

Meera Kumanan ([00:01](#)):

You've really talked about the importance of forming that foundational relationship and what to do once you've made that initial encounter. But what are some of the steps implementation practitioners or new researchers can take in actually identifying and making the first contact with communities?

Lori Carter Edwards ([00:19](#)):

The first one is, is that you must work with someone within the institution that you're representing who already has a relationship with the community that you're serving. While you, if you're starting out, you never go into the community and then start shopping around to see who to meet with. You talk with someone who's more senior, who's been in the community, and you may not choose to partner with who they're partnering with, but they know the community and you are basically using them or working with them to try to to understand before you go into any community. So that's the first thing. And they basically can be the champion. They are the academic liaison to the gatekeeper within the community. That's one of the first things that you do. The second thing within that is you get to know who the champions are and you only work through that champion.

Meera Kumanan ([01:15](#)):

As we talked, I've really appreciated their candid advice, especially to people like me, at the start of our implementation science careers, they talked about ways we can affect change and thoughtfully engage with communities while being mindful of our position within existing systems in academia and funding.

Lori Carter Edwards ([01:32](#)):

For those of you who are just stand starting off, we understand that you may have to meet certain needs for your promotion. If you're in an academic setting and tenure, we know that this may mean that you have to get certain things funded to meet certain milestones, but if you don't start by building the relationships, all of it will be of not, and you will not build solid relationships. And then it will just be project driven rather than relationship driven. And so then you never, ever really answer the right questions because it's not been about building relationships,

Pastor Galliard ([02:07](#)):

You know, identify spaces and I know we, you know, people have to go through the ranks and go through all the steps you have to do to be everything you wanna be. But I think identifying the things that really matter, identifying where we wanna try to make a difference and bring about catalytic change and at least begin querying began researching, began becoming knowledgeable of the community.

Meera Kumanan ([02:32](#)):

Do you have any advice to those entering this field and beginning the work of community engagement and capacity building? What do you think are some of the most important components of this type of work?

Molly Brown ([02:43](#)):

Relationships and partnerships.

Dominique Campbell ([02:46](#)):

Going to every situation as a partner, and not so much as come follow me, but more as we're gonna go alongside each other and we're going to deal with this issue together and we're gonna come up with a solution together.

Qua'Tavia White ([02:58](#)):

We said before, meet people where they are not only families, but providers as well. If you can find an area that they want to excel and they're successful in that area, once they see those successes, they can be duplicated across the board

Molly Brown ([03:13](#)):

And know your community. We have had the time through this pandemic to get to know our community, like I think we didn't even know before.