

Working Together: **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander** **Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles** **and Practice**

Editors: Nola Purdie, Pat Dudgeon and Roz Walker



Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing



This book was funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, and was developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research, the Kulunga Research Network, and Telethon Institute for Child Health Research.

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The views expressed in this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Australian Government.

The publication aims to assist students and others to understand a variety of perspectives about the social and emotional wellbeing and mental health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and to assist reflection and open discussion.

ISBN Numbers

- Publications ISBN:
978-1-74241-090-6
- Online ISBN:
978-1-74241-091-3

Front cover artwork "Spirit Strength" by Nellie Green.

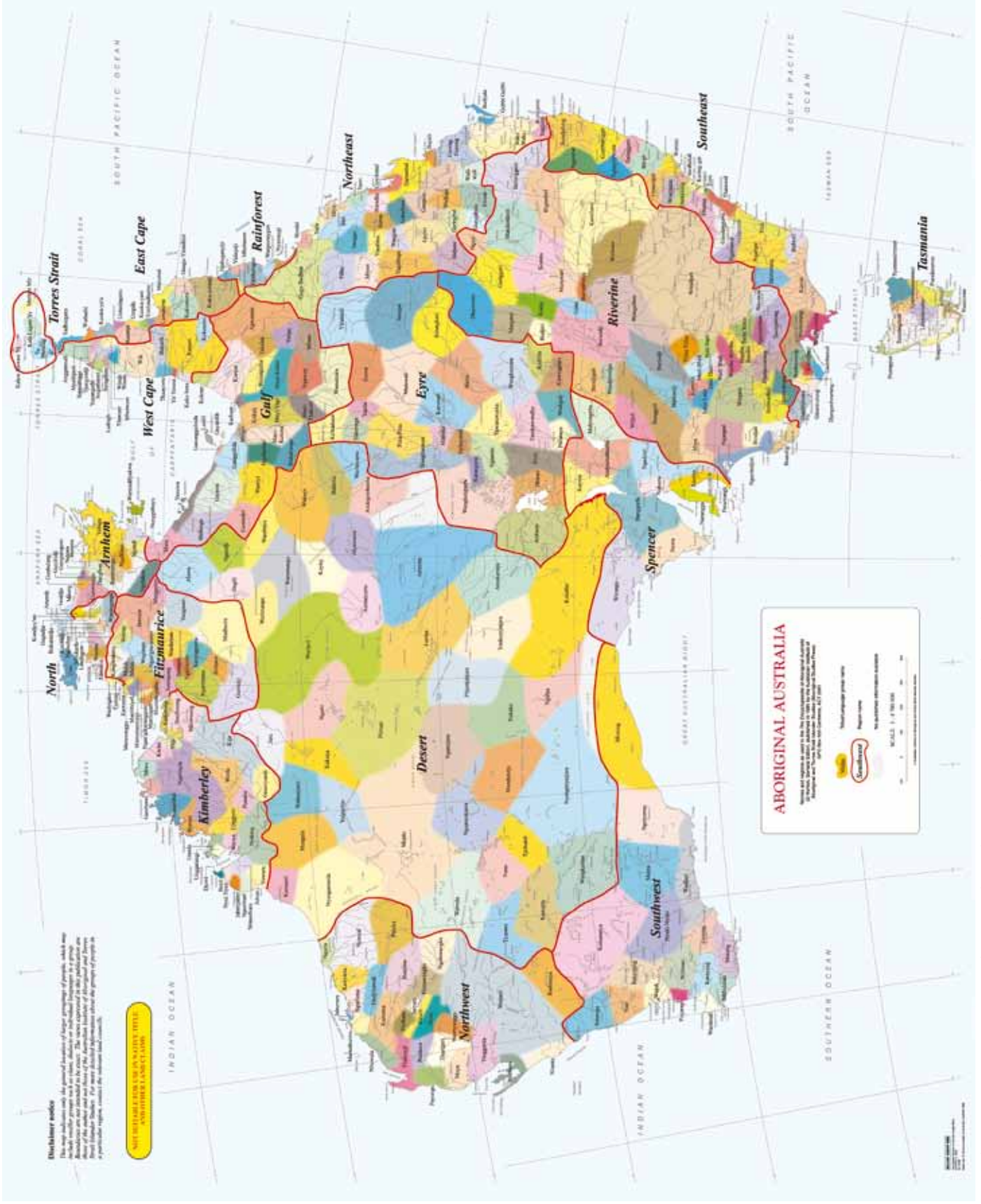
"Throughout life we go through many life changing events and experiences. Sometimes, these are so we can learn lessons, other times during great adversity these experiences can really test our strength. At these times, we must ask our Spirits to guide and support us – for they are always there, just within reach to give us strength and clarity. We must trust the spirits for they have travelled their journeys before us and are wise to the ways of the world – we have much to learn and gain from them, to allow ourselves strength of spirit also."

Jonelle (Nellie) Green was born in Morawa, Western Australia. Nellie's people are the Badimaya people (Yamatji mob) who were traditionally located east of Geraldton. She is the fourth eldest in her family with two brothers and three sisters. Nellie has worked in Indigenous Higher Education for over 15 years and is Manager of Indigenous Student Services at La Trobe University, Melbourne. She is a graduate of Curtin University, Perth, and undertook her Honours year in 2009. She is also an Aboriginal artist and is a keen activist involved with Indigenous social justice and human rights issues.

Other artwork is reprinted with permission of Women's Health Goulburn North East. The six paintings are from the Making Two Worlds Work Project developed by Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation and Women's Health Goulburn North East, 2008. They depict aspects of Aboriginal health and wellbeing. The themes are: spiritual and mental health, kinship and family, culture and identity, physical health, practical support and understanding, and partnerships with health and community agencies.

http://www.whealth.com.au/ourwork/mtww/mtww_posters.html

Map of Aboriginal Australia



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Foreword

I welcome the publication of *Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice* as an important contribution to the ongoing struggle for the achievement of health equality between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, and I thank the Australian Government for funding and initiating the project under the 2006 \$1.9 billion COAG Mental Health Initiative.

This book stands to make an enormous contribution to the mental health of Indigenous Australians, for so long a subject bedevilled by the inappropriate application of non-Indigenous models of mental health, models that so often failed to account for our unique experiences and the significantly higher burden of poor mental health found in our communities.

Indeed, for many years there have been calls for new approaches to Indigenous mental health that identify and acknowledge what makes us different from non-Indigenous Australians—the resilience that our cultures give us on one hand, and, on the other, the collective experience of racism, the disempowerment of colonisation and its terrible legacy, and the assimilationist policies that separated us from our families, our culture, our language and our land. This book is to be welcomed for meeting this long overdue need.

I am particularly pleased that the editors— Nola Purdie, the Australian Council for Education Research and Pat Dudgeon and Roz Walker, the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research—ensured that Indigenous mental health experts led the development of each chapter to ensure that Indigenous voices are heard, loud and clear, in its pages.

Designed for practitioners and mental health workers, as well as students training to be mental health workers, I am confident that the publication of *Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice* marks a watershed in the treatment of Indigenous mental health issues.

I urge all students of health and education to read this book to gain a real appreciation of the issues that may confront you when working with Indigenous people wherever they live in Australia.

This publication stands to make a substantial contribution to the achievement of Indigenous health equality in Australia as we move into the 21st century. I commend it to you.

Tom Calma

*Former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner
2010*



Message from the Minister



I am pleased to show my support for this pioneering book '*Working Together - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing, Principles and Practices*'.

This exciting new resource will prepare students and practitioners across a range of allied health professions to meet Indigenous mental health needs when working in mainstream and Aboriginal Medical Services.

Embracing the principles and practices in this book will help the health workforce play its part in achieving the commitment by all Australian governments to closing the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation.

The chapters within this book provide compelling evidence to show that just as addressing the health gap requires simultaneous effort in housing, education and employment; improving Indigenous wellbeing means tackling more than just physical illness.

Around 70 per cent of Indigenous deaths occur before the age of 65, compared with 21 per cent among non-Indigenous Australians, and so many early deaths tear at the fabric of a community and have lasting impacts on the mental, social and cultural health of a family.

Initiatives to grow and support the Indigenous health workforce and improve the social and emotional wellbeing and mental health of Indigenous communities are vital to efforts to reduce Indigenous disadvantage.

The book provides the reader with exposure to strong views relating to social and emotional wellbeing and mental health. I hope it will stimulate interesting discussion amongst students and practitioners of Indigenous mental health and wellbeing.

I commend the mental health experts who have contributed their invaluable knowledge and experience within these pages and I look forward to working with future health practitioners and mental health workers as they take up their careers improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Hon Warren Snowdon MP

Member for Lingiari

Minister for Indigenous Health, Rural and Regional Health & Regional Services Delivery

2010





Acknowledgments

This book would not have come to fruition without significant collaboration and the sustained energy, ideas, support, and input of many people.

The editors would like to thank:

- Foremost, the important contribution of all authors, who volunteered their time and shared their expertise, is acknowledged with gratitude and admiration.
- The Australian Government which funded the project.
- The members of OATSIH's Expert Reference Group for the COAG Mental Health *'Improving the Capacity for Workers in Indigenous Communities initiative'* for their advice and assistance.

Ms Pat Delaney	National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
Ms Roslyn Lockhart	The Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses
Prof. Mary Katsikitis	Psychologist
Dr Robert Parker	The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists
Ms Stephanie Gilbert	Australian Association of Social Workers
Ms Leanne Knowles	Mental Health Council of Australia
Prof. Ernest Hunter	Psychiatrist
Assoc. Prof. Helen Milroy	Psychiatrist
Assoc. Prof. Pat Dudgeon	Australian Psychological Society
Dr Kathy Brotchie	Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

- Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) staff who assisted with a range of tasks. We are especially grateful to Gina Milgate, Indigenous Research Fellow, for her major contribution in assisting with coordination and liaison activities throughout the project. Other valuable contributions were made by:

Sarah Buckley	Research Officer
Craig Grose	Project Publishing Manager
Darren Jeffrey	Senior Desktop Publishing Officer
Julia Mattea	Senior Administrative Officer
Maureen O'Keefe	Project Editor, ACER Press

- The Telethon Institute for Child Health Research (TICHR) and the Kulunga Research Network (Indigenous arm of TICHR) staff who contributed valued professional and administrative support to the project.

Steve Zubrick	Head of Division of Population Science, TICHR
Glenn Pearson	Acting Manager 2009, Kulunga Research Network
Colleen Hayward	Previous Manager, Kulunga Research Network
Peta Gooda	Research Assistant, Kulunga Research Network, TICHR
Marita Smith	Research Assistant, Kulunga Research Network, TICHR
- The ACER Standing Committee on Indigenous Education and a specially constituted Internal Reference Group who provided ongoing guidance and feedback on chapter drafts. Particular assistance was provided by Dr Ken Wyatt, the Director of the Office of Aboriginal Health, Department of Health, Western Australia.
- The chapter reviewers who provided informed and helpful comments on draft chapters.

Clair Andersen	Riawunna, University of Tasmania
Linell Barelli	Mind Matters
Chris Champion	Kidsmatter
Jacquelyn Cranney	School of Psychology, University of NSW
Valerie Cullen	Relationship Australia, Safehaven
Andrew Day	School of Psychology, University of South Australia
Ernest Hunter	Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health, Queensland
Kerrie Kelly	Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association
Stephen Meredith	The Southern Adelaide Health Service Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (SAHS-CAMHS)
Louis Peachey	Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health, James Cook University
Beverley Raphael	School of Medicine, University of Western Sydney
Lyn Riley	Koori Centre, University of Sydney
Clair Scrine	Kulunga Research Network, TICHR
Carrington Shepherd	Kulunga Research Network, TICHR
Nick Tolhurst	Beyondblue
- The market testers and their students who commented on the usefulness of the book for a range of audiences.

David Lyle	Department of Rural Health, University of Sydney
Tricia Nagel	Menzies School of Health Research
- The copyeditor, Venetia Somerset, who graciously and competently assisted with the task of preparing the manuscript for publication.

Contributors



Yolonda Adams

Yolonda Adams is an Aboriginal psychologist and a Larrakia woman. She is from Darwin in the Northern Territory and comes from a very large extended Indigenous family. Yolonda graduated from Charles Darwin University in 1999 and became a fully registered psychologist in 2002. She is a member (and a steering committee member) of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association.

Yolonda has worked in the public and private sector and has most recently worked with Mental Health Services where she provided a service to clients in a community setting who have serious mental illness and complex needs, including assessments of risks and needs to assist in developing care plans. She has many years of clinical experience with a diversity of clients, with significant experience working with Indigenous clients from urban, rural and remote communities in various employment positions. Yolonda is particularly committed to providing culturally appropriate practice in assessment and intervention of Indigenous people's wellbeing, especially in the area of mental health.

Jenny Adermann

Jenny Adermann has worked for Education Queensland for 25 years as a teacher, teacher-librarian, media production officer and guidance officer with Year 1 to Year 12 students in a range of urban, rural and remote settings. Spanning a 20-year period, she has returned several times to work in Cape York and Torres Strait communities and has more than 10 years' experience working with Indigenous students and their families. Jenny holds a Graduate Diploma in Education and a Master of Education degree. She is currently a Guidance Officer based at Trinity Beach near Cairns and is undertaking PhD studies at Queensland University of Technology, focusing on anxiety and Indigenous youth.

Dr Caroline Atkinson

Caroline Atkinson currently lives in Papua New Guinea, undertaking community development work with a focus on trauma and violence. Her Bachelor of Social Work at the University of South Australia achieved first class honours, with a thesis focusing on violence against Aboriginal women. She then completed a placement in Tamil Nadu, India, researching the specific issues and needs of adolescent girls. Following this she headed a small team at a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre in Katherine, NT, before completing her PhD in Community Psychology focusing on Aboriginal male violence and its relationship to generational post-traumatic stress disorder. While completing her PhD, Dr Atkinson formed Caroline Atkinson Consultancy Services, specialising in multi-method research approaches with a focus on violence and trauma issues. In the course of her career Dr Atkinson has written numerous papers for various organisations and publications and her PhD is due to be published in book form in 2010. Caroline is the daughter of Professor Judy Atkinson, renowned for her work in trauma and family violence in Aboriginal Australia. She is married to David and has a daughter and son who are twins.

Professor Judy Atkinson

Professor Judy Atkinson identifies as a Jiman/Bundjalung woman who also has Anglo-Celtic and German heritage. With a PhD from Queensland University of Technology, her primary academic and research focus is in the area of violence and relational trauma, and healing for Indigenous and indeed all peoples. Having developed a Diploma in Community Recovery, an undergraduate degree in Trauma and Healing, a Masters in Indigenous Studies (wellbeing), and a Professional Doctorate in Indigenous Philosophies, she is presently focused in her role as Director of the Healing Circle (Collaborative Indigenous Research Centre for Learning and Educare). The centre links community and university, building pathways between teaching and research, with a belief that the science of teaching must have a research base, that research can result in a practice based on evidence, and hence influence evidence-based policy for better outcomes for Indigenous and indeed all Australians. Judy is a member of the Indigenous Clearinghouse Secretariat of the Scientific Reference Group of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Dr Marilyn Campbell

Dr Marilyn Campbell is an associate professor in the school of Learning and Professional Studies, Faculty of Education at Queensland University of Technology. She currently lectures in the Masters of Education program preparing teachers for school counselling and in the Masters of Educational and Developmental Psychology preparing psychologists to work in a range of educational and developmental positions. Marilyn has worked as a teacher and psychologist in early childhood, primary and secondary schools. She has also been a teacher-librarian, school counsellor and supervisor of school counsellors. Her research interests are in behavioural and emotional problems in children and adolescents. Her recent work has included research into anxiety prevention and intervention as well as the effects of bullying and especially cyber-bullying in schools. She is the author of the Worrybusters series of books for anxious children.

Wendy Casey

Mrs Casey belongs to the Karajarri and Yawuru people and her extended family reside in the West Kimberley region of Western Australia. She is currently Manager of the Aboriginal Alcohol and other Drug Program of the WA Drug and Alcohol Office. For the last 20 years she has specialised in the drug and alcohol field. She has worked within the community-controlled and government sectors, in metropolitan and remote area regions and in a variety of roles that include managing clinical services, policy, workforce development, resource development, community development and research. Mrs Casey is a member of the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee.

Dr Kyllie Cripps

At the time of writing this chapter Kyllie Cripps was an Indigenous research fellow with the Onemda Vic Health Koori Health Unit, Centre for Health and Society at the University of Melbourne. She has since accepted a senior lectureship at the Indigenous Law Centre, Faculty of Law, University of New South Wales. Dr Cripps's research interests include issues relating to Indigenous family violence, sexual assault and child abuse including policy development and program/service delivery. She is currently leading an ARC project called 'Building and supporting community led partnerships to respond to Indigenous family violence in Victoria'. Her PhD thesis was entitled 'Enough Family Fighting: Indigenous Community Responses to Addressing Family Violence in Australia and the United States'. In addition to her research Kyllie has taught Aboriginal Health to nursing students and regularly provides policy advice to the Australian and state governments. She also provides training and support to professional bodies and organisations dealing with the aftermath of violence.

Professor Neil Drew

Neil Drew is Head of Behavioural Science and Dean of Arts and Sciences at the University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA). He is a social psychologist with over 25 years' experience working with a diverse range of communities and groups. He has worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities since beginning his career as a volunteer at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Medical Service in far North Queensland. He was psychologist for the Department of Family Services in Queensland. Before joining UNDA Professor Drew was Director of the University of Western Australia Institute for Regional Development. At UNDA he is the program head and co-founder of the *Aboriginal Youth and Community Wellbeing Program* in the East Kimberley, established in 2006. The Program is funded by the Gelganyem Aboriginal Trust and promotes wellness and suicide prevention for young people in East Kimberley Aboriginal communities.

Associate Professor Pat Dudgeon (author and editor)

Dr Pat Dudgeon is from Bardi and Gija people of the Kimberley. She went to Perth to study psychology and afterwards joined the Centre for Aboriginal Studies at Curtin University of Technology. She was appointed as the Head of the Centre for Aboriginal Studies at Curtin and provided leadership in Indigenous higher education for some 19 years. Dr Dudgeon has also had significant involvement for many years in psychology and Indigenous issues. She was the first convenor of the Australian Psychological Society Interest Group, Aboriginal Issues and Aboriginal People and Psychology, and has been instrumental in convening many conferences and discussion groups at national levels to ensure that Indigenous issues are part of the agenda in the discipline. She has many publications in this area and is considered one of the 'founding' people in Indigenous psychology. She was the chief editor and major contributor of *Working With Indigenous Australians: A Handbook for Psychologists* (2000, Gunada Press). She is the current Chair of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association and advisory member on the Public Interest Advisory Group of the Australian Psychological Society (APS). She was also awarded the grade of Fellow in the APS in 2008. Pat Dudgeon is actively involved with the Aboriginal community and social justice issues for Indigenous people. She has participated in numerous community service activities of significance, was a member of the Parole Board of Western Australia for several years, and was a psychologist in the defence forces. She recently completed her PhD in psychology. She was appointed as an adjunct associate professor with the School for Indigenous Studies at the University of Western Australia and worked as a consultant. In 2009 she was awarded a three-year post-doctoral fellowship to undertake research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women on women's leadership.

Sue Ferguson-Hill

Sue Ferguson-Hill is currently the Western Australian Project Manager and Senior Research Officer for the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) Indigenous Adaptation Study based at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research in Perth. Sue is also a trainer in the use of the Edinburgh Depression Scale and has extensive experience in the field of perinatal mental health, as well as being a long-term member of the Australian Association for Infant Mental Health. During the course of a diverse midwifery and nursing career Sue completed a Masters in Midwifery, pursuing an interest in postnatal depression through research, health subjects, and as a component of a final thesis.

Management roles and clinical practice in a community-based Family Care Centre in Sydney saw a specialisation in the management of postnatal stress and depression in a community setting. As a Nurse Educator at the College of Nursing in Sydney, Sue managed education programs in Child and Family Health Nursing and Midwifery and participated in training programs for Aboriginal Health Workers in communities in New South Wales and

Queensland. Sue moved to the Kimberley in Western Australia in 2000 to undertake clinical practice in Child and Family Health Nursing based in community health, providing the service to Aboriginal communities in the West Kimberley over a period of six years.

Further study through a Masters in Public Health and Tropical Medicine continued a special interest in the identification and management of perinatal stress and depression in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women living in remote settings, viewed from the perspective of a public health issue, and noting the significant effects of perinatal stress and depression on families and communities.

Darren Garvey

Darren Garvey was born and raised in Cairns in northern Queensland, and his heritage extends to and reflects the diversity of the Torres Strait. Darren has a degree in Psychology from James Cook University of North Queensland and postgraduate qualifications in Health Promotions and Tertiary Education from Curtin University of Technology. For the past 15 years he has worked at the Centre for Aboriginal Studies at Curtin, now lecturing in the Indigenous Australian Cultural Studies Program. He is presently pursuing his PhD on how mental health professionals, students and Indigenous people construct the arena of Indigenous mental health and negotiate their participation in it. In 2000 he helped edit and contribute to a handbook for psychologists working with Indigenous Australians, and recently published *Indigenous identity in contemporary psychology: Dilemmas, developments, directions* (2007, Thomson), which was shortlisted for the AIATSIS Stanner Award. Darren is a devoted family man and the proud father of Oliver and Elliot.

Graham Gee

Graham Gee is a descendant of the Garawa nation and grew up in Darwin. Originally trained as a schoolteacher in 1993, Graham taught Physical Education internationally in the United Kingdom before working with Indigenous students in northern New South Wales and with the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Education as a remote community lecturer in the Northern Territory.

In 2000 he realised that he was most passionate about trying to understand how people navigated their own healing processes, and he was inspired to learn more about the similarities and differences in the way Aboriginal Australians experienced and overcame adversity compared to other cultures. Graham began his studies in Psychology at Melbourne University in 2002, while also working part-time at Native Title Services Victoria. His role there involved coordinating native title meetings for Victorian Traditional Owner groups, and he gained particularly valuable experience while assisting the Victorian Traditional Owner Land Justice Group to engage in (ultimately successful) negotiations with the Victorian Government to jointly develop a Statewide Native Title Settlement Framework.

In 2008, Graham began working as a counsellor at the Victorian Aboriginal Health Services, while also undertaking a combined Masters/PhD in Clinical Psychology at Melbourne University. His work at the Victorian Aboriginal Health Services primarily involves counselling clients who have experienced trauma, grief and loss. The focus of his PhD research is on trauma and resilience in urban Koori communities. Currently Graham sits on the steering committee of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association, and on Stolen Generation Victoria's Partnerships in Healing advisory committee.

Belle Glaskin

Belle Glaskin is a Nyungar-Bibbulmun woman from the south-west of Western Australia, and she is also a clinical psychologist (Registrar).

Belle completed a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Psychology at the University of Western Australia in 2006. During her undergraduate years she was heavily involved in the

Western Australian Student Aboriginal Corporation, and was the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Representative on the UWA Guild Council in 2004. In 2007, Belle was awarded the inaugural Bendi Lango Foundation Bursary, which was established by the Australian Psychological Society to support Aboriginal students in the completion of postgraduate studies in psychology. She completed her Master of Psychology (Clinical) at Curtin University of Technology in 2009. Her Masters thesis explored the role of social and emotional wellbeing in Aboriginal students' school success in a Western Australian school-based resiliency program.

Belle has worked with Aboriginal people and the Aboriginal community in a range of areas including the government and private sectors, not-for-profit organisations, and voluntary work. Her areas of professional interests include Aboriginal mental health, social and emotional wellbeing, resiliency, trauma and healing, grief and loss, suicide prevention and post-vention.

Professor Dennis Gray

Dennis Gray is Professor and Deputy Director of the National Drug Research Institute at Curtin University of Technology, where he heads the Institute's Indigenous Australian Research Program. He has conducted research projects on Indigenous health in general and Indigenous substance misuse in particular and is author of numerous publications in those areas. He is particularly concerned with collaborative research and building Indigenous research capacity. Professor Gray's research has had practical outcomes for Indigenous people at the local, state and territory, and national levels; and he is a member of the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee - a committee of the Australian National Council on Drugs and the peak advisory body on Indigenous substance misuse. In 2006, his research team won the National Drug and Alcohol Award for Excellence in Research and a Curtin University Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence.

Heather Gridley

The middle of three sisters in a predominantly Irish-Australian family, Heather Gridley's upbringing in an inner northern suburb of Melbourne revolved around her family, the parish church and her neighbourhood. Her sociopolitical consciousness gathered momentum during the 1970s and since the 1980s has explicitly encompassed feminism and anti-racism. Heather's areas of specialist knowledge include community and feminist psychology, professional ethics, critical history of psychology, psychology and social justice. Her interest in community psychology stemmed from her work in community health, where she became aware of the limitations of interventions directed solely at individuals.

Heather coordinates one of Australia's two postgraduate programs in Community Psychology, at Victoria University, Melbourne. She has held national positions in both the APS College of Community Psychologists and Women and Psychology Interest Group, and she was a founding member of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Psychology Interest Group. She has served two terms on the APS Board of Directors, and is currently also working at the APS as Manager, Public Interest, where she has oversight of psychology's contribution to public debate and policy in the interests of community wellbeing and social justice.

Darrell Henry

Darrell Henry has worked 20 years as a psychologist, predominantly in the areas of drug and alcohol abuse, Aboriginal family violence, and child sexual abuse. He works with Aboriginal men, women and children in their families and communities, with a focus on healing. Darrell's Aboriginal grandmother country is with the Wunmulla people from the Canning Stock route in desert Western Australia. Darrell was co-founder of the Yorgum Aboriginal Family Counselling Service (established 1994, in Perth) with a small group of senior Aboriginal grandmothers, and served for periods as Manager and Clinical Director. Darrell was one of three panel members tasked with the 2002 Inquiry into Response by Government Agencies to Complaints of

Family Violence and Child Abuse in Aboriginal Communities, and a member of the advisory committee for the 2007 Structural Review of the WA government department responsible for child protection. He was an inaugural member of Western Australia's first Child Death Review committee. He is a former Deputy Chair of the WA Ministerial Advisory Council on Child Protection. Darrell has worked throughout regional Western Australia and currently works as a clinician in Warmun and Narrogin. He continues to train lay Aboriginal community people in working clinically with chronic trauma and in old and modern ways of healing.

Kerrie Kelly

Kerrie Kelly is a non-Indigenous psychologist who has worked for more than a decade with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues in the area of social and emotional wellbeing, which exists in a context of collective and transgenerational trauma. To develop cultural competence in this area, Kerrie entered into mentoring relationships with Aboriginal elders which continue today. Projects have included documenting an Indigenous counselling process and developing accredited counsellor training to reflect this; developing cross-cultural training for mental health practitioners and a co-counselling model to support remote Indigenous health practitioners to cope with job-related trauma. Kerrie has worked with the Marumali Journey of Healing program for many years, which aims to improve the quality of support available to survivors of Stolen Generation policies. More recently, Kerrie coordinated a national project to identify mental health services which encouraged help-seeking in urban, regional and remote Indigenous communities. Kerrie is currently working to support the steering committee of Indigenous psychologists to establish and develop the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association.

Gina Milgate

Gina Milgate is an Aboriginal woman from the Kamilaroi and Wiradjuri clans of New South Wales. Gina has an undergraduate and postgraduate degree in marketing and management and a teaching degree in higher education. She is currently working at the Australian Council for Educational Research in the area of Indigenous education. Gina's background in education, marketing and management has helped her contribute widely to the community, in particular through projects that create awareness, educate and inform key stakeholders, empower Indigenous students, and promote social awareness. In her role at ACER and through her participation in Indigenous affairs, Gina contributes to programs and policies at local, state and national levels that contribute to making a difference and improving outcomes for Indigenous people. Before her appointment at ACER, Gina was an academic at the University of New England for six years where she was teaching and researching in the subject areas of Indigenous organisational management, marketing, strategic planning and management, organisational behaviour and principles of management. She has also facilitated workshops with students in the areas of motivation, building confidence, goal-setting, career-planning, health and wellbeing, and has consulted with organisations. Gina is also working with *Mindmatters* in delivering their social and emotional wellbeing professional development workshops for schools and community groups and stakeholders that have a focus on Indigenous people and culture.

Maria Morgan

Maria Morgan was born in Broome, of Yawuru (Karajarri/Bunuba) heritage, and was raised in Wyndham. She was a Kimberley Development Commission Board member from 1996 to 2002 and was a founding member of the Wyndham Aboriginal Medical Service. Maria was also part of the Argyle Agreement negotiations and is currently Co-Chair of the Gelganyem Trustee Board. In addition she has served for many years on numerous community boards and committees including Ngnowar Aerwah, Joorook Ngnarni and Garduwar. With her husband Colin, she is proprietor of Wundargoodie Aboriginal Safaris and an inaugural member of the WA Indigenous Tourism Operators Committee State Board. In 2006 she founded the Youth and Community Wellbeing Program as a partnership with the University of Notre Dame Australia.

Dr Jeff Nelson

Jeff Nelson is the Director of Research and Research Training at Southern Cross University's Gnibi College of Indigenous Australian Peoples. Jeff gained his undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications from the School of Psychology at the University of Western Australia before working in various locations in various roles in rural and remote communities. Before commencing his current role, Jeff worked in the health, education and justice sectors in research and community development roles. He is primarily focused on developing and using cognitive assessment tools to inform programs that achieve sustained health and educational benefits for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Dr Nelson is also working with Gnibi and its partnering communities to develop a model of community engagement that empowers and supports the positive changes that come from the upskilling of local people.

Dr Yin Paradies

Dr Paradies is an Aboriginal-Anglo-Asian, born in Darwin, who has lived in Melbourne since 2007. He is a Research Fellow jointly at the Menzies School of Health Research and the University of Melbourne. He has qualifications in mathematics and computing (BSc), medical statistics (MMedStats), public health (MPH), and social epidemiology (PhD). Yin's research focuses on the health, social and economic effects of racism together with anti-racism theory, policy and practice for Indigenous Australians as well as migrants/refugees and their descendants. He also teaches short courses in anti-racism and diversity to researchers and professionals in Indigenous and multicultural affairs. Dr Paradies has received a range of awards including a Fulbright scholarship to study at the University of California, Berkeley, the Australia Day Council's 2002 Young Achiever of the Year award, and Scholar of the Year in the 2007 National NAIDOC Awards.

Associate Professor Robert Parker

Robert Parker is an Adjunct Associate Professor of Psychiatry at James Cook University and the Northern Territory Clinical School. Associate Professor Parker initially completed an Arts degree, majoring in Anthropology and Prehistoric Archaeology before working on the Tiwi Islands in the Northern Territory for three years as an Aboriginal art and craft adviser. He then went on to study medicine and specialise in psychiatry. In the course of his medical and psychiatric career he has had extensive clinical experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and mental health issues. Associate Professor Parker is past chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health committee for the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists and was also the previous Chair of the Board of Professional and Community Relations for the College. He is married to Gregoriana, a Tiwi Aboriginal Health Worker, and they have three daughters.

Lorraine Peeters

Like many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children of her generation, Auntie Lorraine Peeters was forcibly removed from her family at the age of four and placed in an institution. Through the healing journey necessitated by this traumatic event, she became involved with helping others from the Stolen Generation. She developed the Marumali model of healing and in response to great demand she established a healing program called Winangali Marumali in 2000, to support survivors of the Stolen Generation. Participants are empowered by the workshop and its model of healing. The program works in tandem with Link-Up, which allows Indigenous people to trace lost family members, and Bringing Them Home counsellors. Recognising that those removed from their families are twice as likely to have been arrested, she also established the Marumali program in Victorian prisons. Since 2002, more than 1000 participants have completed the program. Auntie Lorraine Peeters also played an important role in the National Apology given by the Prime Minister in 2008 to the Stolen Generations. Following the apology, she presented the Prime Minister with a glass coolamon, an Indigenous vessel for carrying

children, to thank him for offering the apology. Auntie Lorraine Peeters has had a profound impact on helping members of the Stolen Generation to heal.

Dr Nola Purdie (editor)

Nola Purdie is a Principal Research Fellow and Coordinator of Indigenous Education Research and Development at the Australian Council for Educational Research. She is an Adjunct Professor at the Queensland University of Technology where she was previously coordinator of research methods and educational psychology courses, and Director of the Centre for Cognitive Processes in Learning. Before commencing a career in educational research, Nola worked in state, Catholic, and independent schools in Western Australia in a variety of teaching and administrative capacities for over 20 years. She was the 2003 recipient of the Australian Association for Research in Education Award for Excellence in Indigenous Research. Nola's work in Indigenous education and related areas is guided by a social justice perspective, a valuing of diversity, and a desire to promote informed policy and practice.

Dr Debra Rickwood

Debra Rickwood is Professor of Psychology and Head of Department at the University of Canberra, where she teaches research methods, developmental and social psychology. She researches in the areas of youth mental health and help-seeking, and promotion, prevention and early intervention for mental health. Debra is a member of the APS College of Community Psychologists and is active in the society through membership of the Public Interest Advisory Group and the Climate Change Reference Group. She has been involved in developing mental health and health policy for the Australian Government, including being the consultant writer of the *National Action Plan for Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention for Mental Health* (2000) and the *National Chronic Disease Strategy* (2006). It is through these initiatives that Debra has developed a growing interest in the impact of policy on the health and social, emotional, spiritual and cultural wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Debra has also been involved in developing information and resources on mental health and mental illness for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Joe Roe

The late Mr Joseph Roe (Purungu by skin name) was a Karajarri/Yawru man. His people are also from the Broome and Bidadanga area. He completed a Bachelor of Applied Science in Indigenous Community Health (Mental Health Counselling specialisation) in 1996. Mr Roe worked in the area of Indigenous mental health for over 10 years, which included working with the Aboriginal Visitors Scheme, Pinikarra Aboriginal Counselling Service and the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Council. Mr Roe also worked as the Psych/Social Rehabilitation worker with Northwest Mental Health Services in Broome. His family has kindly given permission for Mr Roe's unique work to be reprinted so that his legacy can continue.

Professor Sherry Sagers

Sherry Sagers is Professor and Project Leader at the National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University of Technology, where she is establishing a research program on *Prevention, Early Intervention and Inequality* with an emphasis on child-focused, family and community-centred models to address disadvantage. She was formerly Foundation Professor of Applied Social Research and the Director of the Centre for Social Research at Edith Cowan University. An anthropologist, she has worked with and for Indigenous communities across Australia for almost 30 years. She is best known for her research and publications on Indigenous health and substance misuse, including the widely used textbooks *Aboriginal health and society* and *Dealing with Alcohol: Indigenous usage in Australia, New Zealand and Canada*, both co-authored with Dennis Gray. She has also published on children and young people; allied health and community services; and community development.

Dr Clair Scrine

Clair Scrine is currently a Senior Research Officer at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research. She has been a member of a number of project teams involving research and evaluation with Aboriginal communities in Western Australia including the WA Aboriginal Child Health Survey, the Rio Tinto Child Health Partnership, the BHP-sponsored Substance Use Reduction project in the Hedland and Newman areas of the Pilbara, the review of the St John of God Health Care 'Strong Women, Strong Babies, Strong Culture' program in the Pilbara and the review of the Wheatbelt Health Service. Before moving to Perth in 2006, Dr Scrine worked as a senior officer at the Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination and was previously a policy officer with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC).

Dr Scrine received her doctorate from Macquarie University in Sydney in 2003. During the completion of her doctorate she undertook a student residency at the Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine (within the University College of London) and at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

Dr Mark Sheldon

The late Dr Mark Sheldon was a pioneer psychiatrist with a mission to provide psychiatric services to remote Aboriginal communities. Mark died in Sydney, aged 33 years. In the vastness of Central Australia, Mark learnt to overcome cultural and language barriers in his dealings with Indigenous people and was honoured by having an Aboriginal name bestowed upon him. Working with the Ngungkari (local healer), he developed a flexible methodology of investigation, convinced that the best outcomes were often obtained when traditional methods and modern medicine were used together. Designing his own clinical strategies, he was able to confront the psychological and social problems endemic in many communities. Mark was awarded the Fellowship of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) in October 1997. Memorial prizes in the name of Mark Sheldon have been established by the RANZCP and by his old high school. Mark's family has kindly given permission for his unique work to be presented in this book so that his legacy can continue.

Professor Sven Silburn

Professor Silburn leads the program of developmental health and education research at the Menzies School of Health Research in Darwin where he is currently involved in the collaborative evaluation of the NT Department of Education and Training's Transforming Indigenous Education Strategy. Before his appointment at Menzies in 2009, he was Co-director of Curtin University's Centre for Developmental Health at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research in Perth. Sven originally practised as a clinical psychologist with the WA Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and became involved in Aboriginal mental health in the mid-1990s when he chaired the WA Ministerial Council for Suicide Prevention's working group on Aboriginal suicide prevention; this led to the WA Government instituting a \$2 million across-government state strategy to reduce Indigenous suicide and self-harm from 2001 to 2003. He was one of the chief investigators on the *Western Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey*, whose findings are reported in four major monographs including a technical report on the measurement of mental health problems in Aboriginal children and young people, and the first independently verified population data documenting the nature and extent of the intergenerational effects of forced separation in Western Australia.

Dr Christopher Sonn

Dr Christopher Sonn is a senior lecturer in the School of Sciences and Psychology at Victoria University, Melbourne. He teaches in the areas of community and intercultural psychology and qualitative methodologies, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. His work aims to contribute to theory, research and practice that make visible practices of racialisation and other

forms of exclusion as well as identifying resistant and resilient community responses, which are central to promoting social change. This has included exploring the sense of community and social identity negotiation from the perspectives of immigrant and Indigenous people, examining the dynamics of oppression and liberation in the context of intergroup relations, and developing critical pedagogy for anti-racism. This work draws on decolonising methodologies and critical whiteness studies. Papers based on this work have been published in refereed journals, including the *Journal of Community Psychology*, *Race, Ethnicity and Education* and the *American Journal of Community Psychology*. He co-edited the books *Psychological sense of community: Research, applications and implications* and *Psychology and Liberation: Theory and applications*.

Annalee Stearne

Anna Stearne is a Nyungar woman from Western Australia with a background in education and public health, and has been involved in researching Indigenous Australian substance misuse issues since 2001. She is the manager of the National Drug Research Institute's online resource, Indigenous Australian Alcohol and other Drugs Bibliographic Database, <www.db.ndri.curtin.edu.au>. In addition to this Ms Stearne has been involved in a number of research projects at national, state and local level. Research includes the identification of the elements of best practice in Indigenous substance misuse interventions (2003) and the areas of greatest need in Indigenous substance misuse (2009). Ms Stearne has also conducted a number of Indigenous-specific drug and alcohol program evaluations, including the evaluation of the effectiveness of the fuel substitution program COMGAS. From September 2005 until late 2008, Ms Stearne was based in Alice Springs. There she supported a local Aboriginal community organisation, enabling them to control and conduct their own research.

Karen Ugle-Strachan

Karen Ugle-Strachan is an Aboriginal psychologist from south-west Western Australia. Karen moved to Perth to study Psychology as a mature-aged student and graduated with a Bachelor of Psychology. Karen gained full registration as a psychologist in 2007. She is an Associate Member of the Australian Psychological Society and a member of the Australian Indigenous Psychological Association (AIPA). She has a passion for psychology and counselling for Aboriginal people. Karen has worked in various departments as a therapist and cultural consultant. She is now happily working for Yorgum Counselling Service in East Perth.

Professor Iain Walker

Iain Walker is a Scottish-born Wadjella living and working on Noongar land. He has recently started work as a Research Group Leader for Social Sciences and Sustainability at the CSIRO in Floreat, Perth. Previously, he was a professor of psychology at Murdoch University, where he worked since coming to Perth in 1986. He has been researching prejudice and intergroup relations for nearly three decades. He is co-author of the second edition of *Social cognition* and co-editor of *Social representations and identity: Content, process and power* and *Relative deprivation theory: Specification, development and integration*.

Associate Professor Roz Walker (author and editor)

Associate Professor Roz Walker has over 25 years' experience as a researcher and educator working with Aboriginal communities building local capacity within both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations. Roz worked at the Centre for Aboriginal Studies for many years, and was Deputy Director of the Curtin Indigenous Research Centre for several years prior to working with Kulunga Research Network at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research. Her key areas of interest include developing transformative and decolonising strategies at individual, organisational and community levels as well as promoting system level change. Roz has taught extensively at undergraduate and graduate levels in Aboriginal community management and

development and early years education in remote areas. She has worked in Aboriginal education in teaching, curriculum development, academic coordination, research and evaluation. She has extensive experience in translating research into policy and practice. Most recent examples include her involvement in communicating and disseminating the *Western Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey* throughout Western Australia to communities and key stakeholder groups and implementing the Australian Early Development Index and the Indigenous AEDI adaptation across the Pilbara. One of her key projects over the last three years has been the *Staying on Track* substance use reduction project funded through BHP Billiton Iron Ore Health Partnership with Telethon Institute for Child Health Research. This has involved working with young people and relevant agencies and stakeholders in Hedland, particularly the Hedland Youth Leadership Coalition and the Hedland Youth Stakeholder Action Group, assisting the development of a Youth Charter and Youth Strategy. Roz was co-editor of *Gunada Press* at Curtin University and provided extensive support to *Working With Indigenous Australians: A Handbook for Psychologists* (2000) edited by Associate Professor Pat Dudgeon.

Rosemary Wanganeen

Rosemary describes herself as a Griefologist—one who studies and applies holistic approaches to loss and grief counselling and educational models. Her commitment to transforming a preceding loss and grief model has enabled her to modernise her now innovative and unique Seven Phases to Reconciling Losses with Grief for the 21st century. Her study and research in weaving holistic approaches into a standard mainstream loss and grief model has led to the School of Psychology at the University of South Australia awarding her the title of Adjunct Research Fellow. Her passion and commitment to loss and grief had her involved in a number of research projects and her proudest moment is her Seven Phases being described in a publication called *Anger and Indigenous Men*. She has presented her work to a range of audiences, both nationally and internationally.

She spent a year as a research officer with the Committee to Defend Black Rights in Sydney, which became instrumental in forcing the government to call for the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. She spent a further two and a half years on the Royal Commission, which enabled her to ‘see, feel and hear’ intense grief from families around Australia about the death and dying of other family members. She also became aware that many if not all families had members with compounded suppressed unresolved grief and so it was just a matter of time before she was able to acknowledge a major gap in the services to herself and many Aboriginal people around Australia. This gap was any form of counselling for Aboriginal people, but more specifically there was no culturally appropriate counselling and, perhaps for her, what was more challenging was identifying that there was no culturally appropriate loss and grief counselling model. This inspired Rosemary to apply her personally developed Seven Phases and become the founding Director of the Australian Institute for Loss and Grief P/L (est. 2006), which formerly traded as the Sacred Site Within Healing Centre (est. 1993). The Institute is based at Port Adelaide. Rosemary has been an educator and counsellor for 16 years in addition to the five years she endured healing her own personal suppressed unresolved grief, giving her 22 years working with loss and grief.

She is a mother of three and grandmother of five.

Associate Professor Edward Wilkes

Edward Wilkes is an Associate Professor working for the National Drug Research Institute at Curtin University. He has a wide and extensive knowledge of Aboriginal Health. Ted was a member of the Working Party that produced the National Aboriginal Health Strategy 1989 and he chaired the working group that produced the *Complementary Action Plan* for the *National Drug Strategy 2003–2009*. His work with the Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service (1986–2002) as Director allowed him to advocate for change to bring about necessary gains in health and quality of life for Aboriginal Australians. Ted continues to advocate as an Aboriginal health leader and is particularly focused on alcohol and other drugs and research. He sits on the

Australian National Council for Drugs and is the Chair of the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee.

Dr Michael Wright

Michael is a Yuat Nyungar man from Western Australia. His mother's and grandmother's booja (country) is located just north of Perth, in the area known as the Victoria Plains, which includes the townships of Mogumber and New Norcia. Michael has extensive experience in the area of Aboriginal mental health and Aboriginal health. He has worked as a social worker in an inner-city hospital and was the manager of an Aboriginal mental health service located within the Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service in Perth. The mental health program was both innovative and unique, because it was the first Aboriginal community-controlled service to provide a psycho-social and emotional inreach service to Aboriginal families living with a serious mental illness in the Perth area. He is currently undertaking his PhD exploring the experiences of caregiving for Aboriginal people living with a serious mental illness. In 2009 he was awarded an NHMRC Training Fellowship. His post-doctoral project will investigate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the publicly funded mental health system in its provision of services to Aboriginal people living in a defined region in the Perth metropolitan area. The project will involve Aboriginal families, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal service providers, policy-makers and managers.

Professor Stephen Zubrick

Professor Zubrick holds an appointment in the Curtin University of Technology Centre for Developmental Health at the Institute for Child Health Research where he is the Head of the Division of Population Science. He was trained in the USA at the University of Michigan, where he completed Masters degrees in speech pathology and audiology, followed by doctoral and postdoctoral work in psychology. Steve has worked in Western Australian hospital and outpatient health and mental health settings for many years before commencing work in 1991 at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research. His research interests include the study of the social determinants of health and mental health in children, systematic studies of youth suicide, and large-scale psychosocial survey work in non-Indigenous and Indigenous populations. He chairs the Consortium Advisory Group that is implementing the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children and is a member of the Steering Committee for the Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children. He is particularly interested in the translation of psychological and social research findings into relevant and timely policies and actions on the part of governments and private agencies.



Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACCHS	Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
AD	adjustment disorder
AEDI	Australian Early Development Index
AGPS	Australian Government Publishing Services
AHMAC	Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council
AHMC	Australian Health Ministers' Conference
AHW	Aboriginal Health Worker
AIATSIS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Studies
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
AIMHI NT	Australian Integrated Mental Health Initiative in the Northern Territory
AIPA	Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association
AIRRFI	Awareness, Identify, Reclaim, Reconcile, Forgive, Inspire
AMHW	Aboriginal Mental Health Worker
AMSANT	Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the Northern Territory
ANPPEIMH	Australian Network for Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention for Mental Health
ANU	Australian National University
APA	American Psychiatric Association
APS	Australian Psychological Society
ASD	acute stress disorder
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
AUSIENET	Australian Network for Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention for Mental Health
BTH	<i>Bringing Them Home</i>
BTHC	Bringing Them Home Counselling
CAEPR	Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, ANU
CARPA	Central Australian Rural Practitioners Association
CDHAC	Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care
CDHSH	Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DCS	dysfunctional community syndrome
DEETYA	Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs

DRUID	Darwin Region Urban Indigenous Diabetes
DSM IV-TR	<i>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders</i> , Fourth Edition, Text Revision
EPDS	Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale
HPF	Health Performance Framework
HREOC	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
HRSCEET	House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training
ICD-10	International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems 10th Revision
ICMD	Indigenous Management and Community Development
IHI	innate human instincts
IPS	Indigenous Psychological Services
KICA	Kimberley Indigenous Cognitive Assessment
MCDS	Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
MHFA	mental health first aid
MSE	mental state examination
NACCHO	National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
NAHSWP	National Aboriginal Health Strategic Working Party
NATSIHC	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Council
NATSIHS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey
NATSISS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey
NDS	National Drug Strategy
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NPSMHW	National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce
NSEATSIH	National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health
NSP	needle and syringe program
NSPS	National Suicide Prevention Strategy (formerly National Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy, NYSPS)
OATSIH	Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health
OID	Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RANZCP	Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists
RCIADIC	Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody
RTO	Registered Training Organisations
SCRGSP	Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision
SEWB	social and emotional wellbeing
SEWB RCs	Emotional and Social Wellbeing Regional Centres
SUG	suppressed unresolved grief
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WAACHS	West Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey
WASC-Y	Westerman Aboriginal Symptom Checklist—Youth
WGIR	Working Group on Indigenous Reform
WSU	Workforce Support Unit

Introduction



The purpose of the book

There is a lack of suitable resources to educate and assist health professionals to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experiencing social and emotional wellbeing issues and mental health conditions, across all life stages. Further, those resources currently used by clinicians in mental health have little cross-cultural validity.

The purpose of *Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice* is to provide an appropriate resource for a range of health professionals who work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers, counsellors, and other staff of Indigenous health services. It provides a comprehensive, culturally relevant, and specific resource to support the provision of services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are striving to effectively deal with the effects of past policies and practices. The book is also suitable for students studying in relevant fields.

The book has been written by a range of acknowledged experts in the mental health field and thus presents a variety of perspectives relating to the social and emotional wellbeing and mental health issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. A strong Indigenous voice permeates the book. Indeed the high number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors and collaboration between authors has made this text unique.

A social and emotional wellbeing perspective

Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice is a unique and invaluable resource to educate and assist health professionals to work with Indigenous Australians.

Indigenous Australian people usually take a holistic view of mental health. To reflect this, we have adopted a social and emotional wellbeing approach to mental health in this book. The holistic view incorporates the physical, social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of individuals and their communities.

In this respect, Tom Calma, the former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, has observed that we need to break down 'health silos'; he argues that we must break down the silos that separate out mental health, family violence, and substance abuse services. He proposes that these should be integrated within comprehensive primary health care services to reflect the fact that these issues are often linked (Calma, 2005).

The holistic view of health of Indigenous Australians is evident in their capacity to sustain self and community in the face of a historically hostile and imposed culture. Unique protective factors contained within Indigenous cultures and communities have been sources of strength and healing when the effects of colonisation and what many regard as oppressive legislation have resulted in loss, grief and trauma.

Aboriginal writers in this book remind us of the importance of recognising existing frameworks of healing in Indigenous communities, and how culture and spirituality in relation to social and emotional wellbeing are ongoing sources of strength. For instance, the late Mr Joe Roe in Chapter 17 of this book argued that successful counselling and community development needs to include empowering Aboriginal peoples to bring back the systems of care, control and responsibility that once existed. His model and those of Lorraine Peeters (Chapter 20) and Rosemary Wanganeen (Chapter 19) are examples of how traditional ways of healing involve addressing people's emotional, spiritual, physical, and social needs—they are holistic and focus on wellbeing.

Guiding principles

The *National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well Being 2004–2009* contains nine guiding principles that further emphasise the holistic and whole-of-life view of health held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. The Framework was endorsed by Commonwealth and state/territory governments and represented agreement among a wide range of stakeholders on the broad strategies that needed to be pursued.

The nine principles enunciated in the Framework guided the development of *Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice*. The nine principles are:

1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is viewed in a holistic context that encompasses mental health and physical, cultural and spiritual health. Land is central to wellbeing. Crucially, it must be understood that while the harmony of these interrelations is disrupted, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ill health will persist.
2. Self-determination is central to the provision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services.
3. Culturally valid understandings must shape the provision of services and must guide assessment, care and management of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's health problems generally and mental health problems in particular.
4. It must be recognised that the experiences of trauma and loss, present since European invasion, are a direct outcome of the disruption to cultural wellbeing. Trauma and loss of this magnitude continue to have intergenerational effects.
5. The human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must be recognised and respected. Failure to respect these human rights constitutes continuous disruption to mental health (as against mental ill health). Human rights relevant to mental illness must be specifically addressed.
6. Racism, stigma, environmental adversity and social disadvantage constitute ongoing stressors and have negative impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's mental health and wellbeing.
7. The centrality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family and kinship must be recognised as well as the broader concepts of family and the bonds of reciprocal affection, responsibility and sharing.
8. There is no single Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander culture or group, but numerous groupings, languages, kinships and tribes, as well as ways of living. Furthermore, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may currently live in urban, rural or remote settings, in urbanised, traditional or other lifestyles, and frequently move between these ways of living.
9. It must be recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have great strengths, creativity and endurance and a deep understanding of the relationships between human beings and their environment (*National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well Being 2004–2009*, p. 6)

Background to the book

Although this book came about because chapter authors gave their time and shared their wisdom about the social and emotional wellbeing of Indigenous Australians, *Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice* had its origins in the Australian Government's commitment to the improvement of mental health services nationally.

The process

The Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, through OATSIH, commissioned the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and the Kulunga Research Network to produce this book.

Our task was to identify, commission and coordinate key Indigenous and non-Indigenous experts and stakeholders in the mental health sector to provide written contributions to the book. A list of potential contributors was drawn up at the commencement of the project. The list included clinicians, and cultural and educational experts. Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous experts who are stakeholders in the mental health sector were considered. The list was compiled from the editors' knowledge of people working in the field, their extensive networks among Indigenous communities and academic personnel, internet searches, and recommendations from the Expert Reference Group (ERG).

The scope of the book was to include content relating to historical and present-day social health and emotional wellbeing issues and the evolution of current Indigenous social and emotional wellbeing and mental health policy directions. It was to incorporate specific clinical mental health assessment processes and culturally appropriate programs and interventions.

In addition to health professionals who work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the target audience for the book was to include Vocational Education Training (VET) and Tertiary Education Training (TET) students to assist them to understand a variety of perspectives relating to social and emotional wellbeing and mental health issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The book will also be an invaluable resource for professional development in key discipline areas associated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing such as mental health nursing, occupational therapy, psychiatry, general medicine, psychology, and social work.

To achieve these things, we drew on the expertise of a range of individuals, groups and organisations including:

- the OATSIH Expert Reference Group for Improving the Capacity of Workers in Indigenous Communities
- relevant individuals from organisations listed in Chapter 21 of this book
- the ACER Standing Committee on Indigenous Education
- an Internal Advisory Group at the Telethon Institute of Child Health Research in Western Australia
- those located through our existing networks.

We developed a framework for the book (section and chapter themes) and invited key people to be chapter leaders. These leaders took responsibility for the chapters, although they generally worked with other authors who we also had identified as eminent people for the various chapters.

Individual draft chapters were sent out for external review to at least one and usually two reviewers who were recognised experts in relevant areas. Authors were invited to make changes to their chapters on the basis of reviewers' and editors' comments.

When all chapters had been completed, the draft manuscript was sent to several sites for market testing. We asked market testers:

- to provide an overall assessment of the manuscript in about 250 words
- to list the major uses of the work
- whether the work could be better organised or sequenced differently, and if so, in what way
- to comment on readability and writing style/s
- whether they would recommend this book to practitioners and students working in Indigenous mental health
- what would set this book apart from others in its field
- to which special areas or fields the work would make a good contribution.

Each author, or group of authors, speaks with their own voice. Although authors were given guidelines about the book before they commenced their work, we felt it was important to encourage diversity rather than conformity in the perspectives they presented. Authors were, however, encouraged to frame their chapters in accepted wisdom rather than around untested claims.

The structure of the book

Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice is divided into four parts.

Part 1 contains four chapters that outline the historical, social, cultural, and policy contexts that have shaped Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and wellbeing.

In Chapter 1, Robert Parker examines the concepts of physical and mental health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, both before and after the European colonisation of Australia. Parker points to some national and international innovative thinking that may assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to regain the health that has been so significantly lost.

In Chapter 2, Debra Rickwood, Pat Dudgeon and Heather Gridley discuss the history of the discipline and practice of psychology with Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in relation to mental health. The key engagements of psychology with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are outlined. The authors suggest positive ways that psychologists can work together to bring about improved social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing for Indigenous Australians.

Chapter 3 by Pat Dudgeon, Michael Wright, Yin Paradies, Darren Garvey and Iain Walker helps us understand the contemporary issues faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians by providing an overview of the social, cultural and historical contexts that have shaped their lives today. Brief overviews are given of pre-contact times, colonisation, resistance and adaptation, shifting government policies, and the struggle for recognition. Indigenous identity and meanings of belonging in country, community and family are also briefly covered. Contemporary issues confronting Indigenous people are included, with particular attention to racism.

Chapter 4 by Steve Zubrick, Kerrie Kelly and Roz Walker outlines the role of policy in setting directions for and achieving change in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health. Key national policies, frameworks and reports addressing the mental health and social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are presented.

Part 2 contains seven chapters on a number of issues that are particularly relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and wellbeing.

In Chapter 5, by Robert Parker, common types of mental disorders, such as anxiety disorders, mood disorders, psychosis and personality disorders are outlined. These disorders are discussed in terms of what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may have experienced in traditional as well as in contemporary contexts.

Chapter 6 explores current understandings of the determinants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing and its development. Its authors, Stephen Zubrick, Pat Dudgeon, Graham Gee, Belle Glaskin, Kerrie Kelly, Yin Paradies, Clair Scrine and Roz Walker, show that the determinants of this wellbeing are multiple, interconnected, and develop and act across the life course from conception to late life. The authors also show that the risk and protective factors impacting on the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people differ in important ways from those endorsed in mainstream concepts of mental health.

Chapter 7 by Sven Silburn, Belle Glaskin, Darrell Henry and Neil Drew examines epidemiological trends in suicide and attempted suicide for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and in other nations such as Canada, the USA and New Zealand. The meaning of suicide within Indigenous community contexts is explored, and the authors show how this can inform preventive action, early intervention and post-intervention.

Chapter 8 by Jenny Adermann and Marilyn Campbell outlines issues of excessive anxiety in Indigenous youth. It describes what an anxiety disorder is and its consequences, and how Indigenous youth seem to be at risk for developing such disorders. Issues concerning the delivery of traditional prevention and intervention programs are discussed and possible interventions are provided.

In Chapter 9, Edward Wilkes, Dennis Gray, Sherry Sagers, Wendy Casey and Anna Stearne examine substance misuse and mental health among Aboriginal Australians, as well as related harms and the social determinants of mental health and substance misuse. They also examine a range of services that have been developed to address these issues, and the National Drug Strategy's demand, supply and harm reduction framework. They argue that a multi-systemic strategy is required that addresses issues of cultural security, and that evidence-based practice is needed to enhance treatment outcomes. Until the social and structural determinants of good mental health are addressed, the co-morbidity of substance misuse and mental health among Aboriginal Australians will linger.

Chapter 10 by Judy Atkinson, Jeff Nelson and Caroline Atkinson focuses on how the effects of experiencing trauma are transmitted within and across generations. The chapter introduces the reader to a selection of views and conceptions of trauma, and theories of its transgenerational transfer. It also explores the links between unresolved childhood trauma and participation in violence, sexually inappropriate behaviour, and incarceration as adolescents and adults. The second part of the chapter discusses the challenges associated with working in Indigenous communities, and it gives an example of a program that is achieving positive results.

Chapter 11 by Kyllie Cripps briefly examines the context in which Indigenous family violence occurs. In particular, it explores how Indigenous people define and contextualise the violence they or their family members are experiencing. This context is important in considering pathways forward for healing for the victim, their families, and the broader kin network who inevitably feel the ripple effects of such violence.

Part 3 contains five chapters that focus on practice within the field.

Chapter 12 is about working as a culturally competent mental health practitioner. The authors, Roz Walker and Christopher Sonn, address such workforce issues as working in a multidisciplinary team; developing core competencies, knowledges, skills, understandings and attributes regarded as essential for practitioners; and the relations between the disciplines and professions and between those professions and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The chapter also provides a range of tools and strategies, and a reflective framework to assist students and practitioners from various disciplines to develop key competencies.

Chapter 13 by Pat Dudgeon and Karen Ugle focuses on communication and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in urban contexts. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in urban contexts may not portray stereotypical images of what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people look like or live like; however, urban identity is very strong and people have

strong territorial affiliations. Cultural concepts such as kinship affiliations, community obligations and values of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in urban contexts are outlined.

Chapter 14 by Neil Drew, Yolonda Adams and Roz Walker addresses issues of mental health assessment with Indigenous Australians. The authors examine the history of assessment and testing with culturally diverse groups, and they explore a range of emergent principles and guidelines for practice to improve and govern assessment practices with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. They note that assessment and practitioners conducting assessment must be repositioned (and reposition themselves) to play an important role in the development of procedures and practices in the provision of mental health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia.

Chapter 15 is based on the work of the late Mark Sheldon and concerns psychiatric health assessment in remote Aboriginal communities. Sheldon's work is informative for all mental health and wellbeing practitioners intending to work with Aboriginal people, especially in service delivery in remote areas. Sheldon sought alternative ways of working clinically in the cross-cultural setting of traditional and semi-traditional Aboriginal society. He worked to develop approaches to suit the setting. His work required adjustments in history-taking, mental state examination, diagnosis, management, professional boundaries, and the way he worked with his colleagues.

In Chapter 16, Sue Ferguson-Hill considers factors relating to perinatal mental health, culture, environmental context, and ways of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. Protective and risk factors related to perinatal mental health are discussed from the perspective of mother, child and father. Ways of strengthening wellbeing and of recognising and managing perinatal distress and perinatal depression are explored. The chapter also briefly explores pathways and models of care, screening, and tools of assessment used in the perinatal period.

Part 4 presents examples of models and programs for practitioners working with different groups. The models are responses by individuals and groups of people to a perceived need. Some are based on people's personal experiences; others are based on existing models of healing that have been reinterpreted to meet the specific contexts and needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Chapter 17 presents a cultural model for keeping the spirit strong. The Ngarlu program was developed by Karajarri man Joe Roe (deceased) as an aid to working with Aboriginal men in their recovery from a major psychiatric illness. It is a path to spiritual, emotional and social wellbeing. The model has both practical application and policy impact; for instance, it underpins the current framework for the Western Australian Aboriginal drug and alcohol strategy.

Chapter 18 by Maria Morgan and Neil Drew outlines a model for engagement with remote Aboriginal communities in the East Kimberley region of Western Australia. The model was developed and implemented over the last four years as a partnership between Aboriginal communities and the University of Notre Dame Australia. The engagement model is based on authentic program ownership by the Aboriginal communities to reduce the incidence of youth suicide. The model is holistic, based on a multifaceted wellness framework that includes personal, group and collective wellness.

Chapter 19 is by Rosemary Wanganeen. It describes the potential of a holistic loss and grief model to heal anger, rage and violence and empower people who see and find themselves as victims. The Seven Phases to Healing model of self-healing and spiritual reconnection provides a basis for elements related to counselling processes. The basis for Wanganeen's model is five years of her personal life experiences and over 15 years in professional practice. Drawing on this deeply personal experience, this chapter emphasises the importance of positive self-healing and each person's responsibility for this.

Chapter 20 by Lorraine Peeters outlines the Marumali program which she developed as an Aboriginal model of healing for the Stolen Generations. The program was examined and endorsed in 2000 by psychiatrist Professor Beverley Raphael (co-author of the *Ways Forward Report*) as being safe and effective practice. The program was also endorsed by the National

Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) in 2001 as being a positive training and education model in social and emotional wellbeing. The Marumali program is used extensively in the Koori justice system in Victoria.

Chapter 21 provides examples of mental health services and programs that provide specific assistance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the practitioners who work with them. There are different programs and services for different groups and types of mental health issues. The information has been provided by the organisations or has been gleaned from their websites. The services listed in this chapter are not the only ones available but the chapter does provide a starting point for people looking for information or a place to go.

Care and protection

Issues within this book may have an impact on readers and self-care mechanisms may be useful. Some Indigenous students and practitioners may have experienced loss, grief and trauma themselves. Some non-Indigenous people may find aspects of the book challenging and should also be aware of the need for self-care. Teachers' duty of care to students may require them to alert students to the possibility that some chapters may have an impact on them as they reflect on their own experiences. When working with clients, practitioners need to acknowledge the need for self-care as discussed in Chapter 12, 'Working as a Culturally Competent Mental Health Practitioner'. Chapter 21, 'Mental Health Programs and Services', provides information about support for mental health and wellbeing professionals who work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Terminology

In Australia, there are many Indigenous nations, languages and cultures. This is shown clearly in Horton's map of Australia's Indigenous languages which indicates the general location of larger groupings of people but may include smaller groups such as clans, dialects, or individual languages in a group.

It is difficult to identify terminology that is appropriate and acceptable to all these groups. Indigenous Australian peoples are people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and who are accepted as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person in the community in which they live, or have lived.

In this book, a number of different terms have been used when referring to Indigenous Australian peoples. We have chosen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in the title of the book to indicate the distinctiveness of these two major groups of people and to respect what term most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people prefer to use. Authors have used a range of terms and in general we have retained their language, although this has been changed sometimes to aid the flow of text for the reader.

Overall, our intent has been to use language that accords respect and dignity to Australia's Indigenous peoples.

The term 'Stolen Generations' is used to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples affected by past government removal policies and practices. The plural 'Generations' is used to draw attention to the transgenerational impacts of past removal practices.

References

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