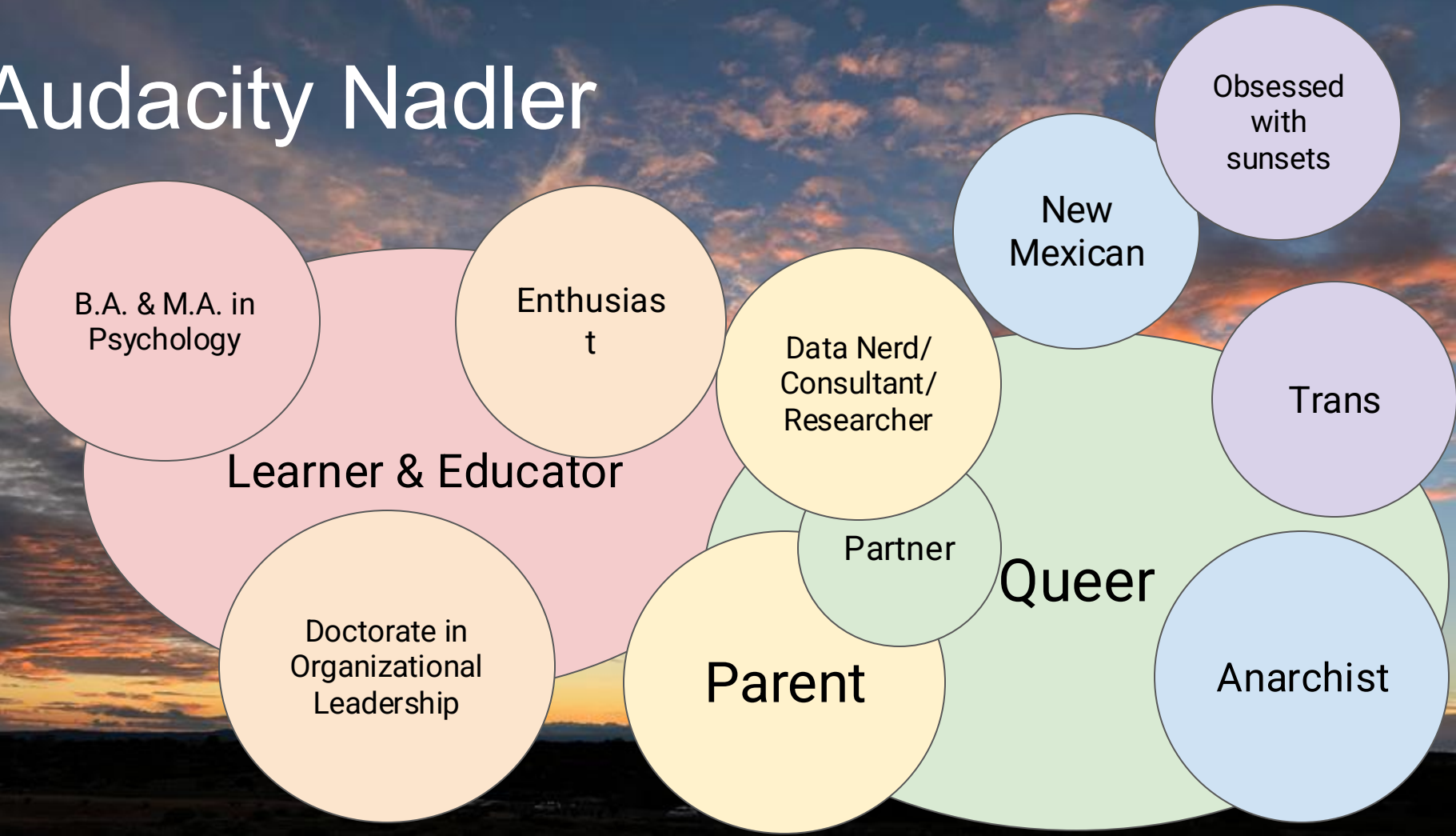




Ask With Purpose: Question Development for Strategic Decision-Making

Dr. Audacity Nadler

Audacity Nadler







We are dedicated to equitable practices that prioritize the inclusion of marginalized, disenfranchised, and oppressed communities.

We provide balanced assessments that integrate internal and external perspectives and identities to identify strengths and challenges.

We value all types of data in building evidence-based support for thoughtful planning and resource allocation.

We model a learning mindset to fully understand program, community, goals, and desired outcomes.

[redacted] echoes [redacted] of many young people
 who have missed out on experiences, friendships, and milestones [redacted]
 [redacted] lost time [redacted]
 [redacted] learning
 celebrating birthdays [redacted] don't [redacted] stop anytime soon [redacted]

[redacted] disruptive [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted] live [redacted]
 [redacted] I'm just gonna [redacted]



Asking Questions: What goes wrong?

Think of a frustrating experience with a customer satisfaction survey, post-event feedback form, or funding progress report.

What was bad about it?



What goes wrong?

- Too long
- Repetitive
- Unnecessary information
- Too vague
- Too specific
- Unclear purpose
- Compliance-focused



Why is it important to get it right?

- Thoughtful/Respectful Use of Resources
- Data-Informed Decision-Making
- Trust and Relationships



Five Steps to Better Questions

1. Identify the Decisions
2. Map Information to Metrics
3. Consider Response Options
4. Keep it Short
5. Build Trust with Context



Step 1. Identify the Decisions

Pinpoint the exact choice or action the survey data will inform before writing questions.

Example



Post Event Survey Evaluation Reimagined 2026

A live, in-person showcase of evaluation that is human, practical, and aligned with real impact.

1. Identify the Decision(s)



“What will I DO with the answers to this survey?”

- **Decide whether to hold the event again next year**
- To decide how to change the content & logistics of the event to better meet the needs of attendees

2. Map Information to Metrics

2. Map Information to Meaningful Metrics



- Decide whether to hold the event again next year. If we:
 - **Achieved our event objectives**
 - and
 - Inspired interest in returning

We WILL do it again!

Did I Achieve Objective 1?



- Objective 1: To provide you with actionable, concrete skills that provide real value in understanding the effectiveness of your work.

How many actionable ideas from each session will you use in the next month?			
	None	A few	Many
Audacity Nadler: What E...	☐	☐	☐
Carlos Romero: System...	☐	☐	☐
Lindsay Morgia: Start W...	☐	☐	☐

Did I Achieve Objective 2?

- Objective 2: To provide each attendee a deeper understanding of how program evaluation can help you carry out your mission

What shifted in the way you think about evaluation today?

Long answer text

Did I Achieve Objective 3?

- Objective 3: To increase excitement about building evaluation practices into your organizational culture



Did people express interest in returning?



I would like to return to this event next year

- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ Definitely

I would recommend that my colleagues attend next year

- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ Definitely

3. Consider Response Options

Does the response make the next action clear?



- How satisfied were you with your experience today?
- How would you rate the quality of our product or service?
- How likely are you to _____ again in the future?
- What is one thing we could have done better today?



Think about thresholds



- IF we:
 - Achieved our event objectives for over 50% of attendees
 - At least 80% of attendees express interest in returning with friends
 - Inspired an average of 5 AHA! moments per participant

We WILL do it again!

4. Keep it Short

Why Keep it Short?



Participant drop-off will never be random, so the more participants you lose, the more biased your data will be.

Keep it Short!



- **Under five minutes** yields the highest completion rates and produces the most thoughtful open-ended responses.
- Invested participants will tolerate a 10-minute survey, external audiences generally abandon after 3 minutes.
- Sharp drop-off after 12 min on desktop, 9 min on mobile.

Keep it Short!



Survey Type	Target Time	Typical Question Count	Primary Context
Transactional / Micro-Surveys	1–3 mins	1–5 questions	Immediate post-event, CSAT, or quick pulse checks
Program Evaluation & Feedback	5–8 mins	10 questions	Standard stakeholder assessment & course evaluation
Comprehensive Engagement / Annual	10–12 mins	20 questions	Deep organizational climate, culture, or annual reviews
Incentivized / Academic Research	15–20 mins	30+ questions	Specialized expert panels or paid research studies

Keep it Short!



- Cut "nice-to-know" questions: Remove any item that won't influence a choice, policy, or resource allocation.
- Leverage available data: Avoid asking for demographics or history that's already tracked.
- Respect participant time: Prioritize essential questions to maximize completion rates and thoughtful answers.

5. Build Trust With Context

Helpful Framing



- Remember, evaluation is not research!
- Tell survey recipients why you are asking for this information and what you plan to do with it.
- Follow up! Tell them what you have done.

Questions?

Upcoming Events

Photovoice Workshop

An immersive, 12-session experience designed to blend the art of visual storytelling with grassroots social advocacy. Join Audacity Nadler and Bryan Steiff for a deep dive into the world of visual storytelling for social change. September 2026 - April 2027

Save the Date!

Evaluation Reimagined 2027: Measure What Matters

March 13th, 8am-1:30pm

A live, in-person showcase of evaluation that is human, practical, and aligned with real impact.

Learn more at <https://www.authenticevaluation.com/upcoming-events>





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Engage with me and invest in your organization's success.

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