**A Resolution for Informational Briefing by the Province III Synod on May 2, 2022**

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**Resolution #D005  
A Resolution for Funding of the Implementation of The Internalized Oppression Curriculum**

Resolved, the House \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That this 80th General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance allocate $73,800 for the triennium for the implementation of The Internalized Oppression Curriculum, Healing From Internalized Oppression; and be it further

Resolved, That such monies shall be utilized exclusively to make presentations to agencies and dioceses and other affiliated entities of The Episcopal Church, and other such activities that promote the purposes of this resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention direct, consistent with established policies and procedures, that The Executive Council shall direct that the Office of Black Ministries be charged with the establishment of all criteria, and procedures associated with implementation of the Curriculum, and that the Office of Black Ministries shall report back to the General Convention in 2024 on the usage of the $73,800 allocation; and be it further

Resolved, That the Joint Standing Commission on Program  Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation of $73,800 for the implementation of this resolution.

**Explanation:**

When people are targeted, discriminated against, or oppressed over a period of time, they often internalize (believe and make part of their self-image – their internal view of themselves) the myths and misinformation that society communicates to them about their group. Exploited low-income workers might internalize the ideas that they can’t do any other kind of work, that their lives were meant to be as they are, and that they’re worth less than people with wealth or education. Women might internalize the stereotype that they are not good at math and science, or people of color might internalize the myth that they are not good workers.

When people from targeted groups internalize myths and misinformation, it can cause them to feel (often unconsciously) that in some way they are inherently not as worthy, capable, intelligent, beautiful, good, etc. as people outside their group. They turn the experience of oppression or discrimination inward. They begin to feel that the stereotypes and misinformation that society communicates are true and they act as if they were true. This is called internalized oppression.

Internalized oppression affects many groups of people: women, people of color, poor and working class people, people with disabilities, young people, elders, Jews, Catholics, immigrants, gays, and many other groups, including members of the Church.

There are two ways that internalized oppression functions:

Internalized oppression operates on an individual basis. A person believes that the stereotypes and misinformation that s/he hears are true about herself/himself. S/he holds herself/himself back from living life to her/his full potential or s/he acts in ways that reinforce the stereotypes and are ultimately self-defeating. This may prevent her/him from running for the Vestry and seeking other positions of leadership in the Church.

Internalized oppression occurs among members of the same cultural group. People in the same group believe (often unconsciously) the misinformation and stereotypes that society communicates about other members of their group. People turn the oppression on one another, instead of addressing larger problems in society. The results are that people treat one another in ways that are less than

fully respectful. Often people from the same cultural group hurt, undermine, criticize, mistrust, fight with, or isolate themselves from one another.

Examples of internalized oppression as it occurs in individuals:

Women, low-income people, and people of color don't speak up as much in meetings because they don't think their contribution will be important or "correct". Often participants from these groups may have insight into how to solve a problem, but they hold back from sharing it.

In response to low expectations and lack of encouragement, some teenagers from oppressed groups believe that they won't succeed; consequently, they give up on learning and pursuing their dreams. This prevents them from pursuing educational opportunities and thus prevents them from attending seminary and becoming members of The Episcopal Clergy. This serves to defeat our goal of achieving equitable representation among The Church’s Ordained order.

A person who is not able get a job with decent wages may try to cope with his/her disappointment with drugs like alcohol.

As you can see, internalized oppression can have serious consequences for communities and The Church. It holds people back from thinking well of themselves, from living full lives, and from standing up against injustice. It can be the source of physical or mental illness and self-destructive behavior. Internalized oppression can serve to divide people within the same group, so they are not as effective in supporting each other and standing together for change. It can also cause people to be suspicious of those outside their own group, making it difficult to build alliances.