Editorial Announcement

Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to present a preview – in the form of a poem - of Gerald Brooks'[1] forthcoming article, **The Echo of Absence: Father Hunger, the Inner Child, and the Weight of Silence** which will be published in *Transformance: The AEDP Journal*, Volume 16, Issue 1, in early 2026. Gerald's scholarly work on incorporating Nigrescence Theory (Black identity development) into AEDP practice is a significant contribution to AEDP's efforts to expand the therapeutic applications of trauma treatment beyond the family unit and into systemic societal traumas, such as racism.

He has presented his approach to working with Black clients, as a Black therapist, in Immersion and Advanced Skills courses, in presentations titled*, Unshackled Souls: A Braided Journey to Core State, Collective Liberation and Collective Empowerment.* He will be presenting *Black Men Do Cry: The Transformational Tear, Father Wounds, and the Healing Power of AEDP* at the April 2025 AEDP conference in NYC.

Gerald is not only a talented and deeply thoughtful therapist but also a gifted poet. Below is his poem, Father Hunger, which we are proud to present in advance of his forthcoming publication in *Transformance: The AEDP Journal*.

Carrie Ruggieri, LMHC, BCETS
Editor, Transformance: The AEDP Journal

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[1] Gerald Brooks, LCSW is a Level III AEDP therapist working toward certification. He is a member of the AEDP Vision Collective, and a Vision Collective subgroup exploring racialized trauma and therapy with Black men. Gerald's clinical work spans children, adolescents, college students, student-athletes, and adults across diverse settings. He is finishing a master's degree in religion and pursuing a doctorate in sports and performance psychology. His credentials include a Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CAADC), Certified Professional Coach (CPC), Department of Transportation Certified Substance Abuse Professional (SAP), and a certificate in sports social work. He is trained in various therapeutic approaches but has found a home in AEDP. Gerald has personally experienced the healing power of AEDP and aims to be a transformational presence for others.

Father Hunger

By Gerald Brooks

An insatiable fact, as the boy opens
his eyes, where does he look? Not
yet understanding these eyes will
know pain— searching for the father
and his embrace.

The world instructs the father,
unconscious to be distant, to be tough.
But must we lose that tender nature,
those body responses to comfort and
emotion, in the name of toughness?

It becomes a challenge
for fathers to raise their sons
when the world has ripped
the very nature of emotion from them,
leaving them hollow men of steel—
distant from heart and flesh.

But fathers, teach your sons to be themselves,
to feel without shame, and to rise without fear.
Show them what is possible— that they can
find their way, and still know they have your
hand upon their shoulder, a support that
endures, even in their becoming.

For when we starve our sons of
emotion, we feed the animal
within— the rage that prowls the
underbelly of life, locked within the
cage of unspoken pain. It becomes a
weight, wielded outwardly, and
turns inwardly to a life left locked,
when the awareness of emotion is
withheld, when the hunger is denied
and unmet.

As men, we must acknowledge this
truth: the hunger for a father's
connection remains deep and
unsatisfied if one has been starved or
poorly nourished in that bond.
Yet, even where absence or distance
has been,
there is still time to heal— for it is
never too late to reach, to mend, to
offer and accept what was once
missing.

And fathers, remember— connection
does not mean perfection. Strive
instead to tame that hunger— to heal
what you may not have received, and
to honor your journey towards
awareness. For connection is an
ongoing art, and even the smallest
gestures can begin to fill the aching
spaces where absence once dwelled.