that the researcher clearly describes the positions she or he assumes (Ponterotto, 2005). This process ensures trustworthiness in a study and provides a basis for evaluating the study's results and conclusions (Shenton, 2004; Morrow, 2005).

3.3.1. Critical paradigm. A critical paradigm is the viewpoint that power relations shape experiences and values for the oppressed and oppressors (Ponterotto, 2005; Creswell, 2013). Thus, identities of sociological relevance such as race, sex, and religion all factor into the experiences of individuals and groups (Creswell, 2013). As a researcher employs a critical lens, she or he also aims to learn from participants and change conditions of marginalization (Ponterotto, 2005; Creswell, 2013). My ontological viewpoint maintained that there is more than one experience of reality, which is dependent on the context of people's lives in relation to access to opportunities, marginalization, and empowerment. Thus, power dynamics shape how people experience reality by creating circumstances that dictate what is readily available to them.

My epistemological position was that truth is derived from an understanding informed by both the researcher and those being researched (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The transactional nature of this exchange allows for truth to be realized mutually between the investigator and the participant (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Ponterotto, 2005). In addition, the background, experiences, and values of the researched and the researcher influences the generation of knowledge (Ponterotto, 2005). For participants in this study, I assume some of these experiences involve poverty, racial discrimination and food insecurity which leads to a shared, value-based emphasis on the

need for social change. Methodologically, the relationship between the researched and the researcher was transactional and dialectic. Therefore, I sought to share values while transforming the accepted roles of participants through learning and subsequent empowerment (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Ponterotto, 2005). The transformation of marginal roles that youth hold in various capacities, including within their families, TMP, and the greater community takes place by exploring roles, relationships, and activities.

3.4 Research Design and Methods

A case study design served as the methodology for the present study because TMP represented only one setting that utilizes CG (Creswell, 2013). That is, the Males Place setting was examined as just one manifestation of how CG can be enacted to potentially facilitate SPD and PYD. Moreover, the use of an intrinsic case study, which explores distinct activities and relationships within a setting, was appropriate due to the unique processes that take place at TMP (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995). More specifically, the distinctive nature of The Males Place and its community gardening activities warranted a case study design to illuminate the potential development that occurs in that setting (Creswell, 2013). Both interviews and observations aided in gathering the meaningfulness of participant experience, as multiple forms of data collection are encouraged in case study designs (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2003). Using the within-site method of case study, I conducted interviews with former Warriors, also called graduates, to gain their perspective on how community gardening helped with their development (Rapport & Wainwright, 2006). A focus on understanding how critical consciousness and the Five C's were fostered for the young men through community

gardening with The Males Place guided the direct interaction between the researcher and the researched during interviews (Farber, 1967). During observations, I identified and documented instances of critical consciousness and development of the Five C's.

3.4.1. Setting entrée and involvement. In October of 2015 I was invited to a weekly meeting of The Males Place in Charlotte, North Carolina. At the time, I had recently moved to Charlotte, North Carolina and graduated from college a year prior. I accepted the invitation, and was immediately impressed with the program's pillars, participants, and role in the community. I became a regular attendee at meetings, and then joined the Saturday sessions at the program's community garden. In time, I was accepted as an Elder with the program, and eventually the responsibility of Mshauri of the Nubian Kingdom was bestowed upon me. I have been heavily involved with The Males Place since that time. I have worked to plan a Sankofa Educational and Cultural Enrichment Trip, deliver the food for weekly meetings, lead planting for the fall 2016 season, develop special event programs, and design a role system for program participants. I am, without question, invested in the program. These experiences equipped me with an intimate knowledge of TMP and a level of mutual respect that allowed participants to be comfortable with the interview and observation processes.

The Executive Director (ED) of The Males Place granted me permission to conduct the study in July 2017. His expectation was that I share my findings with the Executive Board of The Males Place so that they may understand the ways in which their program is carrying out its intended mission.

3.4.2 Participants. Upon turning 18 years of age, successfully finishing high school and obtaining the approval of Elders, Warriors graduate from The Males Place. A

purposive sample of 11 TMP graduates was recruited by phone and email using contact information shared by the ED. This sample of participants was intended to provide adequate breadth and depth in the data and rich description as themes emerged. TMP graduates varied by age (range: 19 to 39 years of age; mean age: 27 years) and length of time in the program before completion (see Appendix D). Only men who successfully completed The Males Place guided development process were invited to participate with the exclusionary factor being that they must have been involved with the program since 2009 (the inception of the community garden). The one exception to this exclusionary factor is a participant who graduated from TMP prior to 2009. His contributions were included because after completing the program he returned to serve as a Mshauri and has been involved with TMP community garden since its installation. The observations featured current program participants and spanned for five months in both the community garden and general meeting settings.

3.4.3 Interviews. Interviews served as the primary form of data collection because they permitted the researcher to learn the participants' experiences directly from their recollections (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) and allowed for an organic exchange of context-specific information between the participant and researcher (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Ponterotto, 2005). The unique setting of TMP required me to anticipate the emergence of unanticipated themes from participants in case novel ideas rose to the surface. Such themes reflected the worldview of former Warriors who developed in a novel way through the facilitation of community gardening.

Eleven participants were engaged in individual semi-structured interviews containing questions about their experiences with community gardening at TMP in

relation to the Five C's, critical consciousness, and organizational characteristics that foster empowering settings (Maton, 2008; Maton & Salem, 1995; Tseng & Seidman, 2007). I used the traveling method of interviewing, allowing participants to answer interview questions with no predetermined expectation of what responses would include. Before administration of the interview questions, consent was gained. Study participants received a $10 gift card for study participation.

Interviews were conducted in a room at the Mecklenburg County Health Department where TMP hosts its meetings, as well as via telephone. All but two TMP graduates resided in Charlotte, NC. TMP graduates were asked to create a pseudonym to protect their confidentiality during the interview. Interviews were approximately 30 minutes to 70 minutes in length. The interview protocol included fixed domains to guide the discussion as well as allow for novel themes to emerge. Following a brief demographic section, questions regarding the benefits, activities, knowledge and relationships gained through community gardening with TMP were asked. The interview period began at the end of Spring 2018 and lasted through late Fall 2018.

3.4.4 Observations. In addition to interviews, participant observations were utilized. Participant observations allowed me to witness explicit and tacit phenomena (e.g. spoken words and nonverbal cues) through inferences (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011; Li, 2008; Kawlich, 2005). Observations enabled me to witness themes as they occurred in the TMP setting by addressing research questions that required description (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002). The level of structure involved with participant observation was loose as participants interacted in a natural setting. My chosen level of involvement was complete or active participation, collecting data as someone engaged in the interplay between

subjects while also joining in the activities taking place (Spradley, 1980; Adler, & Adler, 1987; Kawulich, 2005). Observations were guided by investigating interactions that highlighted activities, relationships, roles and responsibilities and beliefs shared among group members (Maton, 2008). During observations, I was fully immersed in the culture and activities of TMP.

Participant observation occurred during regularly scheduled TMP meetings on Wednesday evenings as well as Saturday mornings at the community garden and typically lasted for two hours. Observations did not feature information collected from individuals and thus no consent was needed; however, an announcement was made about the observations at the first data collection during TMP meeting. To record these observations, I took notes at the time of observation. Shortly thereafter, I employed the process of using first-order concepts (e.g. setting and actual comments) to make second-order assumptions (e.g. inferences based on comments and body language; Van Maanen, 1979).

3.4.5 Data analysis. The data analysis process was deductive and inductive. Given the robust literature on the 5 C's and critical consciousness, I analyzed the data to determine whether themes would arise that were consistent with these models. This was the deductive element of the analysis as it provided confirmation of the tenets of the model within the study's case. The inductive part of the analysis had to do with the emergence of unique subthemes within and outside the model. That is, while the larger category of themes were aligned with the 5 C's, there were unique expressions of these categories not proposed by the model that arose. In addition, there were themes that emerged did not fit neatly into the 5 C's and critical consciousness. The use of both

deductive and inductive approaches helped to better understand the data and the specific contributions of the findings,

Responses were documented using an audio recording device and subsequently transcribed. Once data were collected, I reviewed the transcripts several times to begin the process of data analysis. Using thematic analysis, I completed an initial review of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg & Coleman, 2000) to identify ideas, concepts and repeating words that were then categorized into useful codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process was iterative and required me to visit and revisit the data given by participants to develop codes (Dye et. al, 2000). After generating codes and reflecting on what I gathered, I identified themes across the codes and assigned the codes into corresponding themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I performed this process until new themes fail to present; at which point I achieved theoretical saturation. In other words, data were collected until new data failed to provide additional insight. Further, as I reviewed themes, checking for consistency with codes and across data, I created a graphic representation in the form of a spreadsheet to organize findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This spreadsheet displayed the relationships within data formed by themes. I then named themes and defined them to comprise a clear report and a concept map (see Appendix C) to elucidate the relationships between them (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This concept map represents the inductive results and conclusions of my data analysis. There were, however, codes for which graduates did not present sufficient evidence to fully classify as independent themes.

Likewise, the field notes developed from participant observation were synthesized to identify recurring themes. Specific attention was given to concepts that arose

concurrently with the interview portion of the study. Theoretical saturation was sought

between the two forms of data collection and analysis to provide clear distinguishable

findings. Every theme generated included contributions from at least six of the TMP

graduates, while most themes featured statements from between nine and all eleven of

them. For this reason, theoretical saturation regarding the themes was achieved as

participants shared the varied nuances that comprised themes. As participants'

statements displayed concurrence with one another I realized theoretical saturation. It is

worth noting, however, that there were codes that began to form additional themes but

did not demonstrate enough consistency across participants and were therefore not

included.

3.5 Criteria for Findings Credibility and Inference Quality

     3.5.1 Reflexive practices. One way I addressed trustworthiness for the study was

by considering credibility. To begin, I wrote a statement describing my subjectivities as

they related to my involvement with The Males Place and my experiences as a Black

man. This act led me to consider the values and perspectives that I brought with me to

the research process, a practice which Shenton (2004) highlights as a key technique in

maintaining credibility. That awareness helped me manage my assumptions and consider

how those assumptions influenced the design, analysis, and interpretation of this study.

     Congruent with the aim to ensure trustworthiness, I utilized reflexive practices in

the study (Finlay, 2002). Reflexivity is the "thoughtful…self-awareness" of interaction

between the researcher and the researched in the context of the research process (Finlay,

2002, p. 532). This awareness helped me recognize the subjectivities that I brought to the

study so that I realized the influence of those subjectivities. I also maintained a

methodological log that contained important research decisions accompanied by the rationale for the decisions. The log did not help me, as an in-group member and researcher, to gain additional insight into the relationship between my positionality and the research process. However, as I conducted my analysis, I was able to track interpretive decisions I made about the data and record the rationale. Such decisions included rearranging codes from the competence category to the confidence category because of appropriate fit and situating the critical nature of SPD within the categories related to PYD to understand what strengths meant for TMP graduates in the context of being Black men.

      3.5.2. Multiplism. Multiplism is a method of ensuring credibility that required me to employ multiple forms of data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The use of multiple forms of data collection added richness to the study by providing more texture to the data that were collected (Patton, 2002). While following this strategy, I conducted interviews with TMP graduates and observations of current Warriors, Elders and parents; which provided different sources of data. Consequently, the data I received was rich and textured and allowed me to develop a fuller understanding of the experiences of the youth with CG at The Males Place (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Patton, 2002).

      3.5.3. Member checks. Lincoln and Guba (1985) assert the prominence of member checking as a tool of trustworthiness that can ensure an amount of credibility. Member checks involved confirming the statements and inferences acquired from participants through probing questions (Shenton, 2004). More specifically I employed a "lite" version of member checks by using clarifying questions throughout interviews.

4. RESULTS

The results of my analyses of interview and observational data are presented in the current section. Codes were initially generated and then compared to one another to form larger themes which delineate developmental processes that occurred through community gardening at TMP. Data were collected from the: (1) retrospective accounts of TMP graduates relating to their involvement in CG with TMP; and, (2) observations of current participants in TMP with an emphasis on developmental processes.

4.1 Outline of Findings

Within this chapter, I discuss themes that reflect the developmental process that TMP graduates, heretofore referred to as "graduates", experienced at The Males Place community garden. Themes are organized into categories informed by the PYD framework with attention to the unique ways they manifest among study participants. To begin, I discuss how graduates experienced gains in *competence* through CG and how that enabled them to contribute as assets to their community. Second, I discuss themes related to increased *confidence* stemming from CG activities and using CG activities to contribute to others' well-being. Next, I highlight a category that includes how graduates experienced *connection*; themes include The Males Place as a family, the teachings of Elders and working together as a team in CG. Following that, I present themes that reflect *character* which include working hard to produce positive results, characteristics of manhood, self-reliance, staying on the right path and accountability. In the final category, I discuss how *caring* is learned from CG activities at TMP. Importantly, present in all of these categories is the influence of guided development via TMP and engagement in activity that allowed graduates to *contribute* to their community.

4.2. Competence: What I Have Done

This is food that's going to not only give you energy but give you a self-consciousness and self-awareness that this is something you're capable of doing with your own bare hands. -Kwaku Blessing (39 years old, participant)

4.2.1 Food for power. My analysis revealed that the process of growing food enhanced graduates' perception of what they are capable of accomplishing as farmers. As graduates reflected on their experience with CG at The Males Place, all of them reported that they perceived gains in their agricultural knowledge and ability. Specifically, there was a recognition that they now possessed the capacity to create and foster the full growth cycle of something that is outside of themselves, and that recognition helped them view their new abilities as something of value. They not only had skills, they had skills to do something important.

They (CG activities) definitely made me feel like I was a hard worker and uh, just allowed me to know I was a part of something uh important and, bigger than myself, even though it's just within the group. You know, not many people are, you know, doing farm work or tilling or anything like that. -Lenny (22 years old)

The development of a sense of agricultural competence was linked directly to graduates being able to accomplish gardening activities. In their interviews, graduates recounted specific tasks that they were capable of completing:

I remember getting a tiller, a hoe and a couple of shovels and stuff. We had to make sure we took all the weeds out, we had to break up the ground, we had to make sure everything was spread out throughout the whole garden area and the garden it was maintained. -John (19 years old)

What allowed for graduates to become competent in these activities was the support and structure provided by Elders who demonstrated proper methods for harvesting produce and fielded questions from Warriors about what was ready to be picked. The consistent structure and support provided by CG in TMP setting seemed to facilitate graduates' developing key skills and employing them.

> I think because the elders, they wanted to, they wanted to give us a skill that they know nobody would be able to take from us. I remember that's what they always used to say. No matter what happens in the world or nothing… y'all are going to be able to know how to grow your own food. And even though I'm not active in the garden, or with a garden like I was when I was younger, I definitely still … know it like the back of my hand just from being out there every Saturday and just, uh, consistency. – Deon Friday (19 years old)

Summary: What I have done. The CG activities that graduates performed allowed them to see themselves as competent—possessing useful abilities—and allowed them to employ those in activities they considered important. Graduates, through community gardening, received informed guidance from Elders in the program. Analyses showed that this guided development supported them as they learned skills of practical value through engaging in CG which represented something "bigger than" themselves.

4.3 Confidence: What I Can Do

> They (Warriors are) able and capable of providing for themselves. So now you done built this person for *confidence*, you done built this person for accountability, you done built this person to be able to sustain themselves as a

human being and their natural ability to do that will show in them growing—what they grow. And then what they form around that. (The) ability to be able to grow and produce and protect and do all of those things are shown at the garden and what we're doing. - Kwaku Blessing

4.3.1 I am somebody. Because of the association between CG and manhood that TMP emphasized, nearly all graduates reported experiencing growth in their confidence. Analyses showed that in addition to leading to a sense of competency regarding agricultural work, CG also translated into positive feelings about what graduates could accomplish overall. As Blessing shared in the previous excerpt, being able to provide for oneself results in confidence in these young men. Consistent with Blessing's assertion, interviews with other graduates revealed that they believed they had the potential to be providers and protectors, which enhanced their confidence: *I mean it (tilling) made me feel like I could do more...doing something I never knew about, and it made me feel good about myself.*" (John). Similarly, Charles noted: "*It (CG activities) made me feel like it (anything) can be done if I'm willing to do it. Like whatever I think about, it's not impossible. The only question is how much are you willing to invest into this idea?*" Thus, graduates seemed to gain self-esteem as they experienced accomplishments due to their work in the garden. The knowledge that they possessed the ability to *do* transferred to an expectation that they *can* in other areas of life.

4.3.2 Ubuntu: I am because we are. Most graduates also experienced gains in confidence because they had the opportunity to contribute to others. One important feature of the belief system of TMP is duty to community and people. The confidence graduates gained was tied to this value, meaning graduates expressed gains in their self-

esteem because they used their skills to benefit the community. Brian (19 years old) agreed with this sentiment:

> It (CG) made me feel accomplished that I could do such things at a young age, because most young African-American men don't get to do these things at the age that I was when I did this— so around like 13 or 14. Most of them, I mean they're in school but they don't have that outlook on the community that would be a great impact on their life. - Brian Lewis

In his offering, Lewis mentioned the "outlook on the community" was the driving force that allowed his CG activities to boost his confidence. The importance of making contributions to one's self-esteem was echoed by other graduates. Anthony (22 years old), in his interview, described that his confidence was enhanced knowing that he was addressing an important need in the community:

> So, it made me feel good knowing that somebody's about to eat something tonight. Whether they bought it, or we gave it to them, it was like somebody who's struggling or somebody who's homeless, they got something to eat. They're not going to go hungry tonight. And it always be helping me feel good, that warm tingly sensation.

Summary: What I can do. In sum, graduates experienced important gains in confidence through their engagement with CG activities. However, it was not simply mastery or accomplishment of these tasks that led to increases in confidence. Rather, it was the perceived impact of those tasks, the fact that they benefitted the community and addressed needs that was important to the development of confidence in youth.

4.4 Connection: It Takes a Village

> Um, so first off I'll start by saying uh the Male's Place Garden has been a positive experience for all the young men in the group and I say this because we uh, not only get to *spend time with one another and form that brotherly relationship* with one another but it uh, allows us to produce our own food and we learn self-reliance. -Lenny

4.4.1 The Males Place Family. One defining feature about The Males Place is that it fostered a family-like environment, which analysis showed, also set expectations for graduates and made them feel supported. Almost every graduate shared how they felt that they belonged at TMP community garden. In the preceding passage, Lenny described how work in garden was valuable because it facilitated interactions that built bonds while teaching skills. Implied in that statement is the notion that the garden is a space that affords Warriors time get to know one another and create bonds with each other. Devon (19 years old) described the program as, "*bunch of people that at first you don't know but like pretty soon they become like family basically*." At several meetings various TMP attendants referred to the group as the "TMP Family". The garden facilitated a similar sense of belonging. John noted,

> So, me feeling like I belonged, my Saturdays were dedicated for going to the garden, I mean I always woke my mom up to go to the garden. It gave me something to do, some reason to get out the house.

In the previous excerpt, John expressed how his sense of belonging at the garden led to an excitement for garden detail on Saturday mornings. John wanted to spend time with

others doing CG activities—engaged in constructive work with the group. Caesar who was in the program a brief period added that, "*It was just good to be a part of it (TMP) especially as an African-American male*." (Caesar; 19 years old). This statement captured the worth of involvement with CG at TMP. Graduates realized that they can come together in a positive, supportive environment with other Black males.

The consistent presence and support offered by members of TMP facilitated the family-like environment. Warriors knew that at TMP there were people who attended to them and expected them to do well: "*And then you have family that care about you and they love you and they want to see you do good. And they (Elders) were like the family that pushed us because they wanted to see us achieve our goals.*" (Joe; 23 years old). Joe emphasized a major advantage to having a strong support system— the shared hope that an individual will do well. The supportive family environment fostered a sense of belonging and strong connections among graduates. The Males Place Family also helped keep graduates from ending up in dire situations. Perhaps Lewis illustrates best how the relationships at TMP benefit graduates:

> I think they (TMP members) made a great impact on my life because, truthfully, if I wouldn't have built these relationships and I wouldn't have joined this program I probably don't know where I would be in the recent years after I moved out here. Even if I hadn't have moved out here, if I would have stayed in DC, I don't know where I would've been, truthfully. I probably would've been in the streets or in jail. -Brian Lewis

The relationships shared within the group positively influenced graduates in multiple ways. They felt they belonged to a family, a family that provided them with

support and expectations to do well. TMP Family also kept graduates out of trouble by helping them realize what they should and should not do with their free time. Graduates experienced positive development due to the bonds they shared at TMP in the garden and meeting settings.

4.4.2 The Presence of Bull Elephants. The family environment fostered through the program facilitated a type of guided learning or mentoring of graduates in gardening skills. All graduates emphasized how the program model at TMP utilized Black men as guides for adolescent males both inside and outside of the CG setting. This concept parallels the importance of mature male elephants who regulate juvenile male elephants' behaviors. In the wild of Africa, juvenile elephants can be destructive and work against their best interest in the absence of bull elephants. When unchecked, they rampage and injure other elephants. However, when bull elephants are present, they stop the juveniles from detrimental behavior and demonstrate how male elephants should behave. Blessing offered his perspective as a current Elder in the program. "*I was the Mshauri over the Ashanti Kingdom, so I was responsible for leading the group of young men and doing mentoring.*" (Kwaku Blessing). Blessing's comments reflected an acknowledgement that his role as a Mshauri included leading others. Anthony's experience supported this statement. He gives his own account of what the Washauri did in TMP garden. "*We have a leader and a Mshauri who kind of guides us in our separate section. Like they teach us about the plant…*" (Anthony).

In the following excerpt Friday highlights that the Elders taught them the knowledge and skills necessary to work the garden. Without first learning from the Elders, graduates would not have had the agricultural knowledge necessary for CG

activities. Like other graduates, Friday emphasized that Elders made themselves available to help by making the Warriors feel as though they could ask questions about things they did not understand.

> I mean they just, whatever you needed to know, I would say all the Mshauris (Washauri) is an expert on gardening 'cause you can go to any of them, you know. It's something as simple as the way that you supposed to be weeding. It's the way that you hold the tool, you know. If you're not holding it right, you know, they'll point that out. You think you might be doing it right, but it just goes on with the, like I said, their knowledge. -Deon Friday

Important to note is that Elders did not simply instruct and oversee, they also demonstrated and worked alongside Warriors. According to graduates, Elders served as resources for agricultural knowledge and direction during CG activities. Elders coordinated work in TMP garden by working with Warriors and transmitting important agricultural practices. As Elders engaged graduates with the CG activities they experienced connection with each other that helped graduates to develop skills and contribute to others.

4.4.3 All hands on deck. Every graduate of TMP connected with others while working as a part of a team to contribute to others. To address the labor-intensive and often challenging seasonal conditions such as rain, mud, sunshine and heat, graduates employed a teamwork strategy for CG activities. Interviews captured that they all recalled working as a team to improve the function of CG activities, which permitted them to contribute the proceeds to community members and benefit later in life.

In the following excerpt, Lewis expressed how he worked as a part of a team, and how that arrangement affected productivity. His statement underscored the interdependent flow of work in TMP community garden. He presented an understanding of the garden as a larger operation that functioned using multiple parts.

> Yes, teamwork, teamwork was key... we can work as this team and we can knock these rows out: you till, you hoe, you rake, and we get it knocked out and we get out of here. So, teamwork is key to getting objectives done—don't just think you can do it all by yourself because you can't. -Brian Lewis.

Lewis recognized that TMP community garden is much larger in scope than what he could reasonably accomplish individually, therefore he valued when fellow Warriors upheld their end of responsibility. Guided by an emphasis on interdependence, the teamwork practices performed demonstrated the value of connection to others. Graduates learned through teamwork during CG both that it is important to collaborate with others and *how* to do so.

Graduates described how teamwork was executed during CG activities and underlined the interdependent dynamic that encouraged that connection. Some also shared the larger role that contribution through teamwork performed during CG activities has played for them overall. "*I mean it (CG activities) felt amazing because you're a part of a team that's actually trying to make a difference.*"(John). John understood that the team at TMP garden was seeking to make a larger difference by contributing to work that creates impact on others. Graduates also realized that their teamwork as adolescents at TMP benefitted them later. Caesar relayed the lesson he learned from his participation in CG at TMP community garden. "*Teamwork to be able to work with people and get*

things done. They're basic things but they impact life—they do have a big impact on life."(Caesar). The teamwork coordinated in TMP community garden setting helped graduates learn the practical value of working with others to create a positive impact which also had relevance for life after TMP.

Competition inspired more concentrated acts of teamwork among graduates. The garden is split into four quadrants representing the Ashanti, Nubian, Zulu and Dogon Kingdoms respectively, and oftentimes tasks were distributed by kingdom. Warriors collaborated with fellow kingdom members to attend to the plants in their kingdom. Moreover, the positive feelings that graduates experienced with a well-kept, productive kingdom motivated them to outperform other kingdoms.

And so it (CG activities) also gave a sense of competition. "This kingdom looks better than that kingdom or that kingdom looks better than that kingdom," everybody wanted to have the best kingdom. So, we always worked as a team, and if one team finished early, they would go help the next one because at the end of the day we in this together… This still our garden. -Jamar Smith (22 years old).

Smith emphasized the connection he shared with others by using teamwork to complete CG tasks evidenced by the statement, "at the end of the day *we (are) in this together*." Smith, even while being competitive with other kingdoms, still helped them finish their work. The orientation towards contribution led him to aid other kingdoms in the community garden.

Graduates not only connected through beneficial relationships but comprehended the significance of their teamwork. Through working together graduates learned how to be productive, competitive and interdependent as they sought to "make a difference."

Furthermore, these lessons in teamwork applied later in life. Again, the sense of

contribution was present reflecting how graduates were connected to one another as they

performed CG activities to benefit community members.

      Summary: It takes a village. Graduates connected with others in multiple ways

during their time in TMP community garden. They were welcomed into the family

environment and Elders taught them lessons of practical use. Positive bonds were further

developed as graduates collaborated with others in the garden to contribute to community

members. The Males Place CG activities provided graduates with shared beneficial

relationships that helped them to be productive and work collaboratively with others.

4.5 Character: Man Sharpens Man

      4.5.1 To reap what's been sown. Carrying out gardening activities helped build

aspects of graduates' character such as respect for cultural customs and performing

"acceptable" behaviors. Caesar, for example, noted, "*The garden was a great way of*

learning what responsibility really is— it's doing what you don't want to do so later you

can reap the rewards." Practicing responsibility through CG, then, allowed the graduates

to conduct acceptable behavior. Analysis demonstrated how TMP taught every graduate

to associate productivity with doing the right thing:

> I would say it (roles and responsibilities) had a good impact because in the end as
>
> we knocked each task out, we would see the results by the end of the season…
>
> And it's like since it's during the heat you had to attend to it more. The heat
>
> caused the water to dry out so it's like we got to tend to it multiple times
>
> throughout the week. Sometimes we would turn the weekly meetings into weekly
>
> garden (detail) so we wouldn't go to the health department, we would go to the

garden and work on it. That way we could get it ready for the Blessing of the

Harvest at the end of the Fall, and we turn it over and get ready for the Fall and

Winter… So, the more attentive we were to it the (more) produce came out of it. -

Brian Lewis.

In the previous excerpt, Lewis shared his recollection of CG activities which

highlighted his experiences doing the right thing in TMP community garden. His account

of responsibilities shows that he was aware of seasonal conditions that affect the garden,

and how practicing the acceptable behaviors can mitigate those circumstances.

Furthermore, Lewis alluded to a major TMP staple, The Males Place Blessing of the

Harvest, which is at once a civic agriculture forum, a charitable event for local elderly, a

fundraiser and a spiritual ceremony for praise and invocation. This anticipation of "The

Blessing," as it is commonly referred, is significant because it demonstrated a respect for

an important cultural event for which Warriors needed to work hard to prepare.

Others further exhibited their orientation to do the right thing by making

conscious efforts to prioritize CG at TMP. *I mean we actually took time out our day on*

a fun weekend to actually go to a garden and to actually relieve stress and actually do

something productive instead of something that's just a waste of time." (John). John's

perspective regarding the productivity of working in the garden revealed an orientation

towards engaging in acceptable behaviors to produce positive results. Character

development occurred as graduates gained an understanding of standards for behavior by

prioritizing CG activities over leisure.

Several graduates offered how it *felt* for them to engage in CG that allowed them

to the right thing. For them, engaging in productive work in the TMP setting became

more important because of the positive feelings associated with performing acceptable

behavior. Devon shared in the following excerpt how it felt for him to do CG work:

> It felt good to like get up in the morning and um, just like do something
>
> productive. Like you'd go home after and just uh, your day would already be
>
> started off on a good note, you know what I mean? -Devon

Graduates' appreciation for doing the right thing extended into an understanding of the

transferable value of hard work. Graduates learned that in the face of challenges a firm

work ethic can move them towards their goals. In the following passage, Caesar

described his perspective on the applied value of hard work:

> Well first it (CG activities) let me know that it was going to be hard work, but
>
> doing the right thing isn't always going to be easy. But through hard work
>
> eventually you get to your goal and then once you get to your goal it's one of the
>
> best feelings ever. -Caesar

> Beyond the appreciation for hard work that accompanied CG, there was also a

practical application. At the garden Elders shared repeatedly with current Warriors that

doing right thing should reach past the confines of adolescence and the physical garden.

As such, Joe discussed his major takeaway from working in TMP garden:

> It's good because you know a lot of Warriors never had a job. You know, and you
>
> get on to job, you work harder than everyone because when you work at the
>
> garden, if you stop working you got everything to lose. If you keep on working,
>
> you work hard, you got everything to gain. -Joe

> Graduates' responses demonstrated their development of character by learning to

do the right thing using CG. By practicing acceptable behaviors as established by TMP,

they realized the worth of hard work and the positive feelings associated with doing the right thing and gained respect for cultural events. These lessons also translated to other areas of life as graduates shared their current work ethic has benefitted from lessons learned during CG activities.

      4.5.2 The makings of a man: The 3 P's. The Males Place intends to develop men and defines men as providers, protectors and problem-solvers; the standards of behavior for graduates. Contributions from the majority of graduates clarified both why and how TMP taught those standards of behavior. Blessing, a graduate who returned to become a Mshauri with The Males Place offered his view on his experiences with CG. *"You're growing young Warriors into being men and being—to be out there and doing what needs to be (done) for the community, so providing, protecting and producing makes you feel like a man."* (Kwaku Blessing). Blessing alluded to how his role in the community garden as a Mshauri represents his obligation as a man to do good for the community and added to his political efficacy. That is, CG activities in TMP setting enabled him to contribute as well as see that he can be an agent of change as a provider, protector and problem-solver. When asked about the purpose of the community garden being included at TMP he shared, *"The community garden was included at TMP because if we are going to talk about manhood and manhood training, we also got to talk about providing and producing."* (Kwaku Blessing).

      Other graduates echoed similar qualities of manhood and shared how involvement in CG with TMP related directly to their understanding of how to conduct themselves. Analyses indicated that graduates learned principles of manhood that direct fathers and husbands.

As (TMP Executive Director; ED) said the three main things that a man should do

for his family; protect, provide and guide… Providing, that's where the garden

comes in where you can provide healthy, nutritional fruits and vegetables for your

family without having to go to the supermarket and guiding that's the wisdom

they give you, you can give your family down the road. -Brian Lewis

Lewis captures the essence of TMP precisely as it pertains to the community

garden and its function as a means for production. For instance, he clarified that a man is

responsible as a provider. Therefore, the duty that comes with manhood inherently

includes being able to feed your family—with an emphasis on healthy food.

"Think as if you're working for your family, you got to provide." He (ED) said,

"Are you going to be laughing and talking majority of the time or are you going to

get down in there because you want to make the garden pretty? Get down in there

so you'll be able to feed your wife and kids," -Joe

Here, Joe identified the correlation between working diligently in TMP garden

and being able to provide for your family. He harkened back to his days in the garden

and recalled that, even as a Warrior, TMP leadership challenged him to consider his

future role as a provider. This helped solidify his understanding of his responsibility as a

father and a husband. Smith added by offering the following about why he believed CG

was included at The Males Place:

I remember somebody saying if something was to ever happen whether if we lost

our job or something, we could always have a means of providing for our family.

We'll say, if one day the supermarket or whatever—Wal-Mart or somewhere like

that—closed down and stopped selling produce; *we're not going to go hungry*.

It's teaching us, you can do this, we're showing you. You can grow…everything

that they're selling, you can grow yourself. -Jamar Smith

In the previous excerpt, Smith illuminated how CG activities transcend simply

providing food for loved ones, but also relate to the protection and problem-solving

aspects of manhood. He described a problematic, realistic situation, and shared his

ability to address the basic need of food as a result of his participation in CG with TMP.

In this statement Smith demonstrates his understanding that men can solve issues and do

not shrink from their responsibilities as a husband, father and community member.

Providing, problem-solving or guiding, and protecting are key elements of

manhood according to TMP. As such the 3 p's are related to standards for acceptable

behavior, and graduates illustrated how their CG experiences prepared them in those

three domains. The roles assumed by graduates doing CG at TMP included contribution

as they learned to feed their family and community members. As a result, they can feed

themselves and their families as well as address common challenges with food insecurity.

4.5.3 Self-reliance: He who feeds you controls you. *"The garden, to me I think

the garden is like what The Males Place represents, what The Males Place is trying to do.

Make you independent, make you stronger, make you self-dependent, but also teach you."*

(Deon Friday). Central to the orientation of being a provider, protector and problem-

solver is the concept of self-reliance. Graduates discussed how the program emphasized

Black men as independent actors and the process for how self-reliance became associated

with acceptable behavior: *"They (Elders) just like implant the… mindset like 'Strong

Black Man, Strong Black Man', you know what I'm saying?...alright you, you shouldn't

have excuses, you should depend on yourself."* (Devon). In the previous offering Devon

explicitly stated the importance placed on self-reliance at TMP and how it was directly correlated with Black manhood. Self-reliance, then, became associated with strong Black manhood. Lenny adds, *"The garden was put there so that you could do for yourself and not need anybody else necessarily to be a Strong Black Man."* (Lenny). "Strong Black Men" is an affirmation that the group shouts at the close of meetings after coming together fists raised in the air to remind themselves of their roles. The concept is critical to the teachings of the program and thus many of the practices, including self-reliance, aim to bring TMP Warriors to being Strong Black Men.

> It showed me...that you can do a lot more with what you have. Like that part of land could have just been another basketball court. But no, the Elders decided we're going to turn this into a garden, teach boys how to farm. Things like that. It showed me to make more of what you have. -Caesar.

In the preceding passage Caesar highlights an important aspect of self-reliance; ingenuity. TMP utilized 5,000 square feet of land in a local park to place the community garden. It was ingenuity that enabled TMP to recognize the park as a location to teach Warriors about self-reliance. As other graduates discussed how they benefitted from their CG activities the significance of self-reliance was repeated. *"I mean just learning how to actually grow something myself and be more self-reliant on what I can do that I didn't know I could do."* (John). John made it clear that prior to CG he did not know how to grow food and rely on himself. This is key to the development of his character as he realized that he could and *should* do. In the following excerpt, Blessing offers the mindset that many people in Black communities have adopted. He underscored the

origins of this crippling mindset and how CG in TMP garden has changed his idea of what he should be able to do.

> A lot of people was giving us feedback. "Well, why y'all going to do a garden in the park?" or "Why y'all doing a garden, period?" You know the stigma or theme that's been put on farming goes back to slavery so, you know, trying to get that mindset clear that that's not what it is. You got to eat. So you grow or you buy from the grocery store. You going to feed yourself or you're going to starve. Being able to do that made me realize that we do have a way of life and we have not been practicing it based on what other people and cultures have placed upon us. So, it made me feel like we could be independent, we could do it. -Kwaku Blessing.

The legacy of chattel enslavement of Africans here in the United States is vile and reverberates. More than a century after the legal emancipation of enslaved people the stigma with Blacks in agriculture persists. Blessing described negative input he initially received from community members as a result of that legacy and delineated the role of CG in breaking those notions by providing Black men with an avenue for self-reliance. By practicing self-reliance, educating and feeding community members graduates also participated in critical action. They acknowledged the oppressive legacy of enslavement and acted to address the need in their community.

Graduates learned and performed a practical form of self-reliance that helped them learn about their role as well as how to practice ingenuity. Through involvement in CG they acquired an understanding of their role in society as people who do not depend

on others to meet their needs. TMP taught them how to be Strong Black Men who could take critical action to meet the needs of themselves and their families.

4.5.4 The Males Place mantra: Staying on the right path.

I watch my thoughts. They become my words.

I watch my words. They become my actions.

I watch my actions. They become my character.

I watch my character. It determines my destiny.

Values are categories of commitment and priorities which enhance or diminish human possibilities. As a result of the manhood training I am receiving at The Males Place, I have a positive focus on my thoughts, word, actions, character and destiny. Which will enhance my possibilities, thus benefiting myself, my family, my community and my people.

The preceding passage is The Males Place mantra, a set of principles that is recited at the start of weekly TMP meetings. It is both a guiding tool and a reminder of the standards which TMP Warriors and Elders should uphold. In fact, TMP's mantra is displayed on a large sign at the anterior of the community garden for all members and visitors to see. At one TMP meeting an Elder explained the meaning behind the words in the mantra, and how it translates to life. He examined how decisions can lead to problematic behavior and eventual patterns of maladaptation. Interviews with graduates indicated that reciting the mantra and its application in the community garden led them to perform acceptable behaviors later in life.

So, the garden is helping instill… keep a firm mindset. If you feel like you want to do something, keep your mind to it and keep going and don't let anybody veer you from that path. -Jamar Smith.

Most graduates cited how TMP mantra and CG aided them later in life. Smith was able to return to his time in TMP community to remind himself to focus on tasks. Lewis talked about how the mindset that accompanied TMP's mantra kept him away from trouble:

So, it's like you got to stop, breathe and think. Recite the mantra in your mind because I've had to do it a couple times. You be like, "Hey, words turn into actions," you got to realize whatever you going to say there's going to be a consequence behind it, so you got to put it into that perspective. -Brian Lewis.

The graduates who contributed the previous excerpts offered how TMP's mantra and their participation with CG presented an alternative thought process— or minimally— a new perspective to decision making. Thus, staying on the right path became synonymous with the teachings of TMP's mantra and CG activities. In the following passage Charles added that CG activities did more than help him stay on the right path but helped him recognize the divergent paths that some of his peers had taken. Through participation with The Males Place he determined when he needed to break ties with them to ensure his own well-being.

It (CG activities) kind of helped me like…push out all of the extra, like things that I shouldn't want to entertain it just kind of made me think that there's no reason to do that because I got a lot of things going on, I got a lot on my plate. It kind of actually pushed me from certain people just because like I can see we're not going

on the same path so I can't really kick it with you like that no more because we're not doing the same things. -Charles.

Graduates also discussed how their view of CG activities guides them in their lives currently. Smith still considered the consequences of his actions just as when the Elders impressed TMP's mantra upon him as an adolescent:

As far as with the elders I want to say they help me with work experience— helped me with my work ethic, my whole demeanor as far as everything because they were the ones that made sure we did the mantra twice a week. It was like it was just drilling it in my head. And I still use it to this day, and I might not remember it all word-for-word but I still remember, "I need to watch this or this going to happen..." -Jamar Smith

Community gardening and TMP mantra helped graduates orient themselves towards doing the right thing. They were socialized by TMP expectations of manhood as they followed the guide of the mantra and applied it to CG activities. The lesson of "staying on the right path" through CG activities played a larger role in development than simply agricultural knowledge but allowed graduates to recognize the benefit in doing the right thing.

4.5.5 Accountability: Word is bond.

Um just because…how we wanted everything to be and how we knew it had to be because the garden, that was all like—that was just all our thing like, that wasn't nobody else coming helping us out or, like that was just The Male's Place, that was our garden. So… if nobody was going to do for it, we had to do for it. So,

you know, *it was always a big thing*. Everybody coming out there doing what we got to do to make sure that the garden's looking nice. -Deon Friday

One popular theme from nearly all interviews and observations was the relevance of accountability for Black men when conducting themselves. In the previous passage, Friday highlighted the sense of ownership and obligation that was shared at TMP community garden. This is evidenced by him offering that "it was always a big thing" for them to rely on one another to take care of the garden after making it clear that no outsider was accountable for coming in to manage it.

These perspectives of the garden were reinforced through CG participation and applied more generally to other areas in the life cycle of Black men. At the close of a TMP garden detail, the Elders gave thanks to the warriors for their work in the garden and highlighted the benefit of tasks completed. They then spoke of the importance of maintaining the garden and not just "casting your seed and leaving". The concept of casting the seed was paralleled to fatherhood and the commitment of a father to his children. It was made clear in no uncertain terms that Black men do what they must to provide for their families, and do not abandon their children. When asked about the purpose of the community garden at TMP, Caesar had the following to say: "*One, to show the Warriors what responsibility is because eventually they're all going to have to get jobs, support their families. Responsibility is key, that's one thing all men have to participate in.*" (Caesar). Caesar acknowledged that CG at TMP is, in part, a strategy to build the sense of accountability in Black men. Community gardening, within the context of TMP, is comprised of a set of practices that can be used to intentionally support the development of morality and obligation in Black youth.

Charles furthered the case for accountability by discussing the realization he had after practicing CG at TMP. "*I guess it made me feel like I have the capacity to be responsible.*" (Charles). This excerpt suggests that involvement with CG activities not only introduced the concept of accountability but allowed Warriors to demonstrate to themselves that they can be agents of accountability while doing the right thing. Similarly, Smith talked about what it meant to be accountable at TMP garden:

> If I did miss a day the garden, it's like dang "I could have helped out one way or another—I could of did this, I could have did that." Because even with the work inside the garden, there's still work to be done around the garden. -Jamar Smith

Smith shared the thought process of an individual who has accepted accountability for the garden but has missed a session. The thought process included concerns about how he did not play his part in the overall success of the garden but thought about what he could have done. Also on display, was his orientation towards contribution as he considered how he could have helped others who are also accountable for TMP community garden. These cognitions illuminate how salient accountability became for him and how he was committed to doing the right thing.

As with other lessons at TMP community garden, the aim was that accountability would be applied in other settings as well. Graduates learned through CG activities how to uphold responsibilities. The responsibility of garden upkeep was paralleled to men supporting their families and the many other obligations that they often maintain. At TMP community garden graduates learned how they can keep themselves accountable to and practice acceptable behaviors.

Summary: Man sharpens man. Graduates expressed that CG helped to foster their character. Community gardening reinforced that they should work hard to produce positive results as they learned to fulfill the role of a provider, protector and problem-solver. Furthermore, graduates shared what they learned about being a self-reliant, Strong Black Man and how to remain on the correct path using TMP mantra. They also reflected on their lessons in accountability at TMP community garden which is, perhaps, the basis for other forms of character development. Graduates also expressed that they contributed to others as their character developed and they took part in critical action by addressing a community need.

4.6 Caring: A Helping Hand

4.6.1 My brother's keeper. Community gardening at The Males Place garden afforded Warriors the chance to sympathize and empathize with others because of their orientation towards contributing to others' well-being. Due to the rigor of many CG activities TMP participants, especially newer, younger Warriors, would sometimes struggle with tasks. Oftentimes, Elders and more experienced Warriors would recognize the struggle and attempt to aid them. Most graduates shared how they recognized struggle and what steps they took to show compassion for others. In the following passage Smith explains how he helped a smaller Warrior after witnessing him struggle with a mechanical tiller.

> I've seen one of the younger guys—he wasn't but so big—but soon as he…he couldn't use it (the tiller) at first, but I helped him practice with it and once he started getting the hang of it he had better control than some of the guys that was older than him and bigger than him. (Interviewer: Mmm) So as far as if you put

> your mind to it, you can go. And he kept… he did it and we was all proud of him
>
> for that part. -Jamar Smith

Smith identified that his fellow Warrior needed assistance and set aside time to help him.

His willingness to help underscored his desire contribute to the success of others.

Consequently, when the Warrior displayed improvement using the tiller, the others in

TMP also expressed pride for him which further illustrated their concern for the success

of others. TMP participants cared about others and TMP community garden provided the

setting for them to exercise sympathy.

> The caring outlook reinforced in Warriors through CG also translated to other

areas. This was demonstrated by other graduates who shared similar experiences of

expressing their concern for others in need of help.

> It (relationships in TMP) always made me want to do the right thing outside of the
>
> Males Place but always in the Males Place too 'cause you know as I got older,
>
> you know, I started becoming one of the older warriors so you know, when new
>
> guys came in and newer guys, young guys and new—uh, that were new into the
>
> program you know, you just got to let them know, you know, let them know what
>
> the program is about and what it can definitely could do for you. And you know,
>
> how you've got to look at things even though you might not want to. -Deon
>
> Friday.

In the preceding excerpt, Friday talked about helping other, newer Warriors as he

matured in the program. One way that he helped was to share the beneficial nature of

The Males Place with them. This represents an instance of empathy because Friday also

stated that when he first joined TMP he was reluctant to accept the program. During his

time participating in CG and other TMP activities he realized the value of what he learned at TMP and that he needed to reach out and help younger Warriors who may have been struggling with joining TMP.

Similarly, Joe understood the importance of expressing sympathy for fellow Warriors. In the following passage Joe discussed how he would approach a Warrior and provide solace after recognizing that the Warrior was upset.

> Baba Reggie (ED) actually helped us with that, if someone felt down, you know, it was uh… you know, you would go to them and talk to them, "Hey man, anything you want to talk about?" because at the end of the day he (ED) always said we're family. So even if we done something embarrassing, or something crazy, something we're not proud of; we're able to come to the Elders or the Warriors. -Joe.

Here, Joe recognized when others were discouraged and possessed the ability to support them. Central to this recognition and support process is the underlying empathy that comes with having done something that you are "not proud of" and then helping others when they have their own unsavory moments. Joe also explicitly stated that a TMP Elder highlighted the importance of caring for others in line with the contributive orientation of TMP.

> I didn't know it all, but I had a general concept on a lot of the things, and I was able to help the younger Warriors that were coming up. A lot of the guys—that was their first time even in a garden, first time even digging dirt, planting seeds or anything like that. A lot of them struggled with planting and doing all the maintenance that we needed to do for the garden. So being able to teach them and

help them strengthen their weaknesses because that's what we should do in life.

Instead of trying to pull each other down, let's strengthen weaknesses. -Jamar

Smith.

In the preceding statement Smith illuminated his overall approach to supporting others,

explaining *why* he cares to help others. The disposition towards aiding others manifests

through teaching and helping others who are noticeably struggling. After setting the

context for the sympathy he practiced through CG activities, he shared that his general

outlook for life was that we should help to strengthen other's shortcomings. This again

supported the orientation towards contributing to the well-being of others which is

emphasized through CG at TMP.

Summary: A helping hand. Work in the community garden provided the

platform for graduates to learn about caring. They displayed care for others by checking

in with those who seemed down and supporting those who were struggling. In some

cases, the care being exhibited was empathetic in nature as graduates related to others

who had similar experiences. Overall, the recognition that Warriors should and could

help others was reinforced by the contributive nature of community gardening with TMP.

5. DISCUSSION

Theory and research findings suggest that Black youth develop in prosocial ways even under adverse circumstances. This can be accomplished through purposeful participation in their communities (Ginwright, 2007, Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007). Two developmental models, Positive Youth Development (PYD) and Sociopolitical Development (SPD), explain how youth develop strengths to successfully combat challenges they face and highlight the importance of environmental factors in youth development (Benson, 1997; Damon, 2004; Lerner, 2000; Watts, Williams & Jagers, 2003). Some forms of civic engagement that may foster PYD and SPD, namely civic agriculture have not been examined. Given the lack of inquiry, the purpose of this study was to explore the role that CG plays in the development of Black youth through the lens of PYD and SPD. This was accomplished through a case study that involved interviews and observations of participants within a manhood development organization called The Males Place, INC. (TMP). TMP specializes in the development of Black male youth and, in part, uses an organic community garden as a method to achieve its aim. Because of their unique approach to the development of Black youth, TMP was deemed a suitable program for the study of the role that CG plays in the development of Black male youth.

The results of my analyses suggest that CG as a facilitator of Black youth development cannot be separated from the context in which it occurs. In this study, that context was TMP. This program characterized contribution as an aspect of manhood. Thus, CG was viewed as valuable because it was viewed as an expression of manhood. The program also supported youth in developing the skills to be effectively engaged in CG. Elders provided an intentional, constructive and consistent structure for youth

engaged in CG activities. As youth took advantage of the opportunity to contribute to their communities, they developed in the 5 C's. Included in Appendix C is a concept map which illustrates these processes. The current study did not find substantial evidence supporting the existence of sociopolitical development by way of CG with TMP.

5.1 TMP Approach to Development

Previous literature supports the position that settings play a pivotal role in the PYD and SPD of youth (Diemer & Hsieh, 2008; Kirshner & Ginwright, 2012; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Watts, Williams & Jagers, 2003; Watts & Flanagan, 2007; Watts, Griffith & Abdul-Adil, 1999) and specifically outside-of-school-time programs (Murray & Milner, 2015; Watts, Griffith & Abdul-Adil, 1999). Manhood development programs such as TMP are outside-of-school-time programs that serve four functions: create "nurturing relationships" that engage young men; present young men with opportunities for personal advancement; build the competencies needed to pursue those opportunities; and build self-esteem so the young men feel confident and worthy of success (Watts, 1993). Based on that definition, these programs also foster components of the PYD 5 C's framework, namely competence, confidence and connection (Damon, 2004; Lerner, 2000; Lerner, 2002; Lerner, 2009; Lerner et al., 2011).   Results from the present study showed that TMP satisfies the criteria for manhood development programs by using CG to provide an opportunity to develop the 5 C's.   Manhood development organizations that serve Black youth utilize two perspectives to address oppression (Ferguson, 1990; Watts, 1993). Black consciousness, the raising of cultural awareness and self-efficacy, was utilized to develop Black male youth (Watts, 1993). The Males Place utilized the Black consciousness approach in its developmental model, as evidenced by the Strong

Black Men affirmation and emphasis on the role of men as providers, protectors and problem-solvers. TMP community garden presented a setting that incorporated critical perspectives while engaging graduates in productive, skill-building activities with others.

  5.1.1 The value of contribution. Recent literature asserts the importance of contribution as well as the other 5 C's in reducing youth delinquency while increasing prosocial skills (Case, 2017; Lerner, 2004; Lerner & Lerner, 2010). TMP placed value on acts that contribute to others by characterizing contribution as an important aspect of manhood. As graduates interacted with TMP as youth, the idea was impressed upon them that it is important for men to possess the willingness and ability to give back to others. For example, the concept of men as providers that was emphasized at TMP is rooted in the ability of men to contribute to others. This contribution was usually dedicated to family members but also extended into the community. Therefore, graduates were socialized into an understanding that they could and *should* give back to others in their community (Bowers et al., 2010; Lerner, 2004).

  Perhaps the prosocial gains and reduction in delinquency that accompany youth contribution are influenced by an understanding of the value of contribution (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). By contributing to others, youth realize that they are resources themselves who have something to offer to their ecological environment. Indeed, Mariano and Damon (2008) postulate that contribution to others and sense of purpose are integral to youth development. TMP's assignment of value to contributive acts may have amplified a sense of purpose for graduates that further progressed their development. Community gardening was presented as an opportunity to contribute, and because contribution was central to manhood, CG became an opportunity to exercise manhood

qualities. Graduates knew, however, that CG was not the only way in which men could

contribute and that their role as contributors reached past their obligation in the

community garden—and carried with them the desire to do for others.

    5.1.2 Guided development using CG. The Males Place provided a setting in

which community gardening functioned as a bridge to contributing to one's community

and thus fulfilling a key aspect of manhood. The bridge, supported by TMP-branded

socialization, social support and skill-building, empowered youth to contribute to their

community. The role of setting as a mechanism of empowerment is supported by

existing literature on empowering community settings for youth development (Maton,

2008; Maton & Salem, 1995). The organizational characteristics of empowering

community settings help elucidate how this process occurs at TMP. Relevant

characteristics include a group-based belief system, core activities, a relational

environment, and opportunity role structure (Maton, 2008). The Strong Black Man

affirmation along with TMP mantra reflect the practices and belief system that shape

involvement with TMP community garden. These elements formed the basis for many of

the gains in character that graduates experienced as they participated in acceptable

behavior. Notably, the core activity that TMP employed to reinforce the group-based

belief systems was community gardening. CG reciprocally reinforced the gains made

with character development as graduates actively learned the practical value of hard work

and the importance of self-reliance during community gardening. Similarly, the many

ways in which graduates experienced connection added to the relational environment at

the community garden. They learned to be interdependent as they worked in teams,

learned from Elders and shared a sense of belonging within TMP setting. Significantly,

CG afforded graduates the opportunity to participate in community action. While in TMP, graduates had the chance to fulfill various roles by tilling, harvesting, planting and watering to ensure the functioning of the community garden.

The framing of CG activity as a means to practice being a provider, protector and problem-solver increased the significance of the activity because of how TMP used those roles to define manhood. TMP garden provided all graduates with the chance to contribute to the overall productivity. Many similarities are shared between the current study and Allen et al.'s (2008) study which also found that CG affords Black youth the opportunity to engage in constructive activity that build skills, competencies and interpersonal relationships. The two community gardens investigated in their inquiry rose from a violence reduction initiative and were more loosely structured than TMP. These programs did not feature guiding mantras, kingdom groups or ceremonial gatherings such as the Blessing of the Harvest. Therefore, the current study illustrated how highly structured CG with proscribed value can progress Black youth development. By incorporating CG into their program TMP was able to put forth productive contributors to their communities.

5.1.3 Giving back to others through CG. Consistent with existing literature, graduates viewed CG as an opportunity to serve a public purpose and meet community needs (Schusler, Krasny, Peters & Decker, 2009) as they maintained a well-kept garden that fed community members. As graduates progressed through TMP program, they contributed time and effort to fellow Warriors, Elders, parents and community members through engagement in community gardening. It was impressed upon graduates that they needed to be assets to others to successfully matriculate to manhood and lessons taught in

the community garden bolstered the contributive orientation. TMP's success with building its Warriors as contributors parallels other CG programs with similar populations (Allen et al., 2008; Draper & Freedman, 2010). However, while both the present study and Allen et al.'s (2008) study observed current garden members, the previous study interviewed current gardeners as well. The present study required individuals who, for the most part, were no longer engaged in CG with TMP to retrospectively reflect on the role of CG. By focusing on participants who have already grown to adulthood, this study allowed me to assess how their gains made in development display into adulthood. Thus, The Males Place community garden was studied as a platform used to provide graduates with the opportunity to contribute to the well-being of others, therefore progressing their own development towards manhood.

5.1.4 Contribution as *the* platform that supports the 5 C's. Graduates benefitted from the external strength of participation in TMP community garden setting. One model that highlights the internal strengths of youth is the Five C's construct, which is comprised of competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring/compassion (Bowers et al., 2010; Heck & Subramaniam, 2009). The strengths which comprise the Five C's interact with one another to varying degrees as youth mature (Bowers et al., 2010; Lerner, 2002; Lerner et al., 2011). More recent literature has identified that a 6th C, contribution, emerges in the presence of the other five (Bowers et al., 2010; Lerner, 2004). When youth display competence, confidence, character, connection and caring they also contribute positively to the institutions with which they interact.

The present study adds an alternative understanding of the role of contribution as it relates to the 5 C's. The community garden is introduced by TMP as a facilitator of

contribution and a necessary element in the development of Black male youth into productive men. Interviews with graduates who had all performed CG activities reflected how they contributed to others due to the emphasis placed on contribution at TMP. The desire to contribute to others was underscored by an understanding that community members experienced challenges with food access, which suggests a degree of critical reflection. In light of the realization that they could be productive contributors to others, they developed forms of competence, confidence, character, connection and caring. This expands the common understanding of how youth develop contribution as a strength. Contribution, as it relates to graduates, was the context in which other, more internal forms of development occurred.

5.1.5 The lack of evidence for SPD. The role of community gardening in the progression of sociopolitical development remains to be established. Based on the responses gathered from graduates in the present study, I was not able to reach defendable conclusions about how youth develop critical consciousness while at The Males Place. Due to the nature of SPD and the understanding of critical consciousness as progression through stages, inquiry into SPD may have been better suited using a quantitative method. Namely, surveys may have been a useful tool because of the emphasis on behavioral indicators in SPD. Moreover, it is difficult to ask exploratory questions regarding one's orientation towards rectifying resource imbalances without asking leading questions. Although the current study was not able to validate the role of CG in SPD, it would be premature to state there is no connection.

Schusler et al. (2009) assert that community gardens serve as mechanisms for youth to assume a public purpose and get involved in efforts that addresses community

needs. Participation in efforts which address community needs and bring change to the ecological environment is consistent with the critical action aspect of SPD. Moreover, the practice of gardening when viewed as a part of the community life becomes relevant in the context of food system inequities. It appears that the consideration of and action to eradicate those inequities through community gardening would foster SPD (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007; Watts, Griffith & Abdul-Adil, 1999; Watts, Williams & Jagers 2003).

Future inquiry should more intentionally explore the role of CG in SPD. If approached with a similar methodology, the interview guide should be equipped with questions crafted specifically to answer matters relating to SPD. The present study employed an interview guide that focused more on PYD and, as such, rich data pertaining to PYD were gained from the interviews. Additionally, the 5-stage model of SPD may not be as useful to analyze interview responses. For instance, graduates may have undergone some level of SPD so if an individual had progressed into one of the later stages, it would be difficult to see evidence of their actual progression through the stages. Future researchers should consider the components of critical consciousness— critical reflection, political efficacy and critical action when developing the interview guide to measure the existence of SPD (Watts, Diemer & Voight, 2011).

5.2 Limitations

The results presented in this study cannot be separated from the context in which they were executed. By using an intrinsic case study design I explored the unique ways in which CG was employed at TMP community garden (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995). Due to the unique nature of CG activity at TMP findings cannot readily be generalized to other dissimilar settings (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). As such, the gains in PYD and

SPD that graduates experienced may not occur in other guided development programs. Findings of this inquiry are not definite; they simply represent possibilities for how Black youth can experience development through community gardening. While results shed light on TMP's practices, they may vary between programs.

One limitation of the current study was that graduates were only interviewed one time. The limited number of interactions with graduates restricted the ability to clarify both existing themes and novel themes offered during interviews. If I had conducted follow-up interviews with graduates, I would have been able to more deeply explore unanticipated themes, such as CG activities providing the platform for program members to issue "tough love" to one another. A minority of graduates offered insight into how they connected with other program members through tough love at TMP. This concept is not one that I planned to emerge, and I did not include questions in the interview guide related to tough love therefore I was not able to draw in-depth conclusions or pursue it with other graduates. Multiple interviews with graduates would have provided additional clarity about how tough love and other novel themes factor into the CG activities that facilitated development.

Another limitation to the present study is the possibility of selection bias. The names and contact information of the sample were provided by the Executive Director of TMP. It is possible that those graduates who remained in contact with the ED are those who had the most favorable views of CG in TMP. In addition, not everyone who was identified on the list participated, thus, these findings may not reflect the full breadth of experiences graduates had with CG and TMP. The use of observations helped to mitigate some of these limitations by supplying data that converged with the interviews.

5.3 Implications for Community Programs, Theory and Future Research

There are two key findings from the present study. First, inquiry suggests that The Males Place, INC. manhood development organization fosters a setting that utilizes community gardening to engage Black youth in contribution-focused activity which leads to gains in the 5 C's. Second, the contribution that Black youth engage in during CG activities may not follow the 5 C's in positive youth development but occur concurrently. There are two questions that arise following these key findings. First, how can similar guided development organizations make use of CG to bring about positive outcomes? Other manhood development organizations maintain related ideologies to TMP without using the same practices (Watts, 1993). These organizations, like TMP, emphasize the importance of contributing to the community but do not incorporate community gardening. Community programs that also contribute to PYD and SPD by adopting a Black consciousness approach may find similar success by engaging youth in community gardening. Findings suggest that community gardening may be adopted to help like-organizations achieve their aims.

There is potential that the unique developmental processes that occurred at TMP through the facilitation of community gardening may not be able to be replicated identically elsewhere. However, the model reflected by the concept map (see Appendix C) may have some transferability for other organizations if similar structure is present for CG activities. That is, other manhood or guided development organizations might find CG to be a useful strategy when it is ascribed with value and offers support for youth to get engaged.

Secondarily, what is true nature of the relationship between the 5 C's and contribution? As a follow-up question, is the relationship between the 5 C's and contribution reflexive or contingent upon context? Previous literature pertaining to PYD theorizes that contribution emerges in the presence of the 5 C's, however the current study adds that contribution can promote gains in the 5 C's (Bowers et al., 2010; Lerner, 2004). To answer this question researchers, need to determine if there are differing contexts that dictate when contribution leads to the 5 C's or when the 5 C's lead to contribution. If various contextual factors affect the order with which the contribution interacts with the other 5 C's, those factors should be explored. Conversely, the correlation between contribution and the 5 C's may be cyclical in nature instead of one leading to the other. It is possible that as one occurs, the other presents itself as well— similar to how the 5 C's interact with one another. This potential relationship between contribution and the 5 C's might advance our understanding of PYD.

The development that graduates experienced at TMP fit program objectives regarding development such as character and competency development. By using CG to involve Black youth in constructive activity, TMP effectively supplied them with gains in multiple areas of development. Because of the success of TMP in navigating Black youth to manhood, the program should be further explored to better understand the processes taking place. Community psychologists have an obligation to collaborate with these types of community organizations to help them understand and share how their programs function (Maton, 2008). As researchers, community psychologists possess necessary access and resources to evaluate these programs to help them reach their goals. Community psychologists also maintain skills that enable them to conduct rigorous

inquiry into guided development organizations in addition to the credibility that accompanies an advanced training degree. Lastly, many community psychologists maintain the resources to support guided development programs through grant acquisition and management. These collaborations between community practitioners and researchers are critical for progressing the efforts of community practitioners and maintaining the legitimacy of community research.

5.4 Conclusion

The goal of the present study was to answer the following research question: In what ways does community gardening facilitate development in Black youth? I found that CG can be a mechanism for youth development when contextualized as an important activity that will be useful in adulthood and when there is intentional support by adults to help youth successfully engage in this activity. In the context of TMP, the importance of this activity was that it was an expression of manhood, specifically providing for others and thus contributing to one's community. Elders in TMP provided support by demonstrating the practices of CG and working alongside youth in the community garden. Thus, CG promotes development of youth by offering the opportunity to build skills, including planting, instill values such as providing, foster relationships and contribute to others.

The findings of this study suggest that Black youth can experience positive development through CG activities when these activities occur alongside a contribution-focused belief system, and if they are supported by strong connections within the group. The Males Place community garden is a setting that fosters a contribution-focused perspective and draws parallels between work in the garden and the components of

manhood. This allows for Black youth to develop key strengths consistent with PYD.

As Black youth engage with CG at TMP, they simultaneously mature through

adolescence as they build their strengths and help others by providing food. In the

presence of their contribution to others, Black youth develop the 5 C's: competence,

confidence, connection, character and caring. The contributions that they make, then,

coincide with gains in other areas of PYD which advances the understanding of PYD

(Bowers et al., 2010; Institute of Medicine, 2002; Lerner, 2004). Findings suggest that

programs which place a critical emphasis on the development of Black youth while

enabling them to contribute can be effective at fostering strengths that further their

development.

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APPENDIX A: PYD AND SPD CONSTRUCTS

FRAMEWORK	CONSTRUCT	DEFINITION
Positive Youth Development	*The Five C's*	
	Competence	Positive view of one's actions in domain specific areas including social, academic, cognitive, and vocational. Social competence pertains to interpersonal skills (e.g., conflict resolution). Cognitive competence pertains to cognitive abilities (e.g., decision making). School grades, attendance, and test scores are part of academic competence. Vocational competence involves work habits and career choice explorations, including entrepreneurship.
	Confidence	An internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy; one's global self-regard, as opposed to domain specific beliefs.
	Connection	Positive bonds with people and institutions that are reflected in bidirectional exchanges between the individual and peers, family, school, and community in which both parties contribute to the relationship.
	Character	Respect for societal and cultural rules, possession of standards for correct behaviors, a sense of right and wrong (morality), and integrity.
	Caring	A sense of sympathy and empathy for others.

Sociopolitical Development	*Critical Consciousness*	
	Acritical Stage	Asymmetry is outside of awareness, or the existing social order is thought to reflect real differences in the capabilities of group members. Belief in a just world.
	Adaptive Stage	Asymmetry may be acknowledged, but the system maintaining it is seen as immutable. Predatory, antisocial, or accommodation strategies are employed to maintain a positive sense of self and to acquire social and material rewards.
	Precritical Stage	Complacency gives way to awareness of and concerns about asymmetry and inequality. The value of adaptation is questioned.
	Critical Stage	There is a desire to learn more about asymmetry, injustice, oppression, and liberation. Through this process, some will conclude that the asymmetry is unjust and social-change efforts are warranted
	Liberation Stage	The experience and awareness of oppression is salient. Liberation behavior (involvement in social action and community development) is tangible and frequent. Adaptive behaviors are eschewed.

Source: **Derived from Bowers et al. (2010), Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003) and Watts, Williams and Jagers (2003)**

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

RESEARCH QUESTION: In what ways does community gardening foster development among Black youth?

Interview Guide

This protocol represents a general frame. Questions can be asked out of order and may be followed with unscripted, emergent probes with the purpose of getting a better understanding of the participants' experiences

Introductory narrative: In this study I am interested in your experiences with The Males Place. Before I begin asking you questions, I would like you to come up with a name I can use to refer to you in the interview so as to protect your confidentiality. It can be any name of your choosing.

[Start recorder]

Warm-up questions:

A. How old are you?

B. What year did you graduate from TMP?

C. How long were you in TMP?

D. How did you find out about TMP?

E. What led you to join TMP?

DOMAIN 1: ACTIVITIES

1.) Tell me about what you remember doing in the garden.
2.) What type of things did you do at The Males Place community garden?
3.) Overall, how did doing these things make you feel?
   a. Probe: How did doing these things make you feel about yourself?
   b. Probe: How did doing these things make you feel about your abilities?
   c. Probe: Do you feel that doing taking these actions made a difference (i.e. social, community)?
      i. If yes: What change did doing these things make?
4.) (If necessary) What activity in the garden did you like best?
   a. Overall, how did doing this thing make you feel?
      i. Probe: How did doing this thing make you feel about yourself?
      ii. Probe: How did doing this thing make you feel about your abilities?
      iii. Probe: How did doing this thing make you feel about doing the right thing?

    iv. Probe: How did doing this thing make you feel about others?

    v. Probe: Do you feel that doing this action made a difference (i.e. social, community)?

      1. If yes: What change did doing these things make?

DOMAIN 2: RELATIONSHIPS

5.) Tell me about your relationship with other *Warriors*
 Possible Probes
  a. How did you feel about these relationships?
  b. What did you gain/learn (if anything) from these relationships?
  c. How did these relationships make you feel about yourself?
  d. How did these relationships make you feel about abilities?
    i. Do you think these relationships helped you make a difference (i.e. social, community)?
      1. If yes: What change did doing these things make?

6.) How would you describe your relationship with the *Elders and Washauri*?
 Possible Probes
  a. How did you feel about these relationships?
  b. What did you gain/learn from these relationships?
  c. How did these relationships make you feel about yourself?
  d. How did these relationships make you feel about abilities?
    i. Do you think these relationships helped you make a difference (i.e. social, community)?
      1. If yes: What change did doing these things make?

7.) Did you work together as a team with *Warriors* during community gardening activities?
 Possible Probes
  a. What was it like to be part of a team
  b. In what ways, if any, did you feel that you supported others?
  c. What did you gain/learn from being a part of a team?
  d. In what ways did you feel supported by the interactions?

8.) In what ways did the *Elders and Washauri* lead you during community gardening activities?
 Possible Probes
  a. What was it like for the Elders and Washauri to lead during time at the garden?
  b. In what ways, if any, did you feel that you supported by the Elders and Washauri?
  c. What did you gain/learn from the Elders and Washauri leadership in the garden?
  d. In what ways, if any, did you feel supported by the Elders and Washauri?
  e.

9.) In what ways did you experience belonging at The Males Place garden?

Possible Probes

       a. How strongly did you feel like you belonged at the TMP garden?
       b. How about outside of the community garden setting?

10.)   How were the relationships in TMP different from the relationships outside of TMP?

DOMAIN 3: RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES

11.)   What were you responsible for in the garden? (what activities did you have to do?)
       a. How did these responsibilities affect the overall production of the garden?
       b. Overall, how did doing these responsibilities make you feel?
          i. Probe: How did these responsibilities make you feel about yourself?
         ii. Probe: How did these responsibilities make you feel about your abilities?
         iii. Probe: How did these responsibilities make you feel about doing the right thing?
         iv. Probe: How did these responsibilities make you feel about others?
         v. Probe: Do you feel that these responsibilities helped you make a difference (i.e. social, community)?
       c. If yes: What change did these responsibilities make happen?
       d. What did you gain or learn from these responsibilities?
         i. What skills?
         ii. What knowledge?
       e. What role(s) did you have in the garden? Overall, how did doing this role make you feel?
         i. Probe: How did this role make you feel about yourself?
         ii. Probe: How did this role make you feel about your abilities?
         iii. Probe: How did this role make you feel about doing the right thing?
         iv. Probe: How did this role make you feel about others?
         v. Probe: Do you feel that this role helped you make a difference (i.e. social, community)?
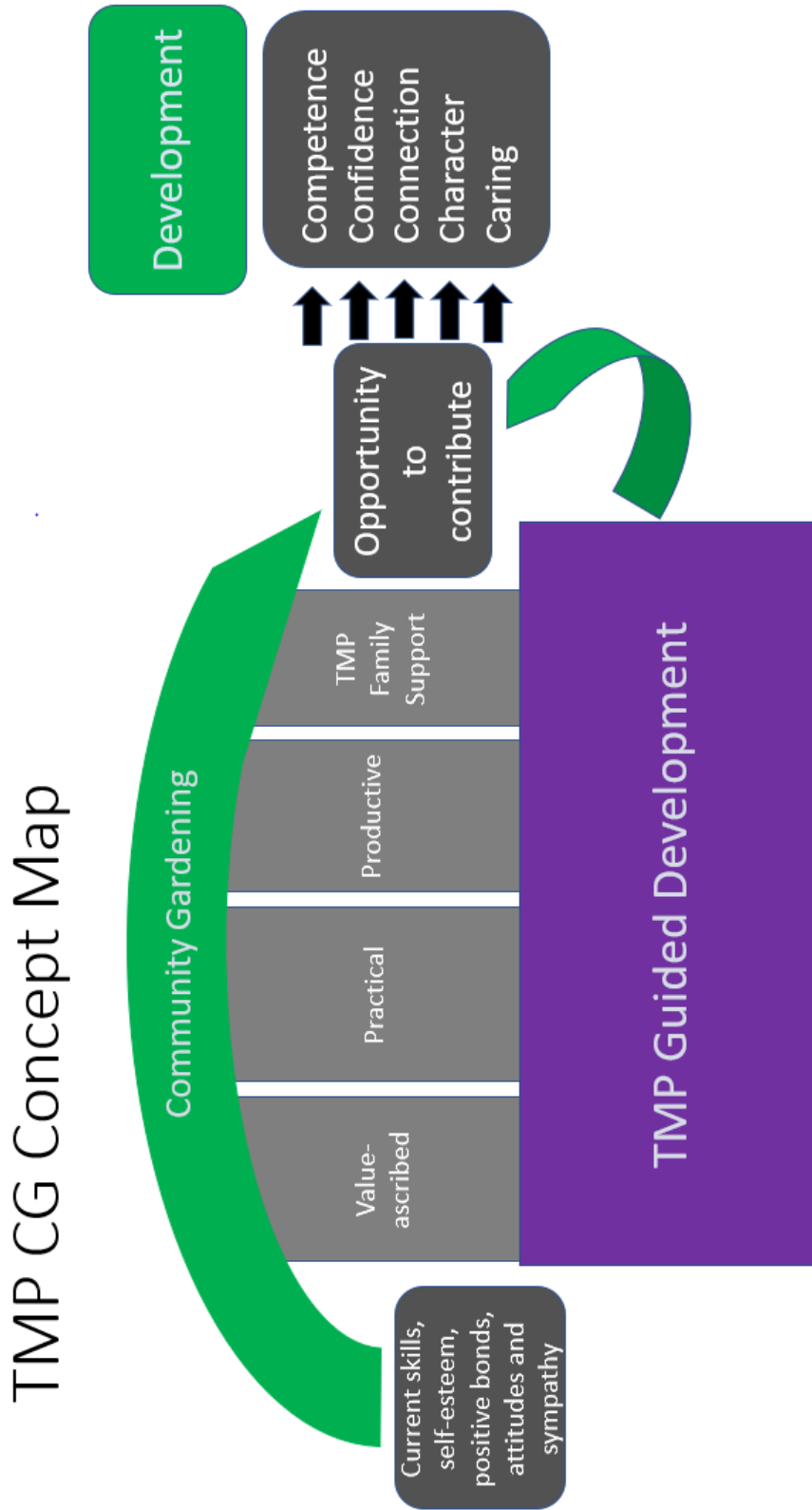   1. If yes: What change did this role make happen?

DOMAIN 4: BELIEF SYSTEM

12.)   Why do you think CG was included in TMP?
13.)   Did CG affect the way you see the world or people? In what ways?
14.)   Did CG affect the way you see yourself? In what ways?
15.)   What was The Males Place's vision for the garden when you participated?

1.) In what ways have you benefitted from participation in community gardening with The Males Place?
2.) In what areas of life/personality/behavior have you been affected by your participation in community gardening with The Males Place?
    a. How have you changed?
3.) What did you learn/get from gardening with The Males Place?

We are now at the end of our interview. Is there anything else you would like to share that would help me understand how you have experienced development through community gardening and overall participation with The Males Place?

APPENDIX C: CONCEPT MAP

TMP CG Concept Map

Development

Competence
Confidence
Connection
Character
Caring

Opportunity to contribute

Community Gardening

TMP Family Support

Productive

Practical

Value-ascribed

TMP Guided Development

Current skills, self-esteem, positive bonds, attitudes and sympathy

APPENDIX D: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Participant Information

Pseudonym	Age	Age in Program	Duration	Time Period
Jamar Smith	22	13-18	4-5	2009-2014
Brian Lewis	19	12-18	5-6	2010-2016
John	19	14-18	4	2012-2016
Deon Friday	19	10-16	6	2009-2015
Anthony	22	15-18	3	2011-2014
Charles	27	16-18	2	2009-2011
Caesar	19	17-18	< 1	2016
Lenny	22	16-18	2	2012-2014
Devon	19	17-19	2	2016-2018
Joe	23	16-18	2	2011-2013
*Kwaku B.	39	14-18	4	1993-1997

*Community garden had not yet been installed while participant was a Warrior, yet participant engaged in the community garden upon returning as an Elder