



May 10, 2023

To Our Partners within the LGBTQIA+ Community:

Recently, concerns have emerged that the therapeutic practice of Dr. Nicholas A. Cummings, a prominent psychologist and past president of the American Psychological Association (APA), practiced conversation therapy. During a time in our nation when those unaccepting of LGBTQIA+ individuals are pushing an antagonistic political agenda, these concerns have maliciously distorted Dr. Cummings's views to support their anti-gay and homophobic views.

The Cummings family offers an open apology for statements made by Dr. Cummings that may have been used to promote the now discredited and dangerous practices used with the LGBTQIA+ community before the publishing of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), third edition. This includes “sexual reorientation therapy” and “reparative therapy” — all of which we refer to as “conversion therapy.” We extend our most heartfelt apology to individuals of the LGBTQIA+ community, including their families, loved ones, practitioners, and professional organizations in the psychology field.

The statements made by Dr. Cummings and any form of therapy performed by him in his professional practice represent the views and activities of Dr. Cummings alone and do not represent those of any other member of the Cummings family or any affiliated entity. While we cannot purport to speak for the deceased, we believe this apology would be endorsed by Dr. Cummings, a husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather who believed in the importance of family, no matter its makeup.

Dr. Cummings strongly condemned all forms of conversion therapy. During his practice as a psychologist, an intervention referred to as sexual orientation therapy was used to assist LGBTQIA+ individuals with identifying and accepting their sexual orientation. At his time of practice, this intervention was professionally recognized as a cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) technique within the APA standards of professional care. Dr. Cummings firmly believed in the right of people to accept and embrace their sexual orientation and gender identity. Having this belief, he believed individuals also had the right to choose goals for treatment which should be practiced in a professionally appropriate manner.

Before he died in 2020, Dr. Cummings produced a video explaining his views on this topic in his own words. The video is available at [\(68\) Dr. Nicholas Cummings - Cummings Foundation - Response to 2011 NARTH - YouTube](#).

Unfortunately, Dr. Cummings did make statements that were misconstrued, taken out of context, and manipulated by those who support an anti-gay agenda. We are painfully aware that others have

exploited Dr. Cummings' words in deceptive attempts to justify the practice of conversion therapy. We are appalled that those practicing this discredited and unethical form of therapy have used Dr. Cummings' name and words to harm the LGBTQIA+ community. We are saddened that many people have suffered due to this so-called treatment.

Conversion therapy and similar efforts to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity have subjected many LGBTQ+ adults and children to unnecessary stigma, prejudice, discrimination, family rejection, and physical and mental pain and suffering. Even those who have not directly experienced these dangerous practices may avoid seeking out behavioral health care because of fear they will be subjected to unethical practices.

Conversion therapy, including similar efforts to change an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity, has assisted in perpetuating discriminatory and biased beliefs about the LGBTQIA+ community. It has made the fight for rights, acceptance, and equality for diverse populations more challenging. Additionally, it has impacted mental health and medical professionals by making it harder to earn the trust needed to provide effective and compassionate care to LGBTQIA+ people.

While we have been unsuccessful in our efforts to remove the misleading videos and statements about Dr. Cummings' views from the internet, please be assured that no member of the Cummings family, nor any of the entities or organizations with which the family is affiliated, supports the use of conversion therapy. We concur with the current professional consensus in the psychological community that conversion therapy has no scientific merit as a therapeutic intervention. We support legislation to ban all forms of conversion therapy nationwide.

Despite the passing of Dr. Cummings, the Cummings family, and its entities continue to endeavor to make this world a more equitable, accepting, and safe place for everyone.

Sincerely,

The Cummings Family