

WILLIAM CROSS NIGRESCENCE MODEL

POSTER CREATED BY: THEVULNERABLEBLACKMALE.COM

Cross, W. E., Jr. (1995). The psychology of nigrescence: Revising the Cross model. In J. G. Ponterotto, J. M. Casas, L. A. Suzuki, & C. M. Alexander (Eds.), Handbook of multicultural counseling (pp. 93-122). Sage Publications, Inc.

William Cross developed Nigrescence theory in 1971, a model considered the seminal Black racial identity development theory (Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith, 2002). When Cross introduced Nigrescence in 1971, he described it as “an identity change process as a Negro-to-Black conversion experience, the kind of process that could be seen in Black behavior during the Harlem Renaissance” (Cross, 1991, p. 189).

Pre-Encounter Stage

In the pre-encounter stage, the Black Being remains in a state of indoctrination—a perpetual cycle of dissociative self-denigration and aggressive projection of that internalized violence onto other Black or Brown individuals. This is the colonized mind.

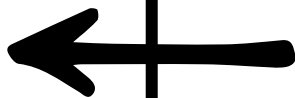


Immersion-Emersion

In the immersion–emersion stage, the process of decolonizing the mind takes form through the continued construction of a cleansed, positive self-concept.

Encounter

The encounter stage arises when the Black Being can no longer reconcile their subjective experience with objective reality. It involves a death of the old identity and the reconstitution of the self-concept—beginning the decolonization of the mind.



Internalization Stage

The internalization stage marks a transitional period in the process of Nigrescence, in which the Black Being settles into an identity that is detached from the negative attachments of indoctrination and colonization. Here, the Black Being accepts the subjective truths of their experience, reconciles them with objective reality, and gains a more accurate understanding of the hegemonic society they exist within.



Internalization - Commitment

In the internalization–commitment stage, the Black Being has fully accepted the mechanisms of hegemonic control, detached from the negative attachments imposed by indoctrination and colonization. The individual has developed a positive self-concept and is equipped to create long-term goals rooted in the pursuit of a worthy and progressive ideal—for themselves and for their community.