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Proposal Title: An Evaluation's Identity Crisis – Implementing a Federally Funded Prevention Project Evaluation within a Sovereign Tribal Government Context

Proposal Summary: Learn through two case studies how an evaluation can have an “identity crisis” because it was funded by outside (non-Indian) government agency but was being implemented within a sovereign Indian nation. Developing the evaluation’s “identity” for a project and using that process as a responsive and respectful teaching tool for evaluation stakeholders is the heart of collecting valid, reliable, and useful evaluation data. Participants will understand how a prevention project’s evaluation identity crisis became a transformative process in which the Indian and non-Indian stakeholders created a unique community of practice and strengthened their own evaluation capacity along the way. During this presentation you will learn how this evaluation’s identity crisis was the catalyst for a multi-ethnic stakeholder group to create new evaluation methods, responsive policies, and new practices. These innovations reflected a more self-determined model and Indigenized strategies for prevention programming and for the evaluation design itself. Theoretical sources, conceptual frameworks, and the empirical data, instruments, and evaluation processes will be shared. Using Indian and non-Indian methods, the presenter will compare the approach to the prevention evaluations in a side-by-side manner to highlight the differences in evaluation designs, share the collaborative transformation process, and allow the audience to leave with concrete ideas and empowering resources.