



INDIGENOUS EVALUATION METHODOLOGIES

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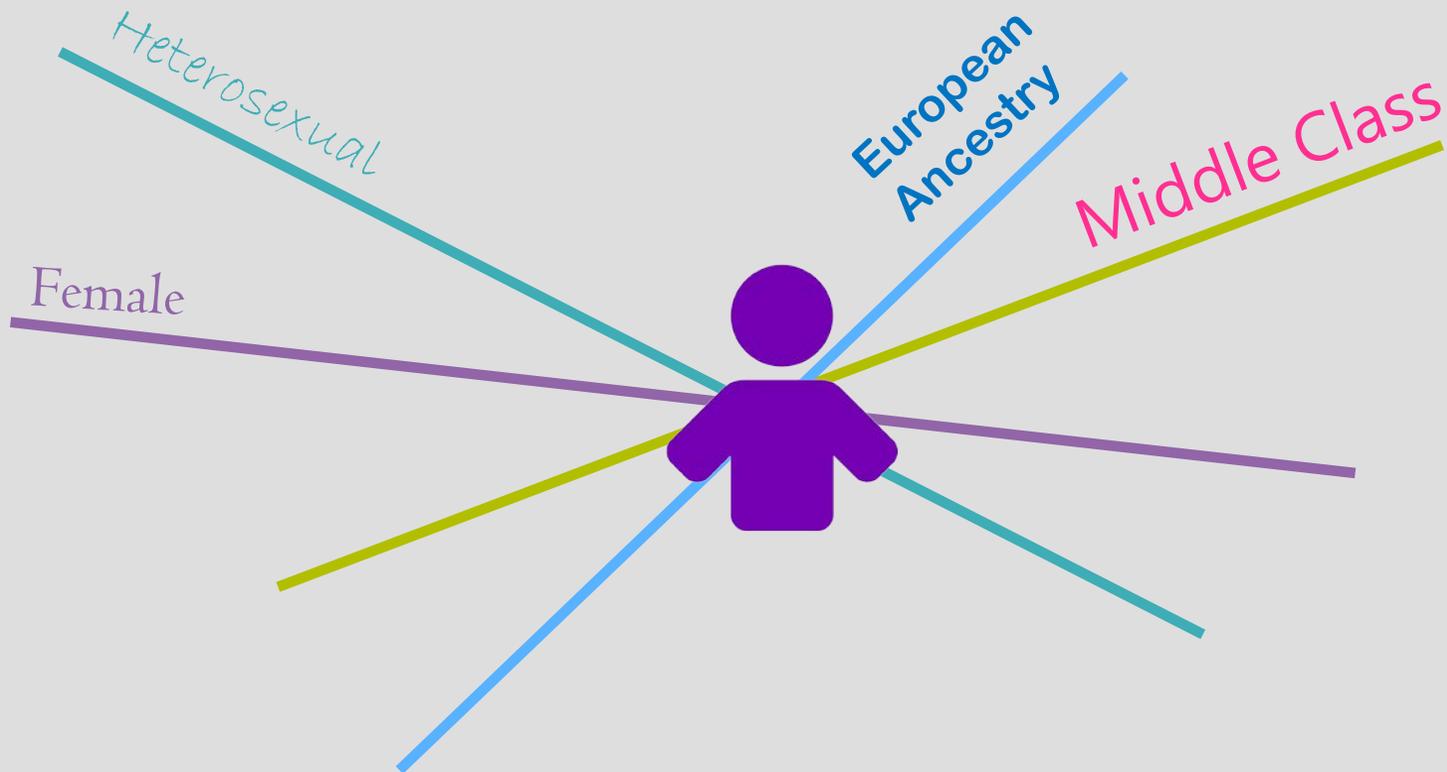
University of Calgary



PURPOSE OF
TODAY'S
PRESENTATION

- To provide an overview of Indigenous Methodologies and Evaluation Research
- To share an Indigenous Evaluation Framework
- To understand the importance of relationships

POSITIONALITY



WHAT IS EVALUATION RESEARCH?

What is the program about and what needs to be known?

So what? Is the program relevant and making a difference? If so, why does the program or service work the way it does?

Now what? With the information gathered, what needs to be done to make the program better or sustainable?

WHAT IS METHODOLOGY?



Epistemology

Theory of Knowledge



Methodology

How knowledge about reality is discovered



Methods

Tools or techniques to gather data

INDIGENOUS EPISTEMOLOGY AND METHODOLOGY

Relationality: “relationships do not merely shape reality, they are reality” (Wilson, 2008, p. 7).

Relational

Knowledge is shared with all creation

- Everything is connected
- Community partnership is necessary

Accountability

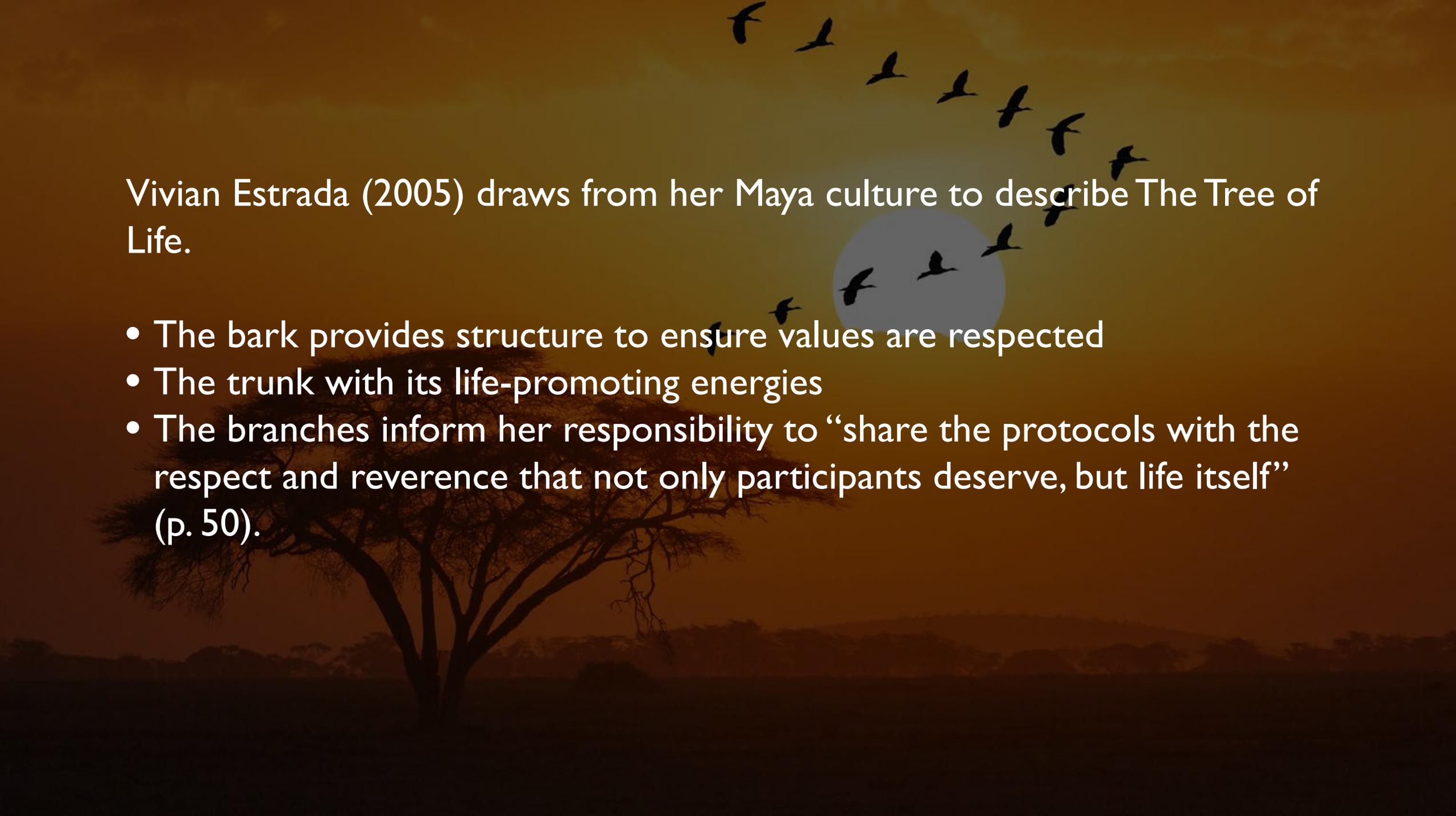
Respect

- Reciprocity
- Responsibility



INDIGENOUS
METHODOLOGY

“Your methodology has to ask different questions: rather than asking about validity or reliability, you are asking how am I fulfilling my role in this relationship? ... This becomes my methodology, an Indigenous methodology, by looking at relational accountability or being accountable to all my relations” (Wilson, 2008, p. 177).



Vivian Estrada (2005) draws from her Maya culture to describe The Tree of Life.

- The bark provides structure to ensure values are respected
- The trunk with its life-promoting energies
- The branches inform her responsibility to “share the protocols with the respect and reverence that not only participants deserve, but life itself” (p. 50).



WHY DOES THIS MATTER

- Evaluation - negative judgements, exploitation, oppression, loss, and deficit narrative
- Redefined as an opportunity for learning rather than judgement
- Research is not acultural or apolitical

REDEFINING EVALUATION

1

Community takes ownership for defining success

2

Tell the community's story

3

Be flexible

4

Be “an advocate [...] you want to make them shine”

INDIGENOUS EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Culture Writes the Script: On the Centrality of Context in Indigenous Evaluation

Joan LaFrance, Richard Nichols, Karen E. Kirkhart

Abstract

Context grounds all aspects of indigenous evaluation. From an indigenous evaluation framework (IEF), programs are understood within their relationship to place, setting, and community, and evaluations are planned, undertaken, and validated in relation to cultural context. This chapter describes and explains fundamental elements of IEF epistemology and method and gives several examples of these elements from evaluations in American Indian communities. IEF underscores the importance of putting context ahead of method choice and suggests that context exerts an even greater impact than previously recognized. © Wiley Periodicals, Inc., and the American Evaluation Association.

PHASES OF IEM



Understand the context



Create the story



Build the scaffolding

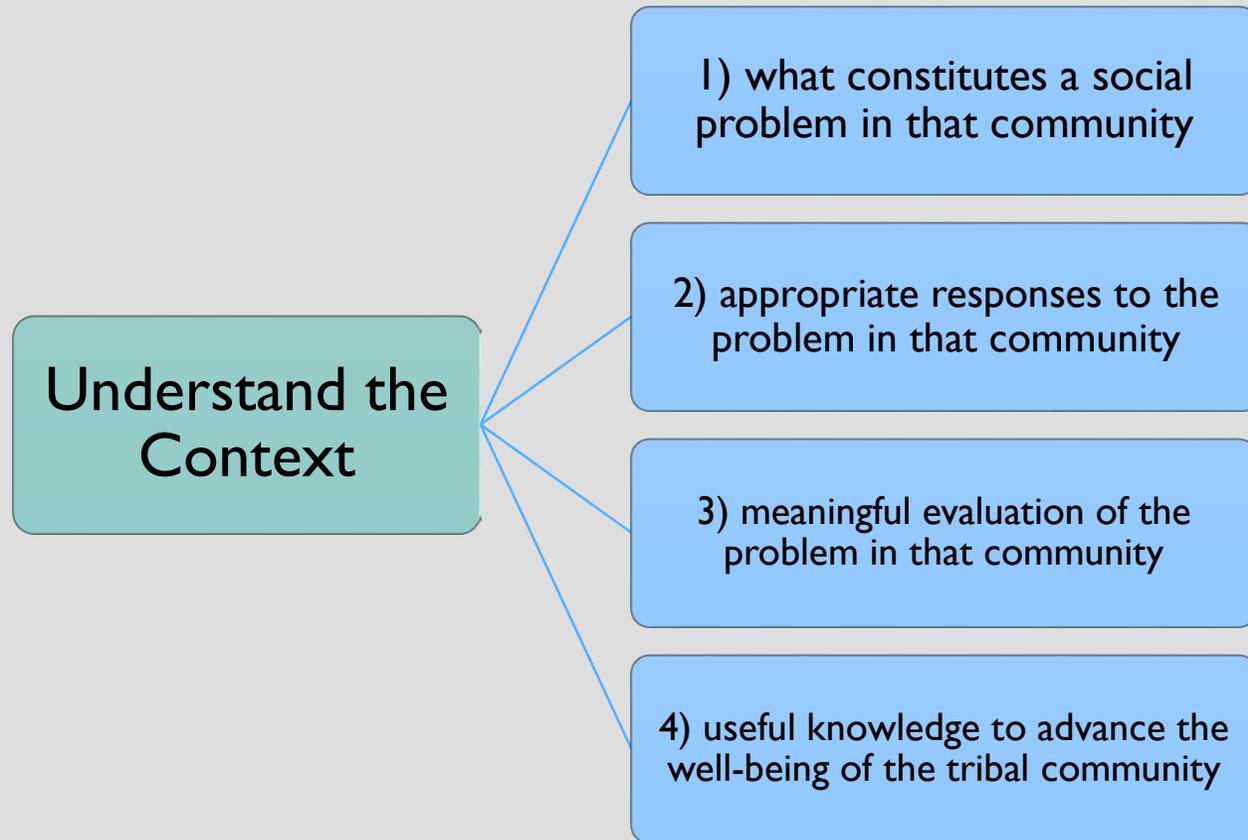


Planning, implementing, and celebrating evaluation



Engaging community and building capacity

PHASES OF IEM - CONTEXT



(LaFrance et al., 2012)

PHASES OF IEM- STORY

A Plains tribe's Winter Count—a buffalo hide calendar with pictures or symbols depicting memorable events—was used as the metaphor for comprehensive project to introduce students to science, nursing, and mathematics. Among tribes of the Great Plains, the Winter Count was used to record important events over the course of a year, from first snowfall to next first snowfall. The group used this metaphor to represent key relationships and activities of the program. These included environmental restoration, engaging youth with elders, and using the outdoors as classrooms.

PHASES OF IEM - SCAFFOLDING

Scaffolding

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graph LR; Scaffolding[Scaffolding] --- P1[Factors are selected for exploration]; Scaffolding --- P2[Evaluation questions are developed]; Scaffolding --- P3[What data needs to be gathered and what are the best sources]; Scaffolding --- P4[Consider what methods fit the context]; Scaffolding --- P5[Establish a data collection timeline]; Scaffolding --- P6[Determine analysis and reporting];
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Factors are selected for exploration

Evaluation questions are developed

What data needs to be gathered and what are the best sources

Consider what methods fit the context

Establish a data collection timeline

Determine analysis and reporting

(LaFrance et al., 2012)

PHASES OF IEM - PLANNING, IMPLEMENTING, CELEBRATING



Inclusive, transparent
processes



Ongoing reflection and
learning



Celebrate the success

ENGAGING COMMUNITY AND BUILDING CAPACITY



Negotiating ownership



Opportunities for capacity building



Work with tribal internal review boards
or research committees



Seek permission to disseminate the
evaluation work

TAKE AWAYS

Instead of...	Focus on...
 Objectivity	How context and relationships shape the process What is the relationship between the program and community?
Testing the generalizability of a program	How a program fits the situation and contributes to local understandings
 Critiquing	Build capacity
 Efficiency	Take time to build relationships and reflect on what has been learned “You will know in the future what you have been taught today” (p. 20)

DOING RESEARCH IN A GOOD WAY

“[In our efforts, we are] about becoming, we are always becoming ... and so they talk about people becoming—not of its finality but of its becoming because we are people who are constantly growing and changing and learning, even as we get older and older, we’re still learning, and like in a lot of the older [evaluation] models and the measurement, it’s so finite, the achievement score, that one place in becoming, which we know is just a measure of that moment.

So somehow this becoming ... is [not only] one element within a [single] context but a larger picture ... living within this larger frame and in harmony, and in peace and in that sense of place.... I think that most evaluation systems have a hard time capturing that.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- <https://youthdatingviolence.prevnet.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Indigenous-Evaluation-Methodologies.pdf>
- Thank you to Dr. Deinera Exner-Cortens and Dr. Wendy Craig



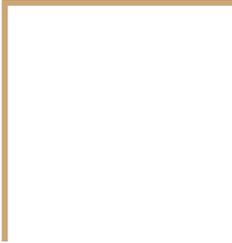
COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE:
ADDRESSING YOUTH DATING VIOLENCE

Indigenous Evaluation Methodologies

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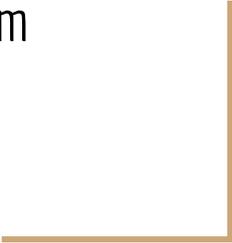
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Bundle

Indigenous Paradigm

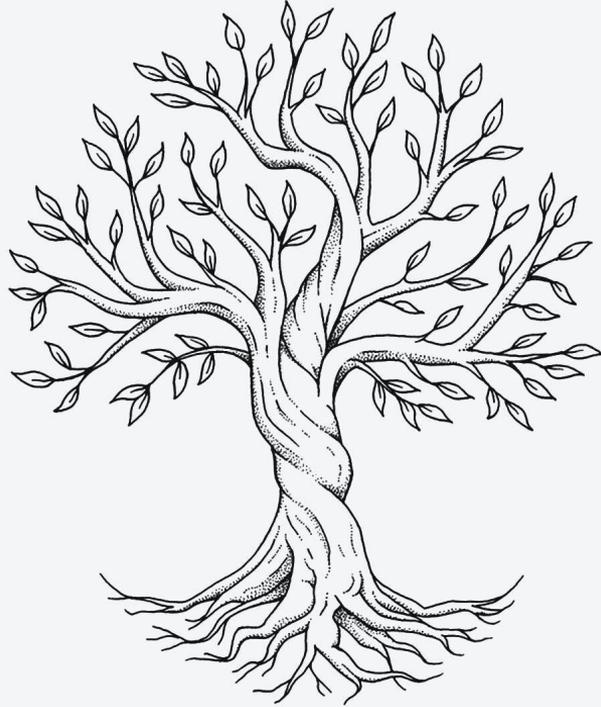


Relational Accountability

- As a researcher you are answering to all your relations when you are doing research
- You should be fulfilling your relationships with the world around you
 - How am I fulfilling my role within this relationship?
 - What are my obligations within this relationship?
 - How am I demonstrating respect for this relationship?
 - How am I maintaining balance within this relationship?
- Consider your relationship with the ideas and concepts that you are researching
- Consider your relationship with the participants and their community

Bundle

1. Start with Ceremony
2. Creation of Safer Space and Relationship
3. Introduction of Story and Methods
4. Arts-Creation Methods
5. Talking Circle
6. Sharing of Food and Maintaining Relations
7. End with Ceremony



Sharing Circle

- Within Circle, we are all Equal and we are all Connected
- Participants are seated in a Circle facing towards the Centre
- Once the process begins, the Circle should not be broken by individuals leaving during the sharing
- There is a facilitator (Elder, Knowledge Holder, Cultural Helper) who leads the Circle
- The Circle may be focused on a predetermined topic or participants may be free to share their thoughts on a topic as they wish
- The first person to share may share for any length of time or not at all
- The next person to share may share for any length of time or not at all and is given the same opportunities to share as the first person
- The process continues until all people within the Circle have shared
- Within Circle Listen Respectfully and Extending beyond Listening with Our Ears
 - Listen with our eyes...we can listen by looking at the speaker
 - Listen with our mouths...we listen by keeping our lips together and not talking
 - Listen with our minds...we can listen by thinking about what is being said by others instead of thinking about what we're going to say, or what we're going to do later today, etc
 - Listen with our hearts...we can listen by caring about others and what they are saying

Talking Circle

Here are some guidelines around participating in a talking circle:

- 1) Participants sit in a circle. The circle symbolizes completeness.
- 2) Everyone's contribution is equally important.
- 3) State what you feel or believe starting with 'I-statements,' e.g., 'I feel ...'
- 4) All comments are addressed directly to the question or the issue, not to comment on what another person has said. Both negative and positive comments about what anyone else has to say should be avoided.
- 5) An everyday object such as a rock or pencil is sometimes used as a talking object.
- 6) When the talking object is placed in someone's hands; it is that person's turn to share their thoughts, without interruption. The object is then passed to the next person in a clockwise direction.
- 7) Whoever is holding the object has the right to speak and others have a responsibility to listen.
- 8) Everyone else is listening in a non-judgemental way to what the speaker is saying.
- 9) Silence is an acceptable response. There must be no negative reactions to the phrase, "I pass."
- 10) Speakers should feel free to express themselves in any way that is comfortable; by sharing a story, a personal experience, by using examples of metaphors, and so on.

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