



**Emotions, relationships, and politics
between external evaluation consultants,
program staff, and non-Indigenous
organisational cultures in the conduct of
evaluation of Indigenous programs.**

We are honoured to be on the lands of the Ngunnawal people. We acknowledge the First Australians as the traditional custodians of this land, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water, community, and culture.

We pay our respect to the Elders of the Ngunnawal people and to all Elders past present and future.



Introduction



Key points

- The emotional and relational aspects of conducting evaluations in Indigenous spaces
- How the relationships between the external evaluation consultant and the program staff lead to practice of culturally safe evaluations
- How the cultural, emotional, and relational expertise of the team contributed to culturally safe evaluation practice
- The emotional impact of working successfully across cultural environments



About me

- I worked with Bec on the evaluation of the Straight Talk program. Straight Talk is a national program that focuses on political engagement with Indigenous women.
- I worked with Sissy on the evaluation of ChangeCourse – a change-making and leadership program for young Indigenous people.
- Sissy was also a participant in Straight Talk and participated in the evaluation.





Personal context

- Experience being a social worker and not understanding evaluations
- Experience observing that organisations have stated and lived values – and they don't align
- Experience observing program staff and managers struggle to communicate with each other



Emotions and relationships

- Between me and the program managers
 - Relational and emotional
 - Technical knowledge
 - Navigating cultures
- Between me and the participants
 - Relational and emotional
 - Accessibility
 - Not transactional



How the relationship informed practice of evaluation

- Valuing each others technical expertise
 - lifted quality both sides
- Engagement with participants
- Negotiating organisational cultures



Benefits

- Positive experience
- Deeper understanding
- The evaluation findings got used!