

[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 0:38

We have Kristy leader here today to help us further explore how a culturally responsive and anti-bias framework can support our families and school communities that are often overlooked and forgotten. Kristy holds a master's degree in educational leadership from Bank Street College of Education, and has worked for 20 plus years as a teacher, school administrator and college professor with a focus on community activism and social justice through education. She founded education for progress, where she partners with schools and organizations as an anti bias anti racist educator, and works as a family and community educator with the Westchester Institute for Human Development. Kristy, thank you so much for being here today. You add so much value to school communities and clearly support families that are often overlooked. Why did you get into this line of work? And can you tell us more about what you do as a family and community educator and anti bias educator?

Kristy 1:37

Sure, well thank you so much for having me, it's such an honor. And anybody who's worked with me knows I never get exhausted from talking about any of this, so I'm very excited to be here on this podcast. So I knew from the time I was very small that I wanted to be a game changer, a world changer. My mom was a nurse, she was a visiting nurse in the South Bronx when I was a kid working with AIDS patients in the 80s. And my grandmother worked in a nursing home and I was very involved in watching their work and knew I wanted to follow in their footsteps and do something to impact the world in a positive way. I initially wanted to be a lawyer, and in my schooling over the years as I took classes and electives, just to kind of try to find my way, I took a child development class with a professor named Sheila Hannah, I hope she listens, who basically said that the way to change the world is through education. To her, she was a teacher in her soul and at that moment, I just knew that that's what I wanted to do. So I went to school to be a teacher, I taught in early childhood, I taught in elementary school for a long time, predominantly fourth grade, my Master's in leadership. So I did some director work in the Bronx. And through that, you know, as I tried to figure out what I want to do next, you know, social justice and anti bias work always is what stood out the most to me. And so as I thought about

the next phase of my career, I knew that that's where my heart and my passion was, and so it led me to doing this unbelievable work that I'm so honored to do every day.

Noelle 3:12

That's awesome. I mean, I know you have so much experience and so much knowledge to share with us today. You know, one of your main focuses in what you do is working with families and engaging families in the education process. I know the role of the family in education is so important, yet seemingly it doesn't seem like a priority in many cases. Often we might blame families for uninvolvedness, such as saying things like-oh, they don't value education, or they just don't care, rather than addressing ways that we can include them. So can you touch on some of these factors that cause family disengagement in the schools?

Kristy 3:54

Sure, absolutely. So as you mentioned, one of my hats as a family and community educator at WIHD in Westchester. And we work predominantly with families of children with disabilities, helping them navigate the process, educate them around the special education process, and really, you know, helping them to understand how to be advocates for their children throughout their school career. And so as we work with professionals in schools, a lot of times we do hear this-okay, you know, these families just don't care. And in my 20 plus years of education, one thing that I can tell you is that I've never met a family that didn't care, and nothing hurts me more. I'm a mother of three kids myself, and I know that sometimes I'm not engaged with the school or doing what you think the best mom in the world should be doing, but it never takes away from the love of your child. And I think first and foremost, people who work in schools need to really embrace and understand that. But there are a variety of reasons why families may not show up in the way that schools want them to show up. And some of those things, I try to think first and foremost of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. And if you're familiar with that, it's basically like your food and shelter come first and you really can't get to all the goodies and the self actualization until you feel safe, secure, fed. And so there's a big piece of that with families. And I would say now more than ever before, you know, now, right now, there's a lot of talk around, the families on zoom, and kids aren't logging in, you know, always, but especially now, we just don't know what's going on inside those homes. And so if a family is just working to get food on the table, or to keep their job, and they're worried they're going to get fired for missing, you know, because there's a 10am conference at the school. And schools are notorious for making things between nine and three, when you know, a single working mom just can't take the day off to show up. So there's that. Right now families are dealing with illness, sometimes it's childcare. A lot of times, if there's a PTA meeting at night, you know, a lot of us moms are just getting home at six, and either we don't have the childcare to leave our families, or we can't! We haven't seen them all day, and this is our only special time with our little ones; between six when we get home and maybe eight when they go to bed, you know. So all those factors sort of play in transportation, those kinds of things. And I hear it in my role as mom too, with people in the PTA and those kinds of things like, you know, we only get a few people showing up. Okay, well, how accessible are you really making this? So that's the first part of it, are people's needs being met, and are they just focusing on keeping things going. And then the second part that contributes to disengagement is all the lack of culturally responsive work that people do with

families. So a lot of times there's no translation, or meetings are predominantly in English. If you go to one meeting and it's an English, and English isn't your first language, probably, you're not going to arrange for the childcare and get yourself out of the house for a meeting at six at night, just to sit there and hear you know, a meeting in a language that you don't necessarily understand. A lot of times families don't feel welcomed, and that's a big issue. Nobody likes feeling like an only, it's a very brave thing to be an only in a room. So if everybody in the room looks very different from you, it may be something that's off putting. It may be a way that you don't really feel comfortable, some families are scared. And you know, we see this, particularly with undocumented families where they just don't want to draw any attention to themselves. So if the like things are good at school, then I'm just going to keep it that way, I'm not going to show up and make noise and bring attention to our family. And the other thing that I was thinking is that, you know, a lot of families from a cultural standpoint are taught not to really question. A lot of cultures teach you to really respect the teacher, that's not a very American thing, unfortunately, or fortunately, we question a lot, and that's okay. But in some cultures, you know, the teacher really is the end all and there's really nothing to say. I don't have to show up because you're giving the grades, my child should be listening to you. And so there's kind of not coming to complain so there's nothing else to say. And I think, unfortunately, a lot of times school staff see those things as parents not caring or being flippant, and, you know, it's really not that.

Miranda 7:59

So, you know, sometimes it sounds like just life in general is a barrier to high quality education. And then there's these systems that are in place in the school, and just the way that they don't necessarily view the family structure and the barriers that they already are faced with. Right? So you talked about transportation, you know, busing systems and things like that. So there's a lot that goes into that. So thank you for kind of sharing, touching on all of that. How do you see this as a social justice issue? And how can addressing these factors improve equity in our schools, and for that matter, in our society, as well?

Kristy 8:34

So I see this as a huge social justice issue, because research shows that family engagement really impacts student outcomes. And in every piece of research done around family engagement, students are that much better off. They succeed much more when the family is actively involved. So not engaging your families, whether it's by accident or on purpose, to me, is negligent, because for particularly our disenfranchised communities, we're actually adding to the opportunity gap or to what people call the achievement gap by leaving those families out. You know, the other thing is that students often if the families don't trust the school, then the students don't trust the school, and that can become problematic. I know if I don't like a teacher, my kids automatically pick up on that, like-oh, I hate that lady, you know.

Miranda 9:22

For real, kids pick up on a lot of things.

Kristy 9:24

It's important for families to feel safe. We're giving you our babies, like, you know, you better roll out that welcome mat for me so I can feel comfortable. And in the end when schools that are successful at really partnering and engaging families, whatever that may look like, it may not look traditional, and that's okay. But schools that do involve their families, their students tend to just do better overall and that achievement gap, opportunity gap I like to say, you know, tends to become smaller and smaller.

Noelle 9:54

So, you know, a lot of what I hear and a lot of what this show really stands for right is inclusion and really celebrating diversity. I think sometimes, you know, what schools in particular, unfortunately, a lot of these factors that could offer richness to education and can bring value to education, you know, in terms of respecting our communities and bringing that into the school, sometimes it's looked at as a barrier. And so I'm just wondering, what tends to be your approach? Because I would imagine that sometimes schools might get defensive, or might think, you know, again, with the blame, right, blaming families, rather than them taking some of the responsibility for it. So when you're working with the schools and you're working with faculty, how do you approach that?

Kristy 10:45

So one of the beautiful things that my colleagues at WIHD do when they work with schools is that we bring the parent piece in. And lots of people, colleagues in my office, have children themselves with disabilities, which I think is particularly impactful for them to go into staff meetings and classrooms and professional development seminars, and really talk about the parent piece and what it's like to walk into that first IEP meeting, or to be told the first time that, you know-hey, things aren't clicking right with your child. You know, for kids with special needs in particular, that can be a big-back to the why your family's not engaged-sometimes you go in, if you're calling me all the time that my kids have behavior problems, or, you know, every time I go, you have something negative to say, I'm not going to return and that often becomes the parent and the school's constant butting of heads. So I think first and foremost, it's important for schools to be committed to this work, both to equity work, and to family engagement. And it just has to be a part of policy procedure and ongoing professional development. Schools traditionally, like to do a one and done. Come in, tell us about what we should be doing with parents, and that's the end of it. Or come in and do an equity training, like that's my favorite request, can you come in and teach us anti bias?

Miranda 11:58

It doesn't work like that in education.

Kristy 12:00

Yeah, it doesn't work like that, right? And what those of us in this work know is that this is never ending work, right? This is never ending work. I mean, I've been doing this work for years now and still, every day, every week, I learn something new and I cringe at something I did last week, right. And I'm grateful to be around people, surrounded by people who sort of push my limits and push me to think more carefully about the process and other people's perspectives.

So you know, schools really have to be engaged in this work in an ongoing way. They have to be able to have courageous conversations all the time. Schools have to set up spaces and places for teachers to be honest, to get feedback, to be able to look at their data. For us that's a really critical piece of equity work in schools. And family engagement is to really look at-what are your suspension rates? What are your referral rates? Who are you referring to the special education process? You know, who's getting suspended? What are your graduation rates? And when you kind of can honestly take a look at those numbers, if there are disparities, then you have to start to think about a) What are we doing? And b) how can we re engage these students? And let me tell you, nobody's more interested in re engaging their students than families. So it's a really critical place to start. A lot of times schools have these meetings and they just don't include the voices of families, or the students. And that's really important. A lot of times it takes some time, and it takes trust building because families may not off the bat feel comfortable coming in and saying-well, I feel like you know, you're discriminatory. Nobody's gonna walk in and do that. Most people won't, you know it's a hard thing to do. But if there's a continuous place for those voices and for parent feedback, and for that critical lens for, you know, the staff to be really reaching out and hearing the stories of those they're impacting, then the work can start to move forward. But I think the most important thing is just to remember that we're never done. It's every year. It's not, because this year we did an equity thing, then next year we can move on to math, right? It has to be really a part of every single thing that we do all the time.

Miranda 14:00

And I mean, a lot of schools, you're right. I've worked in schools before, and that is the lens that a lot of people have when it comes to implementing any type of change- training and real change, right? And this idea of us wanting to grow as people, as individuals, even on a basic level, is about dedicating yourself over time, and committing yourself over time to working on whatever it is that you choose to. So in this case, it's anti bias work, right, in schools. So can you tell us a little bit about the ways that you've seen school community shift as a result of the training that you implement? I know, it has to be pretty powerful.

Kristy 14:33

It is. And it's also difficult. It can be thankless because it's not the kind of thing that you always reap the benefits from and sometimes in this work, you know, we're the ones that are sort of the difficult changemakers. We're the shaker uppers, you know? So it can be a hard place to be in, but usually after the fact, the feedback that we get is that the work is really impactful and that it's real eye opening. And the shift really comes with mindset and that's the most important piece. That we move to a place of understanding and away from a place of judgment. And again, back to family engagement, particularly around that, right, but in talking about anti bias work, also that we're not just saying-why aren't these kids behaving? Or, you know, that we're really moving to a place-that shift in mindset-to move to understanding and to raise our awareness together about our role in family engagement, and culturally responsive engagement and anti bias work. And that people start to understand that they personally are responsible for this work. It's not just-let me lean on the school, let me assume that the school is going to do the curriculum for me. This work is very different from math or other types of professional development, because it really

involves digging deep in your own set of morals and ideas and, that can be tough. But, you know, the main shift that we see is in mindset. And it's slow, and it takes time. And it's hard. But you know, you keep at it.

Noelle 15:59

Yeah, I mean, like you're saying, you know, it's slow. When we were talking about a couple episodes ago, you know, we talk about bias, and just how ingrained some of these beliefs can be, and how much work and time it can take. They can be unlearned, right? But it really takes the conscious efforts to do this work on a personal level. And then beyond just the person level, then we're in the system of the school. You know, do you see that people are generally receptive? Do you have to deal with resistance from staff members? And if they are resistant how do you even handle that, you know, and you're coming in, and you're working with them?

Kristy 16:38

So just back to what you were saying prior. You know, one of the pieces I think, for me, that's so impactful in this work is really thinking about the history of equity in schools. And when you start to peel that back, you know, it's so big, and it's so deep, and it's so disturbing, that like, you know, just 60-how many years out are we from Brown versus Board of Ed? 60 years out? I'm not a math person, but just-

Noelle 17:03

Not a long time

Kristy 17:03

-not the fact that, you know, we just integrated then. And that integration really meant taking children away from Black teachers and putting Black children in White spaces. We haven't recovered from that. And so I think that, you know, looking at that piece in schools is particularly profound. And we can remove ourselves from the-I'm a bad person thought, when we can see that I'm a player in this long time game, right? But it is, it is so deep. It's so much more than just let me be nice, which is what people tend to go to as right. As far as receptive, it's seriously, usually, either one way or the other. You're preaching to the choir and you have the yeses and the people that are behind you. And yes, I agree with you. And you have the hard noes. And the hard nose are HARD nose. They are resistant, vocally and outwardly resistant. And you know, I would say the majority of the time, absolutely, they're White. And you know, it's interesting, it's interesting to be in a lot of conversations where White people are talking about not being racist, or not being able to accept racist or oppressive systems. And it's usually one way or the other. And that's probably the hardest part. You know, I'll tell you how you meet the resistance. In the beginning, it was really hard. You know, and I shared with you before that, you know, my kids are biracial-we're from a mixed race family. And so for me, it's not only hard, but it becomes personal to where like, I've been in meetings, and I'm crying. And I can't do that, I have to understand. You know, through doing research and reading books like Glen Singleton's Courageous Conversations, I'm learning to pull my emotional self out of the process and to understand that this is part of their process, too. But we focus back a lot on the norms from the Courageous Conversations book, which really talks about being uncomfortable and expecting

that this work is going to cause discomfort and leaning into the discomfort. And the idea that we're not going to always have consensus. And I think with the resistance, those are the two most powerful pieces for me. We were just in a conversation in some work that I was doing recently, where the meeting, there was an anti-bias meeting, and it got flamed up and it was hard. And we had gone through our hour at the end of that hour I said-you know, we're all uncomfortable, and we're not going to come to a consensus today, and we're just going to have to end the meeting like that and all return. The one happy thing is when everybody actually returns. And when they return I'm like, thank you for at least sh--you may not agree with me and you may not be here, but you're back and your camera's on, right? And you're showing up. So the resistance is just-loook, if somebody's had the mindset of one thing for the last 50 years, I'm not going to come in and tell you my story and change your mindset. And when I tell you, I told you I think, I teach this college course to future teachers around teaching in diverse classrooms and you know, one of the things that I was telling them the other day is that all of your media are just reinforcing your ideas about this. And so you're following people on social media that believe in your beliefs, you're watching the news station that reinforces. You know, we're in a very weird time right now, as far as all that information really being catered to our own skewed way of thinking. So it's really easy to fall into the trap of like-oh no, I don't believe that because I have five sources that agree with me and say that that's nonsense, right? And so you know, kind of unpacking and bringing different perspectives. And, you know, all of that is an important part of the work. But we just got to lean in. I think the quote is, "The only way to the other side is through", right? So we just got to get through, as hard as it may be. I say everyone turns out being a believer, not 100% of the time. But I always like to think that once you hear it, you can't unhear it. So you may not believe me 100%, but I don't believe anyone will go back to day one where you totally didn't know, right? Some little thought, as you're thinking your, you know, awful thoughts that I would say they're awful thoughts, you're biased thoughts, right? Something in your mind will trigger-hopefully my voice at some point-and maybe that's the beginning of the change. But if you are working in a school that is committed to this, either you're going to change and get with it, or you're going to get out. And that ultimately has to be school standpoint. Ultimately, that's the only way I think we're going to make change in schools. We have to start saying- we can't continue to excuse teachers who are suspending Black males at disproportionate rates, year after year after year and make it okay because they've always done it. Or because we forgive them for not understanding. Either this is our plan and you're with it, you can get with it and I'll show you how, or you're done. And you're out. And you know, that's when we'll start to make changes.

Miranda 21:44

Make that statement right there.

Noelle 21:46

No, we love it!

Miranda 21:47

I mean, even just that last bit that you touched on really reminds me of, you know, police reform as well, right. It's just this idea that this is the new policy, and we're sticking to it because it's

what's just, and we're moving forward from there, you know? Get on board and we can help you out, or not, you know? And change in general is just hard. It's hard for anybody. But, you know, aside from training schools and families to increase engagement like you've talked about a lot, you've also mentioned that you involve students in anti bias and anti racism work as well, which I'm more interested in as well. Can you tell us a little bit about that, and why you think it's so important to involve students in these important dialogues?

Kristy 22:24

Sure. And I know we're-- if we have time I'll read you my anti bias definition from my Bible and-

Miranda 22:32

I mean, do you want to read it now? Why not?

Noelle 22:34

Yeah come on, let's hear it!

Kristy 22:35

So this, this I read in my undergrad which is, you know, going back a little ways, 20 years. And it's The Anti Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children. You probably can't see my green screen. And plus, this is a podcast so you can't see anyways. So it's by Louise Derman-Sparks. And I mean, I'd have to look and see when this is originally written, but it had been written for quite some time. 1989. So when I read it, it was already out there for a while. And this is still a book I hold dear and go back to all the time. It's written specifically about early childhood but I think it lends itself to any age. And it says- their definition of anti-bias, it's "an active activist approach to challenging prejudice, stereotyping, bias and the isms. In a society in which institutional structures create and maintain sexism, racism and handicapism, it is not sufficient to be non biased, and also highly unlikely. Nor is it sufficient to be an observer. It is necessary for each individual to actively intervene, to challenge and counter the personal and institutional behaviors that perpetuate oppression." And I just wish everyone would like to hang on their wall. And again, to me, the most important piece is it's an active activist role. It's not a-I'm a good person, I'm sitting here waiting for good stuff to happen. It's-I'm taking active responsibility every single day. So back to your question about students, you know, how can we expect to raise adults that can do this work when we poorly prepare our children to do this work their whole lives. I don't know if you're familiar with Liz Kleinrock. But she has an amazing TED Talk, which she talks about teaching taboo subjects. And she talks about how from a very young age we're really taught that you shouldn't talk about race, politics, or religion. And doing that makes it impossible for humans to engage in, you know, intellectual discourse around these issues. And we can see that, you know, right now on our presidential debate like that is the result of our last presidential debate of people not being taught to have constructive discourse around difficult topics in school. So I was called once into a school where there had been some racist and anti semitic things written in a school. It was a middle school and they brought me in to do work and they were like, you know, don't really talk about the incident, the administration [said], because the kids don't all know. But we still want you to engage in some, you know, anti bias work. Okay, so I start by saying to the students, it was the sixth graders who I met with

first,--so anybody know why I'm here? They're like, somebody wrote whatever on the table. They know, they know. And they also don't have the appropriate avenue to filter through and deal with this. So for me, anti bias work starts when kids are two, and three, and four in your preschool classrooms. You know, when kids start with--you can't play with that doll! You know, it's very simple to say --anyone can play with the doll, you know? You might be a daddy someday, that's amazing! You know? Those kinds of things really start to set the stage for, at each level, the conversations getting more difficult. In this particular TED Talk, Liz Kleinrock talks about talking about consent with students, and that you don't start with second graders and the birds and the bees talk. But you start about in kindergarten, keeping your hands off my body. That in itself is consent, and you build on that. And so it's the same thing with anti bias discussions. We have to allow children, we have to give children the gift of being able to talk about these things in an intellectual, reasonable way. And we have to arm them for a different world. You know, we just, it's just time. We just have to do it, so

Miranda 26:13

Yeah. And I think just like adults, you know, you talk about training with adults and creating safe spaces for them to unlearn what they've learned, and you know, not be judged for that, right? And then a space to relearn. And it's the same for children as well, you know. A lot of my work is with younger children, and you can take that same, the same concepts for young children and apply them to adults, you know. They learn, in many of the same ways so thank you for sharing that.

Kristy 26:36

It's so powerful to students to, you know, give them various perspective and task them to be critical thinkers. And that's such a bonus of anti bias work. Like, this weekend, it's indigenous peoples weekend, aka Columbus Day weekend. And you know, there's a lot to unpack there, there's a lot of historic oppression to unpack there. And so you don't necessarily have to go in because teachers are always afraid, like, I don't want to get fired. And I don't blame them, because a lot of administrators don't want them talking about some of this stuff. But if you explain to families--okay, we're giving them these two different perspectives and we're going to talk about it. We're going to relate it to a book like the three little pigs from the wolf's perspective, have you ever read that book? Which he's like, I was walking down the street and I sneeze, and a house blew down! And you know, or Wicked? Right? And how Wicked is the whole story of the Wizard of Oz from the wicked witch's perspective, and it's totally different. And how amazing if we start to teach history from that perspective, that like--hey look guys, there's these three stories, let's kind of weigh in on--let's debate this, let's weigh in on this, you know, from a very young age, instead of just telling them what to think all the time.

Noelle 27:42

And again, I mean, like you said, teachers are legitimately afraid to have some of these conversations. I think the students are ready for it. Like, as soon as you open it up, just like your story like you said, when you went in there, and they're like, this is what happened and we're ready to talk about it. And, and when you think about the fact that teachers get nervous to bring up these topics or feel restricted in what they can talk about, it just lends even more to the

systems, right? These, these systems that are very much dictating how we're delivering information, how we're sort of guiding our students to be thinking about these things, when really, we need to be opening that up and having the dialogue. Like you said, being able to value other perspectives, have some problem solving, and really kind of reshape the culture through teaching our students these things. So, I think it's awesome.

Kristy 28:38

And talk about a bonus of engaging families! The families that you serve are such a rich resource--tell us what this weekend looks like in your country, or in your culture, or how you grew up, or, you know, whatever it is, because instead of having to reinvent the wheel all the time, often, families have really interesting perspectives on different holidays and celebrations, and on race and culture, and all of these different subjects. So to involve them like, let's think about how this is celebrated at this person's house, or what it what did you learn about Columbus growing up? It's, it's right there. Bring your families and it's right there. And it's not hard, you know? But it is, it's that scary piece because we weren't taught to do this as kids so we continue to be scared as adults to ever bring.

Noelle 29:26

Well, then what do families feel when they notice that schools are valuing them and are bringing their experiences in? It's almost like back to what we were talking about in the beginning, about not having just this restrictive way of looking at it, but when there's, there's multiple sides to this all the time. You know, if teachers and schools reflect on how parents feel, and we're doing things that show them that they're valued, and we see the response that they're coming in, it's a 50/50. It's a two way street.

Kristy 29:57

It is. It's a win win.

Noelle 29:59

And you know, I think that that's often overlooked so thank you for sharing all of that. When we think about our education system in general, there seems to be so much work that still needs to be done. If you could reimagine our education system, what would that look like?

Kristy 30:20

So as I said earlier, this was like the hardest thing I could actually think of because having this historical perspective my first thought is like, how do you undo hundreds of years of inequity, right? But that's not the question. The question is, if I get to wave my magic wand, you know, what do I do? So a few things. The first is, I would make parent engagement at the forefront, family engagement at the forefront, and allow that to lead the cultural responsive lens. Absolutely on the top of my list, I would hire more teachers of Color. Critical in our schools, something that's really missing. As I said earlier, after Brown versus Board of Ed it's still so disproportionate. Our schools are predominantly run by White women, or White women are teachers and White males are administrators. And I think just the process of changing that in itself and hiring teachers that are really, a really diverse body of teachers, and not just

assistants, you know, teachers and administrators, shifts things incredibly without even doing anything else. So that's another one. Make equity policy and philosophy, make it the core of your policy and philosophy so that it's ongoing work, and fully fund and equitably fund schools. And we can start doing that by reimagining the police and putting some of those resources into our schools, so that our kids aren't getting out in the streets and having to deal with officers [that are] dealing with issues that school social workers could be dealing with.

Miranda 31:50

Well, you narrowed it down for such a hard question!

Kristy 31:53

I mean, you said I had a magic wand, right?! What else? I also gave myself a large raise and bonus by the way.

Miranda 32:02

And there is, there's so much to be done. And you know, we really appreciate the work that you do and for being here today just shedding light on some of these things. I really love, you know, Noelle and I we're on our fifth recording. And so we're hearing all these themes, right? And these patterns rolling through episode to episode, from bias to systemic racism. We just interviewed Dr. Ashley Williams, and she spoke about early Ed. and just the inequities there, and you touched on so many of those things as well. So I hope that our listeners are picking up on some of that. So again, thank you for your time, your insight today. Before we go though, can you tell us either what social media platforms we can find you on? Or who or what other organizations we can follow to learn more about culturally responsive education?

Kristy 32:52

Yeah, absolutely. So Education for Progress is where you can find me on Facebook and on Instagram. For families of children with disabilities, you can also find us at Westchester Institute for Human Development's Community Support Network, and we are on zoom now which is amazing. Because we're able to reach more families, there's no childcare, there's no transportation, we can translate, so we can be there for you. And you know, there's a million other wonderful resources out there. So I tell people like step number one is start to change up that narrative on your social media, start to follow people that might be different from the current people that you're following. In my office there's something great that we did, it's a 21 day equity habit forming challenge, you can Google that, maybe I'm not getting that exactly right. But it's like 21 days of snippets of things that you can do to broaden your mind and broaden your horizon. And we did it collectively as a group. And some of them are like, big movies like, you know, watch the film 13th. But it was also like little tiny snippets and you could do this on your coffee break. And just listen to this podcast. This podcast! And so check that out. And we'll have to add you guys for sure to that list.

Noelle 34:05

Yeah, and we can look it up and even post it on the website. That sounds like something that would be super useful for everybody to do out there. And all of us too, right? I mean, we're here

doing this work but like you said, it's a learning process for us too even just with these podcasts and everything that we've been learning. It's just an ongoing process for everyone. So, thank you for that.

Kristy 34:31

Thank you guys so much for having me and for spreading the word and keeping us all together because it's these alliances that will help make our causes stronger.

Noelle 34:41

Next week, we'll continue discussing equity and education with Dr. Charles Barrett, as we explore ways to create impactful change by addressing systemic racism and implicit bias in our schools. As a reminder, if you're interested in learning more about what we discussed today, please be sure to check out our show notes on our website.

[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 byeeee