



## MAGIC OF THE WOODS PODCAST

### *Episode Two Transcript*

**Synopsis:** *Welcome to Episode Two of our podcast and the first edition of our Inclusion Series. In this episode we talk about all things inclusion, what it means and why it matters. We'll talk about current events happening as well as what our opinions are on inclusion here at Bradford Woods and how that translates into our mission and our programs.*

**Script:** INTRO – Music by DarkMoloko called Adventure

#### **Bailey (00:02)**

Hey, y'all by the time you hear this, it will be August, Nich and I recorded this in early July. So about a month has passed. A few days ago there was an incident near Lake Monroe in Bloomington, Indiana, just a short 30 minute drive from Bradford Woods. We want to take a moment to acknowledge that experiences in the outdoors are not always positive or chill for folks of certain identities.

One of our goals for this podcast is to talk about inclusion and exclusion in the outdoors. Bradford Woods was founded as a camp for kids with medical diagnoses or disabilities, which is something we'll talk about in future episodes, who haven't historically had a place for them at any camp or on trails or in the water.

Our slogan out here is 'Outdoors for All' and the outdoors can't be for all, if the focus is centered around one marginalized identity. We know we have work to do, and we want to, and we should do the work. We have the privilege to connect with so many folks of all aspects of life, and we want them to find comfort out here in the woods.

#### **Bailey (01:15)**

Hey all you woodland creatures, welcome back to the Bradford Woods podcast. I'm Bailey,

#### **Nich (01:17)**

and this is Nich.

#### **Bailey (01:19)**

And today we're going to be talking about inclusion, what it is and why it matters. But before we get started, I just want to let everyone know that I am no expert in the realm of inclusion. I'm just very passionate about the subject and have previously worked in facilitating workshops around the history of inclusion and exclusion on college campuses. But again, I repeat definitely not an expert. I'm always learning and wanting to know more. So with that being said, let's dive on in.

So why, why this subject? Okay. Well, for me, I have long wanted to work in the field of outdoor education, but when I was in grad school, I started feeling like I didn't quite belong



because everybody around me in my internship was a man. I was one of the very few folks who was not a guy and as someone who identifies as queer and doesn't look like a person on the binary spectrum of gender, there are times when I don't really feel safe in the woods.

Bradford Woods is such a great place to be for folks who don't feel like the outdoors are a welcoming space for them, because we want everybody to feel at home here, we do this by hosting specific camps for kids and adults who have some type of disability or medical diagnosis and strive to give them the best camp experience in the world.

So Nich, when I say inclusion, what are some things that come to your mind?

### **Nich (03:00)**

Yes, so you send me the script a while ago and I took a look at my little question. Um, and it was hard for me to answer it because obviously when you say inclusion it's Oh, well we just include everyone, but it's really more than that to me. Um, so it's not just designing a building that everyone can access or adapting a program so everyone can participate. It's creating a culture where folks, no matter who they are, who they identify as, or how they get around are treated and cared for exactly the same. It's both physical and mental to me. So it's not just, Oh, we put in a ramp. So when you say inclusion, some things that come to mind are having the ability to be yourself in a space and feel safe and accepted in that space. It's the intentional act of having the means to include everyone, whether it be a business, a library, doing an activity, playing a sports game ball, whatever those are, or like us here at a camp or in the outdoors.

### **Bailey (04:22)**

Yeah and I think for me, when I hear you say those things, I love and appreciate that. And my hope is that here at Bradford Woods, we welcome that difference. Not just accept or support, but we welcome that difference. Yes, we definitely do. Yeah. Sweet.

So what exactly is inclusion? So let me give you a definition. The Institute for community inclusion defines inclusion as all people, regardless of their abilities, disabilities or health care needs have the right to one, be respected and appreciated as valuable members of their community to participate in recreational activities in neighborhoods, settings, three, work at jobs in the community that pay a competitive wage and have careers that use their capacities to the fullest and attend general education classes with peers from preschool through college and beyond for continuing education. Again, this specific definition is very much focused around ability. So inclusion beyond just ability means anyone, regardless of all, identities, race, gender, socioeconomic status ability, nation of oranges, first language, sexual orientation, anything else like anything that feels like they can be out in the woods without worry. Does that make sense?



**Nich (05:53)**

It does.

**Bailey (05:57)**

The big question is right now. Why does it matter?

And I know we both struggle with this cause we, we know our hearts and our guts say well, because it does.

**Nich (06:24)**

It does matter.

**Bailey (06:26)**

It absolutely matters. And it's hard to convey that for me, the outdoors are these wide open spaces. Thanks Dixie chicks. And they shouldn't be limited to folks or only used by folks with the monetary means to do so who can buy the equipment who can go off on a whim at any point in their time, or for folks not to go because of the color of their skin or their gender or how they express themselves because they don't feel safe.

So my challenge is, if you're asking yourself why it matters, think about a joyous moment you've had in the outdoors, that feeling what you were doing. If you were with people, if you were by yourself, if you know that joy, you know, how special one Bradford Woods is, but two in the overall concept of outdoors, you know, that feeling, you know, that feeling of, Oh, this is serenity, I'm challenging myself or I'm relaxing and I'm just in a good, solid space. Well, we want that for everyone. Some people don't always feel that. I know. I haven't always felt that like there's been times when I've been camping and I'm very anxious about either disperse camping. Is anybody going to like, come by that? I don't know, hope not. Or if I'm in a designated camping spot, like who's going to be next to me, what are they going to be doing? Am I okay here? Those are things that crossed my mind as a queer person and as a nonbinary person or somebody who doesn't identify as a man.

So this brings it back to Bradford Woods. We're going to take it from personal to the Bradford Woods perspective. We can say that it matters, but on some level it doesn't quite mean anything if we don't have plans to do something about it. And I think Nich and I both know that we're very fortunate to work at Bradford Woods and to feel loved and supported and accepted and welcomed and affirmed and all of these great things by our peers. And it's great. Like I know I love my job. Do you love your job?



**Nich (08:51)**

I sure do.

**Bailey (08:53)**

Sure does. Um, but we know that we have a long way to go. These are conversations that we're having right now to kind of get everybody on the same baseline, to the same kind of understanding of what inclusion is, um, listing the facts of, well, here's our demographic, The majority of our staff are white. A lot of our programming staff are white folks with at least a bachelor's if not masters, right. That in and of itself is immense privilege. And the fact that we're at a camp year round that provides us healthcare, we know that we are so lucky to be in this space, but our summer camps are for folks who have disabilities.

Like we know that we're going to talk about that later and why that's important to have that specific environment for a group of folks who haven't had a typical camp experience. We'll get to that. But also coming out here requires some finances.

**Nich (10:05)**

Yes, we, at least when I talked to our camp families, I let them know that we fully understand that going to a summer camp is a privilege. And that camp itself is a privilege because it is expensive and looking at our full pricing for cabs and pricing for other camps around the area. Um, I'm like when I have kids, I'm not sure if they're going to go to camp because for even a couple of days, um, I mean we're a week long camp, but even for a couple of days, there's camps out there that are 1200, \$1,500 for a three day camp. That's not even a week without my kids. So understanding that, that, that attending a camp is a privilege. Cause you do, you have to have them one the means to get to camp where we're about half an hour South of Indianapolis and an half an hour North of Bloomington. So not only is camp expensive, but they can't just take a bus to get to us here. So they have to have the means of transportation, but then also they just have to have the money and it's expensive to come to camp. So that in itself is an extreme privilege.

**Bailey (11:20)**

Yeah. Um, and in my opinion, thankfully, our staff know that yes, they don't just sweep that under the rug. That is something that we are fully aware of and zero excuses made, but we have to clean our cabins. We need staff to do that. We have to buy supplies. We have to run camp in a safe manner. That means our course is being inspected. That means our buildings being inspected. That means having staff who are trained to do these things. So there's a lot that goes into it. And it's a 'both and' situation, which is something that we'll probably be, probably be saying throughout many, an episode of yes. And yes. And there's this. Yep. So acknowledging that it's not a polarity, it's messy.



**Nich (12:18)**

Right. But I think that's one thing that's great about the staff here too. Is that again, as Bailey said, we recognize that and we acknowledge it as well, where we can then have that. Yes. And attitude where we know it, we understand it and then we try to do better about it. Um, but also tell everyone about it as well. So explain that. Yes, we get it, but this is what we have to do, but we also get it.

**Bailey (12:51)**

Yeah. So there's the yes. And here it is. And here's why, and we get it. Like, it's just like we, we do. And it's hard. It's not, it's not an easy situation to be in. But again, luckily, thankfully our staff recognizes these things and recognition and awareness of our faults is that first step, you have to be aware that something isn't great to make it great. And so what we're working on now is how do we combat that?

So stay tuned for those specific action items. I know our leadership team is really digging into what that means and how to be a more welcoming and inclusive environment for folks who not necessarily even camp, but for retreats, for nonprofits who want to come out here and get away from the city or develop their team a little bit more. We want everybody to come out here.

But I do know some things that we're doing, we have a really cool grant that we got that, um, is for youth in Monroe County, Morgan County, a county, regardless, we have a really cool grant that is for folks who are deemed at risk. Again, a term that we'll probably talk about in future episodes, but that's anybody who by the system may not be set up for success, low income folks, um, is primarily the target that we see. Um, I would say, would you,

**Nich (14:34)**

Yes, I would agree. Yeah. And there are, I know like kids from the juvenile system that get recommended to Bradford Woods for that program. So yeah, they're just not that traditional schooling or life experience isn't set, hasn't set them up for success. Right. So those are the folks in the youth and the kids that we see through that program,

**Bailey (15:01)**

But yeah, in that grant pays for them to come. So that, that doesn't come out of their pocket. They just have to get here. Right. Which again is something that we know we need to address. And during COVID times we can't bus folks in, um, which is another big thing that we're experiencing right now. Welcome to the world of camping coven. Yes. It's great.

**Nich (15:24)**

Wild, wild world. Yes, sure. It is. Yes it is. But through that grant and having them come here, they have access to not only our staff, but the outdoors. And that's the biggest thing is that they come out here and they're away from home. They're just in again, it's barely talked



about that serene experience, thinking back to that, um, food, this grant, we can give those kids access to that. So, and that's what really, for us, that's really what outdoors for all is, is finding those programs and being able to facilitate those moments, um, for more than just our summer campers for people outside of that whole realm. So yeah, yeah, definitely a lot.

#### **Bailey (16:19)**

So yeah, that's, that's, we know that this is an overarching concept. We know that we are just digging into this and you might have questions. You might have more questions than maybe we answered on what inclusion is. Please send us that information. This is posted on our website. You can find our contact info on that. Feel free to email either me or Nich with questions you may have. We'll answer them on the next podcast or we'll email you directly kind of whatever you might prefer. But if you have questions, ask if you have curiosities, we want to know that!

#### **Nich (17:01)**

We want to interact with all of you and one get to know you all better, but again, as Bailey said, we're not experts in this, but we'll, we'd love to just chat and have these conversations. It's really, the first piece is just talking about it and having those open and honest conversations about this or any of the other podcasts we do, or any questions you have about our experiences or knowledge.

We'd love to just sit and chat like we're doing right now, um, for the podcast, uh, with you all and answer those questions and really connect with you all, more than just talking at you through your screen or phone, right?

#### **Bailey (17:47)**

Yeah! And I'm glad that we're doing this kind of intro to this inclusion in the outdoor series. That's going to be on our podcast is because we want you to know that Bradford Woods cares. Cares about everybody who comes onto our property, whether that is our staff, the campers, the retreaters, the wildlife, even, you know, environmental stewardship is something we care about too.

But we care and we want to do whatever it is that we can do to make you feel like you can come out here. So let us know how we can do that but the next time we have an inclusion in the outdoor series, we're going to be talking about what Bradford Woods does best, which is ability and universal design and how we do it out here. So what it looks like, what those words mean. And yeah, bring in an expert.

#### **Nich (18:49)**

Yes. It's a huge part of Bradford Woods from top to bottom and left to right, so it'll be exciting.



**Bailey (18:57)**

Yes, up, down all around. Yep. So yeah, that wraps up our first episode about inclusion, Nich. What's something that you're going to take away as maybe a learning moment, an aha moment of affirming moment from this episode?

**Nich (19:12)**

Yes. So I think it's, I'll go with an affirming moment, in talking about obviously like I know the staff here but really within some of the conversations we've had in throughout this, that affirming moment of knowing that our staff understand it, acknowledge that we really aren't outdoors for all and that there is more work to do is really affirming and powerful for me, knowing that we all have that support. We're trying to all get on the same page to make ourselves better, which I know a lot of places it's really hard to do that you're working through, we have a lot of red tape here, but a lot of people have a lot of red tape to work through to even start those conversations.

Whereas here, we're just having those conversations with this and so yes, and so being able to affirm that we can have this podcast and we can talk about these things and we can acknowledge that we have a lot of work to do. It's really just powerful for me, whereas I know a lot of places and a lot of people have a hard time acknowledging that, Oh yeah, I actually have some work to do and I can learn some more.

**Bailey (20:40)**

I think that's the great thing about Bradford Woods is, is 'Outdoors for All,' and that that's going to change over time. Um, and I think that's the beauty of our challenge in this work is not being satisfied with where we are and always striving to achieve more, to be more welcoming, to have better design things, to have better curriculum, to have better training so that we can have kids, campers clients who would never come out here and have the best experience possible. That's an affirming moment. Alright, sweet. So that's all for now. Y'all join us next time for an update on what's new in the woods.

**Nich (21:40)**

Yeah!

**Bailey (21:41)**

Yeah!