

Crystal Benjamin, PhD, CFLE
Lecturer
Child Development and Family Studies

EDUCATION

- **2015 Doctor of Philosophy in Family Studies** - Loma Linda University, California, USA Concentration: Health Promotion and Education
- **2011 Master of Science in Marital and Family Therapy** - Loma Linda University, California, USA Concentration: Individual, Couple, and Family Therapy
- **2008 Bachelor of Science (magna cum laude) in Behavioral Science**, Andrews University Concentration: Psychology
- **2008 Associate of Science (magna cum laude) in General Business**, Andrews University

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

- **2020 Benjamin C. Dr.** – Self-Discovery Workbook: Workbook to help individuals discover their inner selves and bring greater clarity in life, business and relationships based upon my professional experience and training in human growth and development across the lifespan.

Encyclopedia Contribution

- **2016** Clarke, C. Retreat from Marriage – published in The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Family Studies. John Wiley & Sons: USA.
- **2014** Clarke, C., & Tareg, A. Texting – published in The Social History of the American Family: An Encyclopedia - Sage Publications: USA.

Conference Proceedings:

2013 Bidart, T., Brown, A., **Clarke, C.**, Dan, E., Denis, M., Esquivel, I., Gallagher, B., Garcia-Quinones, O., Grubel, R., Julien, H., Montes, V., Sembatya, A., Valentino, M., & Vrhovac, M. Reducing sexual and gender-based violence among adolescent girls and boys in a post-emergency situation in Haiti: A United Nations Population Fund facilitated analysis on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Retrieved from [http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/\(httpAssets\)/AE8AB71EEE72B8A7C1257AA70057DE37/\\$file/GSP-WGREPORT-2013.pdf](http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/(httpAssets)/AE8AB71EEE72B8A7C1257AA70057DE37/$file/GSP-WGREPORT-2013.pdf)

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Dissertation:

- **2015** Clarke, C. R. Prostate Cancer Screening Intention Among Black Men: A Multivariate Analysis. *Objective: Though Black men have an increased risk of developing prostate cancer compared to other men in the general population, health screening among Black men is not consistent. The main objective of this study was to explore how intimacy, in the presence of other contextual factors, relates to Black men's intention to screen for prostate cancer using the Digital Rectal Examination (DRE).*

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

- **2015** Clarke, C. R., Distelberg, B., Fox, C., Wilson, C., Montgomery, S., & Casiano, C. *"Prostate Cancer Screening Intentions Among Black Men". Paper presented at the Counselling and Family Sciences Student Research Conference: Families, Communities, and Health, Loma Linda, CA.*
- **2013** Clarke, C. R., & Moses, B. M. C. *"Coping with Prostate Cancer among African American Males; A Systemic Perspective". Poster session presented at the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapist-Southern California Chapter Student Conference, Loma Linda, CA.*
- **2013** Clarke, C., Wray, W., Lyles, L., Castillo, N., & Fider, C. *"To Help Reform and Improve Vulnerability in Education (THRIVE): A Path Analysis Model" Paper presented at the National Council on Family Relations Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX.*
- **2013** Moses, B. M. C. & Clarke, C. R. *"A Collaborative Approach to Working with Prostate Cancer Patients" Workshop presented at the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Student Research Conference, Loma Linda, CA.*
- **2012** Clarke, C. R., & Moses, B. M. C. *"Coping with Prostate Cancer among African American Males; A Systemic Perspective". Poster session presented at the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapist-Northern California Chapter Student Conference, Peasantville, CA.*

ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Lecturer – Loma Linda University (California, USA) –
 - Graduate Programmes: MS in Marital in Family Therapy, Family Studies, School Counselling and Child Life (Year 2)
- Lecturer – Southern Caribbean University (Trinidad and Tobago)
 - Undergraduate: BS in Psychology, Social Work, Behavioral Sciences and Education – Counselling and Research Methods
 - Graduate Programme: MS in Counselling Psychology
- Devised, implemented and successfully facilitated Community Outreach Programmes at Undergraduate and Graduate Level as part of Loma Linda University geared toward

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reducing crime and violence among youth via Cognitive Behavioral Therapy strategies

- Devised, implemented, and successfully facilitated Community Outreach Programmes targeting older adults as a Senior Programme Coordinator
- Successfully co-authored grant proposals resulting in receipt of up to USD \$91,000.00
- Authored and Co-authored Publications
- Media Presentations and Podcaster: Asking for myself with Dr. Crystal Benjamin
- Secretary to Research Ethics Committee (Trinidad and Tobago)
- Supported successful collaboration between International Agencies (United Nations, ILO etc) and the Tobago House of Assembly through policy interpretation, communication strategies and cultural appreciation
- First Marriage and Family Therapist Intern at the Loma Linda University Cancer Centre

CO-AUTHORED GRANT

2013 – 2015, Riverside County Office of Education Foster Youth Services Strategic Tutoring Program, Loma Linda University (US\$45,000 – US\$91,000 respectively).

AWARDS:

- 2019 - Trinidad and Tobago 40 under 40 Youth Influencer
- 2015 - Most Outstanding Ph.D. Family Studies Student, Loma Linda University.
- 2014 – 2015 - Selma Andrews Scholarship, Loma Linda University.
- 2011 – 2014 - The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago's First-Class Honours Scholarship.
- 2009 – 2011 - The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago's First-Class Honours Scholarship.

KEY SKILLS:

- Skilled and experienced collaborator, strong communication skills
- Experienced working with diverse and multiple demographics
- Community Outreach skills – ability to bridge the gap between the University and community impact
- Policy Development and Research
- Collaboration with international and local bodies – United Nations Development Program and United Nations Population Fund
- Survey Development for a multidisciplinary research project - Project C.H.A.N.G.E. (project focused on prostate cancer screening intentions among African American and Afro-Caribbeans)
- Facilitation of Community Engagement and Partnerships

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VOLUNTEER WORK

The Republic of Cameroon – Provided Post-HIV screening counselling to participants.

LECTURING EXPERIENCE

2022 – Present: Lecturer – Child Development and Family Studies at University of North Texas at Dallas

Lectured the following course:

- Parenting Issues and Education

2016 - 2022: Lecturer at the University of the Southern Caribbean (Tobago Extension Campus) – BS Psychology, Social Work, Behavioural Sciences and B. Ed in Education and in MS in Counselling Psychology.

- Supervision / Oversight of internship – assessed needs of students in alignment with program
- Oversight of interns to ensure compliance with policies and guidelines of the programme

Lectured the following courses:

- Research Methods I: Statistics for the Behavioural Sciences
- Marriage and the Family
- Research Methods in Education
- Introduction to Statistics for Social Sciences
- Family Violence across the Life Span
- Emotional Intelligence
- Death and Grief in Contemporary Society

2012 to 2014: Loma Linda University – California, USA lectured classes in the MS in Marital and Family Therapy, Family Studies, School Counselling and Child Life and PhD in Marital and Family Therapy, Family Studies and Social Policy.

Taught the following topics in the following courses:

- Research Tools/Methodology: Quantitative
- Crisis Intervention & Client Centred Advocacy
- Social Ecology of Individual and Family Development
- Research Tools/Methodology: Qualitative
- Statistics III
- Statistics II
- Statistics I

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND COLLABORATION

A key part of my career involved facilitating psycho-educational workshops and psychotherapy for families. My work locally (small island state) includes collaborations with the Gender Based Violence Unit of the Police Service, the Tobago Emergency Management Authority, The Tobago Regional Health Authority and the Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago.

Collaborations with national and community organisations involved with the care and study of older adults include:

- Draft Operating Procedures for Caregiving Services for older adults
- Draft Procedures and Guidelines for persons living with disabilities
- Coordinate psychological and financial support for older adults
- Coordinate substance misuse programmes for older adults and their families
- Led team to investigate allegations of older adult abuse
- Introduced a Family Help Hotline as a response to the financial impact of Covid-19 on vulnerable populations (older adults, single parents, persons with disabilities, children and women)
- Introduced the Counselling Support Hotline to provide access to an on-call therapist who provides crisis intervention to persons in vulnerable situations as a response to the psychosocial impact of Covid-19 on vulnerable populations.
- Introduced Wellness Wednesdays, a multi-media programme (television and radio) targeted at older adults, with emphasis on sensitising the group to financial resources, mediation, counselling, rights of persons with disabilities and building family resilience through family resource management.

Work to provide support for other vulnerable populations:

- Draft Standard Operating Procedures for Community Residence for Children ages 0 to 18 years
- Coordinate programmes targeted to persons in prisons
- Programs to investigate allegations of child abuse
- Coordinates virtual program targeting teenage mothers to assist building their resilience
- The introduction of a gender referral pathway and team for efficient and effective approach to family violence on the island of Tobago – this collaboration includes the Division of Health, Wellness and Family Development, the Tobago Emergency Management Agency, Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, Psychologists, and Social Workers and relevant Non-Governmental Organizations
- Facilitated Community Cognitive Social Intervention Programme, Citizen Security Programme (Trinidad and Tobago) through group psychoeducational workshops and team-building exercises
- Utilization of social and traditional media to promote awareness and provide solutions related to Parenting and Family Life
- Conducting Needs Assessment for Communities and Workplaces and planning, developing, planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating wellness programs
- Conceptualized and delivered training for Parenting and family workshops

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- Patient Advocate - collaborated with medical team, social workers and psychologists to support women with gynaecological cancers

COLLABORATION with INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

Focal point of the collaborations with Governmental Agencies to facilitate development initiatives in Tobago. One of my key roles was identifying areas of collaboration with external agencies to ensure the promotion of diversity and inclusion, and cultural appropriateness and appreciation.

Key Details:

- Supported the following agencies:
 - United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
 - United Nations Volunteers (UNV)
 - International Labour Organisation (ILO)
 - International Organisation for Migration (IOM)
 - United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
 - Ministry of Social Development and Family Services (Trinidad and Tobago)
 - Involvement in the following Response Plans:
 - National Sargassum Response Plan (Tobago Team)
 - Country Implementation Plan for Trinidad and Tobago in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals of Health and Wellbeing.
 - Tobago Road to Recovery: COVID19 Response Plan

Key Activities:

- Provided technical support to the United Nations (UN) Focal Point within the Tobago House of Assembly (THA).
- Conducted research and provided substantive input for the preparation of concept notes, reports and project proposals for development initiatives in Tobago focused on:
 - Capacity Building for NGO's and village councils for sustainable development
 - Programs for poverty reduction in communities through training, education and skills building.
- Facilitated networks for collaboration among local government agencies and the identified International Organisations and Non-Governmental Organizations.
- Identified areas for collaboration regarding policy agendas amongst external agencies (including United Nations agencies such as PAHO, UNDP, UNICEF, IOM and ILO). Strengthened the communication between the THA / Local Governmental agencies and International and Regional Organisations (eg. CARPHA, Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre) through the promotion of cultural appreciation and policy interpretation amongst all stakeholders. This resulted in a Country Implementation Plan in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals of health and

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wellbeing.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Worked within the Administrative Arm of a Government Agency in the developing world to facilitate change. Highlights include:

- Gap Analysis of the Tobago Road to Recovery: COVID19 Response Plan; Review and analyses of socio-economic interventions to ensure effective capture of residents in vulnerable circumstances (inclusive of older adults)
- Conducted situational analysis on the Division of Health, Wellness and Family Development for the purpose of crafting the Division's Workplan for 2018-2019 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 fiscal years
- Facilitated the Division's plans for the years 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2020-2021, 2021-2022 using a results-based management framework

ENRICHED LIFE LIMITED – CEO

- Psychotherapy services for groups, individuals and families
- Promote Parenting and Family life best practices via responses to requests information in response to requests and via media
- Provided psychosocial support to referred clients
- Coping techniques for coping with COVID (older adults were included)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

- **2022 - Present Lecturer**, University of North Texas at Dallas.
- **2020 – 2022, Senior Programme Coordinator**, Division of Health, Wellness and Family Development, Tobago House of Assembly.
- **2020 Tobago Road to Recovery Working Group**, Tobago House of Assembly.
- **2018 – 2022, Chief Executive Officer & Lead Therapist**, Enriched Life Limited.
- **2017 – 2018, Health and Social Services Policy and Research Officer** Division of Health, Wellness and Family Development, Tobago House of Assembly.
- **2016 – 2017, Research Assistant**, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- **2016 – 2022, Contract Instructor**, The University of the Southern Caribbean, Tobago Extension Campus.
- **2016, Facilitator**, Community Cognitive Social Intervention Programme, Citizen Security Programme (CSP).
- **2014, Contract Instructor**, Counselling and Family Sciences Department, Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, CA
- **2013 – 2015, Graduate Research Assistant**, Behavioural Health Institute, Loma Linda University.
- **2014 – 2015, Medical Marriage and Family Therapist Intern**, Cancer Centre, Loma Linda Health.
- **2013 – 2015, Clinical Training Coordinator**, Transitional Support Services, Behavioural Health Institute, Loma Linda University.

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- **2012 – 2014, Teaching Assistant, Counselling and Family Sciences Department, Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, CA**
- **2010 – 2011, Marriage, Family, and Child Counsellor Trainee II, Behavioural Health Institute, Loma Linda University**

CERTIFICATIONS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **2021 Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business:** Managing Remote Employees
- **2020 The Gottman Institute:** Treating Affairs and Trauma: Helping Couples Heal and Rebuild Trust
- **2019 The Gottman Institute:** Gottman Method Couples Therapy Level 1
- **2018 National Council on Family Relations:** Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) - Current
- **2018 Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts (SYMBIS):** Certified Pre-Marital Counsellor.
- **2017 Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA):** Workshop on Research Ethics
- **2016 Inter-American Development Bank via edX -** Project Management Techniques for Development Professionals
- **2014 Provalis Research -** Qualitative Data Analysis Software (QDA Miner)
- **2013 United Nations 51st Graduate Study Programme, Geneva -** Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.
- **2010 Prepare/Enrich:** Building Strong Marriages, Life Innovation.

MEDIA ACTIVITIES

Television appearances as evidenced by the following on emotional and relationship issues:

- [Covid 19 and Relationships - Dr Crystal Benjamin - YouTube](#)
- [Dr. Crystal Benjamin on TTT's NOW: Valentines Day on NOW Keeping it real - YouTube](#)
- [Dr. Crystal Benjamin on TTT's NOW: Work Stress Affecting Productivity - YouTube](#)

Podcast: Asking for myself by Dr. Crystal Benjamin