

SESSION

Who Do You Think We Are:
Opportunities for a Fresh Start on Race

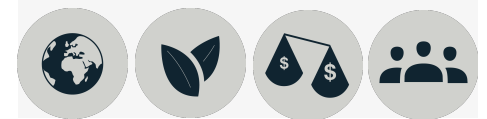
Frontiers

of social innovation

INCLUSIVE MARKETS—INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES



Trabian Shorters
Founder and CEO,
BMe Community



Who Do You Love?

BMe

SHARE ■ INSPIRE ■ EMPOWER

“Building caring and prosperous communities inspired by black men”

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Who Do You
Think We Are



The Epiphany

What if we started with knowledge of each other's value and built from there?



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Think We Are



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While working as vice president of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, several insights lined up:

1. Following every major catastrophe in Knight Cities, two types of actors emerged: Fixers and Builders
2. Fixers sought to restore, rebuild, revive, and return to the splendor of yester-year
3. Builders saw the devastation as a clear field to build their splendid futures upon
4. You need both. One is problem-, survival-, stability-, and crisis-oriented
5. The other is opportunity-, growth-, disruptive-, and aspiration-oriented
6. We are the last generation to live in a majority white America
7. If we don't change our frames to match our new plurality then our ignorance and anachronous habits will cost us elections, market share, students, and opportunities. It's change time!

Be Honest

Be Fair

**Be Good to Your
Family**

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Be Honest Negative

1. Raise: Black poverty rate is still a major problem 150 years after the end of the Civil War – **Money failure**
2. Stand Up: Black and brown are faces of America's problems with incarceration, poverty, and injustice – **Societal beneficiaries**
3. Twirl: Black boys continue to drop out at alarming rates – **Education failure**

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Be Honest Positive

1. High Five: How many black millionaires - **Money**
2. Dap: How many black boys are in college - **Education**
3. Hug: Which racial group gives to charity at highest rate - **Societal benefactors**

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Who Do You Think We Are?

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Be Fair

Turn to your neighbor

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To define a person by their challenge is the definition of stigmatizing them.

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The Stories We Tell Create The Life We'll Live

“No positive black male role
models...”

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Literally EVERY Story Has A Moral To It

Human beings share stories as a type of “mental grooming.”
Stories are how we reinforce the beliefs (morals) that our tribes live by.

HERO

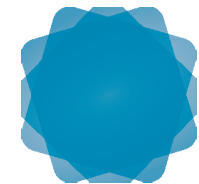


Identifiable by the admirable and/or aspirational terms associated with him or her

Problem
Or
Villain

Identifiable by the negative limited or dangerous stigma associated with it, him, or her

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Something the tribe sees as important to survival or status

Typically the hero deals with a problem and subdues it for the good of the tribe.

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The Narrative Matters More Than Life Itself

This is why politicians *always* create a narrative before moving people to fight in wars or to vote for their party.

Narrative change is the most impactful social change imaginable because:

- Narratives tell us who is good, what is bad, how to behave and why it matters.
- The mind is prone to disregard facts that do not fit the pre-primed narrative frame.
- Public policy and philanthropic initiatives are based upon pre-primed narratives even when unstated.

4 Tired (But Pervasive) Morals To Your Story

Do **You** Reinforce These Beliefs?

1. People of color want privileges they haven't earned and are burdens on society
2. The problems and threats that black males represent to society must be neutralized
3. 'They' deserve whatever happens to them
4. Any gains by one group is a loss for others

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What is the Story You Tell?

Let's talk to each other about it.

Get ready to turn to your
neighbor again.

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Denigrating Words

At-Risk

Underprivileged

Underserved

Low-income

Disadvantaged

Minority

Lacking

Troubled

High-Crime

Ex-offender

Distressed

Opportunity Youth

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A Typical Program Example

Our program helps at-risk youth in high-crime neighborhoods stay on track graduate high school and avoid becoming a negative statistic.

HERO

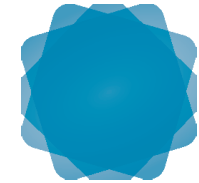


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The Huge Market Dilemma

1. Funders create language to address problems
2. You use their language to get life's blood
3. Too often we're paid this blood-money for telling the story of death and threat our children represent
4. If you don't solve the problem - no funding
5. If you do solve the problem - no funding
6. Deficit-framing is a catch-22
7. Treat, never cure, contribute to cynicism, reduce hope

Be Good to Your Family

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Asset-Framing is defining people by their aspirations and contributions then acknowledging the challenges—which extend beyond them—and investing in them for their *continued* benefit to society.

Narrative Framing



Glinda
"The Good Witch"

Elphaba
"The Wicked Witch"

Deficit-Framing is defining people by their problems, ignoring their contributions, then remediating them to be less burdens on society.

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A Technique for Asset-Framing

Our program helps at-risk youth in high-crime neighborhoods stay on track graduate high school and avoid becoming a negative statistic.

YOU'RE "THE HELP" NOT THE HERO: Define the narrative without stigmatizing

HERO: What is the admirable or aspirational quality of the youth?

GOAL: What is the socially valued goal or status our hero pursues?

PROBLEM: What is their obstacle or problem (often environmental rather than innate)?

HELPER: How does your program help this hero achieve their worthy goal?

HERO

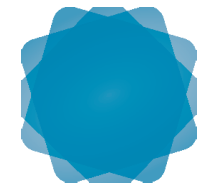


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Asset-Narratives for Our Future Together

Beliefs to Build Upon

1. Valuing ALL members of society is the most prosperous way forward for America
2. Black males are assets to society and important members of the human family
3. We must reject narratives that denigrate
4. We work together in asset-oriented ways to build a prosperous future

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Asset-Oriented Data

1. 110,000 black millionaires (95% not entertainment or sports talent) - **Money successes**
2. 39.8% between 18-24 in college or have degree - **Educational achievers**
3. Black households give 25% more of their income to charity than all others - **Societal benefactors**

Same people, fuller picture.

We Must Choose

Continue to Denigrate (chaos)



Begin to Elevate (community)



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BMe Approach

- BMe provides an **optimistic**, fact-based, **aspirational** narrative of black men, their cities, and related causes
- It **complements** other change **strategies**
- It enters cultural dialogues in a way that **does not denigrate**
- It is an internetwork of people who want to **live a better story**



Who Do You Think You Are?

Our 140 Black Leaders and 10,000+ Community Builders say you are the hero in America's new story.

www.bmecommunity.org – www.reachwithus.com



BMe Community is an influential network based upon the belief that black men are assets and that valuing all members of the human family is the most prosperous way forward for our diverse nation. We dispel negativity and work together to build assets.

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What This Does

- 142 BMe leaders educate children, protect streets, and create economic opportunity for 400,000 people
- 100+ champions of all races and genders work in brotherhood and sisterhood on causes they share
- Narrative change leaders in the Whitehouse, media, philanthropy, think tanks, activism, and consulting turn to BMe for advice and partnership in asset-framing
- BMedia campaigns such as #BlackMenLove are picked up by NBC, The Root, Huffpo, and social media
- REACH, BMe's 2015 book challenging negative black men stereotypes became a *New York Times* bestseller



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We Build Caring and Prosperous Communities Inspired by Black Men

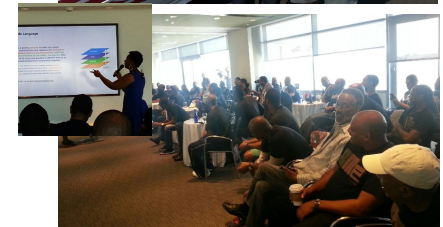


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We Have 35,000 Members of All Race and Gender



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Who Do You
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We Are The People We've Been Waiting For



And...We Love Us Some Us!



Audience Q&A



Trabian Shorters
Founder and CEO,
BMe Community

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