

Sharing Knowledge with Indigenous Communities

Take-Aways from the Table Discussions

Table 1: Unlearning Colonisation

How do we break free of colonial ways of knowing?

Key themes and questions

Where do we see colonisation at play?

- In REB (Research Ethics Board) processes; lack of accountability to communities
- In the supremacy of structure, time, the agenda
- In the separation between personal and professional

What should we unlearn? How should we unlearn?

- Problematic extraction of knowledge through research (go in/get out)
- Need to learn about relationship-building: dedicating time, money & energy to being with others
 - Placing relationships before research
- Collaboration and engaged scholarship sometimes seen as a challenge to traditional academic processes

How can we do our homework/do better?

- Read the Truth and Reconciliation Committee recommendations
- Trace our own story/path/background (reflecting on our own identities and positionality, and what we bring with us)
- Paying attention to people's history to understand their own positionality
- Hold each other accountable
- Take small steps

Resources

Books & Articles

- [Seeding Reconciliation on uneven ground](#): The 4Rs Approach to Cross-Cultural Dialogue
- [Settler: Identity and Colonialism in 21st century Canada](#), by Emma Battell Lowman and Adam J. Barker
- [Indigenous Writes: A guide to First Nations, Métis & Inuit issues in Canada](#), essays by Chelsea Vowel

Projects

- The 3-part student led [workshop series](#) on Belonging, Unlearning and Relearning, and a [description of lessons learned from this project](#)

People

- Willy Dunn, musician

Table 2: Indigenous Ways of Sharing

What can we learn about Indigenous understandings of knowledge, knowledge creation and knowledge sharing?

Key themes and questions

Forms of Indigenous knowledge-sharing to learn about/from

- Relationships as medicine
- Learning by doing: work together
- Storytelling and oral history
- Wampum beading
- Bundle, basket

Ways of knowing

- Videos
- Language
- Audio stories
- Songs
- Two-eyed seeing

Challenges

- Time constraints
 - Time limits, schedules or strict agendas don't always help
- Pay attention to introductions and relationships
 - Need more time to ease into conversations
 - Foster relationships, don't focus only on outcomes
- Disconnection
 - Importance of working in person, in place
 - Don't be a stranger; connect on personal level
- Multiplicity of Indigenous approaches and perspectives
 - Consult with more than one person
 - "Pan-Indigenous"

Ways to engage

- Co-author with Indigenous scholar
- Compensate for effort and time
- Follow principles of responsibility, respect, relationship and reciprocity
- Connect:
 - Do your research
 - Learn from someone in your community
 - Build a relationship and trust

Resources

Web resources

- [OCAP training](#): principles of ownership, control, access and possession when conducting research with Indigenous peoples
- [IPCA Knowledge Basket](#); resources to support and catalyze Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas

People

- [Coeuraj Consulting](#)

Table 3: Working with Indigenous Communities

How do we create a bridge between knowledge mobilization practitioners and Indigenous communities that prompts equity?

Key themes and questions

Questions to consider

- How do we define expertise?
- What is equity in this context?
- Who is community? Who represents them? Consider communities of practice, of geography, of values.
- Who is at the table? Why are certain groups *not* at this table?
- What do Indigenous communities need or want from this process?
- Who is this for? What commitments are we making?
- Why would or should Indigenous want our involvement?
- How can we go beyond representation and make partnerships meaningful?

Doing our homework

- It is necessary to do decolonizing work on ourselves first. This is an ongoing process of recognizing and unpacking our worldviews, trying to understand Indigenous worldviews, underpinning knowledge and experience (including spiritual)

- Recognize that communities are not homogenous; not all Indigenous peoples share the same knowledge or knowledge systems
- Consider our use of words and narratives when referring to Indigenous peoples, adopt strengths-based approaches and terms
- Hold space for worldviews to encounter each other, co-exist and collaborate
- Don't expect Indigenous partners to educate settler members of the team on Indigenous worldviews and knowledge systems; this type of labour is often expected and is problematic
- Reflect on the institutional environment we work within, push back against inappropriate policies (e.g. honoraria requiring too much personal information)

Engaging meaningfully

- Build relationships first. Attend existing events, tables, networks for the purpose of meeting and making connections, not always leading with our own research agendas
- Bring your full self to the relationship
- Practice patience, humility and respect
- Adopt approaches to engagement that prioritize doing research *with* (alongside) communities rather than *about* or *for* them
- Ask Indigenous partners directly how *they* would like to give permission, share knowledge, enter networks
- Practice two-eyed seeing: bring together both Indigenous and Western perspectives on a topic to see more fully and reconcile both views
- Recognize that I may only be here for part of the project; make sure that the bigger picture is explained

Resources

Books

- [Research and Reconciliation: Unsettling Ways of Knowing through Indigenous Relationships](#), by Wilson, Breen & DuPré
- [Towards Braiding](#), by Elwood Jimmy & Vanessa Andreotti

Web resources

- [Indigenous Canada](#), free massive open online course by the University of Alberta, offered on Coursera

Projects

- [Treena Wasontio Delormier's Kahnawake School Diabetes Prevention Project](#), including their [Code of Research Ethics](#)

People

- Ben Spate, non-binary Jewish scholar

Table 4: Moving Beyond Land Acknowledgements

How do we move beyond land acknowledgements and into action? What actions can we build into event planning, research processes and KMB to create space for non-colonial knowledge creation and sharing?

Key themes and questions

Land acknowledgements should:

- Acknowledge the region's history and past horrors inflicted upon Indigenous peoples
 - Important to educate ourselves on this history, understand the context
 - Recognize how white supremacy is built into the systems in place (see Dr. Kim Anderson's work)
 - Don't minimize, call it genocide
- Be personal, and specific to the person given it
 - Don't be too formulaic
 - Use your own background, history, family and relationships as starting point
 - Show gratitude, reflection on our own privilege and good life on this land
- Share your own commitments or desires for how to move forward
 - Offer meaning
 - Reflect on how to move towards equity
- Can acknowledge awkwardness, learning
 - We are all at different points in this journey, but all there together. We can both be teachers and students in our attempt to deepen our involvement and understanding.
- Be context- and location-specific

Questions

- How can we continue to involve more people in conversations like these?
 - Are land acknowledgements used in elementary and high schools?
- How do we move from just thinking about land acknowledgments as a way to begin our events, and start to weave them throughout our meetings

Resources

Articles

- [Rethinking the Practice and Performance of Indigenous Land Acknowledgements](#), by Dylan Robinson et al.

Web resources

- Baroness von Sketch Show, [sketch on land acknowledgement](#)