

BAKER, SCOTT C., Ph.D., May 2007

ADULT, COUNSELING, HEALTH, AND
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

THE PROCESS OF BEING A MAN: A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY (206 pp.)

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Within the broad and multidisciplinary field of men's studies, the exploration of men's issues in counseling is one focus. The purpose of this study was to begin to develop a new model for understanding men's issues in counseling which included increased recognition of diversity, consideration of both internal and external influences, and the concept of multiple masculinities.

Participants in the study included 6 African-American and 6 Caucasian men between the ages of 19 and 92 years and representing both low and high incomes. The researcher interviewed each of the men 3 times in a process of theory development based on the Grounded Theory Method proposed by Corbin and Strauss (1990). Results of the study included the development of a new model for conceptualizing men's issues in counseling.

According to this grounded model, men are adaptable in their expression of masculinities. Masculinities are defined by flexible adaptations of the masculine self over time and within multiple contexts. The range of potential adaptation of a man's masculinities is based on exposure to multiple models of masculinity and intrapsychic factors. The flexibility of adaptability in a given situation is tempered by perceived responsibility for others.

Additional findings are also discussed. The experiences of African-American participants pointed to the importance of religion and suggested coping skills that have

developed in response to racial discrimination, including maintaining a cautious stance and going around dangerous situations. The experiences of all participants suggested the value of the interview process for raising gender consciousness and personal awareness. Finally, the men in the study suggested that they maintain some deep connections with other men through straight talk and teasing.

Implications of the model include the importance of research focus on the process of enacting masculinity, inclusion of men's issues within the framework of multicultural competency in counselor education, and the therapeutic value of exploring the different expressions of being a man.