

## Indigenous worldviews

Indigenous knowledge help guide our way of understanding how we build or modify programs to help us develop ways to help bring about behavior change of program participants. In contrast to typical Western models of behavior, indigenous frameworks can help us conceptualize and implement strategies that reflect indigenous “ways of knowing.” The majority of the literature on indigenous models comes from the work compiled by Indigenous peoples from the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia (AIHEC, 2009; Chino & DeBruyn, 2006; Tribal Evaluation Workgroup, 2013). Indigenous people have historically and collaboratively used evaluation skills, such as assessing, comparing, and interpreting behavior and conditions. Indigenous relational world views and indigenous ways of knowing and evaluating have been discounted and considered inferior to Western scientific methods because they do not use traditional Western analytical or reductionist methods to arrive at cause and effect.

Indigenous worldviews are explained as result of people’s close relationship with their environment. McKenzie and Morrissette (2003) outlines six important metaphysical beliefs that shape this relationship:

1. All things exist according to survival
2. Survival pulses with natural energy and cycles of the earth
3. This energy is part of a grand design
4. All things have a role to play to balance and ensure harmony and the overall well-being of life
5. All things are an extension of this grand design, thus, contain the same essence as the source
6. This essence is understood as “spirt” which links all things together and to Creation