

Thought Leaders Podcast
Weekly Discussion & Resource Guide

Background

The connective, inclusive nature of the Alliance is focused on removing barriers and establishing a strong cross-disciplinary network of relationships between scientists, experts, practitioners and professionals across multiple sectors within our Region - but we don't want to sing to the regular choir, we want to actively engage and include those who aren't usually singing with us. And that's where you and this podcast come in...

The Thought Leaders podcast features locally-based conversations that flowed out of world-leading expert conversations. We hope you are inspired to keep the conversation going - at your workplace, within your community, and with friends and family.

We'll provide a couple of conversation starters for each episode (a full series discussion guide will follow). Use these or come up with your own based on your knowledge and life experience:

Podcast Series Conversation Starters

- ◆ What are some of the biggest challenges that are facing the children in our community and their families today?
- ◆ Are there any that are specific/unique to the community you serve?
- ◆ How do these challenges/issues intersect with one another?
- ◆ How might conversations impact the work you do?
- ◆ Who is missing or would add value to your conversations?



Thought Leaders Podcast
bringing big ideas home

From Healing to Human Flourishing

Listen, get inspired & continue the conversation



Episode #6
"From Healing
to Human
Flourishing!"
Available Now

New York based educator, researcher and scholar Dr. Angel Acosta works to bridge the fields of leadership, social justice & mindfulness. His healing-centred work illuminates ancient wisdom that just might be our guide to human flourishing. Armed with his insights Dr. Clinton, Ojibway Elder and retired educator Elaine Garner, and University student and spoken word artist Madiha Syed, model the process of healing-centred work. Their honest and profound connection takes our listeners full circle through human connection, to sharing pain and insights, and the path to healing and ultimately flourishing. Our alliance was born out of the idea of cooperation. We host events like the Generator that inspired this podcast to spark conversations about the fundamental importance of intergenerational learning, language, and sharing stories in service of healthy growth and development. This conversation is a wonderful illustration of our vision and mission.

Thought leaders:

- [Elder Elaine Garner](#), Retired
- [Madiha Syed](#), University student

Host [Adan Imran](#), Youth Connector on the CYPT backbone team

Suggested Episode Discussion Prompts:

- ♦ How might we as described by Dr. Acosta 'create an experience where the whole community *feels* together'?
- ♦ Does your organization allow for the conditions that let's suffering speak? What does that / might that look like?
- ♦ Do you and those you serve still have a sense of hope? Why or why not?

- ◆ Elder Elaine (like Elder Tom in episode #1) spoke of the significance of ceremony. What ceremonies do you participate in? Why is it important to you?
- ◆ Madiha connected with the idea that healing can look different for different communities. What does/might healing look like for you and your community?
- ◆ What does flourishing look like for you? Has it changed over the past few years?
- ◆ How can we create the conditions that allow for healing and flourishing to thrive? What's missing? What is already here but not well utilized?
- ◆ What role does culture play in these processes?
- ◆ The podcast really illustrated the impact of intergenerational relationships - how might we foster those in community to build a sense of belonging and wellbeing?

[Diving Deeper](#)



Ojibway Elder Elaine Garner

Retired Educator

Founder, White Owl Native Ancestry Association

Elaine Garner is an Anishinaabe and was born in Wolseley Bay on the French River in northern Ontario. Her father was from Dokis First Nation and her sister still lives there. She travelled extensively, living in Brazil and working at Washington State University. Elaine retired as the senior financial manager for graduate scholarships and awards in 2014. Elaine's highlight of service, at both universities, was working with students. Elaine's impact extends far beyond the university when she and her friend, Nina DeShane Gill started White Owl Native Ancestry Association in 1985, White Owl is a community based resource that offers counselling, land based teaching and programs, outreach to services, and an Elder community.

<https://vitacollections.ca/sixnationsarchive/details.asp?ID=3235841>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/staff-training-fee-waivers-a-working-group-how-local-cities-and-waterloo-region-are-responding-to-the-trc-1.6193900>

<https://www.wonaa.ca/>



Madiha Syed
University Student

Madiha Syed is studying architecture at University. Growing up in Cambridge, Ontario Madiha was influenced by and active with the Coalition of Muslim Women and Muslim Women of Cambridge. Madiha (she/her) is a spoken word artist. She is a youth activist who is passionate about promoting inclusive conversations and creating safe spaces. She uses her experience as a young Muslim woman of colour to help bridge the gaps in her community through the art of word.

<https://www.ywcacambridge.ca/why-girls/>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/cambridge-photo-exhibit-highlights-stories-of-community-s-muslim-and-sikh-women-1.4036068>

<https://rabble.ca/anti-racism/racisms-place-canada/>



Dr. Angel Acosta
Principal Consultant, Acosta Consulting

Angel Acosta works to bridge the fields of leadership, social justice & mindfulness. He completed his Ed.D. in the Curriculum and Teaching Department at Teachers College, Columbia University. His research explored healing-centered education as a promising framework for educational leadership development and community care. As a member of the 400 Years of Inequality Project, he designed the Contemplating 400 Years of Inequality Experience to support communities with understanding structural inequality through a mindfulness-based and contemplative approach. Angel began consulting and developing learning experiences that weave leadership development with conversations about inequality and healing to support educational leaders through contemplative and restorative practices.

Angel is a proud first-generation Dominican-American and graduate of SUNY Plattsburgh. He currently the Director of the Garrison Institute's Fellowship Program. He also serves as the Creative Director at the NYC Healing Collective, a community initiative curating work and insights at the intersection of healing, wellness, and societal transformation. Lately, he

has become curious about the ways in which technology can be used as force for advancing racial equity and dismantling structural inequality.

<https://www.drangelacosta.com/homepage>

Contemplative Science & Practice Through a Healing-Centred Perspective:
<https://youtu.be/tl5NLZrvpv8>

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/articles/2020/june/graduate-gallery-2020-hope-as-practice/>



Dr. Jean Clinton
Child Psychiatrist, Knowledge Translator, Author

Dr. Jean Clinton of McMaster University is one of four renowned experts to advise the Ontario government on bold reforms to the province's publicly funded education system. The clinical professor of psychiatry and behavioural neurosciences of the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine is a specialist in child psychiatry. Her expertise is in the development of young minds and she is recognized internationally as an advocate for children's issues. Her special interest lies in brain development, and the crucial role relationships and connectedness play therein. She has authored papers on early child development and poverty, infant neglect, children's mental health, resilience, and on adolescent brain development.

Dr Clinton holds a Bachelor of Music Degree in Education and a medical degree and Fellowship in Psychiatry from McMaster University. Jean's greatest accomplishment is being the mother of 5 great kids who range in age from 21-31 years.

<https://drjeanclinton.com>

'Love Builds Brains' by Dr. Jean Clinton

<https://tallpinepress.ca/products/love-builds-brains>