

## ***Reclaiming Space for our Knowledges: Conversations on Indigenous Research and Ethics***

### **Abstract Submission**

Exploring Indigenous ways of knowing and being in a respectful way within research conversations is essential to engage from day one. This is the guiding philosophy for my pedagogy and journey as an Indigenous academic navigating colonial post-secondary spaces. Not long ago, Indigenous inclusion was not a common conversation being had in colonial academic spaces. Now in the time of reconciliation, navigating recently surfaced colonial histories, spaces of teaching and learning are transforming. Indigenous Peoples are the original researchers. Land-based and relational observations informed epistemologies, pedagogies, and ontologies since time immemorial. Therefore, doing research with an Indigenous component demands positionality and reflection on the space we take up. This self-awareness draws attention to our power, privilege, and ignorance we possess. This can be done by mobilizing an Indigenous research paradigm and the courage to interrogate ignorance by leaning into discomfort. This practice is humility; academics must be prepared to commit to a lifelong journey of unlearning and learning simultaneously. Researchers can gift themselves with time for self-reflection while navigating colonial spaces. Whether it is scoping research or an environmental scan on Indigenous knowledges, ethics, health, languages, etc., we can engage ethical spaces. Engaging ethical spaces, first theorized by Dr. Willie Ermine (2007), transforms a relationship to facilitate respectful dialogue of acknowledging diversity through non-interference. Additionally, research framed can be framed through Indigenous research ethics following tenets of respect, reciprocity, relevance, and responsibility (Kirkness and Barnhardt, 1991). Here I will present concepts to consider for future and current researchers alongside self-reflexivity, critical thought, and a willingness to explore Indigenous conversations and concepts beyond surface level to deeper historical experiences and philosophies. This presentation is a conversation of where to begin in research relationships. What are those first practical steps you can take as both Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers?

### **Author Bio**

Hadiksm Gaax di waayu. I am a T'symsen/settler visitor on Lheidli T'enneh territories. Living and raising my children is my passion while I navigate teaching/dialoguing on shared colonial histories, cultural self-reflection and safety, acknowledging power and privilege in our interactions, and creating/taking space for Indigenous voices in academia and health. I'm an Assistant Professor in First Nations Studies at the University of Northern BC located on unceded Lheidli T'enneh territory.

### **Keywords**

Indigenous, Research, Ethics, Ethical Space, Epistemology, Ontology