THE JOY OF EVALUATION

UNM Evaluation Lab

Summer Institute

2025

Today

- Evaluation and joy? (yes!)

- Community-Based Participatory Research (and Evaluation)

- Group photo

- Embedding evaluation into your organization

- ECHO Learning Community

- Preparing your presentation

But first, why the dread?

Evaluation apprehension is the fear of being assessed. But why?

- Fear of losing control of our own environment (Reitzig and Maciejovsky, 2014)
  - Top-down decision making
- Perception that evaluation results will be ignored (Paulus et al., 2018)
- Fear to being criticized – might adversely affect our standing in the organization
- Reactance – when changes come from an external party we'll resist it because we feel restricted (Taut and Brauns, 2003)

But people sing about evaluation!

- [Here's](#) the song if you want to hear it

Why the singing?

Evaluation is a space for reflection, inquiry that is most successful when all voices are heard.

Recognition for what is working feeds desire to make the work even better

How to transform evaluation from a dreaded chore to something you feel like singing about

1-Link it to your mission

2-Involve everyone

Mission time is energizing

- Helps you focus on what you care about

- Feeds sense of agency
  - Working with others to find ways to align actions with goals
  - Problem-solving

- Provides a break from the day-to-day frenzy and allows you to go back into the fray with renewed purpose

Evaluation is central to achieving your mission

- To keep moving towards your mission, you need to know what you are and aren't achieving, and how you can do better
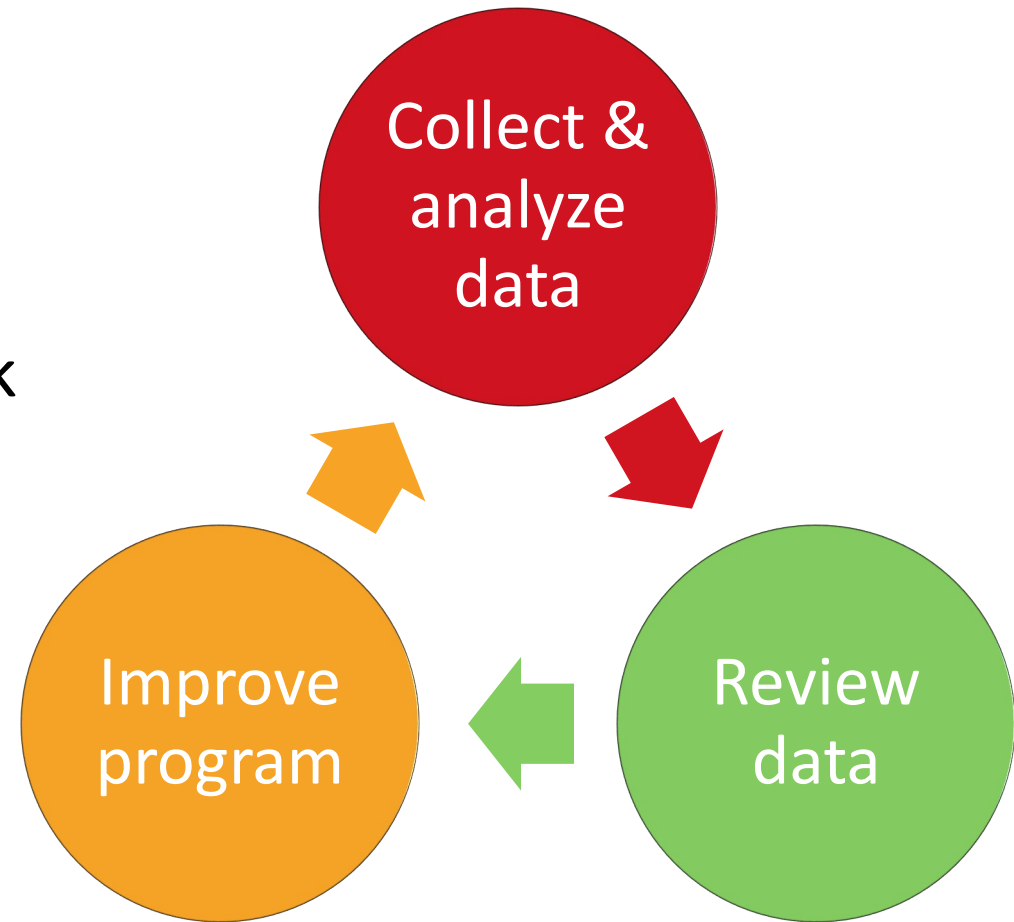- That is the work of evaluation

Involve everyone

- Staff
- Participants
- Board
- Partners
- Funders

Value of asking people what they think: NMPCA's experience

Value of sharing the data that your staff has so laboriously collected

Designing the Feedback Loop

- Mission time provides the time and place for incorporating data into decision making
- Collect, share and invite feedback on data at all levels of the organization

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Our evaluation system

Evaluation Lab's Mission Time & Team

Mission time: one-hour meeting once per week, January-May

- Review/revise logic model,

- write rubrics,

- plan annual evaluation,

- plan Annual EXPO

At the table: Director, Associate Director, Team Leads (voluntary), Students (voluntary)

WHAT WOULD WORK FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Evaluation Lab Feedback loop

- Eval^2 compiles and reviews data, makes recommendations

- Instructor revises curriculum

- Advisory Council (leadership of partnering organizations) reviews data

- Evaluation Reports shared on website

WHAT WOULD WORK FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Bringing it back to your organization

What you need

- Mission Time

- Evaluation Team(s)

- Feedback Loop

Your evaluation plan (YEP #7)

(later this afternoon)

Ideas? Questions?