

## Insight for healthy relationships

Written by Timothy Houston  
Saturday, 10 December 2011 12:35

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From the moment I agreed to write this column as I shook Al McFarlane's hand at the Kente Summit this past weekend, I was committed to write about healthy relationships. I am convinced that healthy relationships build healthy families and healthy families build healthy communities. I am keenly aware that our community is suffering from broken and dysfunctional relationships, and I too am concerned about the state of the Black family. I also believe that despite all of these obstacles, we are all empowered to do something about it. On this past Saturday, despite the snow, I headed out to the Kente Summit with this mission in mind.

This powerful one day summit was the gathering of 75 Black college male students from 8 different private institutions. I along with other prominent leaders was invited to come present. Despite the fact that there were other excellent presenters and 4 sessions to choose from in the same time slot as mine, over 25 young men chose my session on healthy relationships. I was amazed and excited about their response to the subject of healthy relationships which is often ignored or maligned in the media today. As we engaged in an open, honest dialogue about the 4 pillars that support a committed relationship, characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships, and the steps to choosing the right mate, these young men were active, animated, and enthusiastically engaged. Some studiously took notes as if they were preparing for a final exam, while others remained after the session for additional information.

These young men are not alone in their quest for relationship knowledge. As I have toured around the country sharing from my book "*Men are Dirt: Insight for healthy relationships*," men of all race, creed, and color approach me seeking information. In hospital and hotel lobbies,

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break rooms and barber shops, they come seeking tools to make their relationship better. Some come with my book in hand, while others with their heart, but despite their success or setbacks, they keep coming. It is clear to me from this and other experiences that men want their relationships to work, but many lack the tools necessary to build successful ones. Information is power, and power is transferable. In order to heal what ails our community we must gear up ourselves with the right equipment to build healthy families.

Twenty-five young college men were positively impacted by my session this weekend, and I by them. I am both inspired and energized to keep working to give men and women the information and tools to build healthy relationships to make healthy families. I invite you all to continue to join me weekly as I share relationship insight from a man's perspective. This valuable information will help you be a conduit and catalyst to the young men and women in your circle of influences and positively impact our community.

*Timothy Houston is an author, minister, and motivational speaker who is committed to guiding positive life changes in families and communities. . For more information, go to [www.tlhouston.com](http://www.tlhouston.com)*