24

Community Life and Development Programs – Pathways to Healing

Helen Milroy, Pat Dudgeon and Roz Walker

OVERVIEW

This chapter provides an overarching framework for understanding the components of healthy communities through a healing and community life development approach. The chapter explores three major themes covering the nature of the trauma that has occurred over many generations and continues to be experienced in the present. These are:

- the extreme sense of powerlessness and loss of control;
- the profound sense of loss, grief and disconnection; and
- the overwhelming sense of trauma and helplessness.

In turn, there are three pathways to recovery to address each of these areas of trauma that have occurred as a consequence of the history of colonisation and its impacts:

- self-determination and community governance;
- reconnection and community life; and
- restoration and community resilience.

Most significantly we argue that Aboriginal worldviews, developing a comprehensive, holistic approach that focuses on individual, family and community strengths whilst at the same time addressing the needs of the community, is both a more culturally acceptable and effective approach to address these issues.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, on all indicators, Aboriginal people suffer significant health and mental health morbidity, shortened life expectancy, as well as significant socioeconomic disadvantage.[1] See Chapter 1 (Dudgeon and colleagues) and Chapter 6 (Zubrick and colleagues) for a detailed discussion of the relevant statistics. Despite the extent of disadvantage and overrepresentation on all health and mental health indices, Aboriginal communities continue to display their cultural strengths and resilience in facing such adversity. There are a number of factors that have contributed to this state of affairs, including the historical legacy of colonisation, many unresolved issues over land rights, self-determination and identity,[2] as well as current levels of trauma and loss, poor economic development and the lack of human capital available to support families.[3] In view of the high level of burden and the multifactorial nature of the issues, no single program is likely to have a major sustainable impact on health and wellbeing.

At present, due to the altered pattern of distribution of the population across the ages, Aboriginal communities are predominantly young with a median age of 19 years. There are very few older age groups to provide buffering and support for children and community life—see Figure 24.1.

In view of the diminished community capability, together with the high level of risk factors present across all health, social, welfare and education indicators, programs intending to address health and mental health and wellbeing need to be sensitive to the realities of Aboriginal life. They also need to have both a focus on short-term gains as well as growing a healthy population to old age to become sustainable over generations. Another consideration will be prioritising the most urgent issues identified by the community whilst continuing to work on long-term sustainable change to improve health and wellbeing, in particular the safe and nurturing development of children.

Figure 24.1: Population Pyramid of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Populations, 30 June 2011
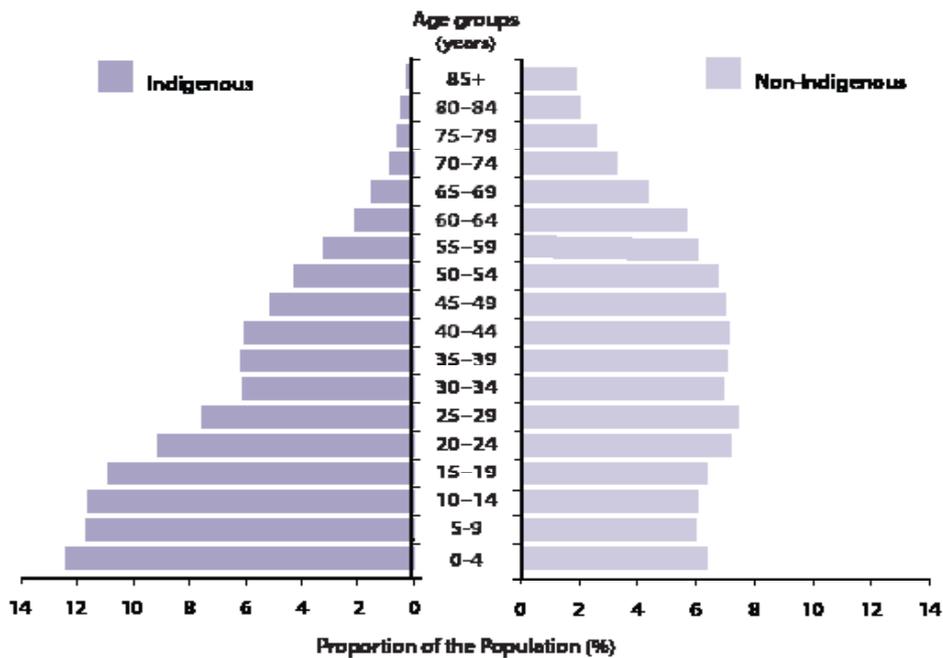
Source: ABS, 2012

Re-establishing Healthy Communities

The first step in re-establishing healthy communities is to acknowledge and understand the impact of the colonial legacy on the lives of Aboriginal people today and the various pathways necessary for healing from historical trauma, using both cultural and contemporary understandings and processes. Although the full history of Australia in regard to the treatment of Aboriginal peoples remains in dispute, there is enough evidence to support the experience of sustained, profound trauma for the entire Aboriginal community over generations, suggestive of genocide. See Chapters 1, 6 and 17 for further discussion.

It is partly the ongoing effects of this process that continue to impact negatively at the individual and community level that require healing before the contemporary issues can be successfully dealt with. Following this, establishing appropriate cultural, community, family and individual support systems and programs to address current needs and developments can occur systematically.

The themes that emerge in the pathways to recovery are:

- self-determination and community governance;
- reconnection and community life; and
- restoration and community resilience.

HEALING FROM HISTORICAL TRAUMA

In order to address these fundamental wounds, each element needs to be dealt with in its own right as well as collectively to repair the social fabric, re-establish community and cultural norms and support the safe development of children and young people.

The Legacy of Genocide

When considering the impacts of trauma experienced historically, there are three major themes that cover the nature of the trauma that occurred over many generations and continue to be experienced. These are:

- the extreme sense of powerlessness and loss of control;

- the profound sense of loss, grief and disconnection; and

- the overwhelming sense of trauma and helplessness.

Powerlessness and Loss of Control

With the imposition of Colonial Rule, Aboriginal peoples and communities experienced various forms of control over all aspects of their lives that undermined the ability to exercise their inherent rights over land, resources, family, children and community life. There were few, if any, avenues for appeal and if resistance or protest was shown by Aboriginal peoples, this was often dealt with in a way that further disempowered families and communities. The sense of powerlessness was in most cases extreme and multigenerational. The sense of degradation and humiliation at being treated as less than human with little regard for the most basic of human rights, remains a source of distress for many families.[4]

Colonial control was exerted through the clearing and taking of land with massacres and dispossession of clan groups; race-based legislation; slave labour; having an 'apartheid' system effectively excluding and alienating Aboriginal peoples from services, society and resources; denial of wages and economic development; imposition of a foreign legal system; and incarceration.[5]

Ways of coping with a sense of powerlessness vary. Some people become passive and are easy prey for further exploitation and abuse. For others, in an attempt to regain control, they may use violence, intimidation or coercion. It has been shown that feelings of powerlessness or lack of control over one's life have been linked to poor health and life outcomes,[6, 7] despair and depression, suicide,[8] violence, substance misuse,[9] poor relationships and parenting difficulties. Refer to Chapter 19 (Marriott and Ferguson-Hill). In contrast, having a sense of control over one's life has been linked to better health and life outcomes, wellbeing and prosperity. Internationally, where the community has a sense of cultural continuity and control over services and community life, lower youth suicide rates have been reported in Indigenous peoples.[10]

Loss and Disconnection

It was estimated that prior to colonisation the Aboriginal population was between 500,000 and 1 million people. By the early 1900s, this had reduced to only 60,000, with recent estimates in 2006 at just over 500,000 people.[11] The sheer loss of life would have had a profound impact on families and communities but also has to be considered in the context of other losses. All forms of loss were experienced including the loss of land, culture, heritage, ancestry, identity, language and children. The current lack of human capital is partially due to these historical losses. With the forcible removal of children under government legislation from the early 1900s through to the 1970s as outlined in the *Bringing Them Home Report*, the negative impact on families, children and communities was extensive.[4] The Report noted the negative impact on health and wellbeing as well as difficulties parenting the next generation. As well, the deliberate

fragmentation of kinship systems made it difficult for many people to find their way home and re-establish links culturally and within the community.[4]

The profound sense of loss results in feelings of disconnection and isolation as well as multigenerational grief and existential despair. Currently, it is known that the loss of affectional bonds, especially in childhood, can have significant adverse effects on child development and across the life-course, leaving children and adults with mental health problems, poor coping mechanisms, difficulty in forming relationships and very likely to contribute to self-medication and substance misuse[9]. See Chapter 19 (Marriott and Ferguson-Hill) and Chapter 21 (Milroy) regarding the importance of affection in supporting positive outcomes.

As well, the death of a spouse can contribute to poor health and shortened life expectancy. Chronic grief can also reduce immune function and increase the risk for a range of chronic illnesses.[12] In some cases, communities have become extremely tolerant of abhorrent behaviour due to the chronic state of grief and to avoid experiencing any further loss. The extent of the impact of profound and continuing loss as currently exists in Aboriginal communities is unknown but this must act as a significant risk factor for poor health and life outcomes, especially during critical developmental periods in childhood. In contrast, having good social supports; strong family and attachment relationships; sensitive, nurturing care-giving in infancy; and a strong identity are protective factors for good health, social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB) and life outcomes (see Chapter 4, Gee and colleagues and Chapter 6, Zubrick and colleagues for further discussion on this topic).

Trauma and Helplessness

For Aboriginal peoples across Australia, all forms of trauma were experienced over time including the frontier violence and massacres; the deliberate introduction of diseases and poisoning; sexual abuse; economic and political abuse; as well as neglect, alienation and discrimination. Cultural and spiritual trauma was also experienced through the denial and denigration of cultural and spiritual beliefs and practices, the mislabelling of behaviours and experiences, and sacrilege through the decimation, destruction and removal of sacred sites, objects and deceased persons.

One of the central experiences of overwhelming and sustained trauma is a sense of utter helplessness and, combined with the ongoing fear and distress associated with traumatic experiences, many adverse outcomes can occur. These experiences can result in an inability to cope with life, disrupt emotional self-regulation, and reduce recovery to one's former potential. This can lead to mental illness and physical health problems, a sense of a foreshortened future, and an inability to develop mastery in life.

Trauma can impact negatively on behaviour, interpersonal relationships, family and community functioning, and may result in deliberate self-harm and self-medication with drugs and alcohol. Living in states of chronic stress can lead to physical problems and chronic disease, such as diabetes, hypertension and heart disease; and psychological problems, such as depression. Some people may cope by living very disrupted and chaotic lives while others may take too many risks and leave themselves and others exposed to further harm.

Trauma in childhood can have an array of adverse developmental impacts including the ability to focus on learning.[13] Trauma can also impact on psychological development in a variety of ways including effects on the sense of self and identity, on self in relation to others and on worldview. For example, repeated trauma in childhood can result in loss of trust, difficulties forming intimate relationships, poor attachment, poor identity formation and maladaptive coping mechanisms. In some cases of abuse, children may be at risk of becoming perpetrators of violence and sexual abuse on others and the cycle of abuse becomes transgenerational.

Although the experience of trauma can impact at any age, certain developmental stages are especially vulnerable. Infants, very young children, as well as old people, are dependent on others for protection and care. Teenagers can be very sensitive due to the developmental changes they are experiencing, and as the accumulation of trauma becomes more evident, the young person may feel alone and unsupported.[14] New mothers and fathers may also feel vulnerable as parenthood can rekindle their own traumatic childhood experiences (these issues are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 19, Marriott and Ferguson-Hill).

In contrast, having a sense of personal agency assists with developing personal and social skills and responsibility and good self-regulation and assists with healthy psychological development. For normal development, it is important to be able to self-soothe and reduce tension, to enable adequate sleep and to establish routines early in life. Healthy social and cultural norms with consistency, behavioural limits and nurturing supports are protective for child development.

The Importance of Family, Self-Value and Social Cohesion

Aboriginal culture is more collective than individualistic, held together through a kinship system involving a shared sense of identity, responsibility, care and control.[15] While the extent to which the kinship system influences or dominates family and community life was stronger traditionally, even though it is more fragmented it still remains strong today.[15] The family networks—aunt, uncle, brother, father, sister, mother, husband, wife or various other relations and affinities—govern almost all social interactions. Aboriginal culture is very integrated and, although harmed by dispossession, removal and cultural genocide, the role of extended family networks remain important for parenting children: while aunties, uncles, grandparents, older brothers and sisters are valued members of the parenting and caring system in which the childcare and parenting responsibilities are shared.[15] Nevertheless, many of the determinants impacting upon the health, mental health and SEWB of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are having a cumulative and detrimental impact on the capacity of families to maintain traditional roles and responsibilities.

PATHWAYS TO RECOVERY

Although there is considerable overlap within the three themes, it is important to address each one specifically as well as all three collectively to promote healing and recovery across generations. The themes that emerge in the pathways to recovery are:

- self-determination and community governance;
- reconnection and community life; and,
- restoration and community resilience.

The interrelatedness of the ways in which the ongoing history of transgenerational trauma impacts on individual, family and community SEWB, and specific pathways to recovery, are depicted in Figure 24.2 below. The diagram shows how each of the pathways to recovery outlines a framework for program development and, in combination, they provide a holistic framework to support community life and development detailed in Table 24.1 on page 431.

While each of the circles encompass the specific pathways to recovery related to each of three trauma themes, in combination they affirm that recognition of cultural strengths and facilitation of Aboriginal ways of working (and of leadership, healing and empowerment) is fundamental to promoting sustainable recovery. At the centre where the circles overlap each of the pathways of recovery come together containing the overall strength and recovery which in combination provide the holistic sense of health and SEWB (for individual, family and community). As discussed throughout the book, Aboriginal SEWB encompasses physical, psychological, social, cultural and spiritual elements.

Figure 24.2: Pathways to Recovery from Transgenerational Trauma

© Milroy, Dudgeon and Walker, 2013
Design: Chrissie Easton
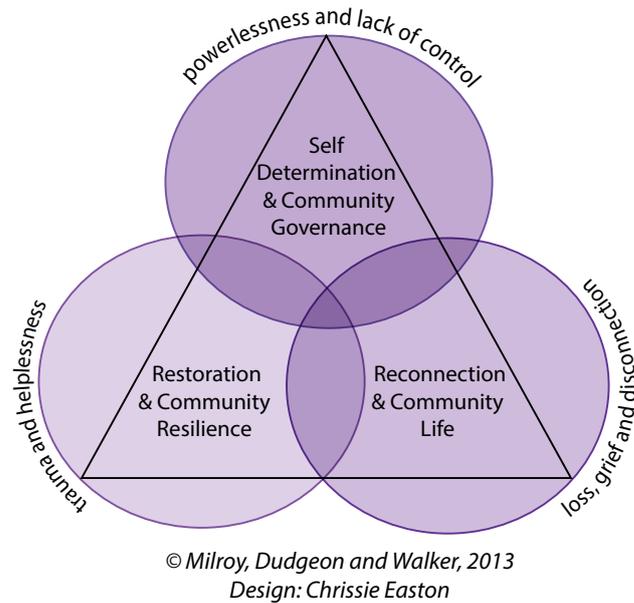
SELF-DETERMINATION AND COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

One of the vestiges of the colonial legacy is powerlessness. To redress this, pathways to promote and develop self-determination are required. Being able to make decisions and be responsible for oneself, family and community, having choice and being able to participate effectively in society, is important for development and wellbeing.[16] For children, it is important to see their parents and Elders in positions of responsibility and respect in society, in decision-making and leadership roles. In turn it is important that parents and Elders have a sense of self efficacy, sense of control and self-determination. How this is developed from a cultural and community perspective will require further consultation, but some basic principles can be applied. The *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission* (HREOC) *Social Justice Report* 2002, provides a detailed discussion on self-determination and notes the following points:[17]

> *Self-determination is an ongoing process that ensures the continuance of choice, participation, decision making and control over ones destiny:*
>
> - *It involves the freedom to live well, humanly and respectfully according to values and beliefs.*
>
> - *It includes the notion of a collective identity for Aboriginal peoples.*
>
> - *It requires recognition and support with appropriate representation at all levels of society.*

It is important to recognise the difference between those practices that have arisen through the trauma associated with colonisation and those based on traditional cultural principles. Governing through fear and threat or for personal gain is not a cultural norm and, in most cases, governance was a shared process with the aim of having a balanced, harmonious and respectful community life. Empowerment is an important part of this process to enable individuals and communities to speak up on issues or in consultations without fear of reprisal, and for true consensus to be reached.

Questions That Need to be Addressed

Some of the issues/questions that arise for communities and stakeholders in pursuing self-determination and community governance are as follows:

> **Questions for Self-determination and Community Governance**
>
> - How is personal and collective decision-making conducted? What are the cultural protocols in place and are they effective?
> - What are the community governance arrangements?
> - How is the sense of community identity expressed and transmitted across generations?
> - What methods are used for individual and community level empowerment and leadership?
> - How is conflict and dispute resolution conducted within a cultural framework?
> - What aspects of traditional law are still important and effective in the community?
> - Which kinship obligations still work effectively?
> - What exposure do children have to effective decision-making and leadership role modelling?
> - What community processes support children and youth to be autonomous, responsible and make good choices?
> - How are families supported to be both nurturing and protective of children?
> - What happens for those families and children who are not doing well?

The program pathways that arise from the discussion between community members could address the issues of taking back control and being empowered through understanding the history, previous mechanisms of control, and contemporary issues of relevance. It will also need to include understanding the ongoing nature of discrimination and disadvantage and how these issues impact on the community.

Program Pathways for Addressing Governance and Leadership

Programs may include those that address the community structure, governance, representational and participation levels, as well as the individual and family models of decision-making, problem solving and relationship structures. It is also important to include educational, economic and career programs to enhance potential and provide opportunity for growth.

Programs may include the following:

> **Programs to Address Governance and Leadership**
>
> - Empowerment, assertiveness and leadership programs
> - Governance and management training
> - Elders forums
> - Community forums to enhance identity
> - Community life, harmony and celebration events
>
> *Continued . . . .*

> **Programs to Address Governance and Leadership** *(continued)*
>
> - Community life skills programs
> - Family mediation and conflict resolution
> - Parenting programs
> - Child development and school/education programs
> - Healthy lifestyles, healthy choices and promotion of health and wellbeing activities
> - Individual and clinical programs to support problem solving, coping skills, self-esteem, motivation and responsibility
> - Economic development, career and work programs
> - Understanding and dealing effectively with racism and discrimination.

RECONNECTION AND COMMUNITY LIFE

To redress the generational and current levels of loss and grief it is necessary to strengthen connections to culture, community, family and spirituality. Importantly, reclaiming the history of the group and creating an ancestral and community story of connections to family and country, will help to restore a sense of cultural continuity.

Individual stories of loss and resilience are also important in retaining the community narrative from past to present and into the future. For children, it is important in their development to know where they have come from, where they belong and how this knowledge will be transferred to the next generation. This knowledge can create pride in identity and a sense of being accepted and supported within a larger family and community structure. Having a strongly woven social fabric will support social inclusion, cohesion and reduce feelings of isolation and vulnerability in knowing there is always someone to connect with, to feel supported by, and be held in mind even when separated.

Questions that need to be addressed

Some of the questions around supporting reconnection and community life are as follows:

> **Questions for Reconnection and Community Life**
>
> - What healing ceremonies or practices are required for the varying levels of historical loss, including massacre sites?
> - What current practices assist in dealing with the ongoing loss in the community?
> - How are families supported in bereavement?
> - How are children supported in bereavement?
> - What has been available to assist the Stolen Generation peoples?
> - How are people re-integrated back into the community after absences such as incarceration, illness, or foster care?
> - What current community or cultural practices enhance a sense of connection?
>
> *Continued . . . .*

- How is life celebrated including new births in the community?
- How are women supported to connect together?
- How are men supported to connect together?
- How are children connected and supported in their development?
- How is attachment in infancy supported?
- How are Elders supported?
- How are family conflicts resolved?

Program pathways for enhancing a sense of cultural connectedness

The program pathways that arise from these issues are about understanding the historical legacy of loss in the broadest sense, cultural and community practices to enhance a sense of connectedness, inclusion and cohesion, and contemporary processes that can assist in recovery. These programs may look at family and community relationships, what processes affirm a strong cultural identity, restoring the community and individual narrative, re-integration and family/community reunion processes, grief and loss issues. It may be important to hold particular ceremonies to address historical losses and promote recovery. Programs may include the following:

Programs for Enhancing Cultural Connectedness

- Bringing them home and Link-up services
- Family re-unification programs
- Grief counselling for individuals and family
- Community grief programs and ceremonies
- Recording of oral histories
- Community cultural celebrations
- Strong men's groups
- Strong women's groups
- Elders' groups
- Cultural renaissance programs, for example, language nests, dance groups, art forums
- Family support programs
- Mothers' and infants' support programs

RESTORATION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Given trauma has continued on many levels across generations, healing from trauma is a slow and complex process. As genocide was a foreign concept for Aboriginal people, there is no existing complete healing process for trauma of this magnitude. However, there would have been a range of common strategies used to support people, assist in coping, and enhance recovery. The impact of trauma on children is often overlooked, thinking that children are too young to understand or are resilient. However, the earlier the exposure to trauma, the more severe the impact can be. As one of the central themes arising from the experience of trauma is utter helplessness, restoring a sense of mastery is essential.

Achieving a Sense of Mastery

Achieving a sense of mastery is important across all age groups. It assists us to experience a sense of achievement in being able to do things for ourselves as well as others, develop confidence, be responsible, cope with disappointments and be self-regulating.[18] As well, reducing fear and having places that promote a sense of calm and safety are important. Some of the other major issues are being able to trust in yourself and others, feeling safe and protected, being able to respect those in authority.

Restoration of the self, family, community and culture within a cultural framework is required in order to re-establish social and cultural norms for the healthy development of children. While reconnection gives us the social fabric that keeps us grounded in supportive relationships, restoration is the process that strengthens the individual and social fabric from tearing apart.[19] For any group, there are a range of cultural, community, family and individual mechanisms and factors that assist in times of stress and promote positive coping and recovery.

Children often learn how to cope or how to do things by watching their peers, family and community members. It is important for adults to show responsible and caring behaviour if they expect their children to do the same. However, under extreme conditions, maladaptive coping strategies can develop and these can become entrenched in families and communities. Examples of this are evident in stories such as those in Chapter 20 (Hayes, D'Antoine and Carter).

Questions That Need to be Addressed

However, it is important to recognise the strengths and resilience inherent in Aboriginal culture and families, as well as the impact of the historical legacy on coping styles to understand what is currently happening. By understanding what are proper cultural and social norms, healthy coping mechanisms can be restored.

Some of the questions underpinning such programs are:

> **Questions for Restoration and Community Resilience**
>
> - What were the old ways people coped with stress?
> - What happens now?
> - What cultural and community mechanisms supported people to recover?
> - How did the family and community protect children and keep people safe?
> - What were the sanctions for those who did harm to others?
> - What are the common behaviours people display when under stress or when something bad happens?
> - What are the strengths in the community?
> - What are the problems in the community?
> - Are there cultural ceremonies/practices for healing from trauma?
> - Are there cultural ceremonies for restoring the spirit?
> - Are there places in the community where bad things happened that need a healing process?
> - Are there places for healing in the community?
>
> *Continued . . . .*

Questions for Restoration and Community Resilience *(continued)*

- Are there places for sanctuary, where you can be quiet, calm and peaceful?
- Are there safe places in the community?
- How do people show respect for these places?
- Are there community counsellors?
- How does the community intervene if families are not safe for children?
- How does parenting work in the families and community?
- How are morals and responsible behaviour taught (right way)?
- How is joy and happiness experienced in the community?
- What are the community's cultural values or principles?
- How are these upheld in the community?
- What are the ways to restore justice in the community?
- What are the barriers to changing bad behaviours?

The program pathways that arise from these issues take into account the behaviours and experiences of the community in order to meet the needs appropriately.

Program Pathways for Building Community Capacity

The programs should aim to build community capacity for the establishment of wellbeing, as well as strengthen positive coping and recovery. This can be achieved by enhancing the individual, family and community's ability to recognise problems, deal with them proactively, seek help as required and improve the responsiveness and appropriateness of services.

Programs may include:

Programs for Building Community Capacity

- Restoring the cultural narrative and promoting strengths in the community
- Mental health first aid education
- Child emotional development programs
- Community protocols promoting cultural values
- Drug and alcohol programs
- Counselling programs
- Mental health programs including individual and family intervention
- Recovery-focussed rehabilitation
- Offender programs
- Support groups
- Family violence programs
- Child protection programs

Continued . . . .

MOVING FORWARD

Although there are three themes outlined above, there is clearly a lot of overlap in some of the impacts and pathways for recovery. It is important however, to make sure there is consideration given to each of the different themes to understand the magnitude of the issues and various aspects of recovery.

Questions for Moving Forward

There are also several other questions and issues of importance when considering the broader aspects of healing and moving forward. These include:

- What used to work well and why?
- What doesn't work well anymore and why?
- What are the critical elements of culture to be carried forward?
- How can this be done?
- How is this integrated into the programs?
- What can we learn from Western knowledge?
- How can this be applied appropriately (with cultural safety)?
- What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) to recovery and prosperity?

The *Australian Human Rights Commission* (AHRC) paper concludes that Australian government policies and programs tend to adopt a 'crisis management' approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy 'which feeds the sense of inequality experienced by Aboriginal Australians through paying for poor health, education, housing, employment status and so on'.[2] Despite record levels of expenditure, the current policy formulation and implementation process (including Close the Gap initiatives) does nothing more than manage the inequality that Indigenous peoples experience.

> *Clearly, what is needed is an approach based in partnership and mutual respect which seeks to facilitate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation on an equal basis, or to allow Indigenous peoples in the words of Madame Daes to 'live well'.*
>
> *Nothing less than the recognition of our right to self-determination is needed to begin to remedy our current situation.[2]*

CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined a range of factors that impact on Aboriginal mental health and SEWB. It proposes a number of key themes that need to be acknowledged if we are to address many of the complex and interrelated issues that impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Importantly, we have outlined the various pathways to recovery that are required to build on existing cultural strengths, and empower individuals, families and communities to move forward.

REFLECTIVE EXERCISES

1. Read the case studies from Chapters 21 and/or 23 and, for each case study, choose the program pathway you would begin with.

2. Look at the questions in the following tables and consider, in your role as a practitioner, community member or policy maker, the steps you would take to address either individual, family or community mental health and wellbeing.

Table 24.1: Programs Development Summary

THEME 1	
Powerlessness and Loss of Control	
Questions to be asked	How is personal and collective decision-making conducted? What are the cultural protocols in place and are they effective?
	What are the community governance arrangements?
	How is the sense of community identity expressed and transmitted across generations?
	What methods are used for individual and community level empowerment and leadership?
	How is conflict and dispute resolution conducted within a cultural framework?
	What aspects of traditional law are still important and effective in the community?
	Which kinship obligations still work effectively?
	What exposure do children have to effective decision-making and leadership role modelling?
	What community processes support children and youth to be autonomous, responsible and make good choices?
	How are families supported to be both nurturing and protective of children?
	What happens for those families and children who are not doing well?
Self-determination and Community Governance	
Pathways to recovery	Empowerment, assertiveness and leadership programs
	Governance and management training
	Elders forums
	Community forums to enhance identity
	Community life, harmony and celebration events
	Community life skills programs
	Family mediation and conflict resolution
	Parenting programs
	Child development and school/education programs
	Continued . . . .

Table 24.1: Programs Development Summary (continued)

	THEME 1 *(continued)*
	Self-determination and Community Governance (continued)
Pathways to recovery *(continued)*	Healthy lifestyles, healthy choices and promotion of health and wellbeing activities
	Individual and clinical programs to support problem solving, coping skills, self-esteem, motivation and responsibility
	Economic development, career and work programs
	Understanding and dealing with racism and discrimination
	THEME 2
	Loss and Disconnection
Questions to be asked	What healing ceremonies or practices are required for the levels of historical loss, including massacre sites?
	What current practices assist in the ongoing loss in the community?
	How are families supported in bereavement?
	How are children supported in bereavement?
	What has been available to assist the Stolen Generation peoples?
	How are people re-integrated back into the community after absences such as incarceration, illness, or foster care?
	What current community or cultural practices enhance a sense of connection?
	How is life celebrated including new births in the community?
	How are women supported to connect together?
	How are men supported to connect together?
	How are children connected and supported in their development?
	How is attachment in infancy supported?
	How are Elders supported?
	How are family conflicts resolved?
	Reconnection and Community Life
Pathways to recovery	Bringing them home and Link-up services
	Family re-unification programs
	Grief counselling individual and family
	Community grief programs and ceremonies
	Recording of oral histories
	Community cultural celebrations
	Strong men's groups/ Strong women's groups
	Elders' groups
	Cultural renaissance programs, for example, language nests, dance groups, art forums
	Family support programs
	Mothers' and infants' support programs
	Continued . . . .

Table 24.1: Programs Development Summary (continued)

	THEME 3
	Trauma and Helplessness
Questions to be asked	What were the old ways people coped with stress?
	What happens now?
	What cultural and community mechanisms supported people to recover?
	How did the family and community protect children and keep people safe?
	What were the sanctions for those who did harm to others?
	What are the common behaviours people display when under stress or when something bad happens?
	What are the strengths in the community?
	What are the problems in the community?
	Are there cultural ceremonies/practices for healing from trauma?
	Are there cultural ceremonies for restoring the spirit?
	Are there places in the community where bad things happened that need a healing process?
	Are there places for healing in the community?
	Are there places for sanctuary, where you can be quiet, calm and peaceful?
	Are there safe places in the community?
	How do people show respect for these places?
	Are there community counsellors?
	How does the community intervene if families are not safe for children?
	How does parenting work in the families and community?
	How are morals and responsible behaviour taught (right way)?
	How is joy and happiness experienced in the community?
	What are the community's cultural values or principles?
	How are these upheld in the community?
	What are the ways to restore justice in the community?
	What are the barriers to changing bad behaviours?
	Restoration and community resilience
Pathways to recovery	Restoring the cultural narrative and promoting strengths in the community
	Mental health first aid education
	Child emotional development programs
	Community protocols promoting cultural values
	Drug and alcohol programs
	Counselling programs
	Mental health programs including individual and family intervention
	Continued . . . .

Table 24.1: Programs Development Summary (continued)

THEME 3 (continued)	
Restoration and community resilience (continued)	
Pathways to recovery (continued)	Recovery-focussed rehabilitation
	Offender programs
	Support groups
	Family violence programs
	Child protection programs
	Safe houses
	Restorative justice programs
	Relaxation, sport and recreational programs
	Healing Centres
	Cultural Healing Programs

REFERENCES

1. Health*info*net. Health risk factors: Factors contributing to Indigenous health. [Internet]. Available from: http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/health-facts/overviews/health-risk-factors [cited 2013].

2. Australian Human Rights Commission. Self-determination and effective participation 'within the life of the nation'? An Australian perspective on self-determination. [Internet]. 2003. Available from: http://www.humanrights.gov.au/self-determination-and-effective-participation-within-life-nation-australian-perspective-self.

3. Silburn S, Zubrick S, De Maio J, Shepherd C, Griffin J, Mitrou F, Dalby R, et al. The Western Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey: Strengthening the Capacity for Aboriginal Children, Families and Communities, Curtin University of Technology and Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, Perth. 2006.

4. Swan P, Raphael B. 'The Effects', Chapter 11 in Bringing them Home Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families. [Internet]. April 7, 1997. Available from: http://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/bringing-them-home-chapter-11#c.

5. Reynolds H. The Other Side of the Frontier: Aboriginal Resistance to the European Invasion of Australia. Australia: Penguin; 1990.

6. Marmot M. The status syndrome New York: Henry Holt; 2004.

7. Brunner E, Marmot M. Social Organization, stress and health. In: Marmot M, Wilkinson R, editors. Social Determinants of Health; 2003. p. 17.

8. Department of Health. Western Australian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2009–2013 Everybody's business, Department of Health WA. 2009.

9. Perkins D, Jones K. Risk behaviours and resiliency within physically abused adolescents. Child Abuse & Neglect. 2004; 28:547-563.

10. Chandler M, Lalonde C. Cultural Continuity as a Hedge against Suicide in Canada's First Nations. Transcultural Psychiatry. 1998; 35(2):191-219.

11. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Fact Sheet [cited 2013]. [Internet]. Available from: http://www.tr7.com.au/pdfs/indigenous/ATSI_Facts_Sheet.pdf.

12. Hall C. Beyond Kubler-Ross: Recent developments in our understanding of grief and bereavement [cited 2013]. [Internet]. Available from: http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/inpsych/2011/december/hall/.

13. Bonanno G. Loss, Trauma, and Human Resilience: Have we underestimated the human capacity to thrive after extremely aversive events? American Psychologist. 2004; 59(1):20-28.

14. Holt S, Buckley H, Whelan S. The impact of exposure to domestic violence on children and young people: A review of the literature. Child Abuse and Neglect. 2008; 32:797-810.

15. Casey W, Garvey D, Pickett H. Empowering approaches to Aboriginal addictions. Curtin Indigenous Research Centre; Discussion paper, no. 8/1997. Curtin University Of Technology, Perth: Gunada Press; 1997.

16. Walker R, Shepherd C. Strengthening Aboriginal family functioning: What works and why? AFRC Briefing. [Internet]. 2008 [cited 2013]. Available from: http://www.aifs.gov.au/afrc/pubs/briefing/briefing7.html.

17. Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. Social Justice Report. 2002.

18. Bachman JG, O'Malley PM, Freedman-Doan P, Trzesniewski KH, Donnellan MB. Adolescent self-esteem: Differences by race/ethnicity, gender, and age. Self and Identity. Advance online publication.doi:10.1080/15298861003794538. 2010.

19. Abraham R. In: Nim-Bii-Go-Nini OjiBwe Language Revitalization Strategy: Families learning our language at home. Master of Education Thesis, Faculty of Education, Lakehead University Thunder Bay, Ontario. [Internet]. May 2010. Available from: http://www2.nau.edu/~jar/Ojibwe.pdf.