



## **Episode 6: Bringing it Home - Panel Question & Answer**

### **Transcript of Conversation with Dr. Wingate**

Kristin Fields 0:12

Welcome to another episode of Practicing Antiracism Clinically. For our last segment of the podcast, we have created mini-episodes, talking to working psychologists in different areas of the field about how they are implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion work, and how they can better improve these practices within their given role. We've invited guests spanning several positions in several states, from clinic directors, to faculty members to practicing clinicians and more. We are excited to hear their perspectives and how cultural humility and anti racist practices can be implemented in their respective settings. Here's who will be talking with for this mini episode.

Déjà Clement 0:57

Hi, everybody, my name is Déjà. As you guys have heard from me before, today, I will be talking with Dr. LaRicka, Wingate, who is a professor of psychology at Oklahoma State University in the clinical psychology program. Her research examines risk and resilience factors for mental health outcomes within the Black community. We're going to jump right in and start talking about cultural humility as we have with previous episodes. And so first, Dr. Wingate, please tell us a little bit about your role as an OSU clinical psychology faculty member.

Dr. Wingate 1:31

Okay, thank you so much for having me here with you. I'm excited to chat. So as you mentioned, I'm a professor in clinical psychology. And in that role, one of the things that I take most seriously and put most of my energy and is my mentorship of graduate students. So

I spend a lot of time working with my students to conduct research studies in the areas that they and I both overlap in. And I'm excited right now, given that I have three Black graduate students in my lab, and we are doing Black specific research, as you mentioned, looking at those things that are both risk factors for negative mental health outcomes, as well as resilience. So that's the main thing that I do, or when I think of myself as a professor, that's the part that I'm most proud of. But I also have the opportunity to teach several courses. The two courses that I have taught most recently, and that I'm most excited and passionate about are Black psychology, and positive psychology, I'll say one of the things that I love about both of those classes, is introducing students to ideas and topics that the typical undergraduate student at OSU, at least don't initially associate with psychology, or particularly clinical psychology. And I love teaching this class also, because those classes also because I get to spend a lot of my time reading, researching, looking into finding videos, etc, etc. On the topics that I'm particularly interested in. A lot of fun for me. Another thing that's relevant, I think, to the podcast is that I am currently serving as the co chair to our departmental Diversity Committee. And I've had the opportunity over the years to lead in different roles related to I guess you could say diversity in general. So I am really enjoying that opportunity and learning quite a bit about diversity efforts in structured settings, right, so in our department, but also at the broader university level, and ways of thinking about approaching it and hopefully, educating others as well as getting them excited about, about diversity and sort of on their own where they want to go out and learn more and be more involved. So I've been at OSU for - this is my 15th year now. I started there in 2006. And

so now I guess technically I'm more of a senior professor in the department. And one of the things that I have been very intentional and doing in my role as someone who is more senior and is very familiar with the department and our history, and our way of our past way of solving problems and addressing concerns is that I have taken the opportunity to be intentional whenever I get - whenever I can, to serve regarding an advising and discussing the topics that I think are important, I say, I think in terms of as a Black woman in academia, who is interested and making the changes where we can, and especially in our department, to consider all people and all approaches. So I have served on our Departmental Advisory Committee. We call it DAC for many years, and I am purposeful in regularly bringing up the considerations into basically any conversation that it can fit. So that's one way that I tried to use my experience in mice seniority in moving our department forward.

Déjà Clement 6:09

And so in that role, what stood out the most to you? And how does that apply to cultural humility or multiculturalism within your program or field?

Dr. Wingate 6:20

Yeah, that's an excellent question. I think that one of the things that stood out most is just how much of the information that was covered, was not part of my training, my formal training as a clinical psychologist, and how much I guess relatedly is not technically a formal part of the training that we are currently providing our students. So of course, that stands out in terms of thinking about our field, Clinical Psychology, being able to serve the broader society, that we have missed a lot of things that will influence the way that we interact with others, the way that we assist, help treat people and mental health concerns. So it does stand out that still 20 years later, this education is missing in most of the clinical psychology that I'm aware of, regarding training programs. And so in what ways could your program or department implement some of the techniques and trading that were discussed by our previous podcast guests, I think that we are doing a good job. And I might be kind of getting ahead. But we are doing some of the things that were previously discussed. And we are actively working to be a more aware department, be a more inclusive department, and allow opportunities for all voices to be heard. But we have plenty of room to go. So getting to that, what are some of the things that we could do, what I believe the broader field of clinical psychology should be doing is opening up our approach as clinical psychologist in general, we have been taught to be very focused on the one individual client in front of us or on one particular psychological disorder, or you know, one description of psychopathology as defined in the DSM. And I think both as a field and as a program. We all need to see, take a step back, and learn from our colleagues and areas like community psychology and counseling psychology, so that we are getting a broader view of the people that we are working with. And I think that we would all do better to take more of a social ecological approach to treatment and to mental health. In general. One of the things that I loved hearing about for cultural humility is more of the approach to the way of thinking about people as opposed to a lot of what I started learning and teaching early on was okay, what we need to do is learn about different cultures. Well, I love that when we just learn an approach to things about cultures to think about people to think about ourselves in relation to those people, it provides answers, I think that fits for all situations. So I do like the idea of being broader in our approach to mental health and working with individuals.

Déjà Clement 10:22

And so what are some things that you think your department or program or field are already doing? Like? What are the strengths in this can even be specific to your lab, or the clinical work in your department,

Dr. Wingate 10:34

I think we have a lot of strengths. Um, maybe I'll start with my lab. And then in the end, move on, I have been intentional and starting from again, thinking about who is who am I working with, and for what goal are we working. And so I'm always intentional and making sure that I do a broad review of all of our applicants, and that I look deeper than who is going to be the traditionally strong graduate student. So So meaning there are some people whose applications I can see and I'm, and I can see this person is going to turn out several publications, and they're going to increase my CV significantly.

And so, I mean, that's the way at least, that I had picked up before in terms of this is how it's supposed to go. And that's changed quite a bit. So I look more in terms of who is going to bring new experiences and ideas to the lab, who is going to be just as passionate about the particular topic that I'm interested in, as I am. And what that has allowed over the years for me is- to the opportunity to bring in students from many different backgrounds, not just racial backgrounds, but different experiences in life. And I always have the opportunity to learn from those students. So I would say, you know, for me, for my lab, but I think also as our department continues to grow. One strength is our ability to really look to our students to even, and I hate to say it, I say that with some concern, because I don't think it's the students job to instruct faculty or to teach them or take on extra burden. But I love that our students come from different, again, perspectives, different generational approaches, and introduce us to new topics and ideas that sometimes we as faculty kind of get stale on, we're used to our own things. So I think that has been one of our strengths. And it's certainly been in the last few years in terms of our department's efforts to ramp up our multicultural approach, our students have really stepped up and told us that they want more, they deserve more. And that has in us being able to and we as faculty, to have a bit of humility, and look and say maybe we're not doing things, as well, as we thought we were, has been has been beneficial. And I do think that that is a strength of our department. And maybe more clinically what steps have been made to promote cultural humility in a multicultural framework in therapy and or research this far in the progress in your program or department. We have made several steps in terms of the effort to bring in more voices regarding training. This is something that I still see continuing to improve in the future. But there's been a few different ways that we've tried to introduce our clinical students to more of a multicultural or culturally cultural humility, type approach by intentionally finding speakers and others who have had more experience to come in and train our students. And our students have done work regarding our new series that we do called luncheon, learn, where we meet weekly, to educate ourselves and in community with each other about things like you know, cultures that we may not regularly have interactions with or about different ways of approaching approaching psychology and I'll say that broader right so our clinical students have had quite a bit of impact in that. And there has been focus there. But we also approach multiculturalism in a broader ways, because it's relevant to all of the areas of psychology. Yeah. So I think currently the biggest steps have been made by trying to bring in voices who have training that we don't have. And I think that there are ways that we can continue to improve that specifically by bringing in permanent tenure track faculty who have those experiences and bringing them on to into our department as regular active members as opposed to occasional speakers.

Déjà Clement 15:46

For our next question, in what areas do you believe we as practicing psychologists require the most growth?

Dr. Wingate 15:53

I think I really hit on that earlier, when I was saying that we all as practicing psychologists need to step back. Particularly as a clinical psychologist, this is at least my experience, in my opinion, that we need to step back and look to our colleagues in community psychology and look to our colleagues in counseling psychology, and and take what we can learn from them where they've already maybe got a few steps ahead of us in thinking in broader ways, about psychopathology, thinking in broader ways about one's individual psychopathologies, but also, like really focusing on what is the environment that our clients exist in and have come from, and that includes culture and, and thinking about our clients in a way that centers them, as opposed to more of an approach where, where, you know, we feel that once we find the diagnosis, we know exactly where to go with that this manualized treatment, and we have less maybe interest in focusing on the person in their context. So I think that we, as a field, in psychology, clinical psychology can really grow by broadening our individualized, specific approach

Déjà Clement

what are current goals you and or your program, or department are working towards to improve DEI in your program and services. And I think you've touched on some of this a little bit.

Dr. Wingate

I think our goals that are most, at the front of our plate right now, are some training goals. We recently implemented a program where we had all incoming graduate students, [they] had the opportunity to go through some diversity training with the idea of communicating that this is key, and important value to us as a department. And I would like to continue to increase that so that we, anyone, any and all of us who are interested in continuing to learn can have more formal, structured ways of going about that, I guess, you know, I think it sounds like a lot of people in our department want to ensure that they are being informed correctly, about how to teach in a multicultural, I guess sensitive way. So many people are interested. But we're not always confident that we're doing it correctly. And so that would be one of the biggest goals, in my mind, is making sure that we know what we're doing as faculty members, and that we are prepared to better our learning in our environment for our students in a confident way.

Déjà Clement 19:15

I like that. Are there barriers that prevent us from diving, diving deeper as a program or field and how can these barriers be addressed?

Dr. Wingate 19:25

There are plenty of barriers. I mean, I think I can sum it all up with white supremacy. Our field has some historic roots that founded it with people who very much valued white supremacy. Our field very much, in my opinion, supports these ideas without even recognizing the ways that it happens. And I think in line with that there are a lot of people who feel threatened by including others, other perspectives, other approaches, and threatened by the thought of being humble, and maybe admitting that there's other ways to go about training, learning, working with clients,

etc. But in my mind, it all comes back to a matter of white supremacy. And I think the way that needs to be intentionally addressed at all levels.

Déjà Clement 20:42

Yeah. So really like the historical and systemic roots of clinical psychology as a field, you think that that's the biggest barrier, and then in order to really break down that barrier is intentionally, like you said, acknowledging that this is the history of our program, of our field, and really starting to break down those concepts.

Dr. Wingate 21:03

Yes, yes. I think that and thank you, again, you're able to say this all quite eloquently. Yes. And in addition to that, though, not just acknowledging and intentionally addressing, but also stepping to the side. And allowing, again, the opportunity to bring in voices that have not been brought in, to bring in considerations that that are, have not been part of our history, right. And so even when I'm talking about it, I'm less interested in the history or making sure people know the history, but - but rather, changing the narrative intentionally changing, changing the future direction in terms of the ways that things go, and just an understanding that foundationally the way that we do most of what we do has not included people beyond largely older white men. So I think that that recognition will allow us to be able to more easily move forward.

Déjà Clement 22:19

Right. Yeah, I think there's a lot of tradition within any field, but especially within clinical psychology, and people like tradition, because tradition feels comfortable. However, it sounds like from you, as well as our other podcast guests, we have to start getting uncomfortable, and really, in order to really start making some of the changes that we want to see in our field.

Dr. Wingate 22:39

100% 100% I think no, no change is going to happen in comfort. I think, you know, again, when we say - even when we say what feels comfortable, we're only used to what feels comfortable in this current context, right? I can't wait until we're all comfortable in disrupting the norm.

Right, that shouldn't be a comfortable thing. And I can't wait until the uncomfortable is comfortable. And you know, in that idea of thinking about whom is uncomfortable for? There's been many people in psychology, that have dealt with discomfort since the beginning of clinical psychology. But we're - we're used to sort of pacifying certain groups of people. And then we all feel, quote, unquote, a bit more comfort. I want now for us to feel comfort in that. We are always talking about those people that have been marginalized when we're thinking about any theories or any ideas. We're thinking, Well, how does this - How does this work for Black trans women? Right? I want that to be the the comfort or the standard.

Déjà Clement 23:56

Who is someone in the field of psychology from a diverse or underrepresented community that you believe has excelled or done amazing work or deserves to be shared or recognized?

Dr. Wingate 24:06

Thanks for the opportunity. I really appreciate that. I would like to give a special recognition to Dr. Na'im Akbar. Dr. Na'im Akbar was the first Black and Afro-centric psychologist that I had the opportunity to interact with. He was a professor at Florida State University. And he has made

huge impacts in the field of Black and African-centered psychology. I don't know how much he knows it, but my interactions with him have fully shaped a lot of how I approach the world. Still today, significantly, you know, past my graduate training and actually I have the opportunity to learn from him as an undergraduate student, as well. So yes, Dr. Na'im Akbar, shout out and I'd like to thank him for his influence in my life.

Déjà Clement 25:08

Well, thank you, Dr. Wingate, we really appreciate you being willing to join us for these questions related to cultural humility and sharing your experiences. If people wanted to reach out to you, where can they do so?

Dr. Wingate 25:22

Yes, I'm pretty traditional. You can catch me on email. And that is LaRicka.Wingate@okstate.edu. That's where they can find me.

Déjà Clement 25:41

Perfect, and we will include that in the show notes. Thank you everybody for listening.

Dr. Wingate 25:47

Yes, thank you. Thanks for having me on. I appreciate it.

Harley Layman 25:59

Thank you for listening to this episode of *Practicing Anti Racism Clinically*. This podcast was funded by an award from the APPIC Call to Action on Equity, Inclusion, Justice and Social Responsibility. Resources associated with today's episode can be found at our website at psychology.okstate.edu that is psychology.okstate.edu. If you hover over the *Diversity* tab, you can find the *Student Diversity Committee* by clicking the link. You can find the *Practice ARC* podcast tab with all associated resources and supplemental materials for each episode.

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