

[Intro music]

**Noelle:** Whaaaaat up?!

**Miranda:** Welcome to The Unpacked Project

**Noelle:** We're your hosts-I'm Noelle

**Miranda:** And I'm Miranda.

**Noelle:** We're here to explore all things social justice. It's through casual conversations, interviews, and story telling that we hope to inspire others to take action towards a more compassionate and equitable world.

**Miranda:** 'Cause honestly it kinda sucks here sometimes.

**Noelle:** For real, we can do better people.

**Miranda:** Alright, let's start unpacking.

[Music plays]

Noelle

Welcome to our show everyone. Today's guest is [Dr. Audrey Brutus](#), we actually worked together as School Psychologists when I lived in New York and were Crisis Prevention Co-trainers for our district. Dr. Brutus earned a Master's in Education and PsyD in school clinical psychology, and also holds a bilingual extension in Haitian Creole. Her doctoral project focused on the under utilization of mental health services among Haitian people. Dr. Brutus has a decade of experience working as a Bilingual School Psychologist in addition to holding a seven year position in a specialized behavior management program. Dr. Brutus also has a private practice where she predominantly provides individual therapy to adults and conducts special education testing for children. She has also taught undergraduate psychology courses at Pace University. Currently, Dr. Brutus works as a Culturally Responsive Education Specialist with the New York State Education Department. In this role, she provides technical assistance to schools and districts in the areas of equity, cultural responsiveness and disproportionality. In addition, Dr. Brutus delivers professional development and webinars around issues of race and systemic racism to facilitate anti racist work. Welcome to the Unpacked Project, it's so nice to be here with you! It's definitely been a while. So can you tell our listeners a little bit more about yourself?

Dr. Brutus

Well, I'm listening to you talk about this. Dr. Brutus, I'm like-she sounds so amazing.

Miranda

That you girl, that's you!

Dr. Brutus

Um, I mean, aside from what you already shared, that's like pretty much me professionally. So the anti racist work and the work that I do around systemic racism and conversations that I lead about that, it's not necessarily part of my role as a Culturally Responsive Specialist. So I kind of want to clarify that. I kind of do that on my own for my private practice because it's a really a passion of mine. But yeah, I was born and raised in Brooklyn, from New York. Still here. Still can't imagine not being here. So I definitely am very amazed at the big leap that you took Noelle and leaving here and moving to a new place, and loving it and thriving and doing well. So I low key envy you about that.

Noelle

It's a whole other world out here.

Miranda

It's different.

Dr. Brutus

Yeah, I'm sure, I'm sure. No, but I mean that's pretty much me.

Miranda

Well, can you tell us a little bit more? I mean, that was a pretty big introduction. You do a lot clearly. And you know, we're so appreciative of folks like you that are doing this work in schools because it's so needed. But can you describe in depth a little bit more about what you actually do as a Culturally Responsive Education Specialist?

Dr. Brutus

Right. So, I literally am a Regional Specialist so I cover or work with school districts and schools that fall in my particular region, which is considered the lower Hudson region of New York. And my regions encompass Westchester, Rockland County, Yonkers, Mount Vernon, those areas are part of the schools that I work with. And what I do is, I provide professional development around cultural responsiveness. So really talking about what it even means to be culturally responsive, what does that work look like in education, in our classrooms. Getting people to really self reflect on their own perspectives and their own culture and what they're bringing into the classroom. And in addition to that, schools that get cited by the state around issues of disproportionality, specifically with suspension and special education related concerns. I support them and offer technical assistance, and on the surface, it's about the fact that they were cited and getting them off this list. But the work involves so much more in that and getting them to really reflect on why they're even on list, what it means to be on the list, and how to kind of go about creating a action plan to address the issues that list is about. So, that's pretty much in a nutshell what I do at work.

Miranda

Just a follow up question, you talk about going in and really just letting folks know- the educators, what it means to be culturally responsive, and also letting them know what it means to be on the list. Can you talk about those two, just for our listeners?

Dr. Brutus

Yeah, sure. So the gist of the workshops that I do around cultural responsiveness and what it means to be culturally responsive is really to send a pretty concrete message that there's not-it's not a list of strategies. It's not a list of things that I'm going to give you and then you go ahead and do, and all of a sudden you'll have a culturally responsive classroom and everything is great. It's a way of being. It's an essence of who you are and what you bring to the classroom, and a lens that you're building your lesson plans from. That you're looking at the curriculum, that you're teaching your students and the language that you're using, how you view inappropriate behaviors. It's a whole way of being. And really getting people to kind of understand that and unpack that is really a big part of my role in those kind of workshops. And as far as-I'm sorry, your second question was, you said,

Miranda

Yeah, the list. Being on the naughty list.

Dr. Brutus

Oh yea, yea. Sorry. So in New York, I don't know if they have this in Florida, but in New York there are certain indicators that the state is constantly reviewing schools data on. And two of those data pieces, there's like, I don't know, 20 different indicators of data that they look at. And two of those pieces involve suspension, and special education referrals and placement. And what they do is they kind of look at the number of suspensions and referrals that are happening in school districts, they have a threshold, if you're over that threshold you get flagged. And in addition to that, they're breaking down by ethnic group to see if there's disproportionality in the referrals for both discipline and special education. And if there are, you get flags for that. So when you get flags for those pieces, you know, those schools go on a list and it comes to me and my department, and then now they become schools that I have to work with, to really address these issues that are showing up in their data at their schools.

Noelle

So, you mentioned disproportionality. It's definitely something that's come up in some of our previous episodes, but we've never gone too deep into what disproportionality actually is, and what it looks like, and how it's measured. So can you tell us a little bit more about that piece of it?

Dr. Brutus

Yeah, sure. Very simply put, disproportionality, you can think of it as if you have a certain, I don't know, like, say you are in a school district and you have 10% of your population is Asian let's say. So you would expect that no matter what other areas you're looking at, whether it's special education, whether it's discipline, whether it's math scores, ELA scores, that that number would stay the same. Or maybe it'd be less, but pretty much be around that number. That you'd have 10% referrals also being of students who are Asian descent, or 10% of discipline being because that would be proportionate, meaning the percent stays the same. So it becomes disproportionate when your referrals or the outcome data doesn't reflect the percentage of students that actually exist in your school. It's a higher number of that. So if you have 10% students who are Asian but they're making up 50% of your special education referrals, that is disproportionate because it's not equal. So when we talk about disproportionality, that's basically what we're referring to.

Miranda

Yeah and I mean, disproportionate rates are happening everywhere, right?

Dr. Brutus

Right.

Miranda

You know, we've been talking about school a lot, but you know, numbers are in prisons as well, which is something that as we're talking about just reform in general, and kind of reimagining the justice or education system, these are things that we're talking about. So even here in Tampa, actually Noelle had sent me the 2020 Equity Report, and it studies various things like health insurance, homeownership, test scores, high school grad rates, you know, if you have a college degree here in your community. And we're seeing really concerning, concerning high rates here in Tampa, which I actually wasn't aware of. So even things like standardized testing scores for like ELA, which is English Language Arts, there's a 32.5% disparity gap between White student's scores and Black student's scores. You see it same in math, there's a 31.9% gap, children living in poverty- about 13% of youth are White and 35% of youth are Black. So we see these numbers across the board, right? Even in graduation rates. Dropout rates, graduation

rates, and folks attaining college degrees, right? There's all these disparities across the board. And just like you said for disproportionality, Tampa is made up of about 11% of our population is classified as black but we're seeing percentage rates in the 30s and so it just doesn't make sense. So can you talk a little bit about what trends that you've been seeing and how pervasive of a problem is in the education system?

Dr. Brutus

Absolutely. So what you're seeing in Tampa is very similar to what's happening across the nation because the [Office of Civil Rights](#), they basically collect data across the nation, and part of the data they collect is educational data and looking at disproportionate outcomes for different groups. And based on their reports, their most recent report was, I think in 2014. And I know the Yale Child Study Center also, they do studies around this as well, and their most recent study as of 2016, both of them have reported that-and I'm specifically going to focus on education because like you said, It spans through healthcare, criminal justice system, across different areas. When it comes to education, the data consistently has shown that Black students are three times more likely to receive an out of school suspension compared to their White counterparts. In addition to that, students with disabilities are two times more likely to receive out of school suspensions when we look at that in schools. So when you think about these two subgroups crossing-so if you have Black students who also have disabilities, that disproportionality becomes even more pronounced. And this issue is, again, it's collected nationwide. So it's a nationwide issue. So it doesn't surprise me what you're sharing is happening in Tampa because it's very similar to what's happening in New York. And in my region, again, I shared that I predominantly focus on discipline and special education. So the districts that I work with in my region, they tend to be cited by the state in these two areas. Specifically, when we look at discipline, the trend is usually an over suspension of Black males. That tends to be the trend in my region. And when we look at special education, meaning how they identify students as being special education students and also determining what kind of classes they should be in, there's also overidentification there for different subgroups. And in my region, it's specifically Black students being identified as having an intellectual disability, and also having a speech and language impairment. And also with Hispanic students also being identified as having a speech and language impairment. So those are the over identification areas in my region, and what I tend to be supporting the districts and schools with where I am.

Noelle

And I think when we talk about disproportionality and some of these indicators, a lot of times, like you just mentioned, we talked about over identification in some of these areas. And then when we think about it, it goes in the opposite direction too, right? The under identification of Black students for gifted programs, right? When we look at the degree attainment from that equity report, you know, big percentage point differences in terms of attaining degrees and finishing high school, and being connected in our communities with employment, things like that, that we know are protective factors, that we know help have these positive long term outcomes. So, these over identification in these negative areas where we're suspending and we're identifying as for special education, and then this under identification in these areas that we consider to be protective. And it makes me think of previous episodes, we've talked a lot about systemic racism most recently, and just how certain societal institutions perpetuate this cycle. And it's just really evident from the data we've heard today. You know, our education system, it's clearly unfortunately, one of those institutions. You know, and for me it's highly concerning obviously, not just because I'm an educator in the system, but because school is where it all starts. And one of our episodes we talked about equity starting early, and really starting in early childhood education in this institution where our kiddos are learning how to be citizens, right? And how we're educating, how we're doing that education is really important. So we put our trust

into the system, and we trust it to be fair and prepare our youth for the world through equitable learning opportunities, but we continue to fail our Youth of Color. So what are some of the systemic factors both within our schools and at a societal level that you think contribute to these disproportionate outcomes?

Dr. Brutus

So I don't see a difference between the systemic factors that we see in schools and that we see in society, because what I always think of is the fact that school is just a microcosm of larger society. So it's going to be the same, it just looks differently in the context. But I really feel that those personal biases that we all have, because it's human nature to have biases, it's the way that our brains are wired to kind of protect us, we have like these fight or flight responses. And in order to be able to react, you have to be able to quickly determine that something is unsafe versus safe. So there's some sort of survival evolutionary need to have biases, right? Because I remember reading a book called *Implicit Bias*, actually, it's what the name of the book is. But they were giving an example of how when you go to the doctor, something about being in a doctor's office, seeing them in a doctor's official kind of attire, lets you know-your brain know-that this is a safe place for you to get undressed. Because if you really think about it, you're getting undressed in front of a complete stranger that you never met, but your brain has to process that in a way to let you know that it's safe and you can do that here. And we kind of go through life, all the time, with all these different operations and these processes. So the personal biases that we have-which are often implicit meaning they're unconscious, they're automatic, you're not even thinking about them, but they're constantly there-we bring that with us into all of our interactions, into all our situations that we're in, they're no different in education. So when you go into an educational environment you're entering with these biases. And also for a teacher, before you could teach content, you're teaching culture, right? So you can only teach what you know and teach from the perspective that you know, so you are going to be bringing those values and what you see as important and how you were raised, it's going to come out and come across as well. So that has to be considered. In the United States, we do have a tendency to kind of focus on more individualistic kind of values, which doesn't really align with many communities of color who have more collectivistic values, meaning they're more family oriented, they more see themselves as having to help each other to get to a goal, whereas we more are like, every man for themselves kind of thing. So there's already kind of like a misalignment in our basic value system to society, with what Communities of Color value. And also, you know, we think about [Brown versus Board of Ed](#), which was the legal ruling that was meant to desegregate schools, because prior to that we had our White schools and schools for People of Color. That ruling only happened in 1954, so it wasn't really that long ago. And really what happened, what people don't realize what happened with that, is that Black students were taken from schools where they were only around other Black students, they were only being taught by Black teachers, and put into White schools, with White teachers, and all the Black teachers are fired, right? Because White people did not want their children being taught by Black teachers. So now the Black teachers have no jobs. And now all these Black students are in these White spaces with White teachers. And that's a situation that we are really still in. So you really think about it in that context. The public school system was never really created with students of color in mind. Right? So it's a system that's not designed for them, that was never created for them, and that's why we kind of see that we've never really recovered for that, because we still see Students of Color being mostly taught by predominantly White staff, for the most part, White women tend to be who the teaching staff are. So the idea that Students of Color are being, you know, mostly educated by teachers who don't look like them, teachers who have not had the experience of having to live in a racialized kind of society, and who are, you know, for lack of a better way of putting it, are racially privileged themselves. But they're making these consequential decisions about students and their futures and their lives. So I think all of

that definitely plays a role in the inequities that we see in education, but even in larger society we see that playing out. And in the news it's a constant thing that you're being flooded with and seeing. So to me, there's no difference between the two.

Miranda

Yeah, I mean that's such a great point, you know, a lot-most of our systems were designed for predominantly White, male, cisgender, you know, so all those things, right. We see that across the board. So I thank you for making that relation. So, so that's a lot right? The data that we talked about, just kind of some background that's going in schools-disproportionality and you even touched on intersectionality, right? So being Black and also being referred to Special Ed. So with all of that, when it comes to training staff right, this other part of your job and why you're doing all this work, where do you even begin? Because it feels like a lot. And how do you tailor your work to address social injustice, social justice issues and equity in schools?

Dr. Brutus

So the piece that gives me an easy entryway into this work is the fact that the schools are being cited for disproportionality. So once they've showed up on the list, now they're reaching out to me like help, help, help, because on the surface, it's like, we need to be off of this list because also, there's an discomfort with what it means to be on this list. That-oh my God, they think we're racist or something like that. So they kind of just want to be disassociated with this whole list and everything that it seems to stand for and what it means. So that gives me an entryway into my work with the school. And really the goal then becomes for me to help them understand why they're cited, while they're also looking closely at the story that their data is telling them. Right? So I take that opportunity to kind of walk them through that. And how I do that is to really get them to go through an exercise of doing what's called a root cause analysis, which is basically where you try to kind of dig and dig into your data and ask a lot of questions until you get to what is consensually agreed to be possible root causes to why you're seeing these trends in your data. And while you're doing that, kind of reflecting on what is the data telling you about the systems and the educators in your school, as opposed to- which is what a lot of people do- they think about what it's telling them about the students, which is not the way that you should look at it, right? Because that's really like a deficit model of thinking, and thinking that students and families are not able to or not good enough, or they don't care. And in doing that, kind of deflects the responsibility from the schools to have to look at their systems and look at their staff. So really getting them to look at the data from that perspective of systemic pieces that may be contributing to it, including the adults in that system, and kind of getting away from this idea that it has something to do with the students or the families. And also, ultimately, the goal is that they're going to develop some sort of action plan to address whatever it is that root cause is that they decided is the problem, to now come up with an action plan on how they're going to address that to kind of ultimately, I want to say eliminate for that's like a really a utopian goal, but at least to minimize this disproportionality that they're seeing in their data. So while they come to me because of a citation and wanting to get off a state list, I take advantage of that opportunity to really get them to dive deeper and really unpack equity and systemic issues that may be playing out in their organization. So that's one piece for me as far as the work that I'm doing with schools and their districts. Now, I also do a lot of work with my own team that I work with, I work with other specialists. So while I'm a Culturally Responsive Specialist, they are specialists on my team that deal with behavior or that deal with transition or literacy. So everyone has their own lane when it comes to the supports that they're providing to the schools. So I work with my team in building their capacity around self reflecting on their own biases and understanding concepts of privilege, and systemic issues, terminology that's associated with equity and systemic inequalities, and really thinking about how all of that is tied into their work. So that when they're going out there to support the schools, it's not just me, culturally

responsive person who's always talking about it, but everyone's on the team talking about it, and them seeing that it intersects with everything that we're doing. So that's really my entry point in the work that I do and how I support both my team and also my region.

Noelle

So you bring up bias and you mentioned it before, you know, talking about [implicit bias](#) and how it really occurs at the subconscious level. It's something that we've talked about in previous episodes. It was actually [episode number 2](#) because we felt like it was such an important concept for people to hear about going into all these different topics that we're gonna be talking about-education, criminal justice, you know, any of these really important areas because it just winds up seeping its way into so much. So I'm curious, you know, like you were talking about root cause analysis, and some of that I would imagine is probably pretty uncomfortable for them to confront sometimes and identify. And taking that responsibility like you said, on themselves, within the systems that we work on and work within. So what kinds of-as you're working with them, what kinds of shifts do you see happening in the school communities after you train them on the cultural responsiveness? And how long does it typically take to see those results within the teachers and the schools, with the students within that environment.

Dr. Brutus

So I want to point out that I've only been in this role for about two years, and most systemic action plan changes have a goal of maybe three to five years before you really start to see change in an organization. So I have to be honest and say that I haven't been there long enough to see the impacts or the effects of the conversations that we're having, or the work that I'm doing. And also, it's been all these kind of personnel changes at the state level, local level, and everything like that. So that's been difficult as well for consistency and carryover. But with that said, the immediate feedback that I get from educators who I work with is always, you know, typically positive and very self reflective, and them feeling like they want to do something-like, what do we do, you know? But it becomes difficult to do when you don't quite yet understand the connections between your data and your own personal values, and how all of that is kind of coming together to perpetuate a system that's happening in your building. So that I think is the uncomfortable place for people, and when we get to the action part, that's where everyone's really excited and coming up with plans. So it has been very rewarding for me to see the plans that ultimately will come out of the work and to also indirectly hear from-you know, sometimes I'll come across students or parents that I happen to know attend a particular school district and they'll start talking to me not knowing that I'm involved in the work at all. And they're like, oh my God let me tell you about my school, they created this equity team and they were calling all the students and wanted them to be part of the meeting, and to share their experiences with racism. And I know in my work with the team, that that was a conversation that we had and we were able to work that out. But the fact that it's trickling down to the point that I'm able to be in a community with the students and their parents, and they're having direct conversations with me, lets me know that on some level, somewhere, there is some level of impact. And that keeps me in the work because sometimes the work can be discouraging, and seems like such a big problem, especially when you guys are all the way in Tampa and I'm here in New York, and we're talking about the same data. So that can definitely be discouraging. And when you see that year after year after year, it's the same data and clearly, it's like, a lot of resistance to change, it can make the work very hard and make it difficult to stay in. But, I guess I think about myself, I think about, you know, my future family and families that I've worked in and who I'm standing up for, and that kind of keeps me tied into the work and keeping my voice heard until I can't anymore. But so for now, that's where I'm at. And I try to stay in it because I am very passionate about the issues. But yeah, I don't know if I answered your question.

Noelle

Yeah, yeah you definitely did. Yeah, it makes me think at least, that this would be work that I would hope our education system and lots of societal systems start doing on the front end, and not waiting for you to wind up on a list, right? Not waiting for there to be these outcomes, you know, but that we start trying to-like you were talking about-equity committees, and starting to try to do these things just as our natural processes within our systems to try to prevent some of these things from becoming worse. If they're already, like you said, look at the data, look at the root cause, where are we at right now, how can we get better, you know? And starting to work with the data that way, having people become more aware of it, and having it just sort of become embedded just within our practices, you know?

Dr. Brutus

Right. And part of the work that I've been on a team to start really developing is creating communities because this is a trend across the region. so getting districts together in the same room to kind of- so they see it's not just us, like we're not just focusing on you, but even your neighbor, they have the same issue as well. So talking to each other about-maybe there are similar root causes, maybe there's a similar action plan that we should be talking about. And that has been powerful as well, for districts to kind of come together and learn that they're not the only, and hearing what other people are doing in their action plan gives them ideas. And I feel like that's the way to kind of trickle out the work and make it more impactful, at least in the region. So that's definitely a piece that we're working on more and to keep it ongoing. So it's, like you said, it not be just about-because you're on the list-but it's something that we want to do because we know it's the right thing to do and we don't ever want to be on the list in the future so we're going to keep it going. So for sure, that's where we're at with that.

Miranda

Yeah, definitely. I mean, it's about creating spaces for educators to grow and learn, right? It's not about shame and blame.

Dr. Brutus

Right.

Miranda

Which really is the same thing for schools, you know, children in general, it's not about shame and blame. We're here to all grow together, and what types of spaces are we creating? Which actually, talking about building spaces like that, it kind of reminds me of the school to prison pipeline, which is something we're going to be getting into pretty soon. So you know, you touched on schools really being microcosms of society and there's these disproportionate outcomes like suspensions, expulsions, we know greater use of force on kids of color, harsher punishment in general. And there's such a parallel between that and mass incarceration. These higher rates of police brutality as well. So can you touch on-and I recently learned it's actually the cradle to prison pipeline, because, you know, we talk about suspension and expulsion, and we're seeing kids in preschool, you know, dealing with these same issues, right, at three and four and five year olds. So yeah, so can you talk a little bit about the concept of cradle to prison pipeline, and then expand on that for us and share the ways in which schools are funneling children into the system?

Dr. Brutus

Yeah, so absolutely. Before when I was talking about the different data around suspensions, out of school suspensions, I want to go back to that. That data, really like you were saying, starts in preschool, as early as preschool. Which is really like-you're like, what can a child in preschool

really do to get out of school suspension? But again, the Office of Civil Rights [collected data](#) and they found that Black students in preschools are 3, almost 4 times-like, it's about 3.6%-but they're more likely to receive an out of school suspension compared to White students in preschool that data starts looking like that. And in addition to that, they found that Black and Hispanic students tend to receive harsher consequences for the same behaviors that are being engaged in by their White peers, as well. So it kind of starts there also. So that tells you that it has nothing to do with the actual behaviors that the students are engaging in, but in the way that they're being perceived and the way that they're being interpreted. And this is where, you know, as we're talking about biases, and you know, the values that you bring in, and you kind of have to kind of check that piece because this isn't about the kids and their families, you know, it's really about the adults that are working with them and how those behaviors are being interpreted. So, in addition to those pieces of data, it's really been consistently shown that school suspensions and expulsions are positively related or correlated to numerous negative educational outcomes, which you kind of talked on before; outcomes such as low academic achievement, dropping out of school and not graduating, which will ultimately lead to juvenile delinquency and interacting with the criminal justice system. So that's what we mean when you hear this idea of school to prison pipeline. The pipeline is really for our Black and Brown students, or Black and Hispanic students, that these outcomes, these situations that they're experiencing in school increases the likelihood that they will have negative encounters with the criminal justice system in the future. And this notion of the cradle to prison pipeline really speaks to the idea that as early as birth, children who are coming from Communities of Color are born into a world where they're confronted or will be confronted with a variety of social disadvantages, and you kind of touched on that earlier with health care, just basic access to various resources and opportunities that they're just going to come in contact with. And also the biases of other people in larger society will negatively impact them as well. And the unfortunate thing is that from birth, race and how someone looks is determining what kind of outcomes people will have later in life. And that's what the data is kind of supporting. It's a very unfortunate thing, you know. Your race and how you look should not determine whether or not you'll be likely to graduate from high school or whether you'll be likely to get a job, or buy a house, or get good quality medical care, but that's what the data is showing, the relationship. So, when they talk about this cradle to prison pipeline, that's pretty much what they're referring to about how these outcomes are predetermined based on race when children are born, which is really disgusting.

Noelle

It is. And, you know, we've talked about so much in this episode that plays into that, you know, systemically, personally within people in terms of their biases and their perceptions, and then how that impacts their actions, and how they're educating our students. You know, and it just makes me think, we're all here I think hoping for better outcomes in all these systems, right? But if you could kind of if you could reimagine a more just and equitable education system, if you had a magic wand right now-

Miranda

wave it all over the place

Noelle

-what would that look like?

Dr. Brutus

Oh, wow, I think for me, on a very fundamental basic level, it's just to be in a world where everyone, like, no matter what their color, or background, or how they grew up, that they just got

it. Like they just passionately, not just understood it intellectually, but felt that what was going on, what is happening systemically is related to both positive and negative aspects of our history in this country, and that a lot of those remnants are continuing to impact certain groups in our society. And that is a problem for everybody. It's not just a Black problem, or a Brown problem, it's an issue for White people as well, because, you know, it's, you're not really getting fair interactions with people either. So it's not really a great situation for anybody that's involved with it. And just, you know, just, I just feel like if everyone was to- just understood it and got it, and was passionate about it, and got how disgusting this was, and cared about how disgusting it was, then people would be on the equal space of wanting to do something about it and change it. But you know, unfortunately that's not the space that we're in. But if I had a wand, it would be to kind of sprinkle it over this whole entire world and give everybody the same advice, knowledge base and emotional stance around this issue to create a more equal footing system for everybody in it.

Miranda

Just have people that care in this world, right? You know?

Noelle

Well we're always like, imagine that, people care about each other

Miranda

Right?

Dr. Brutus

I'd make people care with my wand, that's what I do.

Miranda

No, I love it. I love it. And you know the hope is like, you know, Noelle and I, scheduling these interviews, we've just come across so many people that are so passionate about this work and they want to educate folks, and you know, they're helping us do that. And we're learning more about everyone that is doing this work as well. So, thank you so much for your time today and all of your insight. I really appreciate learning a bit more about that. So before we go we always like to ask what social media platforms we can find you on or anybody else that's doing this work, whether they're organizations, just who we can follow to learn more about culturally responsive education.

Dr. Brutus

So I am actually on [Psychology Today](#), but I'm there more so as a psychologist. But if you know, people wanted to reach out to me, I do this work through my practice as well so that's definitely where you can find me. But some great resources for people who are looking for information about cultural responsiveness-[Teaching Tolerance](#), is a website that has not only great information, but also great tools and handouts and things that can be used with children, adults of different ages, and public, private schools. So I think they're a really great resource for those pieces of information. If you're someone who's about data and you're looking for data, I repeatedly referenced the [Office of Civil Rights](#). So their website is also a great resource for those kind of data pieces that I was sharing today. If you need information about that, like nationwide, and if you're looking for a good read, Zaretta Hammond, she wrote the [Culturally Responsive Teaching in the Brain](#). And she really speaks about not just about cultural responsive being about race, but understanding like, as far as biases and just how the brain is set up, you know, and how we're set up to survive in this world. And once you can kind of understand that on a fundamental level, then being culturally responsive is not like a chore or a

hard thing to do. So I think that's a great kind of basic fundamental building process, especially for educators who might be looking for tools and what it's work.

Miranda

Awesome, thank you. So we'll have all those links up on our website, and most likely in our show notes too, if there's space.

Noelle

Next week on The Unpack Project, we will be starting our criminal justice series. Adam Foss will be joining us and he is the Founder and Executive Director of Prosecutor Impact, a nonprofit organization that develops innovative curriculum and experiential training for prosecutors across the country.

[Outro music plays]

**Miranda:** The Unpacked Project is produced by Vicky Lee. Branding and Marketing by Raquel Avalos.

**Noelle:** Show us some love and be sure to like, subscribe and review our podcast. And to stay connected and up-to-date, follow us on Instagram at the\_unpacked project.

**Miranda:** Shout out to all of our listeners who unpacked with us today, we'll see you next week.

**Noelle:** Peace!

**Miranda:** Ayye byeeeee