

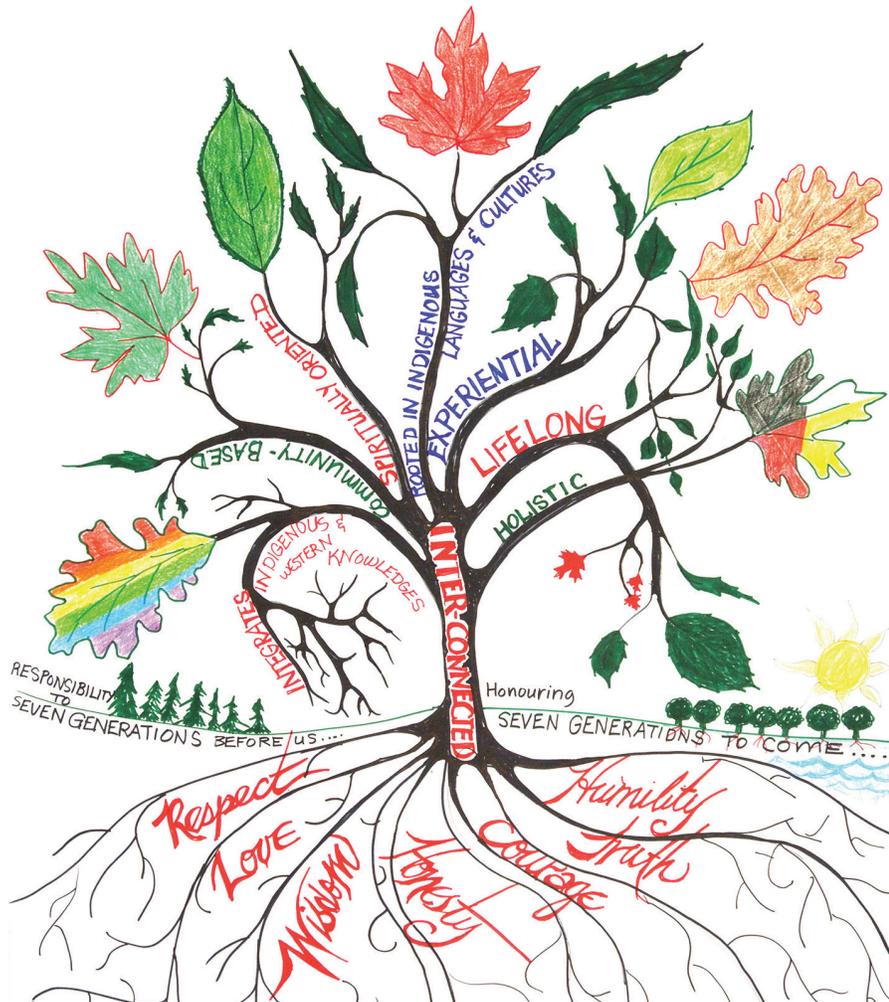


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CANADIAN CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES
MANITOBA

Na-gah mo Waabishkizi Ojijaak Bimise Keetwaatino: Singing White Crane Flying North

OUR WAYS OF KNOWING, BEING, DOING, FEELING



Gathering
a Bundle for
Indigenous
Evaluation

MARCH
2018

**Na-gah mo Waabishkizi Ojjaak Bimise
Keetwaatino: Singing White Crane Flying North:
Gathering a Bundle for Indigenous Evaluation**

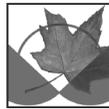
ISBN 978-1-77125-392-5

MARCH 2018

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About the Researchers

Gladys Rowe, BSW, MSW is a Muskego Inninew Iskwe (Swampy Cree woman) of mixed ancestry with membership in Fox Lake Cree Nation in Northern Manitoba. She is currently completing her PhD in Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Manitoba. Gladys has worked for over ten years in community driven, Indigenous-grounded and Indigenist founded research projects in various roles. From these experiences she has been able to build her knowledge and skills in the design and implementation of evaluation and research based on Indigenous ways of knowing, being, feeling, and doing. These projects have graciously invited her to be a part of important community building that ultimately leaves a trail for others to build their own work upon. These are experiences based on respect, trust, love, courage, humility, reciprocity, and responsibility.

Carla Kirkpatrick, BSW Student, is of mixed ancestry and identifies strongly with her Anishinaabe and Cree roots. Carla will be graduating with a Bachelor of Social Work through the University of Manitoba's Inner City Social Work Program. She would like to continue her studies to obtain a Master of Social Work based in Indigenous Knowledges. Carla is a mother, auntie, daughter and granddaughter who thrives in the North End community. She is currently the Inner City Student Association President, member of the University of Manitoba's Gaa Wii Ji'i diyaang Council, and proud member of the North End Community Helpers Network.

Cover image courtesy Astrid MacNeill.

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Acknowledgements

The completion of this work would not have been possible without the energy and effort of a community of committed and passionate community members, leaders, and organizations who have worked to bring this together. This has been a long time in the making. We appreciate the generosity of everyone who was able to sit and share their experiences in circles, meetings, one-on-one, and through emails. Thank you to the following participants who have contributed at the various stages:

April Blackbird, Stella Blackbird, Kara Boles, Mae Louise Campbell, Sherry Copenance, Vern Dano, Debra Diubaldo, Chantal Fiola, Carla Kirkpatrick, Darlene Klyne, Dilly Knol, Heather Leeman, Shauna MacKinnon, Astrid MacNeill, Janet Nowatzki, Yvonne Pompana, Don Robinson, Diane Roussin, Gladys Rowe, Billy Schibler, Helen Settee, Bobbette Shoffner, Tom Simms, Lee Spence, Leslie Spillett, and Eleanor Thompson.

There were many other people who expressed the need for this Bundle, but were not able to participate in person. We thank you for your expressions of support.

We would like to thank the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives for their support and generously funding this stage of the Bundle development. It truly takes a community of committed people with a common vision to bring

this Bundle together. It will also take this same commitment and more to maintain and grow what has been built. For this we say thank you.

We wish to acknowledge funding from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada through the Manitoba Research Alliance.

Indigenous Learning Circle Background

The Indigenous Learning Circle (formerly Community Learning Centre for Promising Practices) began in 2007. Its founding members recognized a need for a centre that could capture the knowledge and promising practices within the community and to share that knowledge with the broader community and future generations.

Current members of the Indigenous Learning Circle who have led the completion of this work are: Debra Diubaldo, Darlene Klyne, Heather Leeman, Astrid MacNeill, Dana Riccio-Arabe, Diane Roussin, Tom Simms, and Tanyalee Viner.

The Indigenous Learning Circle (ILC) has identified the development of an Indigenous Evaluation Bundle as one of its priorities. The ILC is committed to the development and implementation of evaluation that is meaningful and relevant to Indigenous understandings of success, accomplishment, growth, learning, achievement, and resilience.

Part 1: Background

Resistance and resurgence

For Canada, 2017 was a year of celebration, where citizens came together to celebrate 150 years as a nation. For many, however, this year was not one of celebration but rather it was a reminder of 150 years of legislation and policies that have left considerable intergenerational impacts on Indigenous children and families. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, with the release of the final report in December 2015, shared hundreds of stories gathered as a result of years of cross country hearings to witness the enormous impact of Residential Schools on Indigenous people in Canada. Released with the final report were 94 Calls to Action, calling on Canada to move towards reconciliation and action to redress these impacts. Recently, in an assessment of the progress made on the Calls to Action, Senator Murray Sinclair noted that while there has been some movement in some areas there remains a lack of observable difference, “The reality is that we’re really looking for action that shows leadership, that causes people to sit up and take notice and recognize that there is an important process underway here that they have to be part of,” (Sinclair, March 20, 2017). What remains steady in the face of continued

struggle with institutions, structures, and societal attitudes that perpetuate indifference, apathy, and anger is the work of Indigenous peoples to confront and resist within personal, local, and national spaces.

To Indigenous peoples, resistance is not a new concept. It is simply a matter of survival. As the global push of colonization reached this continent so too did the concerted effort to resist against impositions upon land, beliefs, and complex societal structures that existed prior to contact. As the impositions continued to work to dismantle all that it meant to be Indigenous through resettlement, erasure, violence, legislation, incarceration and education Indigenous peoples continued to rise up (Wesley-Esquimaux, 2004). Historical and ongoing inequities have become observable disparities (Czyzewski, 2011). However, the consciousness of generations of resisters lives on within the Indigenous peoples who are still fighting today. Currently, evidence of resistance can be witnessed across multiple media platforms and methods, in classrooms, in family and community relationships, and at the forefront of discussions about concepts such as decolonization, reconciliation, and Indigenization for example.

While resistance continues to be an important strategy for Indigenous peoples in Canada, another concept, resurgence, is also being held as a way forward to positively impact the wellbeing of Indigenous children and families. Resurgence is in contrast to resistance -which is in relationship with the colonial structures that continue to impact families. Resurgence¹ is centered instead on a reclamation of ways of knowing, being, feeling, and doing that link to traditional ways and are based on Indigenous knowledges and ceremonies that have survived despite the past 150 years. In the ongoing dialogue of reconciliation that is occurring as a result of the TRC, Leanne Simpson (2011) asserts that resurgence is the path towards reconciliation. Anything less than space, recognition, and respect for the necessity of cultural resurgence is not reconciliation in its fullest sense.

Research and evaluation for Indigenous communities

In Indigenous Nations across the world, research is a dirty word. For Indigenous peoples and communities their historical experiences with research have most often ingrained and perpetuated racism and oppression. Research has been a process of examination and extraction, providing colonial judgments on Indigenous ways of life (Smith, 1999). Processes of colonization² have meant that the imposition of western ways of knowledge gathering and validation continues to contrast and be valued over Indigenous worldviews, values, and ethics. As an extension of research, it is sad to say that evaluation can also be painted with the same brush. Researchers and evaluators, the majority of whom are trained within western founded post secondary institutions, learn how to do this work from those who have gone before. This means that most often positivist, objective-based experts are ones who are undertaking projects that ask people and communities to share their knowledge and experiences based

on a worldview and belief about knowledge that is not congruent with Indigenous worldviews.

In order to move forward from a colonial understanding of knowledge and measurement, a decolonizing process must occur (Smith, 1999).

[D]ecolonizing research methods include deconstructing and externalizing the myth of the intellectually inferior Indian, while simultaneously privileging and centering indigenous worldviews and knowledge to promote revitalization of indigenous epistemologies, research practices, and ultimately, indigenous wellness practices. (Walters et al., 2009, p. 148)

How we gather knowledge and what assumptions this gathering is based upon are important points of decolonization. There is an ever increasing and strong base of Indigenous scholars, academics, and researchers who have been disrupting the status quo over the last few decades. Indigenous researchers who are making space for another way of understanding what it means to know, learn, and evaluate success and progress. It is critical that researchers, and therefore evaluators understand this history. It is important to understand that through socialization and education researchers and evaluators may inadvertently replicate colonial practices and patterns (Johnston-Goodstar, 2012). This is why the following Bundle, meant to bring together experiences, questions, and learning is a powerful tool for undoing this replication.

An awareness of colonial history in evaluation practice is essential to the practitioner, but even with awareness and the best intentions, evaluation practice remains shaped by things the evaluator may not be aware of, as well as by perceptions of evaluation held by others. (Johnston-Goodstar, 2012, p. 111)

One mechanism for making space and pushing back within institutions has been to hold them accountable through the Calls to Action

released through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The 94 Calls to Action are meant to advance the process of Canadian reconciliation by calling upon the structures, systems, and people of Canada to do different, to do better, and to reconcile for the unjust, inequitable and oppressive conditions that continue to impact Indigenous peoples (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015). The Calls to Action asks Canadians to build understanding, knowledge and even proficiency in the historically and structurally contextualized experiences of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Linda Tuhwai Smith (1999) speaks to a process of self-determination that involves intervening to take action based on a research (and therefore evaluation) framework that is a proactive process for making cultural and structural changes. This requires systems to shift the way that they work with Indigenous peoples to better meet their needs. In the world of evaluation this means evaluating what is important to Indigenous peoples and understanding the impact based on Indigenous ways of knowing, being, feeling, and doing. The central focus of Indigenizing is based on reframing the way that Indigenous peoples, issues, and social problems are discussed and handled. Who gets to define the focus and who gets to provide the process for seeking answers? Smith (1999) asserts that Indigenous peoples hold their own answers, and this applies in the realm of evaluation as well. In the case of the Bundle, who will use this knowledge and combine it with experience, skills, and community connections to do this work *in a good way* that does not continue to appropriate, or misrepresent Indigenous peoples, organizations, or the work that is being done?

The term evaluation is not an Indigenous concept

From what has been learned so far there is no word for evaluation in any Manitoba Indigenous

language. What comes close to the term evaluation reflects a personal process of deep reflection and contemplation. This is more about a process: looking back and seeing what worked, what didn't, and then determining the path ahead. These concepts of evaluation involve taking stock and reflecting upon previous experience in order to move forward. This is a guided self-reflection of who you are, where you are at, and where you want to be. This does not employ an external set of indicators upon these questions of where you "should" be. Rather, this creates the space for people to learn from their experiences, reflect on what has worked for them, celebrate their journey, and take that learning into their future. This is a purposeful reflection on self, self in family, and self in community. Based upon this definition, it is also clear that ceremony will be an important element at different points of the evaluation process.

Don Robinson, a Cree Elder from Bunibonibee First Nation in Manitoba, shared about the process of reflection and contemplation,

So we think, we feel. We feel, we think.

Whenever we have any stress, we carry it on our body somewhere. We carry it in our body. So that's what consciousness is. Consciousness is becoming aware of the whole human being, becoming aware of our self, and becoming aware of all of your relatives.

The elders used to say "Mamitoney ni ta" which means really think about your life. "Mamitoney nihta mowin" means thinking deeply about your life. That means think about your values. That means, part of when I do counseling, I get people to think about their life. To think about how they got to where they are today. Say they are struggling with [feeling] depressed, low self-esteem, struggling with addictions, struggling in a bad relationship. Get them to think about how they got to be there. From their past. So they have to deconstruct that whole past and make a new life. They have to make a new life.

They have to reclaim their consciousness... People have to be aware of their power. They have power; emotional, mental power, physical power, and spiritual power. When a person realizes their power of “ti pe ni mi sowin” (Cree word meaning self- determination).

So in the old days, and even today. People go fasting, and that’s how they get to know themselves through this ceremonial meditation. That’s how we used to meditate a long time ago. Today we need to get away from all of this rush of life, and all the technology. It is spirituality just going for a walk in the bush and sitting with nature. The traditional fasting is an opportunity to just be with the earth, reflect and to think deeply “Mamitoney nihta mowin”. Then you get to know yourself. “Kiskinomisown” is a Cree word that means to know yourself. So that means you know yourself as a man, you know yourself as a woman. Then you look at what information do I need to become a better person. I am okay the way I am. But I can be better (as cited in Rowe, 2013, p 102).

Development of an Indigenous evaluation Bundle

As Indigenous peoples, we continue to assert traditional knowledge, cultural practices, teachings, and ways of knowing and being as valuable contributions to health and wellness for not only Indigenous peoples but also community members in general. Ways of helping and the worldviews and values that they are based upon have existed for generations within the cultures of the First Peoples of Turtle Island.³ These practices which continue to exist in processes of community care have also been incorporated more formally into programs and organizations who are funded to work with individuals, families, and communities. In Winnipeg, a city with a high population of Indigenous peoples, incorporating Indigenous ways of practice into helping programs and or-

ganizations makes sense as organizations work to support community.

However, funding expectations and evaluation metrics have not shifted to meet the needs of Indigenous grounded practices. In evaluation, participatory processes that also build capacity of community members to understand and participate in evaluation design, implementation, and sharing the findings is supportive and aligns well with Indigenous values and practices.⁴

There has also been increased recognition of the value of Indigenous grounded qualitative methods to share stories and experiences in a more flexible and holistic manner (Kovach, 2010; Loppie, 2007). With an Indigenous grounded evaluation it will be possible to focus on culturally significant impacts that may often be lost in western founded evaluation methodologies (Kawakami et al., 2007).

Evaluations of projects in indigenous communities must (a) be viewed and implemented in the context of a specific place, time, community, and history; (b) promote and practice an indigenous worldview; and (c) facilitate collaborations that embrace both cultural and academic perspectives (Kawakami et al., 2007, p. 319).

There remains room to grow in the development of an Indigenous grounded evaluation process that comes from the worldview, values, and practices, and therefore makes use of methods of knowledge gathering congruent with this foundation.

The ILC’s interest in evaluation stems from its concern with common evaluation practices that focus on narrowly defined quantifiable outcomes. ILC members believe that this approach fails to capture the broader benefits that come from holistic community-based programming. Their aim is three-fold: To develop a set of evaluation guiding principles that community organizations can collectively use to assert more control over the means by which programs and services are evaluated; to develop culturally ap-

appropriate methods of evaluation aligned with these guiding principles; and to engage governments and other funding agencies in dialogue about decolonizing evaluation practice.

This has been a vision that has grown to fruition through the ongoing work of many community leaders and organizations beginning in particular with the joint work of CCPA-Manitoba, the Manitoba Research Alliance, and Community Led Organizations United Together (CLOUT).⁵ The ILC continues to assert the need to decolonize evaluation practices, as current mainstream methodologies and methods fail to measure what is meaningful for community-based organizations (MacKinnon & ILC, forthcoming).

In order to ensure that the story remains central to evaluation, the ILC, building on the past work of CLOUT, aims to put community-based organizations in the driver's seat — allowing them to decide who, how, and what to evaluate — a process that began in 2006, when CLOUT began to question the evaluation expectations of their funders (MacKinnon & ILC, forthcoming).

Our research continues to indicate the need for community level control in evaluation, which is identified as a gap in current practice. Meetings to date have led to the development of draft guiding principles that could be collectively used by community-based organizations. In addition workshops and community circles have been held to build on the guiding principles and outline the critical elements that can be used to design and implement evaluations that centre Indigenous ways of knowing, being, feeling, and doing.

The ILC envisions evaluating outcomes aligned with the seven sacred teachings: Respect, Truth, Honesty, Wisdom, Courage, Love, and Humility. The challenge is to find a means by which to measure how people incorporate these teachings into their daily lives and practice each of the Teachings through respectful, reciprocal, responsible collaboration with all nations, and

to determine the impact on “the seventh generation prior and the seventh generation ahead.”

Aim of an Indigenous evaluation Bundle

What has been brought together through the work of the ILC is an Indigenous Evaluation Bundle. The aim of this Indigenous Evaluation Bundle is to reassert Indigenous ways of measuring learning, growth, transformation, progress and success that directly align with Indigenous practices. This is a resurgence of Indigenous ways, building upon other work being done in communities and institutions. These ways of working have provided opportunities for people to build on their strengths, access supports and resources, connect with community, build a sense of belonging and identity, and practice generosity and reciprocity.

In circle discussions held in October and November 2016, participants explored the meaning of the terms evaluation, framework, and toolkit, and questioned whether these terms represented the spirit and intent of what was being brought together in this project. It was decided within these discussions that from an Indigenous foundation these terms are not congruent with Indigenous ways of understanding progress or learning.

As we began the journey of bringing this Bundle together, it was clear that we needed to make an important assertion about our language and how we define the term evaluation. The language we have chosen to signify what is being shared moves away from use of the term framework or toolkit. These terms do not match the principles and vision of what is being gathered. The concept of a Bundle makes an important connection with the values and principles of Indigenous worldviews. A Bundle is a sacred gathering of objects, ideas, gifts, and teachings that take place over the lifetime of an individual. A Bundle is unique to the person who carries it and the Bundle can transform, grow and change over its lifetime as each person has new experi-

ences, teachings, learning, and growth. Bundles can be gifted and passed on to ancestors during their journeys. This Bundle is a gift that is being gathered to be used along a path of Indigenous learning, reflection, and decision making in order to provide opportunities to leave marks along the trail of development.

The Bundle outlines values, principles, and methods that are important in the design and implementation of evaluation by, with, and for Indigenous peoples, communities, and organizations. This Bundle also honours the holistic, interconnected, and unique nature of learning journeys and is also an evolving, living document. This Bundle is much more than an intellectual or theoretical model. The Bundle is comprised of mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual elements.

Astrid MacNeill shares the following with respect to the physical nature of the Bundle:

When completed, the Bundle should also have a tangible object, medicines accompanying it. Such as a medicine bag or hide painting such as Carla Kirkpatrick's mother does. I hope there are funds for this. There needs to be a keeper of that Bundle, endowed with responsibilities that protect the Bundle, and put it to good use. For example if the Indigenous Evaluation Bundle is presented at a workshop or conference, that tangible Bundle should accompany it.

That tangible Bundle or symbol will come to us, through a vision, dream or pipe ceremony. We needn't hurry it, but it should be included as part of promising practices derived from Indigenous worldviews, ways of being, doing, knowing, feeling (personal communication, January 2017).

This collection is bringing together examples of ways of knowing, being, feeling, and doing that can be used by community organizations to reflect on programs, experiences, practices, and learning. These opportunities for guided, sys-

tematic, and documented reflection are markings that can be able to be used as examples for other organizations. This Bundle will provide trail markers and examples to help build evaluations congruent with Indigenous values, practices of success, and reflection for learning.

This Bundle is presented with a caveat that it is important to connect with and build knowledge and practice through mentorship and support. As evaluation practitioners, community organizations, and community members begin to learn more about the process of Indigenous evaluation and how to use the Bundle this will be a necessary step. In this way we can ensure the values and principles of the Bundle are being used to their fullest and most positive intent. The ILC agreed that the Bundle, based upon Indigenous epistemology, would adopt the use of the following guidelines, developed by a consortium of Kanaka Maoli (Hawaiian) and Māori evaluators:

1. The evaluation must be viewed and implemented as a holistic and contextualized experience with respect to a specific place, time, community, and history.
2. Evaluation of projects in Indigenous communities must promote and practice an Indigenous worldview, including, but not limited to, consideration of Indigenous identity, epistemology, values, and spirituality.
3. Colleagues who have complementary knowledge and skill sets must collaborate to embrace both the cultural and academic perspective during this time of emerging methodology (Kawakami et al., 2007, p. 332).

Language is important: Naming the Bundle
On June 12th 2017, a naming ceremony, sweat and feast were held for the Indigenous Evaluation Bundle. The Indigenous Learning Circle had the honour of Vern Dano leading the cer-

emony. Members of ILC, CEDA Pathways, and the evaluation Bundle team were present. The name that was given to the evaluation Bundle is, *Singing White Crane flying North* (pronounced, Na gah moon wha ba ska o ji'i jak mi mise kee wa ki noon)

Na-gah mo (singing)

Waabishkizi (white)

Ojjaak (crane)

Bimise (flying)

Keetwaatino (north)

The colours are white, sky blue, green and brown. Now that this name has been given it is now the responsibility of the person/organization who houses the Bundle to feast the name and colours four times a year to bring energy and life to it.

With the name, Vern shared a teaching of the crane clan and how it sits in relationship with the loon clan. When there is conflict it is the responsibility of the turtle to work to resolve the conflict between the disputing clans; which will be one of the challenges moving forward with this Bundle. He saw the Crane had travelled over the first hills of life and it sits on the 4th hill of life.

Vern also shared that the Crane is a being that works with all 4 elements of life and that it is very

clear that the Bundle sits within the North End. This is where the Crane's nest sits. He asked us to think about the knowledge of that bird to receive teachings on how the spirit of this life should be respected. For example, Vern talks about the role of the Crane in building a long lasting structure in its environment. Two cranes build a nest that is strong and sturdy; it persists. When those two cranes have moved on, the nest is still intact for loons to use. The loons add the materials that they need to the nest in order to foster and promote positive wellbeing for the community members that they are raising.

In further conversation with Vern in July, there was more shared about the name. The name is multicultural, in a sense the name will need to be translated into many different languages. He gave the example of seeing images where "thank you" or "welcome" is depicted in many various languages that are common to the land. This is how Vern has envisioned it. The name, the spelling of the name, and the sound of the name will change depending on its geographical location. Even though the Bundle is housed (nesting) in the North End, many Nations are able to access this Bundle as this is what has been envisioned for it.

Part 2: How to use the Bundle

This Bundle is not a comprehensive document on how to complete an evaluation. The intention is that this will build upon what is understood about evaluation and provide a guide that can be used in planning, designing, implementing and reporting based upon Indigenous values and principles. This Bundle does provide a common understanding of the purpose of evaluation, how it can be beneficial for community, and Indigenous principles, values, considerations, and methods that could be used in the design and implementation. This is a conceptual roadmap that can be adapted and used in different settings and with diverse groups.

An Indigenous Evaluation Bundle can be used by community organizations and staff to understand evaluation and increase community members' capacity to actively participate in evaluation efforts in their programs and organizations. The ILC believes that this evaluation Bundle is one component of a larger strategy to build community capacity for evaluating. It will be necessary to continue to train and mentor evaluators to be able to use this Bundle in a good way. This support aligns with the relationship-based approach to Indigenous evaluation. It is critical that community evaluation practi-

tioners are trained and supported to build the necessary knowledge and skills to design and implement based upon this Bundle.

An Indigenous Evaluation Bundle:

- Provides guiding principles, values, and principles that will be important in decision making during the planning, implementation, and reporting on evaluation findings.
- Identifies key questions for evaluators and organizations to consider when working together.
- Identifies and incorporates ways of assessing merit or worth based on traditional values and cultural expressions.
- Incorporates broadly held values while remaining flexible and responsive to local traditions and cultures.
- Uses practices and methods from the field of evaluation that fit our needs and conditions.
- Defines evaluation, its meaning, practice, and usefulness in our own terms.
- Respects and serves community goals for self-determination and sovereignty.

- Creates opportunity for learning from our programs and effectively using information to create strong, viable communities (Adapted from LaFrance & Nichols, 2009).

It is important to remember that in the measurement of learning, progress, success, outcomes, and impact, there are core values and principles that are either implicitly or explicitly a part of the decisions being made about what gets measured, how it is measured, and how the data gathered is interpreted and presented in an evaluation. The development of this Indigenous Evaluation Bundle is working to make explicit the values and principles that must guide evaluation of programming for, by, and with Indigenous peoples.

Questions for potential evaluators

As you consider whether to use this Bundle to develop an Indigenous evaluation, there are questions, reflections, and responsibilities to be asked to ensure that a foundation of understanding and common vision exists prior to the development of an evaluation.

The following questions ask an evaluator to consider *how* the guidelines and values will be put into practice through the design and implementation of the evaluation. It is not expected that a person possess expertise in answering any of these questions, but rather that an open and meaningful dialogue take place to ensure that these necessary elements have been considered. If there is an area identified below that requires development, it is expected that the time will be taken to build capacity and knowledge in order to meet the needs of the organization. Building capacity for evaluators to work based upon this Indigenous Evaluation Bundle is an ongoing development and it will require a commitment to relational accountability and relational ways of working.

The ILC has identified the following questions that organizations can ask of a potential evaluator:

- Do you hold a deep understanding of the historical context of the community you are working with? If you do not possess this knowledge, how will you ensure this is addressed prior to design?
- If you do not share the same worldview within an Indigenous Evaluation, is there a way to effectively and appropriately design and implement a meaningful evaluation?
- Do you possess a network of relationships that will assist you in remaining accountable to the community that you are working in? How will you foster and nurture these relationships to ensure that the needs of the community are at the core of the work being completed?
- Do you understand the meaning of protocols and how values and principles are placed into action within local cultures? For example, do you have an understanding about the centrality of food to Indigenous worldviews?
- How will you incorporate protocols, ceremony, and spirit into the evaluation?
- Conversations that occur within evaluations are sacred and a form of ceremony. How can you ensure that the stories that come forth as a result of this ceremony are held in a sacred manner?
- How will you incorporate opportunities for community members to engage in evaluation? Will you include mentorship through hiring and training of local people?

These questions provide critical reflection areas required when working with this Indigenous Evaluation Bundle.

Importance of an evaluation advisory group
Evaluation Advisory Groups (EAGs) can provide important connections and relationships to ensure the design and implementation is built

upon a concrete understanding of context. This can mean the direct involvement of community members as advisors or employees of the evaluation (Johnston-Goodstar, 2012). The formation of EAGs can mean that community members or Elders are the primary source of validation of the quality of the evaluation. This could also ensure that cultural protocols are followed in the evaluation (Kawakami et al., 2007). Community based participation in the process can provide direct benefits to the process by ensuring the centrality of Indigenous worldviews; participatory inquiry/evaluation methods; and, relevance and service to community (Johnston-Goodstar, 2012).

Guiding principles

This Indigenous Evaluation Bundle is founded upon a set of *Guiding Principles*:

The following guiding principles were developed as a result of a collaborative community process and presented back to the ILC for further feedback. During the last round of circles in November 2016, additions have been made to ensure that these principles continue to support an Indigenous driven evaluation vision. These principles are evolving and have been outlined as important in the development of an Indigenous Evaluation Bundle:

1. Community must be the driver of evaluation. Evaluation must focus on strengths, recognize challenges, but also consider individual and community resilience.
 - Engage the community in the planning and implementation of evaluation
 - Cultural and lived experience must be respected.
2. Evaluation must be developed from an understanding of the broader context of systemic, recurring, and intergenerational trauma.
 - For example, the damaging intergenerational effects of residential schools, the sixties scoop have been

shown to have left a legacy of trauma for individuals, families, and communities.

3. Evaluation must take into consideration the broader social and economic context.
 - Interventions at the community level cannot resolve broader social and economic issues such as poverty, lack of housing, etc on their own.
4. Evaluation must take a comprehensive approach to assess broader community impact.
 - Recognize that while programs have individual mandates, funding arrangements etc., they do not work in isolation of other programs.
 - Aligning with the goals of comprehensive community approaches, evaluation must also recognize the needs and aspirations of individuals and families who have their own hopes and dreams.
5. Evaluation must take a holistic and relationship based approach.
 - Aligned with holistic programming that focuses on cultural, spiritual, physical and mental well-being of individuals, families, and communities.
 - Nurtures the time and space to build the relationships necessary to design and implement a meaningful evaluation that honours reciprocity.
 - Honours the interconnections that exists and facilitates exploration of relationships with self, others, and the natural world.
6. Evaluation must recognize that meanings of “success” are self-determined.
 - Success is not an objectively defined concept.
 - Individuals have their own ideas of what ‘success’ means to them.
 - ‘Success’ is not static — often re-defined as individuals proceed along their personal journeys.
 - Evaluation must capture the growth along the journey as itself a measure of ‘success’

- Evaluation must capture unanticipated outcomes as examples of success.
- Evaluation models must place program participants at the centre of evaluation.
 - Each individual journey involves multiple and interconnected factors/programs/ events.
 - The purpose of evaluation should be to improve the collective impact of individual program and coordinated program responses.
 - If individual community members, rather than individual programs are at the centre of evaluation, it will be more likely to identify gaps in service and how they might best be filled.
 - Evaluation should be continuous and adequately funded.
 - Evaluation is not an add-on and should be embedded into program design and delivery.
 - Individual and community input should be ongoing.
 - Evaluation should be seen as a cyclical process of reflection and action involving a network of CBOs working toward collective impact.
 - Evaluators must demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the “Neechi Principles.”⁶
 - With particular emphasis on local hiring, local training, capacity building, mutual support.

Core Indigenous values

Evaluation from an Indigenous grounded approach moves beyond the activity of gathering information in order to evaluate benchmarks of success. As important in evaluation is the process through which knowledge is gathered. It is critical to be mindful of the processes that we use in evaluation. It is our understanding that



IMAGE: ASTRID MACNEILL

This photograph shares the interconnected nature of Indigenous values and principles related to the measurement and reflection on a learning journey.

participation in evaluation that incorporates core Indigenous values can be a transformative and healing process. This can create opportunities for people to say something they haven't said before and/or experience something they haven't experienced before. Evaluation, through careful consideration in the choice of methods, can nurture deep reflection and evaluators need to be mindful to create safe spaces where people can share their stories.

The following values have been outlined as important in the development of an Indigenous Evaluation Framework:

Relationships

It is critical that evaluation be built on trusting relationships. Trusting relationships take time

to build, and often the length of the relationship will uncover different types of sharing and depth of knowledge. As an evaluator using this Bundle you must be committed to building and maintaining respectful and reciprocal relationships.

In the practice of evaluation the value of relationships can take many forms. This can mean the relationship between evaluator and:

- Community
- Organization
- Issue area being addressed
- Staff
- Participants
- Participant's family

What relationships does the evaluator have with each of these groups? If there is not a previous relationship, how will the organization and evaluator work to build a positive and reciprocal relationship where it is deemed supportive to the evaluation?

Relational accountability is how we respect and maintain balance in our relationships. This is the way that we accept and honour the responsibility that comes with fulfilling our relationships and answer to our relations with the world around us. One of the ways that relationship can be built and maintained is through participation in ceremony. The incorporation of ceremony at different stages of evaluation can be an important consideration. Are there ceremonies that need to occur to mark the evaluation journey?

Seven Sacred Teachings as values

Love, respect, courage, honesty, wisdom, humility, and truth. These values, and the teachings they encapsulate, are the backbone of *how* the evaluation work is done. In the planning, design, implementation, and sharing of results of an evaluation these teachings are to guide the relationships that the evaluator has with the organization and participants. These teachings also provide direction for the methods that are

to be used and the questions that are designed in the evaluation process.

Elder Mae Louise Campbell shares:

To me, seven sacred teachings are a universal kind of teaching of how we get along. How do we make things good? I think that there are many similar teachings out there in all the faiths. And that people understand. When we get everybody together, it's what I introduce, because it's all I know and I try to live by those teachings. When you sit with people, because we have students here from all over the world, you know they will say oh that's really similar for this, or that's just like this teaching that my grandmother gave me, or you'll find that there's more similarities, there's more commonalities, between you and between your spirit way than you would think. Then it's a beginning way of being able to talk about it, to have some dialogue about it and to be in a good way and kind of figure out how you are going to live together, whether it is at work, or whether it's at school or at home. How do you live together, where I can stand in my truth and be respectful to each other? These are the universal teachings that would be easily installed in any of those. But you've got to figure out what that means for you and for everybody it's something different.

When the evaluation is being designed — how are the seven sacred teachings incorporated into the overall plan? How will the methods used in the evaluation incorporate these teachings and can they be used to tell the story of the evaluation?

Success is a subjective experience. In alignment with the seven sacred teachings, it is important to acknowledge that there are lessons learned along the way that come from mistakes. There are teachings that come from these experiences. It is safe to find those opportunities to learn. In evaluation we need to offer a comfortable space to talk about what didn't work, what didn't go as planned or expected. Meth-

ods should ensure to capture this learning in a respectful manner.

Evaluation that is designed based on Indigenous values and principles will honour that opportunity for learning and growth exists in any situation. Therefore success is based upon a person's assessment of their situations. An evaluation can guide people through processes to reflect on their own journey that shares their own unique story of success. Success is a long-term journey. Indigenous evaluations can incorporate mechanisms that allow people to see the markings on the trail of their own journey. It is a role of Indigenous grounded evaluations to create the space and opportunity for people to reflect on these markings, derive their meaning, and to share and celebrate their learning. Making space for this learning begins at the outset of program development so that participants have multiple opportunities to sit in deep contemplation and reflection, to look back and see what has and has not worked, and then to determine future paths. For example programs can consider including sessions that familiarize participants with evaluation methods and activities that build their skills towards deep reflection and deep conversations.

Trust

It takes time to build trust with individuals and families. Trust is an essential foundation for working and being in relationship with all people. This value is interconnected with the value of relationship. These are mutually nurtured values to ensure that an Indigenous evaluation is meaningful for participants and organizations.

In order to facilitate meaningful opportunities for reflection and contemplation as described previously trust needs to be built with the evaluator. By planning evaluations alongside the program development, building awareness about the purpose and intent of an evaluation that is designed from the Indigenous Evaluation Bundle trust could be built.

Respect

The value of respect is about honouring the experiences and knowledges that each individual brings with them. To honour all of life, we must honour the basic rights of all others to be heard, to have autonomy to make decisions, to have freedom of choice, to know they are inherently worthy.

The value of respect means that in all interactions, people feel value is placed on their participation and contributions; be truthful about how the evaluation can be used and will be used; explain the purpose of evaluation and why each method was chosen; listen to individuals when they speak; and respect that each person has dignity and uniqueness that they share with others. This is a gift. People will participate from where they are at; they will show respect and acceptance of where each person is on their own journey.

Strength based

Strength-based practice means that each person is a self-determining individual and comes with assets and strengths. This is where we begin from. This does not necessarily mean physical strength; it can also mean mental, emotional or spiritual strength. Each person has gifts that they can share. People may not see this right away; they may have been told that they are less than, or worthless. Many interactions in systems perpetuate this belief. From a strength-based perspective, people are viewed as resourceful and resilient even in the face of challenges.

Within evaluation, coming from a strength-based perspective can be incorporated in who is involved in designing and implementing the evaluation, and what methods are chosen. It is important that the methods used maintain the unique nature of individual and situated experiences. As evaluators, we do not need to come to a situation claiming that a person is broken and requires fixing. We need to start from the centre of sacredness and beauty. You are sacred. You are beautiful. You have had experi-

ences that have impacted you. How would you like to strengthen yourself based on these experiences. It is a personal statement — who are you, where do you come from, where are you going, what is your purpose? These questions lead to answers that frame an individual's journey. What did you learn about yourself? What was useful for you and how did you incorporate that into your everyday life? Is there more you need to know now? Is there a next step to your journey? There needs to be space and time for people to incorporate their learning. Healing and strengthening is a spiral process, not a straight line.

Sharing food

Sharing of food is also an important value to incorporate into an Indigenous evaluation plan. The sharing of food is seen as an action of generosity. Sharing food together is a part of building relationships and is seen as an honour. Sharing food is also important for ceremonial gatherings.

Often funding does not take into account the need to share food when people come together. When designing the plan and budget it is important that each time a group comes together or you meet with someone, there is an offering of nourishment. Take into consideration the time of day, where you are meeting, and how many people will be there. There should be enough food so that people can also take some with them when they are done. This act of generosity acknowledges the time and gift of sharing that participants are making by meeting with you.

Reciprocity

Reciprocity is built into the value of relationships. Reciprocity means that if someone gives of themselves through time, kindness, teachings, or stories, for example, it is important to give something of your self back in recognition of this sacred exchange. Reciprocity acknowledges that in building relationships it is impor-

tant to honour each other and to place the value of respect within this relationship. Reciprocity is the practice of exchanging things with others for mutual benefit.

In an Indigenous evaluation, reciprocity could mean a combination of things. It can mean that participants are not the only ones sharing of themselves, but that in the act of building relationships and in reciprocity, the evaluator also shares appropriately of their own experience or life. This can mean that there are gifts given to honour participation in an evaluation.

Responsibility

Responsibility is being accountable and having an obligation to something or someone. Part of this value of responsibility connects back to the value of relationships. When evaluators are given the gift of a person's story or experience, when we are given a teaching, or are given the task of evaluating it comes with responsibility.

Responsibility in evaluation practice can also be linked back to the seven sacred teachings. Are you practicing these values in the way that you are engaging in evaluation and in the relationships to undertake a meaningful evaluation?

Cultural safety

Cultural safety means that beyond cultural competence or proficiency, the person who is a participant in an evaluation feels safe. The measure of cultural safety is not from the perspective of the helper, but is from the perspective of the person receiving services or participating in an evaluation.

It is important that we feel safe within our circle to be who we are and to say our truth, to speak our truth. It is important to be honest using those seven sacred teachings. If we feel safe we are going to act and be more genuine then we will be in an environment where we don't feel safe or haven't felt safe before. Creativity and genuineness is important, and this can be fostered through cultural safety.

Attending to mind, body, spirit, and heart

Another value that is central to an Indigenous evaluation is the interconnected nature of the mind, body, spirit, and heart. It is important to understand holistic experiences and individual contexts. This includes both evaluator and evaluation participants.

When designing an evaluation, methods should ensure that learning and transformation are captured in each of these domains, as they can occur across each of these spaces and we need to be aware of this.

Acknowledging the continuum of existence

The work that is being done is for the future seven generations, it is not just for us. It is important to honour and acknowledge the work of the seven generations back, and now we are responsible for the seven generations moving forward.

What does this look like in evaluation practice?

The questions that a person can consider in Indigenous evaluation are: How am I expressing respect? How am I expressing love to myself, to my family, and to my community? These reflections get at the actualization of the seven sacred teachings. How, as an evaluator, are you enacting and embodying the values? How are you creating the space for people to deeply reflect on these types of questions? Each of the values listed above are important to consider in the planning, design, implementation and sharing of evaluation findings.

The following section will begin to bring together potential methods for using in an Indigenous evaluation.

Methods

It is important to incorporate methods that allow for multiple vantage points to be included into the knowledge gathering. This includes

creating opportunity for participants to share their experiences while also considering service providers, families, and broader community for example. Who is the evaluation being designed for? Whose voices will ensure a fulsome and meaningful story can be told?

Deep reflection and contemplation are important processes to facilitate in an Indigenous evaluation. This can support individuals to share stories of their own experiences and journey. Methods used in Indigenous evaluation will be able to capture this think-act-reflect process. Methods used to capture this process will need to be able to embrace the messiness of a person's journey. This can be facilitated by not predefining success for individuals but by making the space for individuals to share what their own successes are. So, inherently, these methods are individual and honour story.

The form through which stories are shared is another important consideration. What are the strengths and challenges of the method being used? Does a written form allow for people to more willingly share truthful feedback because it may provide confidentiality? Or are written feedback methods less accessible than speaking or sharing in another way that may feel more natural and allow for comfortable sharing?

It is important to be mindful of the tools that are being used. Written feedback does not always capture the stories in a way that is meaningful, useful, or accessible to those using the tool considering the previous theme of deep reflection and the purposes of evaluation from Indigenous perspectives. There is a balance that needs to occur between methods, process, and trusting relationship.

Another consideration in the choice of methods is to choose a way that can allow for expression. Evaluation methods need to be built in to the programmatic process and journey with the program. This can capture the journey and growth of individuals. In the case of Indigenous evaluation, evaluation methods must be woven into the fabric of the program. The evaluation is

as much a journey as the program is. In order to engage in the think-act-reflect process in evaluation, it must involve a methodical approach to method and timing.

As evaluators, how can we elicit stories that share meaning? Returning again to the values that necessitate relationship building, trust, and respect, this can be done in a variety of ways. Sometimes storytelling and sharing does come naturally for people and in an evaluation there may be people who have already done the processes that are important for sharing their meaning.

However, more often than not, you could be working with people who have not seen or been taught how to share their own stories, or how to recognize and make the connections of emotions, learning, and growth. While programs will likely include important capacity building opportunities for learning these skills, this also needs to be included in evaluation methods. An evaluation can use the methods chosen as a space to learn about expressing themselves and their own stories.

Participation in ceremony, the use of circles, and the facilitated creation of art are all methods that can be spaces for deep reflection and meaning making. A person's story changes over time; it transforms and morphs. As we live each day, we can think, act, and reflect, allowing new learning to be incorporated. By using these methods, it is an opportunity to reflect back in order to see a path forward.

In an evaluation plan, methods can also incorporate the following, which are congruent with Indigenous worldviews:

- Opportunities for facilitated self-reflection and observation. Use methods that encourage a consistent time and space for reflection. Is this done daily or weekly? Is this reflection written or spoken/recorded? What questions can be used to facilitate thinking about the actions that have taken place and the meaning that can be drawn from them?

- Opportunities for storytelling. What methods help participants to build their experience with storytelling which also allow reflection and meaning making?
- Opportunities to engage in land based activities and conversations that include ceremony and fire. Our connection to land is often neglected within an evaluation process. A shift of space, new experience, out in the land connects to the holistic nature of Indigenous evaluation. How can being on the land and participating in ceremony facilitate opportunities for meaningful self-reflection and meaning making?
- Drumming and singing. Participating in cultural activities such as drumming and singing builds confidence in self and a sense of belonging to community. As we learn to sound our voice with the drum and in song, the sharing of our experiences and stories may start to flow more often or more freely. Drumming and singing remind us of our own inherent worth and value and that what we have to express is important.
- Opportunities to use the medicines as a vehicle or spiritual connection, self-reflection, and meaning making.

Methods that are congruent with an Indigenous worldview

The following methods and tools have been identified as important to consider as being congruent with the values and principles outlined in this Indigenous Evaluation Bundle:

- Art-based activities including: written words, quilting, mosaic, drumming, drawing, acting, photographs, collages, humour, games, play, poetry, and beading. Building confidence and relationships can happen through multiple opportunities for sharing and can happen through

arts-based activities. They can capture experience and share meaning in a way that connects to heart.

- The use of circle. This can include reflection circles and sharing circles. The circle is a ceremonial space that brings with it particular rules of conduct and enacts the seven sacred teachings. Opportunities to reflect and making meaning in the circle can be a transformative expression that can add depth to an evaluation.
- The Medicine Wheel can be used to measure and determine progress, to engage in reflection, or to share learning. This can also be a way to measure mastery, belonging, generosity, and independence. When used at the beginning and end of a program for example, it can be a physical expression of a person's journey. The wheel can be used to explore a person's answers to: Who am I, Where am I going, and, What is my purpose?
- Natural Conversation is a facilitated one on one or circle processes that can

engage people to share their learning.

Conversations can take place over multiple sessions until both participants are comfortable that all that needs to be shared to answer the question(s) has been expressed.

When designing the methods to be used you can consider including the following questions:

- How are the values and principles placed into action each day?
- How are you living your life with intention, reflection, and learning?
- What methods do you use to track your learning, what relationships ensure you are accountable to the goals you set out for yourself?
- Are there ceremonies or celebrations or feasts that mark points in time in this journey for you?
- What relationships are important to being able to maintain the seven sacred teachings for you?
- How do you nourish and maintain these relationships?

Part 3: Methods

The ILC recognized that the development of the Bundle would be best shared with an example of the Bundle in practice. CEDA Pathways, a North End organization came forward to partner in the application of the Bundle and to share the learnings that would come forth. The following sections share the process and what was learned as a result of this partnership.

Who would work with us: Finding the core question

Considering the timeframe of the partnership, the previous evaluative work completed by CEDA Pathways, and the timing of an upcoming evaluation report being written, the focus of the collaboration was chosen. It was decided that to compliment the work already done, this work would focus on seeking feedback from parents of the students in the program. The key evaluative question that would be examined through the use of the Bundle was: *How has CEDA impacted your family?* The focus of the Bundle work would turn to parents of current students supported through CEDA Pathways. It was agreed that Indigenous families with students who covered the span of grade 9–12 at the different schools

and had high/mid/low attendance at programming would receive invitations to share their experiences.

Setting out on the journey: How you start is important

Using the Bundle means starting with ceremony. With the CEDA Pathways partnership it was decided that a Pipe Ceremony and Feast would be held at the beginning. The Pipe Ceremony was held on May 15, 2017 at the CEDA Pathways office at 419 Selkirk Avenue. Elder Don Robinson was passed tobacco and asked to lead the Ceremony. This evening provided the team the opportunity to introduce themselves, share background of the Bundle, and invite families to help us with the evaluation.

Relationship building was a central focus for the circle held during the Pipe Ceremony. Elder Don was asked to share a teaching about the Circle of Courage.⁷ He spoke to the families about what it means to walk through the circle from belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. The intention was to ask families to begin to reflect on what this has looked like in the students through their work at CEDA Pathways.

The opportunity to reflect deeply is an important element of the Bundle. Ceremony helps prepare us to enter this type of reflection.

In the circle, introductions were made, families seemed very comfortable in the circle, and openly shared their experiences with CEDA Pathways without any prompting. Several expressed how thankful they were for the program and how proud they were of their children. Families shared how the program had helped their family with resources such as food, transportation, and tutoring. Education was clearly a strong value for the families in the circle, and their introductions and examples of experiences reinforced this. The atmosphere of the evening was supportive and open, for example one parent shared that they had not finished high school themselves and they had so much pride in their child sticking with it. Another shared that they were now finishing high school as an adult. This brought supportive applause that also occurred at other proud moments for the families.

At the close of the circle, the families were invited to share a meal with one another. The visiting continued with staff and other families during the meal. After the meal the Research Assistant made a presentation to the families. This included the background of the Indigenous Learning Circle, about the evaluation, why it was valuable, and how they could participate and contribute to the learning at CEDA Pathways and for the benefit of the families in the future.

At this point there were also several knowledge sharing methods that were presented to the families as options for the upcoming evaluation evenings. It was decided we would like the families to choose which one of the methods they would prefer to use. Options included: Creation of a Dreamcatcher and found poetry; Wellness Wheel; Personal Shield Collage; or a Tree of Life. Each method was chosen due to the creative hands-on process that can help facilitate sharing of experiences. Parents chose the Wellness Wheel and the Tree of Life as options for

the sessions. Based on the preference of the parents, and in further team conversation, the Tree of Life was chosen as the method that would be adapted for use in this evaluation.

The presentation portion of the evening ended up rushed, due to the in-depth sharing and introductions by families during the Pipe Ceremony and circle. This was actually a positive experience. As indicated in the Bundle, the circle is a powerful method of relationship, trust, sharing, and learning. Despite the short presentation time, the Research Assistant was still able to share key points with the families and ask for their participation by offering tobacco. When the tobacco was offered, parents were asked to reflect on the question, *how has CEDA impacted my family?*

There was a final important question asked of the families at the end of the evening. In the design of the evaluation based on the Bundle, the team had an in-depth conversation about the Program Director's presence at the evaluation evenings with parents. The Program Director is a pivotal contributor to the success of their work with the students. While we felt her presence was an important function in the relationship and trust that families felt with CEDA Pathways, she also did not want to be present if it would prevent open feedback from families or be seen as invalidating the evaluation process in any manner. In the end, the team decided this was an important question to put forward to the families, those directly impacted by her presence. The response by the families was overwhelmingly positive. In fact, they seemed confused as to why the Program Director would not consider attending the evaluation evenings. It was very clear through families' discussions that her attendance at the evenings was imperative and necessary for the evaluation to be successful. This confirms the necessity of attending to trust and relationship in the design and implementation of evaluation based on the Bundle.

One important observation made during the Pipe Ceremony evening was during the presen-

tation. For future use of the Bundle in organizations it is important to consider families' familiarity with the term evaluation and the language that is used when discussing this process. It was clear that more time must be spent developing a clear and more connected language to describe this process in a way that is meaningful for families if we are truly looking for engaged and active participants.

The tools: Congruent methods for gathering knowledge

The use of the Tree of Life was a choice that was made through active discussion and participation of the team and the families invited to participate in the evaluation. The Tree of Life is a tool that helps people by guiding them through a series of questions that promotes self-reflection. It allows people to take stock of where they have come from, where they are right now, and where they hope their future will take them.

This method is one that had been previously used by the Researcher in teaching undergraduate courses and she suggested it due to the connection that it has with Indigenous teachings about relationships, families, connection, belonging, learning, and growth.

The exercise involves encouraging the participant to build a picture of their life through the representation of a tree. The facilitator assists the participant to build their tree from the ground up, taking the time to reflect on each of the elements that make up their tree. Through the process, participants can work to acknowledge the strength and experience they have gained in their life journey. This can assist to:

- Improve self-knowledge
- Acknowledge skills and experience
- Develop inner resources and potential.

The Tree of Life is a method that is connected to Indigenous understandings of the *Sacred Tree*. The *Sacred Tree* is a symbol that represents many

meanings about the creation of life, purpose, and how to live meaningfully through a balanced and connected journey. The values and beliefs that are presented through an exploration of the *Sacred Tree* speak to how to walk in a good way and live *mino pimatisiwin*, (the good life in Cree) or *mino bimadiziwin* (in Anishinaabe).

The Story of the Sacred Tree

For all the people of the earth, the Creator has planted a Sacred Tree under which they may gather, and there find healing, power, wisdom and security. The roots of this tree are spread deep into the body of Mother Earth. Its branches reach upward like hands praying to Father Sky. The fruits of this tree are the good things the Creator has given to the people: teachings that show the path to love, compassion, generosity, patience, wisdom, justice, courage, respect, humility, and many other wonderful gifts.

The ancient ones taught us that the life of the Tree is the life of the people. If the people wander far away from the protective shadow of the Tree, if they forget to seek nourishment of its fruit, or if they should turn against the Tree and attempt to destroy it, great sorrow will fall upon the people. Many will become sick at heart. The people will lose their power. They will cease to dream dreams and see visions. They will begin to quarrel among themselves over worthless trifles. They will become unable to tell the truth and to deal with each other honestly. They will forget how to survive in their own land. Their lives will become filled with anger and gloom. Little by little they will poison themselves and all they touch.

It was foretold that these things would come to pass, but that the Tree would never die. And as long as the Tree lives, the people live. It was also foretold that the day would come when the people would awaken as if from a long, drugged sleep; that they would begin, timidly at first but

then with great urgency, to search again for the *Sacred Tree*.

The knowledge of its whereabouts, and of the fruits that adorn its branches have always been carefully guarded and preserved within the minds and hearts of our wise elders and leaders. These humble, loving and dedicated souls will guide anyone who is honestly and sincerely seeking along the path leading to the protecting shadow of the *Sacred Tree*. (Bopp, Bopp, Brown & Lane, 1995, p.7)

The team agreed that a creative activity that helped to engage families with other ways of knowing and sharing experiences was in alignment with the Bundle. This was seen as one method in an interconnected process where families would be able to share their reflections. Once the method was agreed upon, the team worked to design a process and questions that would help to elicit the journey of the families with CEDA pathways through the Tree of Life.

The development of this process and the design of questions underwent several revisions as the team worked to connect the Circle of Courage, used as the programmatic model, with the Tree of Life used as the knowledge gathering tool. Initially the guide included the following process of reflection:

The Ground

- The present — Where are the important places in your family's life now? Who are the important people in your family's life now? What are the important things happening for your family right now?

The Roots

- The past — Where does your family come from? Who does your family come from? What are the important things in your family's history (whether they are good, bad, or other)? Who are the people, places, animals and things that have had a significant impact on your family?

(e.g. historical events, family members, significant teachers or those of influence, friends, care givers, pets, books, toys, music, etc.)

The Trunk

- This is your family — what are some of your family's skills and knowledge, what are the things your family can do, what are the qualities you possess, what makes your family strong? What are the acts of kindness you show others? Where did you learn about being a family? What is important to you about your family?

The Branches

- The future — what are your hopes, dreams and wishes for your family (e.g. to have a safe and happy family, to travel, to feel calm, to not have to worry about money, to become a vet, to have new friends etc.)?

The Leaves

- Who are the important, valued people in your family's life — from the past and present (e.g. family, friends, carers, teachers, other people of significant influence)?

The Fruit

- What are the gifts you have received as a family by participating in CEDA Pathways? How has CEDA Pathways supported your family? What has your family achieved?

After an important discussion within the team, the process was revised to align more closely with the Circle of Courage journey of belonging, identity, independence, mastery, and generosity. This revision can be seen in the Guide (Appendix 1).

The supplies for the art creation included: poster paper, glue, crayons, markers, stickers, and art supplies. Initially the team had discussed painting the trees, but given the tight time lines of the evening, we were worried about the paint not drying in time to add all of the elements in the tree's journey. Retrospectively, parents iden-

tified that it would have been nice to start their Tree of Life the evening of the Pipe Ceremony so that it would be able to dry in time for the evaluation evenings and to add their elements.

Evaluation evenings: The Bundle in action

In the planning for the evening, the outline initially included an ice-breaker — a getting to know each other exercise that would help to build comfort in sharing with one another.

The initial structure of the session was as follows:

1. Welcome/Opening
 - a. A smudge will be offered and participants welcomed into the space with an overview of the session. Would be good to include a visual reminder of the overview on the wall.
2. Ice-breaker
3. Tree of Life
4. Circle
 - a. Ask participants to move into the circle with their creations.
5. Closing & Thank you
 - a. Closing fire and offering tobacco to the fire. Teaching about offering and thank you for participating and sharing with CEDA.

After the Pipe Ceremony and Feast it was clear that sharing in this setting was already comfortable for the parents and that an ice-breaker would not be needed and this time could be better used in the Circle process. This confirmed the use of Ceremony as we implemented the Bundle and the positive implications of starting *in a good way*.

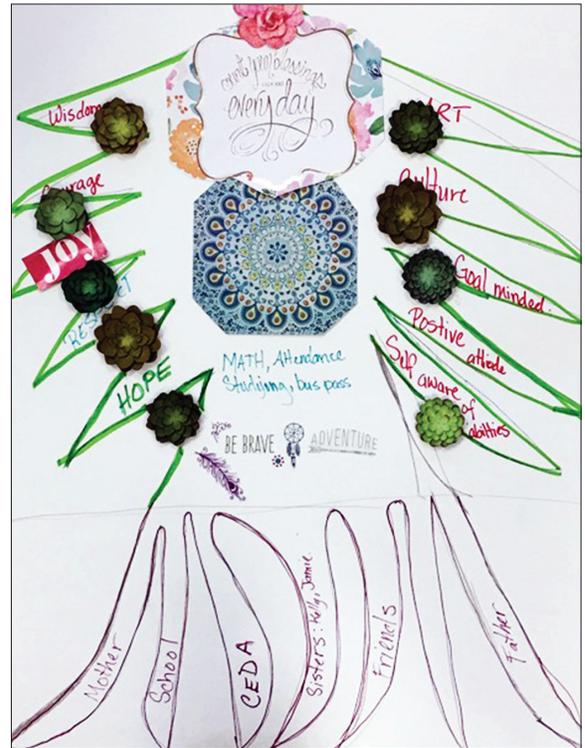
Two evaluation evenings were held at CEDA Pathways on May 25 and May 30, 2017. In total, 13 parents from 12 families attended the sessions. The evenings included a sharing of food, offering of smudge, and reciprocity through honourariums. Each of these is a critical element to address the values and principles in the Bundle.

Elder Don Robinson was able to attend the session on May 30. Observations from the team indicated that his attendance provided a positive environment for the session and was an important element of the success of the evening. He brought many of his gifts to the circle, including reflecting on the Tree of Life. Elder Don shared with the group how all trees are interconnected and intertwined with one another, each communicating to each other in their own way. Without one there could not be another. He reflected that CEDA Pathways is one tree of many that families need for supports. Just as tree's leaves open at a certain time of season and fall at another time, we can then think of CEDA Pathways as being the tree and the leaves being the 300 plus students that enter the programming. Once they have completed or graduated the program, those leaves fall and another set of leaves grow on the tree to signify another group of students who are wanting to be in the program with the goal of graduating, attending university or college, and getting a job.

It is critical to share that the inclusion of Elders is central to any design based on the Bundle. There is such a need for Elders to be incorporated into the process as their valuable knowledge and experience and connection to ceremony is beyond measure. As evaluators, we can learn so much through how they can engage with participants and create spaces for deep reflection and meaning making to happen. This was witnessed throughout various parts of the evening as being able to elevate the group discussion and inspire and bring a sense of identity for families, community members and students attending CEDA Pathways programming.

Families shared their appreciation for being included in the feedback of CEDA Pathways programming. Parents also reflected on the use of the Tree of Life, sharing that this would be a valuable method to use together as a family.

The evaluation sessions were initially planned to include a sacred fire with a teaching about the



CEDA Pathways Parents Tree of Life, May 2017

offering of tobacco and what can be done after the responsibility signified in the passing of tobacco is completed. Unfortunately we weren't able to incorporate this process because the fire pit

was no longer available at the site. In consideration of the use of ceremony and its importance to the Bundle, it would be beneficial to include a closing through ceremony.

Part 4: What was learned through this partnership?

The opportunity to design and implement an evaluation based on the Bundle has been a gift. There are important learnings that we have made based on this gift, and we hope that they will be useful to others who look to the Bundle as a guide for their own organizations.

As has been reflected upon throughout, ceremony is important and needs to be the starting point in all evaluations. The role of an Elder in evaluation processes must be prioritized in the use of the Bundle. Feedback from the parents was that the ceremony was appreciated and the opportunity to share was important. The attentiveness to this holistic sense of self and self in connection and relationship to the world cannot be underestimated.

The Tree of Life was an interesting process for reflection and feedback from the parents. It was creative and engaging but it also held some limitations. While it was adapted to elicit the journey of the Circle of Courage and the foundation of the programming at CEDA Pathways, this connection was not strong enough in the two versions that were used. Based on these observations, the team strongly believes that there would be a better fit in the use of the Bundle to design a directly correlated evaluation method based on the Circle of Courage.

Working with the parents based on the process of the Bundle created a safe space for them to express themselves. The relationship building that occurred was a strong outcome for the organization. In addition, the artwork that was created by parents carried important meaning and beauty. While these contributions were important for the evaluation, staff had hoped for more opportunity for parents to identify gaps, barriers, or challenges. This would have created a more fulsome picture that could be incorporated into the learning for the coming year. This is an important consideration in the choice of methods and must be considered for future designs.

Whenever possible, value must be placed on the contributions that participants make within evaluations. In this case, CEDA Pathways was able to ensure that the families received a honourarium of value based on the budget. This is congruent with the values and principles in the Bundle and also acknowledges that this is important due to economic challenges some families face.

Unfortunately, due to time and distance barriers, the full potential of completing the analysis based on Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing were not able to occur. As it stood, each of the circles held with the parents were tran-

scribed and were used to share their feedback with CEDA Pathways in their overall evaluation process. The contributions of the parents were strong and valuable, however in the future, the use of the Bundle could also incorporate analysis based on the values and principles described. This is an area that requires great development and the contribution of Indigenous grounded analysis would be important to consider in future designs.

For now, the process of designing and implementing based on the Bundle is one that CEDA Pathways has committed to in the long term, with a staff member being designated as responsible for carrying the Bundle within the organization. In the fall the experience of using the Bundle and the learning shared by parents will be included in a Community feast and shared at CEDA Pathways.

This was an important opportunity to sit with what has been gathered in the Bundle so far, to reflect on what it has to teach us about the process of evaluating, and to reflect deeply on growth, strength, success, and challenges. This is not an opportunity the team took lightly. Given the responsibility to write what we have learned, it feels like an overwhelming and blessed task. There is still so much to learn, and the opportunities to collaborate and design again based on the Bundle will continue to build the knowledge and skills necessary to carry this forward as the way of working on evaluations within organizations operating based on Indigenous knowledges and practices.

Carrying the learning forward

The Indigenous Learning Circle has brought together this Bundle with the vision that it is a living document that will continue to grow and share teachings and learning as they occur. The Bundle brings together guidelines, values, and methods that provide a foundation for planning, designing, and implementing an Indigenous Eval-

uation. We hope that as this is the case, examples can be shared in order to add to the value of this Bundle to be used as a guide in Indigenous evaluation. We believe that with capacity building and mentorship, this Bundle will be a valuable asset to organizations who would like to mark not only their journey, their learning, and their successes of the Indigenous centred work that they complete, but also the powerful stories of transformation that happen for Indigenous individuals, families, and communities as a result of walking alongside each other.

Evaluation must:

- Be relevant to the community
- Center on Indigenous knowledge paradigms
- Include participation of Indigenous peoples
- Produce outcomes and processes that are meaningful to the community
- Provide service to the community in a variety of negotiated ways (Kawakami et al., 2007).

Indigenous evaluation based on the Bundle is a critical opportunity for community members, organizations, funders, and post-secondary institutions to address the ongoing challenges of colonialism. *Who* is leading and doing the work and *how* the work gets defined and prioritized are important redresses in fulfilling the TRC Calls to Action and decolonizing practices that have upheld inequities and oppression in Canada.

A key part of the success of this work will be in the sharing of this knowledge with community members and leaders and in their driving of the importance of the Bundle. It will mean training and mentoring those who will become researchers and evaluators. It will also mean educating those who are funders and policy makers.

Finally, evaluation processes and outcomes that provide value to a community also help to build the capacity of those communities to conduct their own evaluations and to develop

relationships for future collaborative evaluation efforts. Focusing on the relevance of the evaluation creates space to allow the community to struggle with knowledge paradigms, their own priorities in evaluation and dissemination. This struggle is key to building capacities for evaluation among community members otherwise not trained in this area, and it also allows the community to speak back to the institutions and curricula that train “evaluators” (Johnston-Goodstar, 2012, p. 115).

This opportunity is not taken lightly and will be cared for with the original intent and spirit of this work. This means that great responsibility for the care of the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual elements of the Bundle will be maintained. The Bundle was gathered with great generosity and humility. It was gathered with a common vision for asserting the importance of Indigenous ways of knowing, being, feeling, and doing in the long-term wellbeing and success of Indigenous peoples, communities and organizations.

Community of belonging

There exists a strong community of belonging within the North End of Winnipeg. This example in the Bundle is one way to witness this community in action. The strong reciprocal networks have created the Bundle and shared these experiences. Without this strong network coming together and sustaining their learning relationships, this authentic experience would not have been possible.

Mentorship

The use of the Bundle requires a circle of support that extends beyond the evaluators and the staff. This circle of support includes program participants and families, Elders, community members, and schools in the case of CEDA Pathways. In

order to work in the way the Bundle entails it requires active participation, time for mentorship, and a circle of support that will ensure accountability to the values and principles of the Bundle continues. They can provide guidance and nurturing leadership that will be the foundation for future work based on the Bundle.

Co-learning in community

The process of using the Bundle together was important and the co-learning process is one that requires respect, humility, reciprocity, and trust. These were all present as we worked to create an example of how this Bundle could be used in an organization. CEDA Pathways was generous to open up their organization and resources to learn from their families. Each of us came to the room with experiences and knowledge that allowed the conversations to take place. The generosity of the families allowed for us to use the Bundle in a hands-on community context. The spirit of co-learning is held within the values and principles of this Bundle.

Inviting into the circle

How we begin is important. It is about building trusting and respectful relationships and honouring the mind, body, heart, and spirit in the work that we do through the Bundle. Inviting each other into a circle created a safe space for reflecting and learning between the team and families. Ceremony carries the work of the Bundle in a strong way. Using the circle ensures that there is a space that is safe and welcome to creating opportunities for growth. Taking care to continue the relationships that have been built will be the ongoing work of CEDA Pathways and the staff who have shared their experiences with the Bundle in a kind and respectful manner. For this we are thankful.

Appendix 1: The guide

Indigenous Evaluation Bundle Methods:
CEDA Pathways, May 2017

Central evaluation questions

How has CEDA impacted your family?

The interview guide for these sessions will be founded upon the Circle of Courage model⁸ that is used by the CEDA Pathways program in Winnipeg. The model will be used to focus the questions that will be used with the art creation method and the conversation circle.

The Circle of Courage is a program founded upon the belief that when the universal needs of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity are met, children and youth do well.

Structure of the session

1. Welcome/Opening (10 minutes)
 - a. A smudge will be offered and participants welcomed into the space with an overview of the session. Would be good to include a visual reminder of the overview on the wall.
2. Art Creation Methods (45 minutes)
3. Conversation Circle (50 minutes)
 - a. Ask participants to move into the circle with their creations.

4. Closing & Thank you (15 minutes)
 - a. Closing fire and offering tobacco to the fire. Teaching about offering and thank you for participating and sharing with CEDA.

Art Creation Methods (45 minutes)

1. *Tree of Life*

The Tree of Life is a tool that helps people by guiding them through a series of questions that promotes self-reflection. It allows people to take stock of where they have come from, where they are right now, and where they hope their future will take them. The aim of the tool is to help people identify their existing strengths and increase a sense of connectedness with family and community.

The exercise involves encouraging the individual to build a picture of their life through the representation of a tree. The facilitator will assist the participant to build their tree from the ground up, taking the time to reflect on each of the elements that make up their tree. Through the process participants can work to acknowledge the strength and experience that they have gained in their life journey. This can assist to:

- Improve self-knowledge
- Acknowledge skills and experience
- Develop inner resources and potential.

The Tree of Life is a method that is connected to Indigenous understandings of the *Sacred Tree*. The *Sacred Tree* is a symbol that represents many meanings about the creation of life, purpose, and how to live meaningfully through a balanced and connected journey. The values and beliefs that are presented through an exploration of the Sacred Tree speak to how to walk in a good way and live *mino pimatisiwin*, (the good life in Cree) or *mino bimaadiziwin* (in Anishinaabe).

The Story of the Sacred Tree

For all the people of the earth, the Creator has planted a Sacred Tree under which they may gather, and there find healing, power, wisdom and security. The roots of this tree are spread deep into the body of Mother Earth. Its branches reach upward like hands praying to Father Sky. The fruits of this tree are the good things the Creator has given to the people: teachings that show the path to love, compassion, generosity, patience, wisdom, justice, courage, respect, humility, and many other wonderful gifts.

The ancient ones taught us that the life of the Tree is the life of the people. If the people wander far away from the protective shadow of the Tree, if they forget to seek nourishment of its fruit, or if they should turn against the Tree and attempt to destroy it, great sorrow will fall upon the people. Many will become sick at heart. The people will lose their power. They will cease to dream dreams and see visions. They will begin to quarrel among themselves over worthless trifles. They will become unable to tell the truth and to deal with each other honestly. They will forget how to survive in their own land. Their lives will become filled with anger and gloom. Little by little they will poison themselves and all they touch.

It was foretold that these things would come to pass, but that the Tree would never die. And as long as the Tree lives, the people live. It was also foretold that the day would come when the people would awaken as if from a long, drugged sleep; that they would begin, timidly at first but then with great urgency, to search again for the *Sacred Tree*.

The knowledge of its whereabouts, and of the fruits that adorn its branches have always been carefully guarded and preserved within the minds and hearts of our wise elders and leaders. These humble, loving and dedicated souls will guide anyone who is honestly and sincerely seeking along the path leading to the protecting shadow of the *Sacred Tree*. (Bopp, Bopp, Brown & Lane, 1995, p.7)

Supplies: Large paper, canvas or poster board, at least 11x14 (one per person, plus extra); markers, pencil crayons, acrylic paints (this may not dry as fast), can also provide glue and buttons, sequins, stickers, magazines, construction paper; large example of the tree posted on the wall.

Process⁹

The Tree of Life will be used as a guide to assist parents in sharing the impact of the CEDA Pathways program in their families. The process begins from the ground up, and will produce a visual representation through which parents can share their stories.

I am going to guide you through creating your Tree of Life. We will create the ground, roots, the trunk, branches, leaves, and fruit. Make sure to leave room on your page to have space for all of these pieces. As you are creating your Tree of Life you can use symbols or words to represent your story and use the colours that are important for you. This tree is your experience!

Think about the journey of your child and family throughout this creation.

The Ground — Belonging (5 minutes)

As you think about the answers to the questions and you are drawing the different parts of the tree of life, you can write a word or draw a picture that responds to your answer or what you think about the questions we ask. You can write a name, a feeling, a few words, or draw a symbol.

We will begin your picture by laying out the ground. The ground brings stability, for your tree and in life overall. This is your foundation. It represents a sense of belonging.

A sense of belonging is a human need, just like the need for food and shelter. Feeling that you belong to a family, to a group, and to a community allow you to know you are not alone. Belonging can mean you treat others as your family.

Examples of a sense of belonging can include knowing who your family is and what community your family comes from, feeling like you belong at school, feeling safe at programs, feeling supported by the adults in your life, and having trusting relationships.

Think about your child's sense of belonging:

1. Who are the important people in your family's life now?
2. Does your child feel like they belong at the CEDA program here?
3. Do you feel your child is comfortable at the program? If so, why do you think your child is comfortable? Is there anything that would make them more comfortable?
4. Do you feel comfortable sending your child to program? If so, what makes you feel comfortable? Is there anything that would you feel more comfortable when they attend program?
5. Are the relationships that your child has with people at CEDA important to them? How would you describe their relationships here?
6. Do you think your child has important people who support them? Who are these people?

The Roots — Identity — who we are (5 minutes)

The roots of the tree signify who we are and where we come from. This is our identity, our family history that keeps us rooted. The roots are our past and our present.

Identity and how we know who we are is an important thing to think about. Our identity can include what community we belong to, our family members, and our job for example.

1. Where does your family come from?
Where do you feel at home?
2. Who are the important people in your life? Who are the important people in your child's life?
3. Are there places that are important to your child? What makes these places important?
4. Is there anyone that has had a big impact on you or your child's life?

The Trunk — Mastery (5 minutes)

The trunk is your strength: this is what you know and what you can do. You have gifts that make you strong and make your family strong. When you are building your mastery you are developing new skills, improving, and gathering new knowledge.

The trunk is your family's skills and knowledge. This is what your family can do and what makes your family strong. Each person works toward mastery for personal growth, but not to be better than someone else, this is to be the best at being you! Achieving mastery allows you to lead by example.

Examples of mastery in education can include achieving higher grades than before, having a high attendance, getting involved in school, increasing leadership ability, being involved in clubs, and helping friends with their work.

1. Has participating in program supported your child at school? What have you noticed? Are there successes that they have had at school?
2. Have you noticed a change in your child's school attendance? What does this look like?

3. How does your child feel about school? Is this different then before? Is your child passing all of their classes?
4. What are their strong classes? What are the more challenging ones?
5. Is your child getting through classes that might have held them back before?
6. Is your child better able to understand their work?
7. Do you work with your child on their school work?

The Branches — Independence (5 minutes)

The branches grow from the stability and strength of who you are, your gifts, and where you come from. The branches on your tree represent independence, an important part of growing up and achieving your goals.

From earliest childhood, children are encouraged to make decisions, solve problems, and show personal responsibility. Children are given opportunities to make choices. Achieving independence means you are able to take care of your own needs and to be responsible for the decisions you make while also considering the people around you, your family, and your community.

Examples of Independence can include things like confidence, self-esteem, relying on oneself, taking initiative, a positive outlook or attitude, and respect for oneself and others.

1. Do you feel your child is confident in themselves? Have you noticed a change in their confidence?
2. Is your child able to do more things independently? What types of things?
3. Have you noticed your child’s attitude at home with family has shifted? What does this look like now compared to before attending program?
4. At the program we try to be role models and encourage mutual respect. This means that we need to respect one another by listening

and considering other people’s feelings and experiences. Have you experienced your child as mutually respectful at home? What has this looked like?

5. Has your child had a chance to apply for work anywhere? Did they receive a job?

The Leaves — Future (5 minutes)

From the branches come the leaves. Each spring the leaves bud and grow, filling the tree with new possibilities and opportunities. The leaves are your future. This is what you hope and dream. The leaves are your wishes for your family.

1. What do you hope for your child?
2. What do you hope for your family?
3. What kinds of things have your child accomplished?
4. Do they have any goals or hopes for themselves?

The Fruit — Generosity (5 minutes)

The fruit that flowers and grows from the branches of your tree represent generosity. There is beauty when you are able to give to others and support their happiness and success.

This is the importance of being generous and unselfish. In the words of a Lakota Elder, “You should be able to give away your most cherished possession without your heart beating faster.” In helping others, this helps to create a sense of worth. When you give back to support another person, you make a positive impact on another life.

Examples of generosity can include taking the time to check on someone who is having a challenging time, making sure to include people who may be left out, getting involved in activities, volunteering to help with events or in the community, and being role models for younger children.

1. Has your child had a chance to volunteer at CEDA or at community events? What kind?
2. Do you see your child acting as a role model to younger children? What have you noticed?

3. Does your child help other kids out with homework or if they seem like they could use a friend? Do you notice your child helping kids their age?
4. Does your child come to the different events at CEDA like the Christmas feast, student gathering, and summer school? If yes, have they been positive experienced? If not, what could help them to feel like they want to attend?

The Environment (5 minutes)

The final area of the Tree of Life is the environment and air all around the tree.

1. Do you feel your family has benefitted from your child coming to program? In what ways?
2. How has the program supported your family?
3. What else could the program do to support your family?
4. Is the program supporting the goals that your child has?

5. Is the program supporting your goals as a family?

Take some time to reflect on what you have created. Add anything you feel is important. When you are done, please join us in the circle with your creation.

Conversation Circle (50 minutes)

Ask participants to move into the circle with their creations. This circle will guide participants through a series of questions related to their creation and their child's participation in the CEDA Pathways program.

Ask if the participants feel comfortable with us taking pictures of their creation.

Discuss the audio recording and how we will use it.

Closing & Thank you (10–15 minutes)

- Closing fire.
- Teaching about offering tobacco to the fire.
- Thank you for participating and sharing with CEDA.

Appendix 2: Parental feedback

Impact of CEDA Pathways: Parent Feedback¹⁰
Parent feedback was included in the 2016–2017 CEDA Pathways to Education Evaluation based on the implementation of the Bundle. The following section provides an excerpt directly from this report, sharing parent feedback based on the quadrants of the Circle of Courage:

Belonging

Parent feedback echoed student feedback about the staff relationships and the overall atmosphere at CEDA Pathways. Above all, parents know that the staff care about their children. They indicated that the program is a place where their children are comfortable and supported emotionally; as one parent said, “CEDA makes my children feel safe.” Staff members were mentioned by name as parents expressed their gratitude for the connections with the program. A few parents hugged the Program Director, showing how the sense of Belonging extends beyond the student to the family.

Mastery

The main theme in feedback from parents focused on building Mastery in education outcomes and the ways in which CEDA Pathways supports

this. One mom highlighted her son’s academic achievements on the trunk of her Tree of Life: “Math 90%” and “Science 90%.” One dad simply put his children’s names on the trunk of the tree, signifying his pride in all they have accomplished with the support of the program. During the circle, he shared, in reference to his son’s grades, “Like I didn’t even get a 40, so hey, if you get a 60, hell it is BINGO night on me! So I was happy he got 90, like that was amazing.” Parents talked about the support their children have received with difficult classes; math was highlighted a few times. One parent said, “This program is actually getting him to graduate.” Another parent talked about the difficulties in moving to Winnipeg recently and enduring loss in the family. In reference to her daughter’s journey in school she said, “I thank CEDA for being there for her because her grades have really changed since last year.” On their Tree of Life posters, parents included words such as “graduation” and images such as awards; they also highlighted attainment of social skills (friendships), physical skills (sports), and artistic skills (music and art).

In addition to academic achievements, parents highlighted social and emotional changes in their children. Words such as “confidence”

and “self-esteem” were included on the trunks of the Tree of Life drawings. One parent talked about the changes he saw in his daughter through the program, “Peer Helper program...motivated her and then built up her confidence in order to grow and stabilize her more in her education and more in her home.” As well, two parents indicated that their children have been positive role models to younger siblings in the family. Overall, parent feedback indicated that CEDA Pathways is supporting their children in attaining Mastery across many domains: mental, physical, social and emotional.

Independence

Another prominent theme in the feedback from parents was their children’s current part-time jobs and their future post-secondary education goals and career goals, demonstrating Independence. On their Tree of Life posters, parents listed their children’s current jobs and their academic and career aspirations in the branches of the tree. Parents expressed great pride in what their children have accomplished thus far and what they aspire to do after graduation from high school. It was evident that part of their pride stems from their children making their own decisions and charting their own paths. As one mom shared, “So my daughter from the Peer Helpers, she would like to go to university and become an artist, yeah, she knows where she wants to go. I did not even need to guide her.” Other parents expressed similar sentiments about their children making their own choices. In addition, one mom talked about her son taking the bus by himself and always being on time, characteristics that demonstrate responsibility.

Several parents acknowledged the supports from the program that allow their children to be Independent. In particular, parents expressed gratitude for the nutrition, the incentives for transportation, and other financial support. It was evident that these supports have had a huge impact not just on the student, but on the fam-

ily, as well. One single father of two students was very expressive about how the food at program has helped to substantially reduce his grocery bill. Under the original Pathways to Education model, incentives, bursaries and food would fall under the pillar of financial support. The Circle of Courage model allows our analysis of these supports to go deeper. Having food and transportation needs met means that students are given opportunities to have choice, to be responsible, and to attend school and program. In other words, students are empowered to display Independence. As well, it is clear that the financial supports contribute to the feeling of Belonging generated by CEDA Pathways. These supports make students and parents alike feel valued and connected to the organization.

Generosity

A similarity was noted between feedback received from parents during the evaluation and discussion topics from the 2016 Student Gathering. During the 2016 Student Gathering, one of the questions during a circle was, “What are leadership qualities you admire in other people?” The most common attributes mentioned by students were related to kindness, empathy, and being a good listener. The students also linked kindness and humility with generosity.

During the evaluation, when parents discussed the accomplishments and future goals of their children, they did not use words that are conventionally associated with success: having wealth, power, or material possessions. Instead, listed with their children’s education and career aspirations; parents included words and phrases emphasizing kindness and humility. These words relate to Generosity and are congruent with student definition of admirable leadership qualities. At the top of the Tree of Life posters, parents included the following words and phrases:

- Helping younger children with schoolwork
- Volunteers in community events

- Participates in community events
- Helpful
- Kind
- Respectful

- Humble

During one circle, a parent indicated that they encourage their children to be humble. It is evident that students and parents alike associate humility with generosity.

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Endnotes

- ¹A *peoplehood model* provides a useful way of thinking about the nature of everyday resurgence practices both personally and collectively. If one thinks of peoplehood as the interlocking features of language, homeland, ceremonial cycles, and sacred living histories, a disruption to any one of these practices threatens all aspects of everyday life. The complex spiritual, political and social relationships that hold peoplehood together are continuously renewed. These daily acts of renewal, whether through prayer, speaking your language, honoring your ancestors, etc., are the foundations of resurgence. It is through this renewal process that commitments are made to reclaim and restore cultural practices that have been neglected and/or disrupted (Corntassel, 2012, p. 89).
- ²Colonialism is the evolving processes where we, as peoples of this land, face impositions — from genocide, to assimilation, to marginalization — of views, ideas, beliefs, values, practices, lands and/or resources. It is when we as peoples of this land, are stopped, hindered, cajoled, and/or manipulated from making and enacting decisions about our lives, individually and as a group because of being a person of the peoples of this land. These decisions include how we are going to be who we are, and how, if at all, we are going to incorporate the ideas, beliefs, values, and practices of other peoples (Hart, 2008; as cited in Hart & Rowe, 2014, p. 35)
- ³The First Peoples of the geographic area of North America often refer to this as Turtle Island, which is consistent with stories that tell of the creation of this land.
- ⁴There has been considerable work done in the North End with partnerships between community-based organizations, CLOUT, ILC, CCPA, and MRA. These have documented existing challenges, gaps in policy, and barriers based on funding expectations. Publications are available that document these experiences and the work that continues to be led in Winnipeg largely by Indigenous women and allies. See for example: MacKinnon, Klyne, & Nowatzki (forthcoming); MacKinnon, Hill & Roussin (forthcoming); MacKinnon & Stephens (2008); and, MacKinnon (2012).
- ⁵Founding CLOUT member organizations included the Andrews Street Family Centre, CEDA, the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, the Native Women's Centre, Ndiniwemaaganag Endaawad, the North End Women's Resource Centre, Rossbrook House, Wabung Abinoojiiag, and Wolseley Family Place

For more information on this work see the video produced about CLOUT: <https://youtu.be/rSmn7X2-Glw>; and *Is Participation Having an Impact* which is one of several examples of the dedicated work that community and leaders have been engaging in in the North End of Winnipeg, MB. http://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/Manitoba_Pubs/2008/Is_Participation_Having_an_Impact.pdf
- ⁶The Neechi Principles were initially developed by Neechi Food Cooperative in Winnipeg to guide community economic development work. They are broadly used in Winnipeg and are the basis from which the Manitoba Government CED Principles and Policy Lens were developed. (See MacKinnon, 2006)
- ⁷<https://www.starr.org/training/youth/aboutcircleofcourage>
Brendtro, L.K., Brokenleg, M., & Van Bockern, S. (1990). *Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future*. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.
Brendtro, L.K., Brokenleg, M., & Van Bockern, S. (2005). The Circle of Courage and Positive Psychology. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*; 14 (3) 130–6.
- ⁸<https://www.starr.org/training/youth/aboutcircleofcourage>
Brendtro, L.K., Brokenleg, M., & Van Bockern, S. (1990). *Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future*. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.
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- ⁹Adapted by Jill Olver from Ncube-Mlilo, 2006.
- ¹⁰This section is a direct excerpt from *CEDA Pathways to Education Evaluation: 2016–2017*.



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