

Background

I am inviting current or previous Indigenous graduate students in counselling psychology programs to share their experiences to co-create a collective dream for educational programs, to explore ways in which higher education can be more inclusive and culturally safe for Indigenous students.

It is the hope that shifting post-secondary programs to utilize Indigenous pedagogy, paradigms, and praxis will increase Indigenous student enrolment rate in counselling psychology, thus increasing mental health and wellness care and accessibility for Indigenous peoples.

Research Hopes

Ceremony

This research aims to articulate the significance of ceremony within Indigenous mental health and wellness research and practice.

Institutional Decolonization

This research aims to embody and describe Indigenous research methodology utilized to promote institutional decolonization.

Mental Wellness

This research aims to describe central aspects of Indigenous mental wellness including wholism, balance, and harmony.

Reciprocity

The proposed methodology will highlight the importance of reciprocity between researcher-participant, student-teacher, and client-practitioner.

Traditional Healing

This research hopes to highlight the significance of traditional healing within research processes, professional programs for helpers, and personally for many Indigenous peoples.

Acknowledgements

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Dreaming Indigenous Graduate Student Experience into Existence: Laying Medicine on the Path for Culturally Safe Counselling Psychology Programs

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Research Question

What is your dream of your graduate school experience? How does your dream compare with your reality?



Proposed Methodology

Indigenous Research Paradigm

• **Indigenous Worldviews & Relationality**

- Indigenous worldviews encompass collective ownership, wholism, subjectivity, all things as living beings, equality, reciprocity, land as sacred, spirituality, relationality, and humility. Relationality extends to relationship to land, spirit, people, self, and relationship with the living and non-living natural world.

Latikalatuhe' (Storytelling) Methods

Storytelling is the process of transmitting teachings and experiences, often from generation to generation, where fluidity of the story occurs through subjectivity of the storyteller.

• **Initial and Closing Circles**

- Collaboration with *katyóhkwa* (people) on methods we engage in will be invited through a virtual initial circle.
- I will further invite the *katyóhkwa* (people) to sit with myself and an Indigenous artist in one or more closing circles upon completion of one-on-one storytelling gatherings, to see, hear, and provide feedback on the collective dream we shaped together.

• **One-on-One Storytelling Visits**

- One-on-one storytelling gatherings with *katyóhkwa* (people) will take place via Zoom to gather a meaningful and in-depth story of our experiences and collective dream for the future.

• **The Collective Dream**

- We will bring our unconscious thoughts, ideas, and feelings to the collective to co-create a dream of what the future of educational experiences, programs, and systems can look like for Indigenous graduate students in counselling psychology.

• **Ceremony**

- Many Indigenous peoples view talking circles as a ceremony, integral to our wellness. Some *katyóhkwa* (people) involved in this work may experience the initial and closing circles as ceremony, and talking circle protocol will be followed in the initial & closing circles, with invitations for ceremonial engagement (e.g., collective virtual smudging, use of “helpers” like a feather, stone, wood, etc.).

Meaning Making

Oskanhe' yukniyo:té: nen teyakyatátsnye

Together the two of us work we take care of each other.

I am using this phrase to encapsulate the Western concept of “co-researchers.” The collaborative meaning making in this work extends beyond the one-dimensional feeling I experience with my understanding of the term co-researcher. Instead, everyone who will meaningfully collaborate in this research process will work together to care for one another; for our ancestors of the previous seven generations to collectively heal, and for the next seven generations to come.

Ethical Considerations

Cyclical Reflection

Continuous reflection on the purpose as to why I am doing this work – to be an active member within the Indigenous community and to fulfill my role to improve the lives of the next seven generations.

Process over Results

Flicker et al. (2016) state, “Within an Indigenous research paradigm, the intentions and process of data collection become as important as the knowledge acquired” (p. 1149).

Self-Location

Transparency about who I am, where I come from, and why this work is important to me as a process to build trust with the research *katyóhkwa* (people) that are directly involved in this work, and with broader academic and Indigenous peoples, communities, and Nations that this work may apply to.

Reciprocity

Research with Indigenous communities should promote beneficence through work *with us*, opposed to *on us*, so I must understand and encourage Indigenous voices and community members to be centre-stage in work about our own communities.

Territory Acknowledgement

I would like to respectfully acknowledge this work is taking place on the traditional territories of the Songhees, Esquimalt, and *WSÁNEĆ* peoples.