

## We are strong and proud! Strengths for us and our mob



### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander = strong and proud!

As Indigenous people we can heal the effects of the past. We can heal some of the past trauma that we've experienced and get through the tough times we face now. We can use our culture to help us heal.

### Healing

There are lots of ways we can use our culture to help us heal. We can:

- talk about our feelings and we can release our emotions and our sadness and frustrations.
- go to yarning circles.
- organise yarning circles ourselves.
- talk to friends or see a counsellor.

This is all part of healing. And healing means we don't have to drown ourselves in negative thoughts or get lost in depression or anxiety. For some people, it might mean they don't have to drink, or do other things that aren't helpful to escape the pain.

We have to remember that we are strong, and that we are proud. As First Nations Australians, we have survived and we have a lot of things to celebrate.

"As Aboriginal people, we have always retained our resilience, our humour and our cultural integrity. We will always retain our dreams and a vision for the future of our people".

Ken Wyatt

### Helping our kids

If we are able to heal and get better and get healthier, we can change the way that trauma is dealt with in our families. That can really help children to have a more positive future and a better chance to be happy.

Sometimes it's hard to remember that we are strong and capable, and that we are good parents and community members. Some people in our community and in our country may focus on what's going wrong in our communities. That doesn't help us to stay strong. We have to be aware of other people focusing on the things that are going wrong and make sure that is not what we believe about ourselves. Sometimes it can creep in and shape how we start to think of ourselves. If we start to do this, we need to pay attention and challenge this.

Sure, we've got some way to go to address some problems we have, but we have to be honest about our strengths too! Focusing on our strengths and the strengths of our kids and bubs can help us to get stronger.

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Some patterns of behaviour or thinking we have are really good for us, and good for our family and our bubs. There are many things we do that are really good for our community too. Sometimes it can be easier to focus on the bad things and not on our strengths. We need to change this, so our strengths are the first things we think of.

### Here's a few questions for you:

- What do you do as a parent that you're really proud of?
- What does your bub do that makes you laugh?
- What do you see your partner do that you think is good?
- What does your kid do that makes you really proud?
- What's great about the community where you live?

These types of questions are meant to get you to focus on some of the strengths that you have or that your bub or partner has. They are also good to remind you what's good about where you live.

### Sure I'm strong, but sometimes I need help

Part of being strong can be to admit that you need a bit of help sometimes. At times we get overwhelmed by the pressures and expectations of life. Sometimes it would be great to know how to do things better, or to have help and guidance.

If you do feel a bit like this sometimes, the important thing is that you talk to someone about it. You can ask for help. It's important to seek help if we need to.

### Who can you contact? Who can help?

Here are a few suggestions on where to start to look for help:

Lifeline - 13 11 14

Kids Helpline - 1800 55 1800

Your local Aboriginal Medical Service and / or GP

School counsellor or Aboriginal Liaison Officer

Local community health centres

Link-Up - [www.aiatsis.gov.au/fhu/linkup](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/fhu/linkup)

Healing Foundation - [healingfoundation.org.au](http://healingfoundation.org.au)

Trusted family and Elders, and good friends

For more information:

**Trauma & Grief Network: Supporting Families**

[www.tgn.anu.edu.au](http://www.tgn.anu.edu.au)

**Australian Child & Adolescent Trauma, Loss & Grief Network (ACATLGN)**

[www.earlytraumagrieff.anu.edu.au](http://www.earlytraumagrieff.anu.edu.au)

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