

## Ways August 2024 – Homelessness Week (IUIH Uncle Natty Kina, Al, Andrew and Roo)

Through the embodiment of Mob ways of seeing, doing, knowing, being and belonging, we ensure that our service has a basis for which work processes are justified and from which meaning is drawn.

Our Ways are Ancient, proven, handed down by the authority of our Elders and Creator Beings through art, ceremony, rituals and song lines to today and which give us as Mob Terms of Reference or a point of orientation for how we should live and act, caring for Country and others including animals and spiritual beings.

***“Let no-one say the past is dead, the past is all about us and within.”*** Quote from Oodgeroo Noonuccal

How can I as a worker or my service be more Culturally Responsive – how can we align to Mobs’ “Propa” Ways?

***“If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”*** Quote from Aunty Lilla Watson

By sharing our Ways with you we hope that it causes you as service providers to engage every potential pathway which leads to the positive transformation of lives – we respectfully ask that you listen to use and hear our words so that you can make a more meaningful impact in the work you and your service provide to Mob.

### 1 – Self awareness for Cultural Responsiveness

Understanding your own self, ways and journey. Do you have any bias? Have you considered whether Mob have felt stigmatised or discriminated against because of your practice? Have you considered the journey and Ways of Mob since colonisation and before? You are aware of the homelessness statistics – why is that so that Mob are 5% of the Meanjin population but upwards of 25% of the people experiencing homelessness? Why are Mob overrepresented as a people experiencing homelessness? Do you need to know more about the ongoing impact of colonisation upon Mob in this place?

Bias, stigma and discrimination by workers and within systems occurs and causes harm to Mob. It is recognised as one of the largest barriers for Mob to access Propa care and supports and results in Mob “voting with their feet” and not returning for care and support and importantly will tell their family and other Mob that the service isn’t Propa and not culturally responsive to our needs. Be prepared to forget old western ways that aren’t relational, aren’t respectful, aren’t reciprocal, aren’t collaborative, don’t allow for self-determination, agency or choice, don’t show willingness to understand, don’t connect, don’t work and don’t align with Mob Ways but instead learn new ways of doing in your practice.



## 2 - Intentional action that challenges and balances systems

Closing The Gap in health and housing needs for Mob requires intentional action of service providers that challenges and balances systems for equity. This requires a conscious undertaking, recognising the vital importance of working in relationship with Mob and in this way aligning to Mob Ways.

## 3 – Deep Listening with non-judgment, empathy and compassion

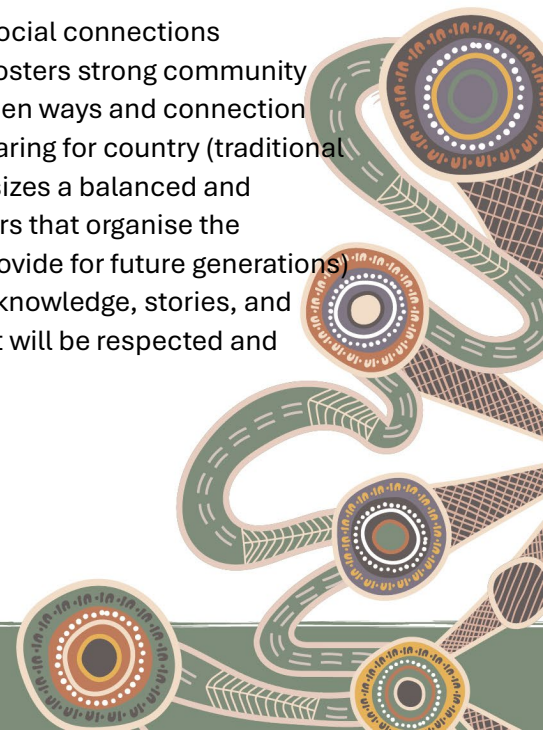
Understanding the person’s yarn/journey/life story is the basis for our work – to understand and see what is important for that person and how we as service providers can support the aspirations and needs of the person. Truly listening to understand helps to give service providers a more holistic awareness and understanding of a person and their situation and the context for which their lives are lived. Mob Ways of Deep Listening are explained in link (Dadirri <https://www.miriamrosefoundation.org.au/dadirri/> )

## 4 - Build relationship through respectful connection (more than rapport)

Relationship is key to supporting Mob. What matters is that Mob FEEL that they have some connection with you and the service you provide. We want to know how much you care before we know how much you know. This means approaching connection not through a clinical or transactional lens but with respect and in the spirit of collaboration. Following steps 1,2, and 3 is a start to building connection and maintaining a strong relationship with Mob your support. Being aware of what you as a service provider bring to your work through your Ways, world views, deeply listening to Mob you support to understand with empathy and compassion.

Other techniques for building relationship with Mob is the sharing of self and shows the value of reciprocity in Mob Ways. Reciprocity is not just about exchanging goods or services but about fostering strong relationships, maintaining balance, and ensuring the well-being of both individuals and the community. It permeates social, cultural, and environmental aspects of life, highlighting the interconnectedness and mutual dependence inherent in Mob Ways.

Reciprocity in our Ways allows for the maintenance and thriving of social connections (emphasizes the importance of mutual exchange and balance and fosters strong community bonds and reinforces social cohesion), cultural knowledge (strengthen ways and connection between Mob and ensure that knowledge transmission is shared), caring for country (traditional knowledge of ecological and natural resource management emphasizes a balanced and respectful relationship with nature, where Mob are seen as caretakers that organise the sustainable use of resources to ensure that the land continues to provide for future generations) and the handing down of knowledge through our Elders (passing on knowledge, stories, and traditions to younger generations, shared with the expectation that it will be respected and preserved).



## 5 – Allowing Self-determination, choice and agency through collaboration

It is important to recognise and value Mob for their cultural beliefs, knowledge and Ways and offer autonomy on decisions they make for their health and well-being and life. Paternalism and removing choice from Mob takes away agency and the ability to be empowered through choices they make that align with Mob Ways.

Being flexible and strengths-based means service providers can tailor approaches to the individual or family they are supporting which allow for the recognition of Mob's yarn and life journey, lifelong learnings and expertise to make choices and self-advocate, to know how to get information and understand the services available, seek support and have their aspirations and needs met.

When Mob are fully involved in the care they receive, its type and the way it is provided we are much more likely to follow through and have ownership of our journey.

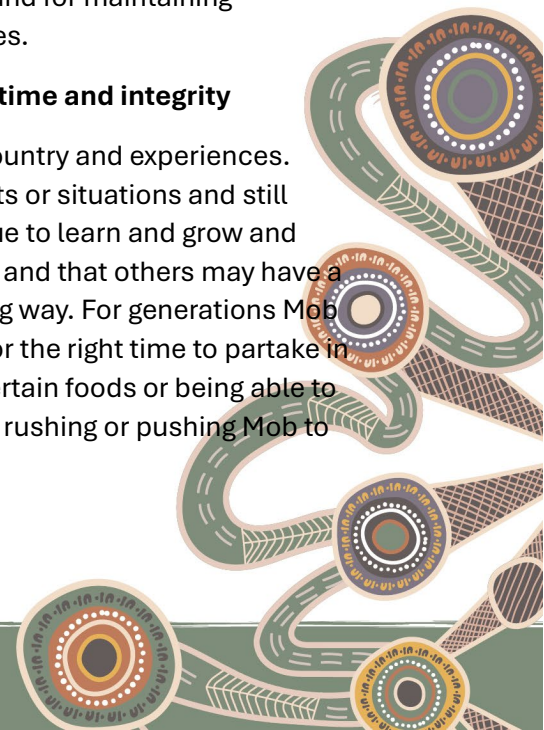
## 6 – Appreciation for Mobs' obligations and connection to Country and Kin

Seeking greater understanding of the relationship between Mob and Country and Kin allows for service providers to act in ways that are respectful and relationship building. The connections provide a framework for how Mob treat and act towards each other and Country. The deep respect we have for our Elders and their moral authority and wisdom and supporting Kin and Mob in need is paramount to Mob observing our Obligations. Seeking to understand the context of actions can result in stronger more collaborative relationship between service providers and Mob they support (working together to work through issues) and less adverse actions (punitive actions) that lead to greater harms for Mob and the wider community.

Country and Place provide identity for Mob and is central our Ways. Mob Ways of Belonging encompass the physical and spiritual joining of a person to a Country through tradition, yarns, ceremony and song that are tied to specific places. Country is seen as living, sacred space where ancestral beings created the world and continue to influence life. Maintaining a connection to Country and Place is essential for preserving culture and for maintaining connection to the spiritual and to traditional knowledge and practices.

## 7 – Ways important things to keep in mind, humility, concepts of time and integrity

Mob learn and continue to learn through our Ways handed down, Country and experiences. Being humble as Mob means we can adapt to changing environments or situations and still observe our obligations to Country and Kin. It means we can continue to learn and grow and change as necessary without losing our Ways or Terms of Reference and that others may have a different experience that our own that may be better than the existing way. For generations Mob have walked alongside the changing seasons and waited patiently for the right time to partake in certain activities. Consider the change of season to availability of certain foods or being able to travel to certain locations. Everything has its place and time and not rushing or pushing Mob to do this or that is essential for keeping a good relationship.



Having integrity means aligning yourself and your actions to Propa Ways. It means having the humility to learn ways that aren't familiar to you and may go against what you have been taught your whole life. Instead of the Professional Integrity workers may identify with in their practice possibly aligning to a specific profession or sector, integrity with the connect of Propa Ways is about alignment to Mob's Terms of Reference, to our world view and Ways, to our values and knowledge and obligations. It's about integrating the wisdom of Propa Ways within your practice.

### 8 - Alignment with other Practice

Propa Ways align with a number of areas of practice including Trauma Aware, Healing Informed Practice, Healing Centred Engagement (Strengths Based), Person Centred Practice, Recovery Oriented Practice and to Culturally Responsive practices.

***“Compassion, commitment and dedication, these are what you need (when working with Mob).”*** Aunty Pam Mam (IUIH Patron)

Things to keep in mind:

Self-Awareness, Intentional action to balance systems, Deep listening and awareness to understand, Non-judgemental, Sharing of self, Build relationship, Compassion, Empathy, Respect, Reciprocity, Collaborate, Autonomy, respect and reciprocity, Allow self determination and agency, Walking alongside (or in front (leading) or behind (here when you need) as required), Acting with humility, Acting with integrity and Acting in a Propa Way

