



CC BY-NC-ND: This license allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.



**Indigenous Insights: An Evaluation Podcast
Season 1 Episode 20: Karen Alexander**

<https://gladysrowe.com/s01e20-Indigenous-insights-dr-karen-alexander/>

August 21, 2023

Gladys Rowe ([00:04](#)):

Tansi. Greetings, welcome to Indigenous Insights. I'm your host Gladys Rowe, and I'm so grateful you are here. Each episode I sit in conversation with Indigenous evaluation practitioners, leaders, researchers, and scholars who are working in, thinking about, and supporting Indigenous evaluation, to share the learning they've experienced along the way. My hope is that these episodes allow you to reflect on how to design, implement, learn from, and support evaluation by with and for Indigenous families, communities, organizations, and nations. Join me and my guests as we open up our evaluation bundles to share what we've gathered in our journeys and bring them together into this space. I hope in these stories you will come to understand how we can collectively contribute to decolonial futures and strengthen Indigenous resurgence.

Dr. Karen Alexander is Ojibwe from the Sioux Saint Marie tribe of Chippewa Indians. She's the proud mother of four and grandmother of five. Karen's culture as an Indigenous person is most important to her, and she passes down her knowledge about how to live life in a good way to her children and grandchildren. She has always striven to help other Indigenous people to heal and has been an addictions counselor and a clinical social worker, as well as an evaluator and a researcher. Karen is most interested in making sure that Native people have programs, services, and evaluation that is appropriate to their culture. Karen's dissertation examines the values that make us who we are as Indigenous People and the benefit of the inclusion of those values in evaluation. Most of all, Karen hopes that her research will help others to know who we are on a deeper level. Welcome, Dr. Karen Alexander. I'm so excited, first of all, to say Dr. Alexander! I know that's a recent accomplishment, and I'd love to invite you to welcome yourself and introduce yourself into this space in any other way that feels important for you before we begin our chat.

Karen Alexander ([02:11](#)):

Okay, thank you. It's nice to meet you too. Waabishkaa Mukwa Kwe ndizhnikaaaz, mukwa ndoodem, Baaweting ndoonjbaa, Ojibwe ndaa. Aapji gchi-nendam, maapii yaa'aah. And what I



CC BY-NC-ND: This license allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.

said was, my spirit name is White Bear Woman. And what I said was, my spirit name is White Bear Woman. I am Bear Clan. I am from The Place of the Rapids (Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan). I am from the Ojibwe Nation of the Original People. I am very happy to be here.

Gladys ([02:40](#)):

Wonderful, thank you so much. So I'd like to start off by asking people who come and sit with me in conversation a little bit about how you came to be working in this area of Indigenous evaluation. So I'd love if you could share a little bit about your story about how you got here.

Karen ([02:57](#)):

It's kind of a long story. Well, not a long story, but a long time in the making, I guess. About 20 years ago I started out as a prevention worker for my tribe. And one thing that I had to do was I had to write the grant for the prevention program. I think it was life skills program back then. And I also had to implement and facilitate the program. So all of it, everything about it I had to do. So I had to go in the schools and present this program, and the program, it was an evidence-based program and it was considered universal, which means that it was meant to be used with anyone, this program was. So I went into schools and I did prevention and I had to do evaluation. That was my first time doing any kind of evaluation, and I had to do evaluation with these Native kids.

'Cause the program was with the Native population, so it was the Native kids in the local schools. And it just felt really inadequate because the program itself, for instance, it was about not smoking, not drinking, you know, substance abuse prevention. And to make it more culturally appropriate, I would have to add something in; like when we talked about tobacco, then I could add in about the sacredness of tobacco, how we use it for prayer. So I was altering the program every step of the way. I was altering it to make it fit with our people. And then when it came to the evaluation, it was just a pre and post survey, but there were certain guidelines that I had to follow: I wasn't supposed to read it out loud, I wasn't supposed to explain anything, and it just wasn't working for me.

So I tried it their way, the way whoever wrote it said, but then I ended up reading it because the reading level – at least, I had like third graders and you know, they didn't, it wasn't working to just hand them a survey. So I found myself altering the program, altering the evaluation to make it fit the Native population I was working with. So that was my first foray into evaluation. So it was always kind of in the back of my mind. I didn't go to school, I didn't start my doctorate program for at least another 10 years after that, but it was always in the back of my mind that programs and evaluation, they have to be made to fit Native people better. So that's how I got started in it.

Gladys ([05:46](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. I love the observations that you shared, that it didn't feel appropriate to take this thing that you talked about being created, it could be delivered with everyone, but you recognized right away that there were things that needed to change in order to make it more relevant to the youth that you were working with and that you were targeting within the intervention. Is that something that really influenced then how you went forward and started to



CC BY-NC-ND: This license allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.

work in the area of program design and evaluation? And how did you carry that learning forward into your work as an evaluator and researcher and community worker, based on that learning?

Karen ([06:32](#)):

Mainly, I've always worked for my tribe or a couple of other tribes and I also worked for Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan and I was evaluation manager there for a few years, a few years ago. So always when working with Native people, because that's primarily who I worked with, I realized that evaluation has to fit the way that we are in some ways, you know, when I talk about my research in a minute, you'll see that certain things work better for us, like instead of doing a focus group, a Talking Circle. A Talking Circle is more – it's similar, but it's more in line with our culture and the way that we operate. In little ways, evaluation and programs have to be changed to suit the way that we are. Our worldview is different than the mainstream, and that's something that is in my dissertation. People can read more about that. But just looking at how we are as people, how we're different in how the programs and the evaluation can be changed to suit our needs better.

Gladys ([07:56](#)):

Absolutely. And I think that that's probably a really good segue into talking more about your dissertation that really explores what's important within Indigenous evaluation. So can you tell me a little bit about kind of how you came to that dissertation work? What was the focus and what were some of the things, questions that you put forward as you started that dissertation journey?

Karen ([08:20](#)):

My dissertation, or my whole program for my doctorate, started in 2011 and I just finished <laugh> in April. So you know with raising kids and grandkids and working, everything, it was kind of a long process. So I went to Western Michigan University and it was in the back of my mind, you know, what am I going to do my dissertation on? So, you know, I thought about that for a while and after a while I thought really, What is it about us? What is it about Native people that is unique to who we are? And the more that I thought about that, I kept thinking about values. Our values are distinct to who we are, and mainstream values are not the same as the values. And we have some of those values too, but certain values are distinct to Native people and values are at the core of who we are as people. So that was what, so I got really interested in values research and that's what I studied. So the main thing that I wanted to find out was, What are the values of a certain Indigenous group? And my tribe – was the tribe a focus? Because I am, it's my tribe and I have an in, so what values are of most importance to my tribe? And if these values were included in evaluation, you know, would that increase utilization of evaluation? So those were the main things that I looked at.

Gladys ([10:12](#)):

Amazing. Can you tell me a little bit about, and well, first of all, I want to say congratulations, because I know, from my own perspective, it took me much longer than my PhD program. I was at the end, I was at the maximum point of time, and raising kids and doing community work and doing all of the things that you're responsible for, it's a really big lift and accomplishment to be



CC BY-NC-ND: This license allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.

able to finish your PhD in that context. So first of all, congratulations. And second, the question I guess that comes to mind for me around the idea of values. Your question makes sense and it's so important to think about: What is the worldview that is informing the evaluation? Because those values are, I think, beacons for every decision that's made in the design of evaluation after. But sometimes they're not so apparent, sometimes they're implicit and kind of hidden and aren't really talked about. And so making explicit those values that ground and are important to Indigenous evaluation is super important. And then the other question that you had there around, Does this make evaluation used more? Does it impact the utilization of evaluation? So I'm wondering if you can share a little bit about what some of those values are that came forward in your dissertation work.

Karen ([11:37](#)):

Yeah, first of all though, I wanted to make it culturally appropriate; you know, that's a term we use: cultural appropriateness. But I wanted the way that I did the research to fit with the ways of my people. So I used Talking Circles with a focus on storytelling. So that worked out really well, and I did interviews too, for people who were more comfortable with that. So that's the way that we did it. And a question that I had in the back of my mind throughout this is that growing up and in the community you hear about the Seven Grandfather Teachings, and a lot of times you'll see it posted in different buildings, the seven grandfather teachings, with the list of them. But I really wanted to know, 'cause they're important to me, they've always been important to me – but I really in the back of my mind wanted to know if these really are important to people, like modern day people now, are they?

So that was always in the back of my mind. And so when I did the Talking Circles and the interviews, I was surprised to find out that they were; the seven grandfathers, and I'll list them for you, but they were; it was surprising to me because like you said, sometimes it's implicit, people are not walking around talking about these values. But what I found out in my research was that these values are more displayed through action. Like love, love was at the top of the list, but it's displayed through helping, you know, it's helping other people that's big. That's real big with the people in my tribe. If somebody needs help, you know, and if word gets out and word does get out a lot quicker and more widespread now because of Facebook. But everybody is wanting to help everybody out. So love displayed in different ways, helping Elders, you know, cooking for people, different ways that we show love and it's through action. So I'll read the seven grandfathers: they are – and they're not rated in any order, although I did in my dissertation, I quantified which ones were more prevalent, and love was of course at the top of the list – but here's the list of the seven grandfathers: respect, love, honesty, humility, bravery, truth and wisdom. So I was really happy to find out that these are important to tribal members, you know, in my community.

Gladys ([14:24](#)):

Beautiful. Yeah, we don't really go like <laugh> go around talking about, Okay, this is what I'm gonna do now and this is why, is because love is important to me. But, also at the same time, like of course those values drive the choices that we make and the actions that we do in our lives. So those values – and I love that you also shared that how you gathered the information and in order



CC BY-NC-ND: This license allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.

to answer the question for your dissertation, how you designed that was also important and really making sure that you incorporated methods, Talking Circles, that were congruent with the values of your tribe. Can you talk a little bit about the second question that you asked in your dissertation? So in those values, if those values are included in an evaluation, would this increase utilization? What did you learn about that?

Karen ([15:22](#)):

Okay, so if I could go back, I would ask it in a different way. Because the way that I asked the question was, you know, I used the word *utilization* and you know, Would utilization be increased if values are included in evaluations? Well, my sample was really small and a couple of people who were more familiar with evaluation and utilization could answer that in a different way than people who were not, you know; some Elders who are not really well-versed in evaluation, you know, had different ideas. So I – it was a whole range of different ways that people answered it, but kind of, you know, tried to boil it down to really, What were they saying and what were they getting out of this? The main thing, you know, a couple of people were saying, Yes, of course it would be, and especially if part of the goals of a program were related to the value.

Like, for instance, one of the tribal leaders was saying that like in some of our health programs, if it's written into the program, we're going to respect our bodies through following this program, well, respect is built right in there. So of course we're going to somehow measure, you know, how people are taking care of themselves and that would reflect that they're respecting themselves. So I had a couple of people, you know, along the lines of saying, Of course it's important. The majority of the people though were so excited and happy that I was doing research on values, on their values. Because like even this one Elder was saying, Now people are going to know who we are. So for me, talking about that, I get kind of choked up because really, you know, one of the biggest findings of the whole of my research, I'll tell you all along the way, and even today before this interview, I prayed; I pray before I do any of this because it's so important.

And throughout my research I prayed; I put my tobacco down and I did those things so that I could get guidance for this. So I think underlying all of this – you know, it's all good, it's all good for evaluation and everything, but underneath of that, even deeper – is that people will know more about who we are. Because I think there's been so much isolation between different groups, different cultures, and we self-isolate. That's the thing, we self-isolate. And then also our reservations are far away from other people. Some people may not even know that we actually exist. So having us come together – the greater society and subcultures, different cultures – having us just talking and getting to know who the other is, I think that really I think was the purpose of my research.

Gladys ([18:38](#)):

What a beautiful story and thank you for sharing that. And did it kind of get to – one of the things that I think about is why this work that we do in evaluation and in research that's driven by the values and the worldviews of our Indigenous communities that we belong to, why it's so important. And thinking about what I hear in some of what you just shared, the gift that you



CC BY-NC-ND: This license allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.

offered into this space, because we all show up and offer ourselves in our communities in different ways because we all show up with our different gifts, right? One of the things I hear that you brought forward is that visibility and making space for stories that maybe are invisible, stories that haven't been told, stories that have been excluded about who Indigenous Peoples are more broadly in order to think about what kinds of new relationships we might be able to have if we had the opportunity to really get to know one another.

Karen ([19:42](#)):

Oh, and I just got word a few weeks ago that my dissertation is published, so people can look into that more. And it was so interesting to me to sit with people and to find out more about their values. And while I was doing that, there was a lot of storytelling and there was a lot of people talking about, you know, some other thing. A lot of other things came up with this, you know, it wasn't just, What are your values? But it was, people were telling stories about how they learned their values. They got teachings from grandparents, from parents, from other people, and also by watching what other people were doing, observing, and they learned their values that way. But there was a whole lot that they shared about that. And also sharing some of the traditional stories that they heard that taught them the values and what those stories were like, and how there were different meanings in different stories.

And as you hear a story, you also have your own perspective and your own interpretation of the story. So one story can give me certain teachings and it can give you other teachings. So it was just kind of multi-layered. And I got a lot of teachings myself from listening to what other people were saying. And that leads me to interconnectedness. You know, when working with Native people, the values that's at the core of who we are and also other concepts like interconnectedness or, as Sean Wilson says, relationality, that's another thing that's basic to who we are as Indigenous People. So things like that have to be included when you're working with Native people. Values, interconnectedness, and also spirituality. And spirituality is, it's about, that's all interconnected too. You know, like praying before each Talking Circle or before each interview, praying and passing an eagle feather around. That's all part of who we are and it's all interconnected. So I think working with Native people, there's a lot of different approaches that we can use, but I think we really need to take the time to know who the people are that we're going to be working with.

Gladys ([22:17](#)):

Thank you. So many amazing insights there, and I love the points you made also about the stories that came through as you sought to answer the questions for your dissertation. There were so many that offered you individually – that's the beautiful power I think of story in different Indigenous cultures, is that we gather what we need when we need it because we're different people at different points in time. And so, you know, in my dissertation work, I also sat and gathered stories from Indigenous birth keepers who shared with me their experiences of supporting people in their own communities. And what I gathered when I sat in those conversations almost three years ago, and then what I gather now as I listen again or read again the stories is different because I'm different at those different points in time, right?

Karen ([23:09](#)):



CC BY-NC-ND: This license allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.

Right, exactly. Right. And that's part of the interconnectedness. Yeah, the meanings, there's more meanings in mine. Every time I would go back to revise and to look at it, I would see something new. It's all interconnected; and when we are writing up the report or we're trying to make meaning with everything that we've gathered, we have to see the whole picture and how everything is connected. And one thing that I did is that I would, every once in a while, I'd check back with people, Well, is this what you meant by this? Did I represent that the way that you meant it to be? So that's really important, because as a researcher or an evaluator, I might be thinking that it's this way and then when I talk to them I might have missed something that was really important. So yeah, it's, there's a lot more to it I think than just on the surface what it might look like. I think we have to look a lot more deeper for meanings.

Gladys ([24:14](#)):

Great. I feel like in my head, I'm like, Yes, yes, yes! to everything that you're sharing about how to do this work in a way that is so deeply meaningful and so deeply connected to those values that you are talking about. And one of the things that I wanted to go back to was you had shared a little nugget about how you prepare, how you yourself prepare to show up and to do this work. And you shared a little bit, like you pray and you ask for guidance. But I'm wondering if there's anything, if you'd like to expand on that and if there's anything else that you've learned along the way about like how you prepare yourself as an Indigenous evaluator and researcher to do this work and to do it in a good way.

Karen ([25:03](#)):

Yeah, that's a good question. I did Talking Circles, but I also talked with Elders in my community. Like I had an in because they know me. And the first thing that I did was I made an appointment to talk with our tribal council; we don't have a tribal I[nstitutional] R[eview] B[oard]. That's very important I think for people to have permission first. So I met with the tribal council, I made an appointment with them and I went to see them and I brought them tobacco. I brought my eagle feather with me and I talked with them and I explained, you know, what my research was and I invited them if wanted to participate. And I explained it. And I also let them know that I would be publishing my dissertation and I may do some articles or something with this. So I got their blessing, I got their permission, and they were excited and happy about it and they were fine.

So I think that to do something in a good way like that, even if there is no tribal IRB, I could've just went in there and did the research without talking to the council. But to me that was the respectful way to do it. So that was the first thing that I did. And then also to find a couple Elders. I had a couple Elders that were providing guidance and also a couple of the Traditional Healers helped me and guided me on certain things and like even with my Talking Circle protocol to check with some of them, Does this look okay to you? And they looked at it, yeah, you know, and it was good. And also as a Native person – not just as a Native person – but I've also fasted and I try to follow these ways, my traditional ways.

And I have, through following the ways, I have permission to do a Talking Circle. Now, I suppose anybody could do a Talking Circle, but I think the respectful way is to talk to the Elders and find out, Is this okay for me to do a Talking Circle for research? And is my protocol, does



CC BY-NC-ND: This license allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.

this look okay? So I think for me it was important for me to do that and to have guidance along the way, you know, by Elders and the Medicine Man. So I forgot what the question was, but that's how I started the process and I received guidance along the way like that.

Gladys ([27:41](#)):

Yeah, that's beautiful. The question was, and you answered it expertly, I would say <laugh>, was how you prepare to show up and do this work in a good way. And so as you were sharing there, I could really see the interconnectedness of the values, the seven grandfather teachings that you talked about, and how that informs the actions that you took yourself as someone who is undertaking this knowledge gathering.

Karen ([28:06](#)):

Yeah, I tried to do that. And that's important to include those values in every step of the research process. And in my – near the end, it's in the appendix in the back, I came up with, it's called IVA, Indigenous Values-Based Approach. I thought, well what if I use the seven grandfathers? How would that look if I purposely wrote it down and I'm going to use this evaluation? So that's what I did, so people can take a look at that in the appendix, it's near the end, it's the last appendix I think. But just how in each step of the process, you know, how I can use, you know, focus on some of these values and just it really comes down to like the golden rule, treating people with kindness and love and respect. And what you put out comes back to you. And yeah, so that's kind of how it was.

Gladys ([29:09](#)):

What an amazing offering. I can't wait to read that approach that you've shared. It's hard to distill, I think, the learning that happens when you are so deeply engaged in a dissertation journey such as yours for so many years. But I'm going to ask you anyway, <laugh>, it's a hard question, I think. What are some of your biggest takeaways from the research for your dissertation?

Karen ([29:32](#)):

Well, the biggest takeaway for me was, well, living in, I've kind of lived in an isolated area for most of my life. I've lived most of my life around my tribe in the upper peninsula of Michigan. And living in an isolated way like that, it was good because I think my worldview as a Native person was kind of really protected. And I was kind of just there. But coming out of that, going to the university, I could see so much difference in the way, the higher education system is what I'm thinking of, so much it felt like a culture clash to me. So much different than the way that I was. I had to comply with however that was. And so our values are so much different in some ways. We all have some of the same values. But I think just being in where I grew up, then where I lived for my doctorate, seeing the difference and then that's reflected in my dissertation in that, the self-isolation, I think, living on the rez and everything, that we really need to branch out and get to know the other cultures around us. I mean, the dominant society needs to get to know us; we need to get to know every other group of people. And I think for me, that was the biggest takeaway is that one day, and I wrote about this in my dissertation, one day, I was sitting at the kitchen table, I was starting to write this one section and this teaching or this thought came



CC BY-NC-ND: This license allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.

to me and it was, They don't know us. That's the biggest takeaway for me, is if somebody reads my dissertation, they're going to know more about me and they're going to know more about my tribe, a small section of my tribe. But they're going to know more about us as Native people and they're going to be able to, I guess, know who we are, and that's a starting place.

But the only way I think really we're going to have to reach out to each other and we're going to have to just talk to each other. It's probably best for people within a tribe, Natives doing evaluation for Natives, as you know, I've heard other people say, but also that's not always the case. 'Cause a lot of times people are not trained in evaluation. So I think people need to be trained more in evaluation methods. But people who are coming in that are not Native, I think they need to get to know who we are. And it's time-consuming, getting to know people of a different culture. It takes time. It might take months or years. And some of the evaluators, some evaluators that I know that are non-Native, you know, it takes a while for them to come in and get to know who we are, what's important, how to do the evaluation in a good way, in the best way for the people. But it's not something just quick that you can do it. It takes time, it takes relationship, and that takes time.

Gladys ([33:04](#)):

Yeah, thank you for sharing that really big takeaway and that moment that you had at your kitchen table that came to you, that teaching that, They don't know us, it's powerful. So we are coming close to the end of our time together and I wanted to ask a couple of things. First is, what is your hope as you are done this work, this amazing accomplishment of telling these important stories around the values that are important for Indigenous evaluation, particularly from your community? What is your hope for the next steps with your work?

Karen ([33:49](#)):

So I'd like to see other Native researchers and evaluators. I'd like to see them do some more values research with Native people. Because what I did is specific; some values and some of this is generalizable to other tribes, but I'd like to see other people, other Native researchers do values research with tribes. So I'd like to see more of that happening. And then also something else that came out of this, it was just kind of a little side byproduct, was that meta-evaluation – we need cultural meta-evaluation. Because part of my research that I didn't talk about much was, at first I was just doing some document reviews, I was just looking to see what was out there and if anybody was doing any, if they were focusing on values when they were doing evaluation with Native tribes. And I found that, you know, there was some of that happening. But I think if we want to do meta-evaluation with the evaluations that have done with Native American tribes, we need to develop a cultural meta-evaluation model. So I'd like to see somebody do some research in that area.

Gladys ([35:13](#)):

Yeah, those are both very important next steps that build off of this example of the work that you did. So the second question as we close off our time is, is there anything else that you want to leave listeners with? We have so many different kinds of listeners who sit with us in conversation in these episodes: other Indigenous evaluators who are wanting to learn how to



CC BY-NC-ND: This license allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.

make space for Indigenous evaluation, funders, organizations, community leaders, policy analysts, there's so many different groups of people who listen in. And I'm wondering if there is something that you'd like to leave them with as they think about what you have to offer and what you've learned in your time in your work?

Karen ([36:02](#)):

Um, that's a big question <laugh>, and thinking of all the different people who could be in the audience, yeah, I'm not sure how to answer that. But I would say that we need more Indigenous evaluators; we need more people trained in evaluation. And the way that I see it now, yeah, I have a PhD, but the way that I used to see it before is that somebody with a PhD, we need somebody like that to come in and do the evaluation. I'm thinking the opposite way now: that people who are already on the ground, maybe they're managing programs, they're managing at the tribal level. I think we need to provide more training for people in evaluation methods and models. And maybe they develop their own ways of doing this. But I think the people who are on the ground need more training and evaluation instead of us relying on people that we consider experts.

Because even myself with a PhD – qualitatively, I'm pretty strong; quantitatively I'm okay – but I'm not the expert in all of these different methods, you know, and I don't think anybody is. So I think relying more on ourselves, because we can learn and we can do these evaluations ourselves. We need to build capacity. That's the main thing that we need to do. And then for people who are in school, going to school for evaluation, I would say for Native people to stay true to who you are, what's most important to you. And for me, that was doing values research, but follow – you know, my grandma used to say that: Be true to who you are and, and what really means something to you in your heart. And put your tobacco down or however you pray, pray for help from the spirits, from your guides.

'Cause they'll guide you in the right direction and they'll help to guide your research and whatever else that you do. And for me, like getting a PhD – you know, when I was a kid, it was a rough life back then, but school to me was fun. It was an oasis. I did well. So for me, getting a PhD was something that I wanted to do because I felt like that's something I could do. And it was always something that I liked. But education's not for everybody. I would just say for anybody listening, follow your heart. Follow what's most meaningful to you because life is short. So that's most important is to be happy and do what pleases you, I suppose.

Gladys ([39:03](#)):

So many beautiful invitations and you jumped right into that super big question and answered it in a way that's so full of heart and love. And so thank you for that. And thank you for spending time with me today. This was a beautiful conversation and I'm so grateful to have shared it with you.

Karen ([39:22](#)):

Meegwitch. Thank you, Gladys.

Gladys ([39:37](#)):



CC BY-NC-ND: This license allows reusers to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.

Ekosi.

I am so glad you spent time with us today. I have a few notes to wrap up this episode. If you're enjoying the podcast, please subscribe on your favorite streaming service, including Podbean, Spotify, and Apple Podcast so that you don't miss an episode. Also, this podcast is self-supported and I'm hoping to make the work more sustainable. So if you're finding the content interesting and valuable, please consider supporting Indigenous Insights through Buy Me a Coffee. You can find the link in the show notes. Finally, I would like to extend an invitation. If you are someone who has an interest in Indigenous evaluation and would like to have a conversation on this podcast, I would love to hear from you. Please send me a note and we can connect about your work, what you're learning, and the questions you're thinking about. That's it for this week. I look forward to sharing this space with you again soon. Ekosi.