1. CDC evaluators work in communities with both strengths and challenges
2. CDC evaluators are motivated to be part of the change necessary to improve the health of the community members
3. CDC evaluators have a role to play in informing decisions throughout the life cycle of an intervention
4. Beginning evaluations from a human rights stance and using mixed methods increases the probability that evaluations can contribute to the desired changes
How can we get people to change behaviors that are self-destructive and that have negative implications for society as a whole?

Examples: smoking, alcohol consumption, obesity, reduction of HIV/AIDS infections

How do we know if the interventions are viewed as credible and valuable by the targeted population and effective in terms of behavior change?

Theories to explain why these problems persist: poor self-concept, they just don’t care, stigma attached, they are immoral...

Perennial Questions

*BMC Health Serv Res. 2011; 11: 196.
Published online 2011 August 18. doi: 10.1186/1472-6963-11-196
* Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death, disability and disease in the US (CDC 2013)
* One in 8 adult women binge drink; 1 in 5 HS girls binge drink (CDC 2013)
* Obesity rates for children in the US have tripled since 1980; over 1/3 of adults are obese. (http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/2012)
* Rate of HIV/AIDS infection in the US is not dropping (Harvard School of Public Health Professor Richard Marlink, Int'l AIDS conference, Washington DC, July 2012)

What ever we are doing is not working well enough

Before we talk about evaluation questions and methods
We have to take a step back
And ask
What are the assumptions that we are making about:

• Axiology - ethics
• Ontology - reality
• Epistemology - knowledge
• Methodology - systematic inquiry

Philosophy guides methods decisions

Guba & Lincoln, 2000
Axiology
- Cultural respect; promote social justice & human rights; address inequities

Ontology
- Multi-faceted; consequences of privilege
- Interactive; trust; respectful

Epistemology

Methodology
- Transformative mixed methods

Transformative Paradigm

Transformative Axiological Assumption

- Improve social justice and human rights
- Respect cultural groups
- Challenge discrimination & oppression
- Relationships based on trust
- Recognize strengths & resiliency
- Address power inequities
- Provide reciprocity, sustainability, & honesty
Who are the major stakeholder groups?
How could you use mixed methods to:
identify the cultural norms and beliefs that might be operating in the community?
appropriately engage members of the community?
make determination about those cultural norms and beliefs that might further social justice or those that might sustain an oppressive status quo?
How could you build in ways to demonstrate that you are leaving the community better off than when they began the research - in terms of increased knowledge, capacity, or changes in policies or practices?
How would you take into account the expertise, knowledge, and strengths of the community in order to provide a platform for authentic engagement between the researcher and the community?

* Is there one reality that we know imperfectly?
* Are there many socially constructed versions of reality?
* Are there many versions of reality
  * That require us to delve deeply into understanding factors that lead us to accept one version of reality over another
  * That have consequences in terms of who is hurt if we accept multiple versions of reality or if we accept the “wrong/privileged” version?
* Civil rights era: Whites are superior to Blacks OR we are all equal?
* Oral communication based on lip reading and residual hearing and speech OR visual communication using signed languages that are visible?
* Poor people don’t come for prenatal care because they only have babies to get welfare checks or they face discrimination?

**Ontology:** Whose Version of Reality is Privileged? With what consequence?

How could you use mixed methods to:
* Identify, support and include diverse participants, so that you can
* Reveal different versions of reality, including their basis in terms of privilege and power?
* Contribute to the change in understandings of what is real?

**Transformative Ontology:** Methodological Implications
Transformative Epistemological Assumption

* Epistemology: Assumption about the nature of knowledge and how to relate to that which you want to know

* In addition to asking, what is the nature of knowing and how does the knower relate to that which would be known? We also ask:

If I am to **genuinely** know the reality of something, how do I need to relate to the people from whom I am collecting data?

Philosophical Assumptions: Epistemology

* Epistemology: What should your relationship be as an evaluator to the people in your study? How should you interact with the people in your study?

* Should you be distant and removed so you prevent bias?

* Or, should you be close and involved so you prevent bias? Smile

* What makes it better so you can determine what is real?
Transformative MM Methodology

* Ask provocative questions
* Advocate for cyclical designs that are culturally responsive
* Be engaged from the beginning
* Provide contextual analysis before the intervention is developed
* Ask provocative questions
* Insure engagement with diverse participants is accomplished throughout the process in culturally appropriate ways

Transformative Indigenous Mixed Methods Design

Stage 1 Qual
Assembly team; read documents; engage in dialogues; identify contextual factors

Stage 2 MM
Preliminary studies: youth, gender, disability, tribe
Demographic information; Surveys; Incidence data

Stage 3 MM
Pilot intervention: Observations, Interviews, Surveys
Pretest: Knowledge, Attitude, Behavior;

Stage 4 MM
Process
Post tests: Quant Qual; Behavior & Policy Change; Transfer To other contexts
**Transformative Elements**

* Cultural understandings elicited in culturally appropriate ways
* Understanding the dynamics of oppression based on economic, gender, and age
* Provision of data for development of relevant intervention
* Continuous improvement
* Culturally relevant data collection
* Use of information for personal and social change

**Solutions**

* Power in the hands of members of marginalized communities
* Formation of teams of evaluators that represent diversity
* Capacity building of evaluation teams by community members re: cultural issues
* Capacity building of community members re: evaluation strategies
* Use of transformative cyclical designs that allow for use of information throughout the evaluation
Community Involvement

* Appropriate invitations
* Appropriate venues
* Appropriate supports
* Appropriate representation
* Appropriate protections
* Appropriate plans for use of data and social action

References

* [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

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