

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

We also extend that respect to other Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders who are joining us here today.



David R Horton, creator, © Aboriginal Studies Press, AIATSIS and Auslig/Sinclair, Knight, Merz, 1996.

View an interactive version of the AIATSIS map
www.abc.net.au/indigenous/map/

Header Artwork produced for Queensland Health by Gilimbaa



Growth and Empowerment Measure: Its Story and how can it assist in drug and alcohol settings?

**Melissa Haswell, Sarah Gaskin, David Kavanagh
with Ivern Ardler, Tanya Bloxsome, Martin Billingham
Oolong House Nowra**

**School of Public Health and Social Work
Queensland University of Technology
Melissa.haswell@qut.edu.au**

Acknowledging the honour to be here among the many great cultures & learn, take responsibility and hence belong...



QUT RECONCILIATION STATEMENT

This statement commits QUT to sustainable reconciliation between Indigenous (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) and non-Indigenous Australian people. The statement recognises the particular responsibility of educational institutions to redress disadvantage and to overcome prejudice.

RECOGNITION. QUT recognises that Indigenous Australian people are the custodians of the land, and have a traditional association with the land in accordance with their laws and customs that this traditional association with, and respect for, land sustains Indigenous cultures, languages, spirituality, art, law, and all other aspects of life treasured by, and held sacred to, Indigenous Australian people the social, political, economic and education disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australian people as a result of a history of colonisation, dispossession, and unjust legislation, policies and practices the importance of Indigenous cultures to Australia's heritage and the dynamic contribution made by Indigenous Australian people to the community and to the University the rights of Indigenous Australian people to self-determination, to equitable participation in the community and the University, to equitable access to resources and services, and to be treated with respect the significance of the reconciliation process in building new relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian people.

RESPONSIBILITY. QUT acknowledges that for reconciliation to be sustainable over time, local communities and institutions must support, and be involved in, the process the particular responsibility of educational institutions to redress disadvantage through Indigenous education and research and to overcome prejudice by educating the Australian community about the cultures and experiences of Indigenous Australian people.

COMMITMENT. QUT is committed to pursuing its goals of teaching and learning, research and community service, and its other activities, in the spirit of reconciliation. In consultation with Indigenous Australian people, QUT will:

- teaching and learning
- recruit Indigenous Australian students, provide opportunities for them to access a wide range of academic programs, and provide academic, social and cultural support services
- incorporate Indigenous content and perspectives as appropriate into the University's curriculum and teaching practices
- research
- encourage appropriate and beneficial research of Indigenous issues, ensuring the research is developed in partnership with Indigenous communities and is conducted in accordance with relevant Indigenous protocols and ethical guidelines
- community service
- encourage staff and students to develop and participate in community service activities that are inclusive of Indigenous Australian people and perspectives
- engage in public debate and discussion on Indigenous issues to increase awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories and cultures and to promote reconciliation in the wider community
- employment
- recruit and support the advancement of Indigenous Australian staff through the development and implementation of an Indigenous Employment and Staff Development Strategy
- organisational culture and environment
- promote activities to increase staff and student awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories and cultures and to foster communication and collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff and students
- counter racism
- promoting and implementing the University's policies on cultural diversity and racial discrimination and harassment, paying particular attention to Indigenous experiences
- create a University environment that acknowledges Indigenous rights and interests, and legitimises Indigenous knowledges, perspectives and practices by ensuring participation of Indigenous Australian people in appropriate planning and decision-making, and including appropriate accommodations in organisational practices
- acknowledge the achievements of Indigenous Australian staff, students and community members through appropriate awards and media
- acknowledge the original people of the land on which the University is located, in ways deemed appropriate by the original people, after consultation with the Brisbane Council of Elders, including particular QUT ceremonies, promotional material in print, electronic and virtual media, and in a plaque or other visible monument on each campus
- acknowledge Indigenous culture, in ways deemed appropriate by Indigenous Australian people, including public art, performances and ceremonies. This reconciliation statement provides a framework for QUT's ongoing activities and efforts toward reconciliation.



... and reflect that for over 65,000 years these custodians sustained health and life all over this continent of extremes through intimate knowledge of the Australian environment...

One Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Definition of Health

...not just the physical wellbeing of an individual, but the social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the whole community in which each individual is able to achieve their full potential as a human being thereby bringing about the total wellbeing of their community.

(National Aboriginal Health Strategy 1989)

Empowerment and control ... the often overlooked Social Determinant? Definitions from the Literature

- As an outcome: Increased Control and Mastery means that people are better able to deal with the forces that affect their lives, (Syme 2003) and have greater capacity to deal with day to day challenges of life without being overwhelmed by them (Syme 1998).
- As a process: A social action process that promotes participation of people, organisations and communities towards the goals of increased individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of community life, and social justice (Wallerstein 1992).
- As a multi-level concept: empowerment at individual, organisational and structural levels

Power Over versus Power With

- The idea of empowerment can be threatening
- Power is seen as a finite property : lost and gained but empowerment implies sharing power which becomes limitless
- Positive direction, values oriented and closely connected with increased SEWB (Diener & Diener, 2005)

FAMILY WELL BEING

Developed by the
Aboriginal Education Development
Branch, Office of Vocational Education
and Training, South Australia

Some Principles we've learned through the Family Well Being Empowerment Program

Even in the most desperate of situations, there is always something a person can do to make things better.

Empowerment occurs when people can recognise and apply their own strengths and inner qualities in their choices.

Change starts from within.

Skills and little successes make change sustainable.

Empowered individuals can be supported to use this personal change as a basis for participating and leading organisational and community level change.



What is Empowerment?... how does it related to healing and wellbeing? some Aboriginal Australian perspectives:

- Healing—coming to terms with the past and present situation, dealing with the pain**
- Gaining control**
- Becoming strong culturally and spiritually**
- Remaining calm despite turmoil**
- Finding your voice, participating in change**
- Working together for a strong community**

“When a person takes the first step towards becoming empowered, it is also the first step of healing”

“It’s about knowing who you are and where you belong, it’s about being proud of who you are”.

“With empowerment you are building people to have the power to stand up and make change - what you put into your inner self, it shows on the outer”

Underlying impacts of *Disempowerment*: Overarching opportunities for *Empowerment*

Figure 1: Suicide and self-harm within a cycle of disempowerment



Figure 2: Protecting against suicide within a cycle of empowerment



Diagram developed by Dr Arlene Laliberte to summarise extensive qualitative research with people from rural and remote Aboriginal communities in Queensland. Building Bridges Report, page 27.

Thinking about measuring the process, impact and outcomes of change

The story of the GEM

Why measure empowerment?

Despite lots of qualitative descriptions of the impact of empowering programs on people, their growth has been restricted by a lack of quantitative evidence of effectiveness in helping people move toward change and achieve better health outcomes.

Empowerment tool

Challenges: Getting it Right

- **Tool must capture shared and valued change in levels of empowerment (based on qualitative data from FWB participants)**
- **Tool must reflect cultural context and definition of empowerment for Indigenous people (their own words and concepts)**
- **Tool must be strengths-based and able to promote the empowerment process (promoting hope & guiding effort)**

Iterative methodological process used to develop the GEM

Part 1. Defining the Pathway and Attributes of Empowerment

Step 1. Interview Collection

Step 2. Interview Analysis

Phase 1 - Manual attribute analysis

Phase 2 - Computer assisted attribute analysis

Phase 3 - Validation of Coding and of Data Saturation

Step 3. Validation/Confirmation Workshops and Adoption of the Tree Metaphor

Part 2. Developing and Trialling the Instrument

Step 4. Identifying optimal types of questions

Step 5. Selecting the most appropriate attributes and building the questions

Step 6. Validation/Confirmation / Specialist Workshops

Step 7. Piloting and improving the Instrument

Step 8. Psychometric Validation Study

Step 9. Testing as a program evaluation, service outcome and epidemiological tool

Part 3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis – January 2017 – everything passed!

SECURE
UNITS

UNITY

SERENITY

FAMILY YARRABAH WELL BEING

HAPPINESS

ACCEPTANCE

CHANGES

1



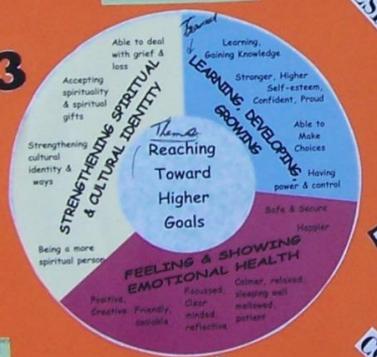
SELF-DETERMINATION

LOVE

Jesus Love's You!
RESPONSIBLE

FORGIVENESS

3



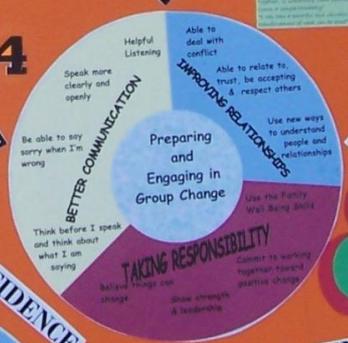
HEALING

PHYSICAL
MENTAL
SPIRITUAL
EMOTIONAL

CULTURAL IDENTITY
Language

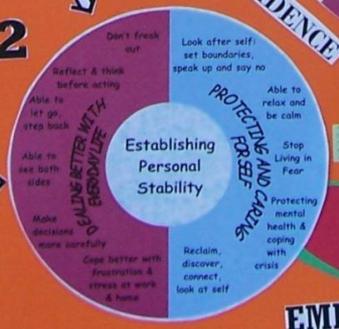
RESPECT

4



CONFIDENCE

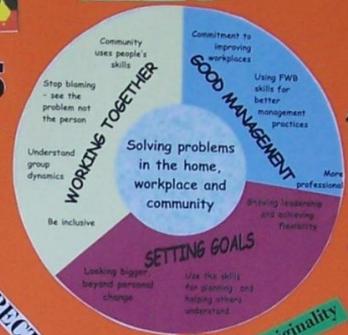
2



EMPOWERMENT

RECOGNITION

POSITIVE



Aboriginality

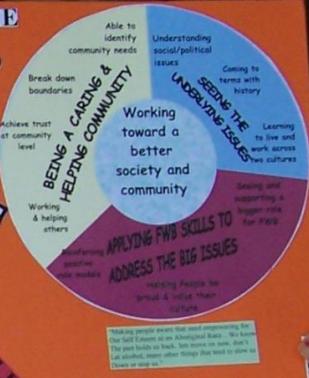
SELF-CONTROL

MEDITATION
Prayer

PATIENCE

CLEAN ENVIRONMENT
SELF-ESTEEM

6



EDUCATION

GOOD HEALTH

MOTIVATION

EMPATHY

UNDERSTANDING



THE TREE OF EMPOWERMENT

THE FRUITS OF CHANGE

Background text from
Carmen Richards

WORKING TOWARDS A BETTER SOCIETY & COMMUNITY

Being a Caring & Helping Community

- Able to identify community needs
- Think across boundaries
- Achieve work at community level
- Working & helping others

Solving The Underlying Issues

- Understanding sociopolitical issues
- Coming to terms with failure
- Learning to just stand with across two cultures

Applying FWH Skills to Address the Big Issues

- Reinforcing positive role models
- Helping people be proud & value their culture
- Seeing and supporting a bigger role for FWH

"Making people aware that we need empowerment for our self-esteem as an Aboriginal race... we know the pain built on back, lets come on team, don't let it hold the more things that tend to slow us down up."

SOLVING PROBLEMS IN THE HOME, WORKPLACE & COMMUNITY

Working Together

- Community owns people's skills
- Stop blaming - use the problem on the person
- Understand group dynamics
- Be inclusive

Good Management

- Looking bigger, beyond personal change
- Use the skills for planning and helping others understand
- Showing leadership and achieving flexibility

Setting Goals

- Commitment to improving workplaces
- Using FWH skills for better management practices
- More professional

"I can examine situations better rather than making assumptions about why people are behaving in particular ways or making particular decisions..." Using the skills, FWH has taught me in the workplace and in the wider community.

PREPARING & ENGAGING IN GROUP / ORGANISATION CHANGE

Improving Relationships

- Able to deal with conflict
- Able to relate to, trust, be accepting & respect others
- Use new ways to understand people and relationships

Better Communication

- He able to say sorry when I'm wrong
- Helping people
- Speak, share openly and openly
- Think before I speak and think about what I say next

Taking Responsibility

- Believing things can change
- Committed to working together towards positive change
- Show leadership and leadership
- Use the Family Well Being Skills

"I feel we have become friends or family to one another... happy to trust me to one another... we have been able to be able to come to some agreement, so something could continue to be done on a group or single level, and that has been a powerful and valuable reminder of many others, a reinforcement of what can be done."

REACHING TOWARDS HIGHER INDIVIDUAL GOALS

Learning, Developing, Growing

- Learning, gaining knowledge
- Grow and developing into a stronger person
- Ability to make ourselves for growth
- Greater self-confidence, higher self-esteem and self-worth
- Having power and control, being empowered

Navigating Spiritual & Cultural Identity

- Safe & secure - supported
- Culture - Respect - Supporting Well - Mellow - Patient
- Focused - Clear Mindful - Reflective
- Positive - Creative - Friendly - Sociable

Feeling & Showing Emotional Health

- Accepting spiritual gifts
- Able to deal with grief & loss
- Being a more spiritual person
- Strengthening cultural identity & ways

"This learning has given me strength and will power to address things in myself, family and community. It has given me the resources and clarity to empower and the wider community."

ESTABLISHING PERSONAL STABILITY

Disabling Better Work Experience Life

- Don't think out
- Reflect & think before acting
- Able to set health sides
- Able to let go - not
- Make decisions more carefully
- Cope better with frustration & stressors out at work and home

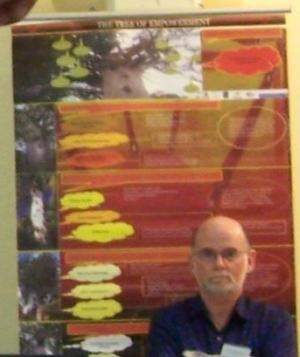
Protecting and Caring For Self

- Look after self - responsibilities
- Take care and be able
- Help being in time - speak up and say no
- Reclaiming - someone - look at self
- Proactive mental health & coping with stress

"I believe I am more control, confident and accepting of my experiences and no longer have the fear in me. The first step had the foundation for growth and stability, taking on challenges and making changes in my life."

GAINING UNDERSTANDING OF MYSELF & MY SITUATION

... to be able to...
... to be able to...
... to be able to...

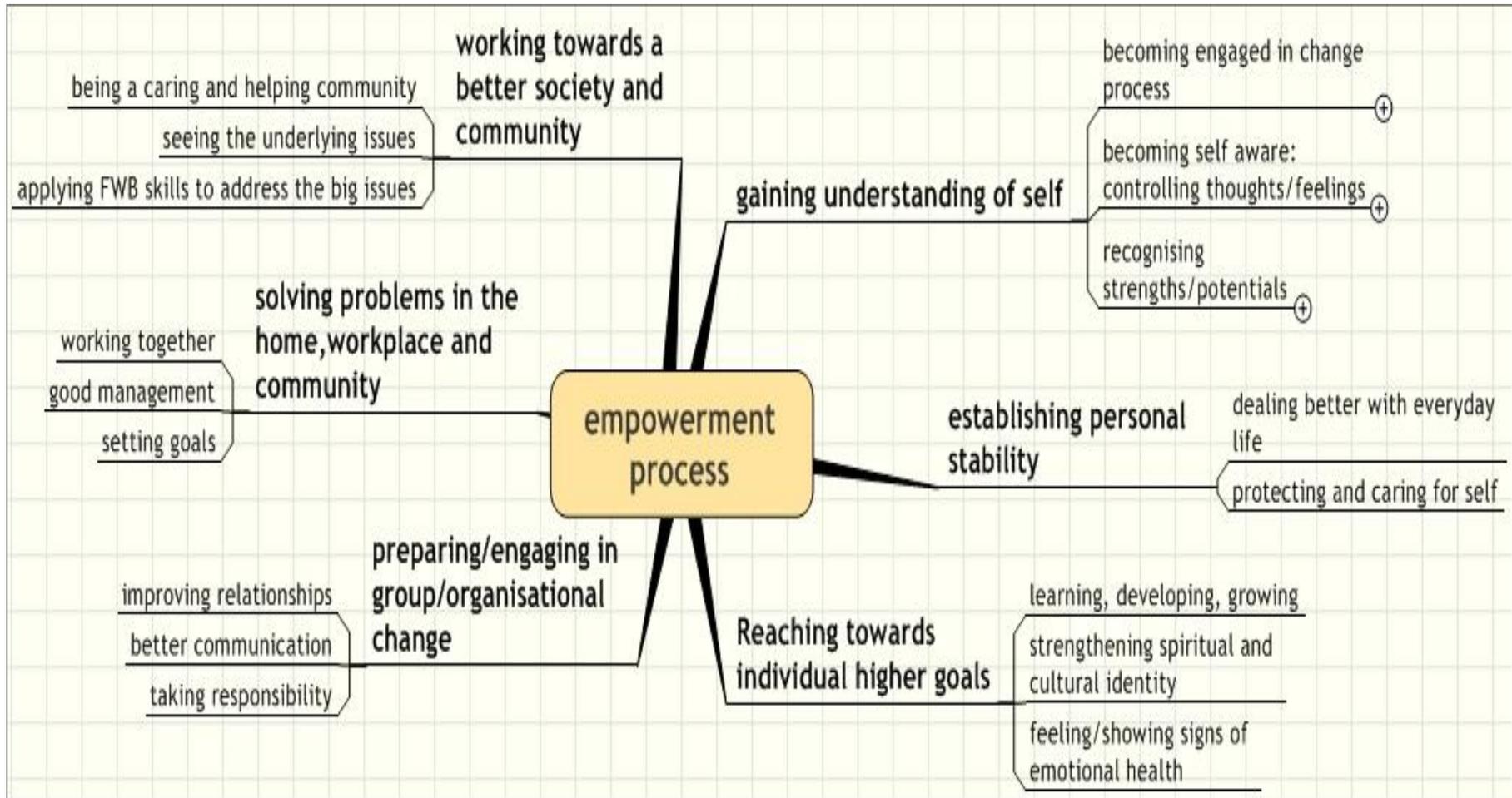


Three Questions

- 1. Can we use the empowerment tool across organizations? (Challenge: how to gain starting points for implementation?)
- 2. How do we know that empowerment interventions are having an impact on what matters? (Challenge: how to measure what matters? How to measure the impact of empowerment?)
- 3. If empowerment works, how can we integrate it into existing systems, the values of different levels of programs and guide resource allocation?



Positive change and growth associated with empowerment: non-linear, mutually reinforcing process





The GEM

The Growth and Empowerment Measure

“Its like a tree – there is a foundation (seeds, roots), then the energy and self-esteem to look after yourself (trunk), so you can grow – the more you grow the bigger it gets... on the branches (of the tree) are education, job opportunities, housing”.

Aims to measure the empowerment pathway



Parts of the GEM

- S12 (Scenarios): **Process** of empowerment – which ‘story’ best matches your situation
- EES14 (Emotional Empowerment Scale) - **Impact** measure – from the interview codings “showing and feeling signs of empowerment”
- For validation, we used the Kessler scale but this component is interchangeable according to the **Outcomes** sought in a program or service.

How do you see your relationships with other people?

Please tick **ONLY ONE** box below that best describes the way you see your situation.



I feel completely trapped in my relationships.

I am dealing with things like: kids out of control, anger and fighting, gossiping, bullying.

Most of my relationships are harmful, not healthy.

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box →

I am **gaining an understanding** of my difficult relationships.

I have started to think about how to make them better. I think more about what I'm saying.

I still have a lot of work to do to improve my relationships.

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box →

I have made a lot of **progress in improving my relationships.**

I think a lot about **listening and talking sensitively** to people.

I see **improvement in the way people respond to me.**

← Are you partly this & partly that? If so, please tick box →

My life is now rich and happier because of many good relationships.

My relationships give me peace and harmony in my heart.

I am able to preserve this peace in my home and family, even when we disagree.

Are you here? If so, please tick Box

12 Scenarios

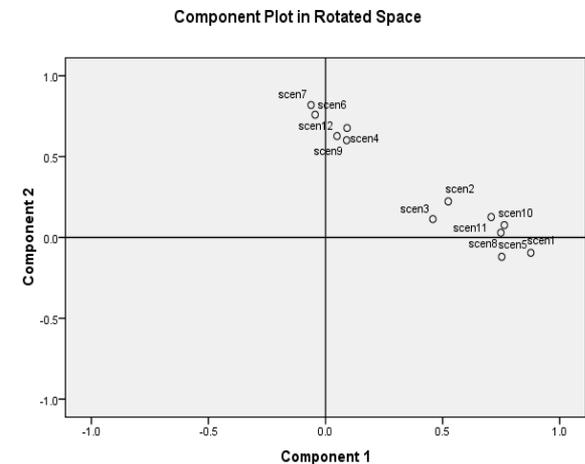
Shown good reliability on a range of tests Cronbach's alpha consistently >0.85
Two principle components emerged in factor analysis with oblimin rotation

Healing and Growth Subscale

- 1 Dealing with painful feelings
- 2 Personal and Family Safety
- 3 Able to say no
- 5 Engaging with Learning
- 8 Able to speak out and be heard
- 10 Improving relationships
- 11 Reaction to judgement

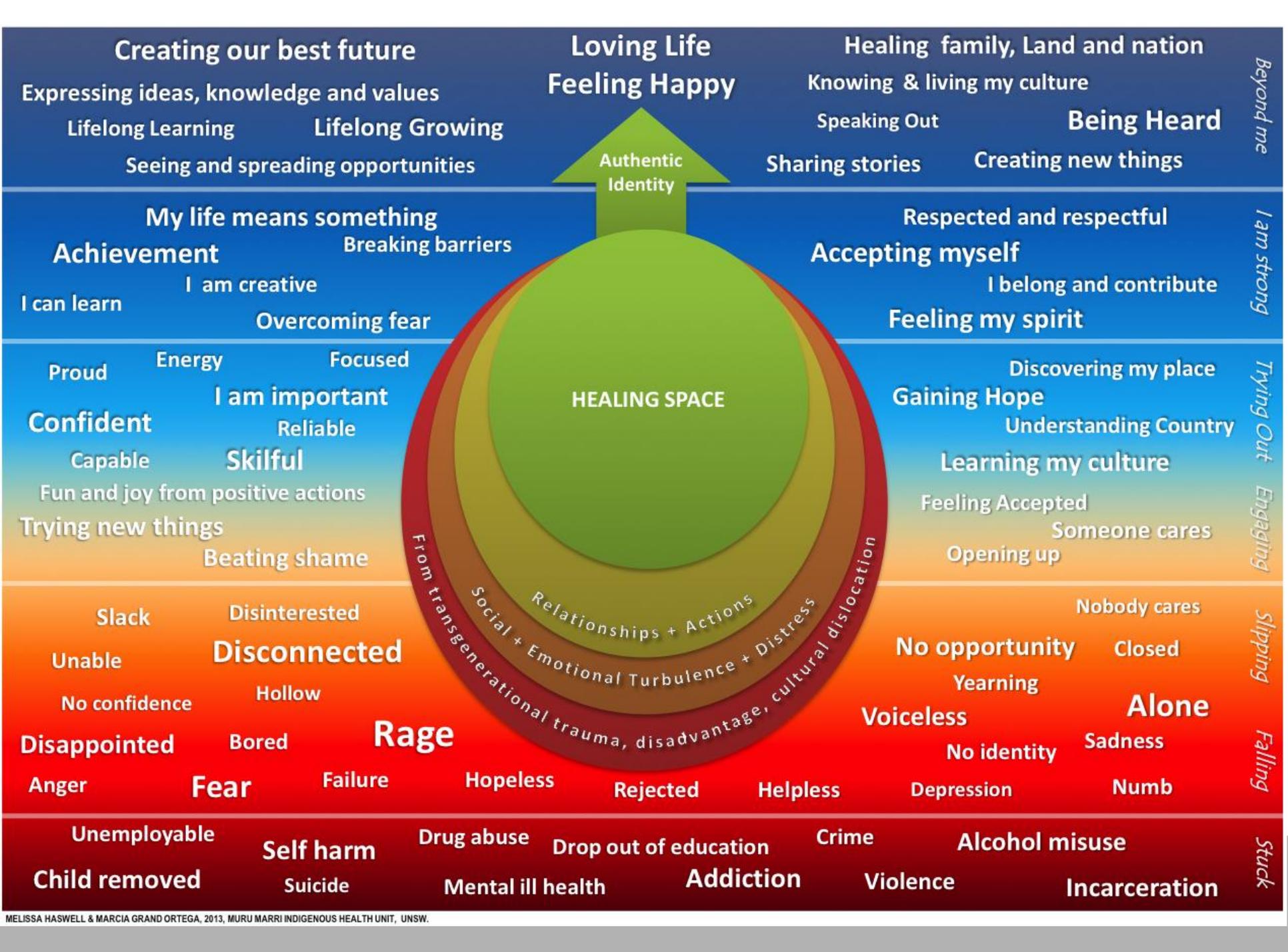
Meaning and Purpose Subscale

- 4 Able to make changes
- 6 Developing Spirituality
- 7 Establishing identity
- 9 Valued in workplace
- 12 Working toward a better community



GEM: 12 Scenarios – w/ the six core scenarios that appear to be particularly linked to impact and outcome





14 item Emotional Empowerment Scale

Feeling and showing the signs of empowerment

I feel like I don't know anything.

← half 'n' half →

I am knowledgeable about things that are important to me.



Emotional Empowerment Scale

good reliability on a range of tests

Two principle component factors

Cronbach's alpha consistently >0.85

Inner Peace Subscale Items

- **Feel Skilful**
- **Strong, full of energy**
- **Confident**
- **Centred, focused**
- **Calm, relaxed**
- **Happy with self & life**
- **Safe and secure**
- **Can deal with anger**

Self-Capacity Subscale Items

- **Can speak out, people listen**
- **Satisfied with opportunities**
- **Feel Valued and Admired**
- **Feel hopeful for a better future**

Loaded on Both Subscales

- **Feel connected, I belong**
- **Feel knowledgeable**

Outcome Measures

- Process
- Impact
- Outcome – we often use Kessler 6, but this part can be entirely tailored to what the program is trying to achieve
 - ? What might be relevant for your Program?

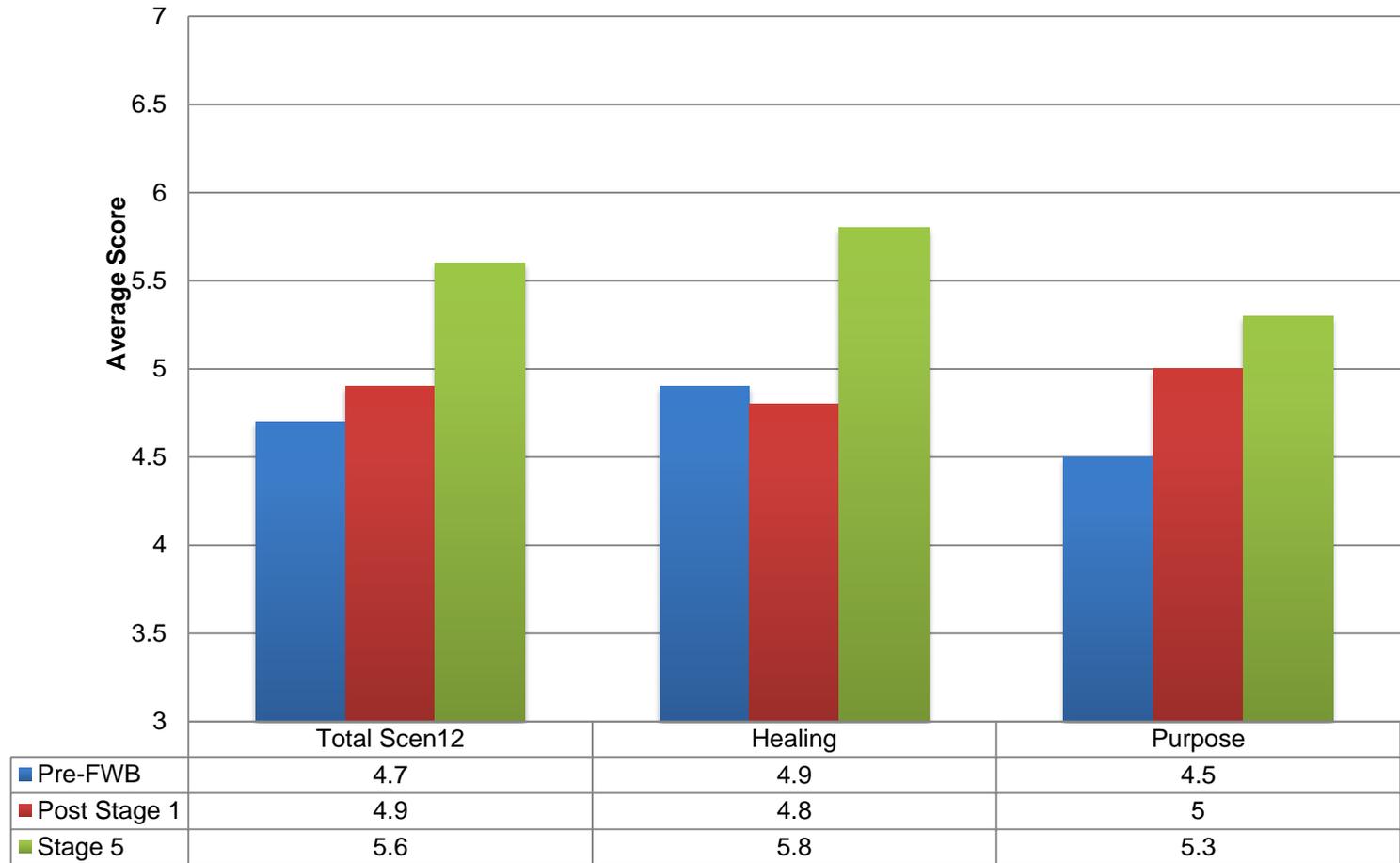
Some examples of use of the GEM

Team of seven AOD workers did
all five stages of FWB.

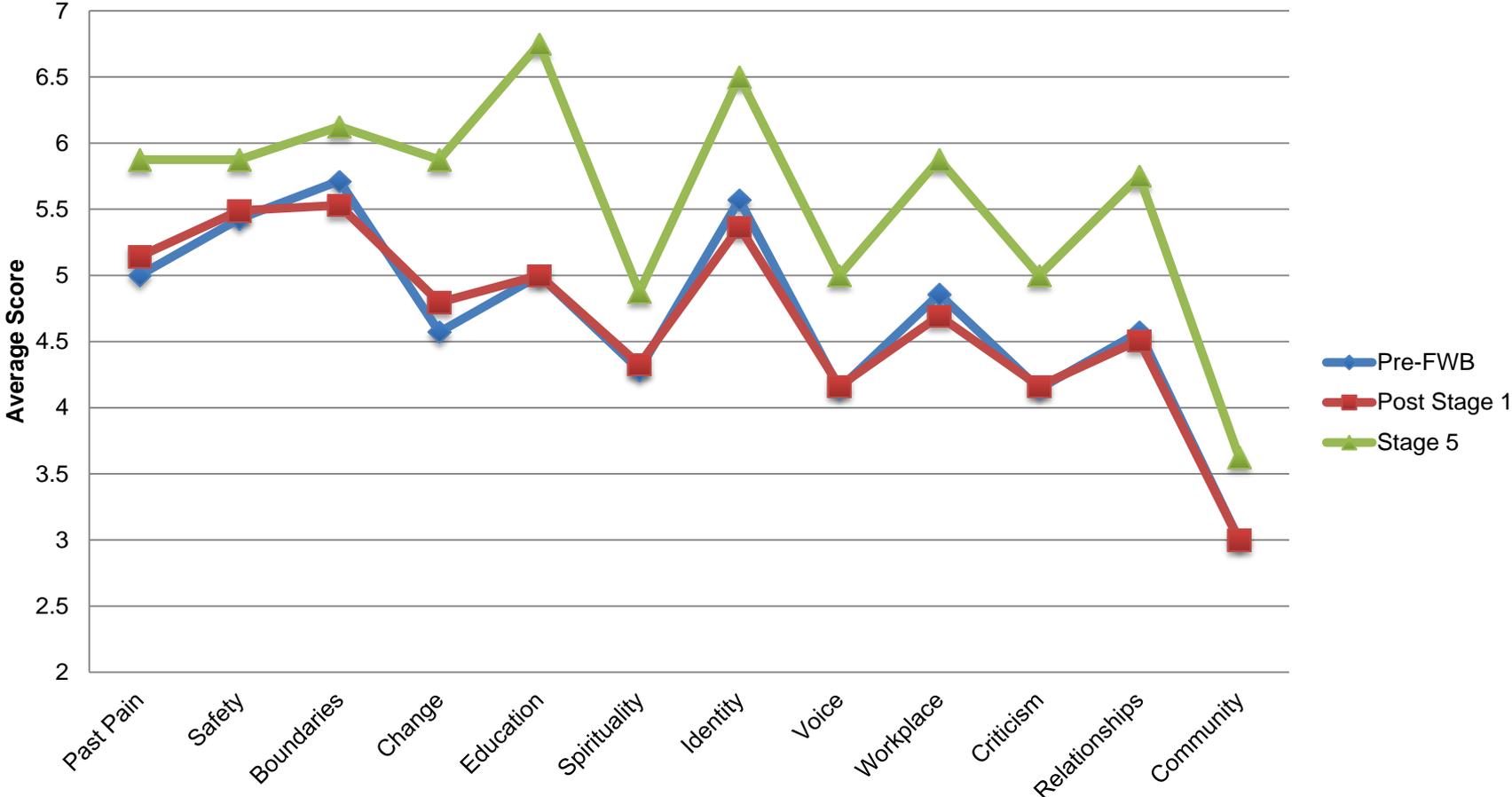
Six completed the GEM two or three times.

Research led by Anthony Shakeshaft
National Drug and Alcohol Centre, UNSW

Results - Twelve Scenarios



Individual Scenario change



The GEM's development was intimately tied to the Family Well Being process, but has been shown to work well with many programs that effectively use empowerment approaches.

Oolong House Residential Rehab.



strong roots

strong spirit

http://www.nada.org.au/media/90125/nada_advocate_2016_15december.pdf



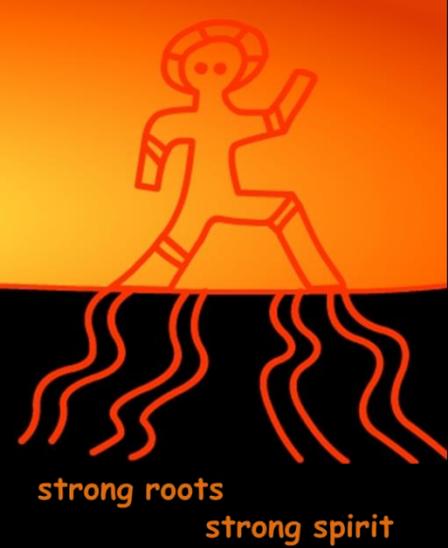
Ivern Ardler

Former Chief Executive Officer
Oolong House (Oolong Aboriginal Corporation)

11 Junction Street
Nowra, NSW 2541

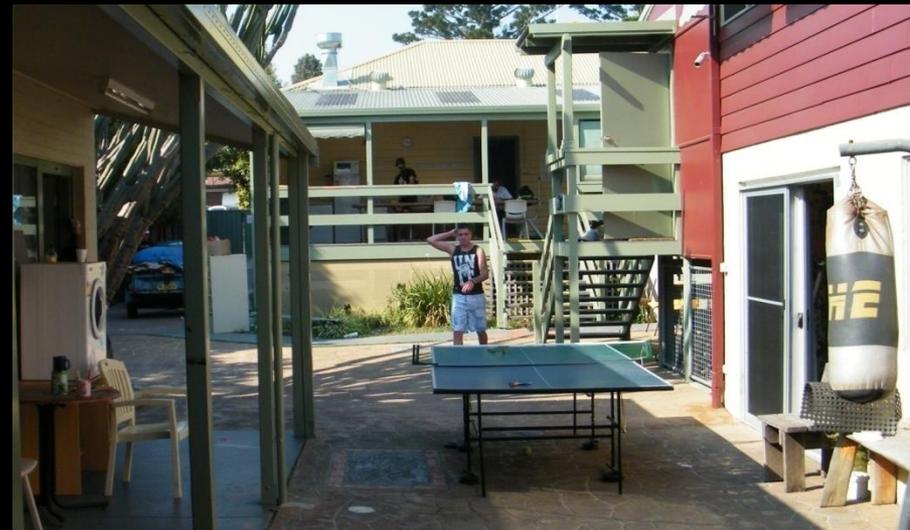
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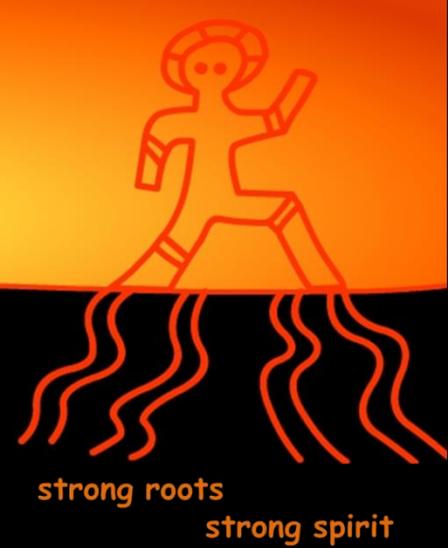
E: ivern@oolonghouse.org.au



Oolong House Overview

- Indigenous-managed residential rehab
- 11 Junction Street, Nowra
- Accept Aboriginal AND non-Aboriginal clients
 - About 60:40
- Men only, 18-55 years old
- 16 week residential AOD program
- We work closely with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal services
- Focus on AOD/ Mental health comorbidity





Oolong House Program

- Abstinence-based 16 wk program
- CBT-based group work
- Counselling
- Cultural activities
- Aftercare
- Education and lifestyle activities
- Referrals to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal services
- Focus on AOD/ Mental health comorbidity
- Accredited under the ACHS



Oolong House's Data Toolkit

At Entry, 8 weeks and 16 weeks

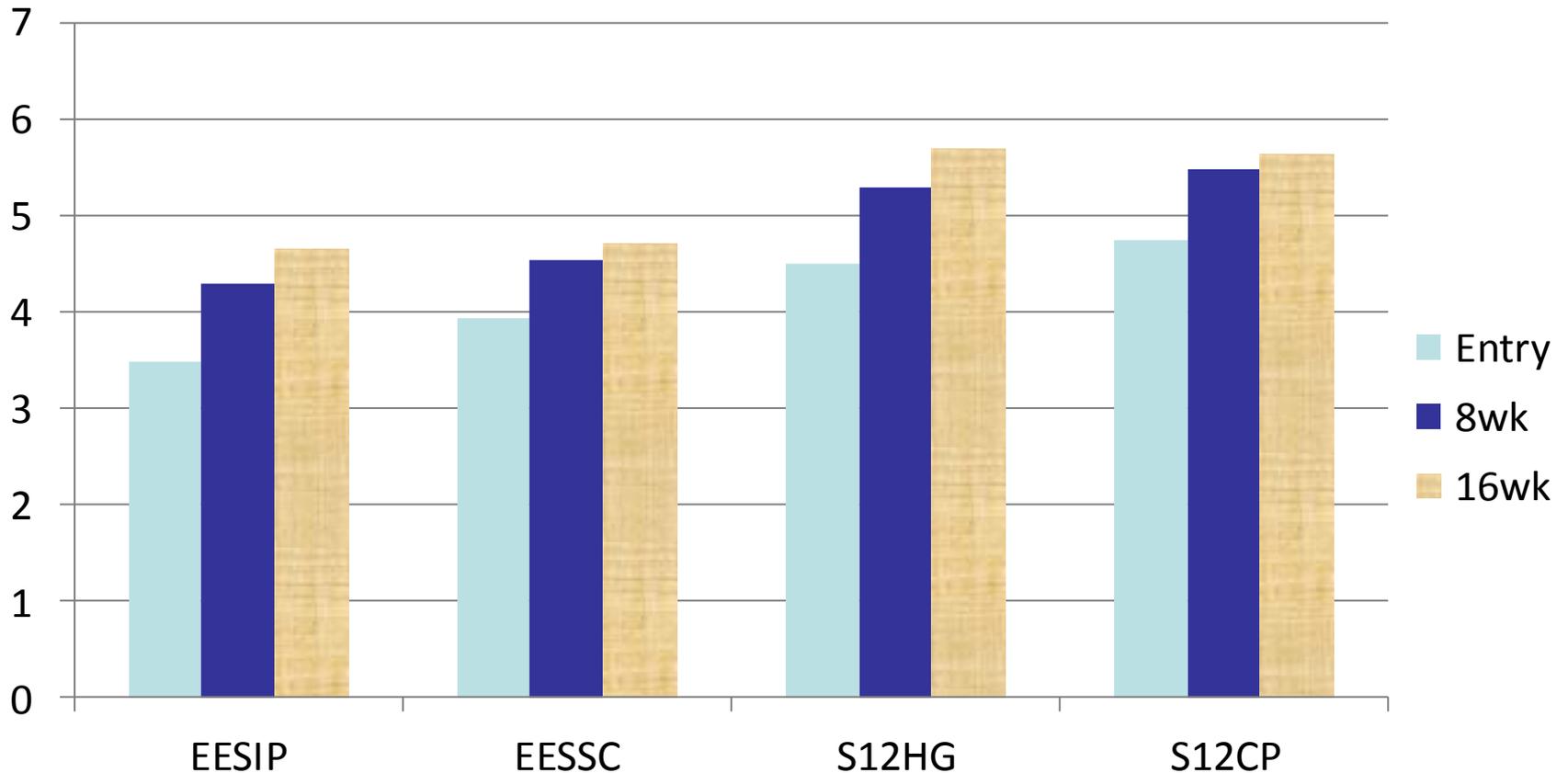
- **Applied at entry alone:**

- Parts of Psycheck (brief mental health check, suicidal thoughts)
- Two items from the Brief Treatment Outcome Measures (BTOM)
- Indigenous Risk Impact Screen (IRIS) (MH SS, AOD SS)

- **Applied at entry, 8 weeks and 16 weeks (graduation)**

- Growth and Empowerment Measure (GEM) with 12 Scenarios (Healing SS, Purpose SS, Core6 SS) & 14 item Emotional Empowerment Scale (Inner Peace SS, Self-capacity SS)
- Drug Taking Confidence Questionnaire (DTCQ)
- Kessler 10 (K10) plus 2 questions on anger and feeling happy in yourself

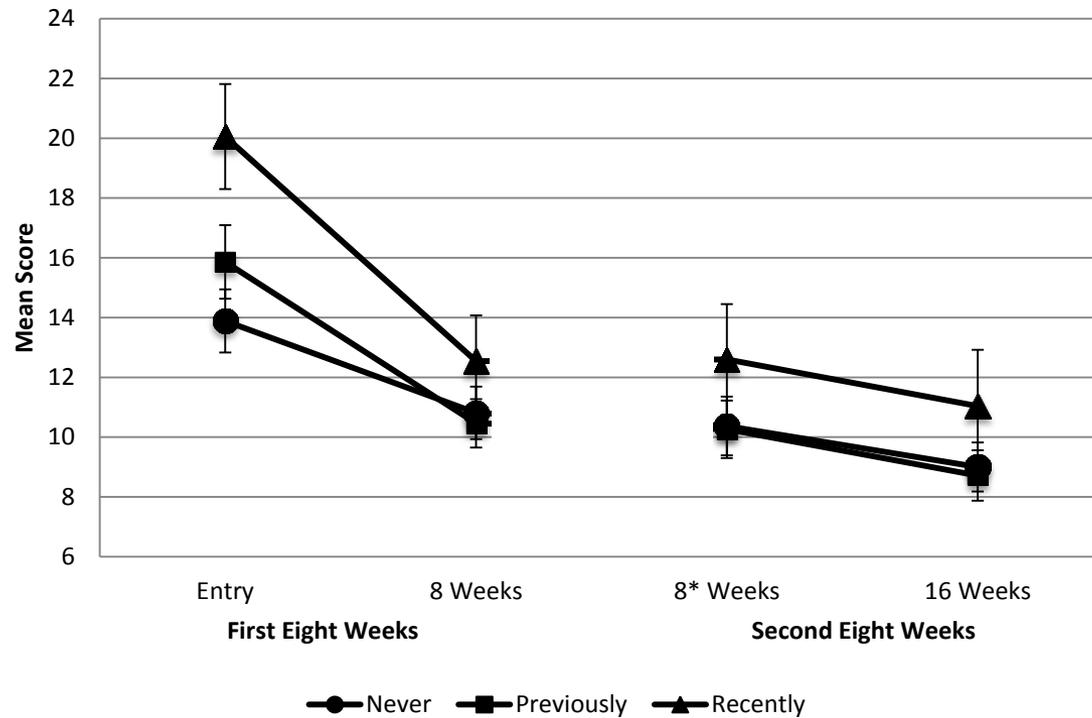
Repeated measures during residential rehabilitation



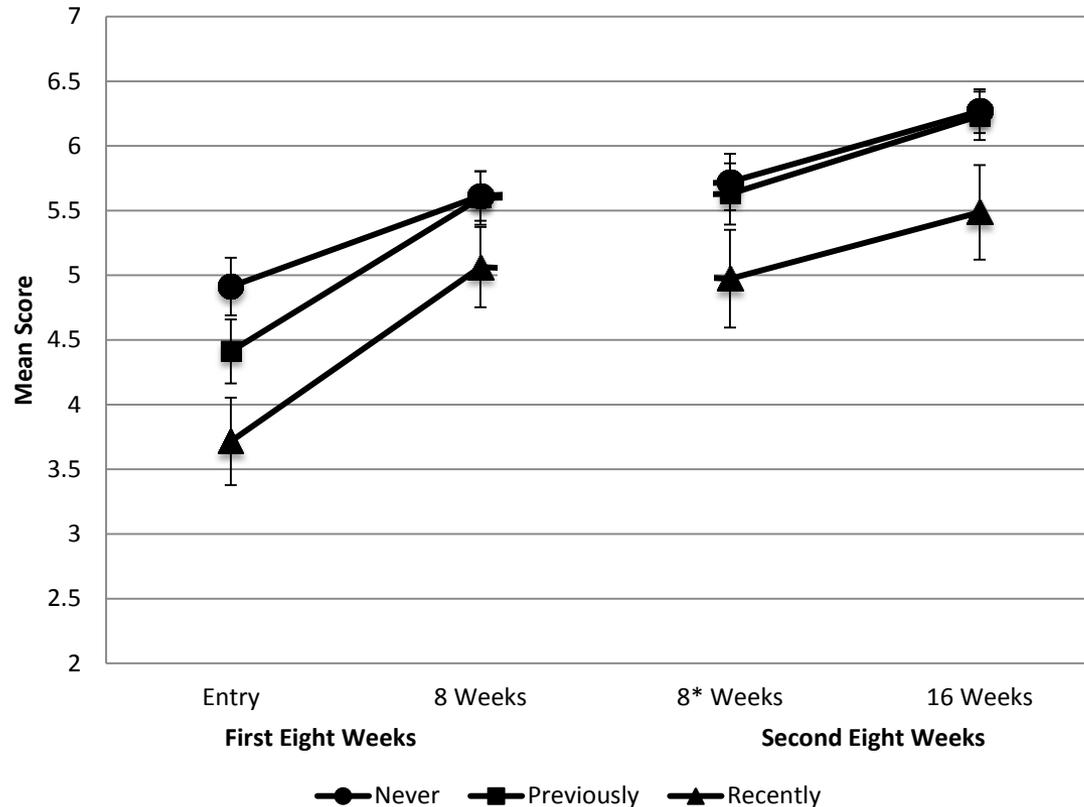
PsyCheck questions

- “Has the thought of ending your life ever been on your mind” (Question 5a) and, if yes, the person is asked “Has that happened recently?” (Question 5b).
- We compared distress and disempowerment among three groups (total 388):
 - Never had thoughts (n = 186, 47.9%)
 - Ever but not recently had thoughts (n = 140, 36.1%)
 - Recently had thoughts (n = 62, 16.0%)

Change over time at Oolong House - Kessler 6 Distress Scale



Core Six Scenario subset – Change over time at Oolong House



These tools are also sensitive to change; capable of guiding and capturing improvement in an empowering program or service.

- By using these measures, we were able to see that men who had entered Oolong House with recent suicidal thoughts experienced lowered distress (Kessler), and scored higher on inner peace (GEM EES) and Scenarios (Healing and Growth, Connection and Purpose, Core6).
- However, their scores remained lower than the men who did not have recent suicidal thoughts on entry – hence this suggests that an extended stay may be warranted for full recovery.

Learning about
trauma from an
empowerment lens

The Family Business

Improving the understanding and treatment of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder among incarcerated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women

Report

Project Team

Chief Investigator:

Dr Ed Heffernan
Associate Professor, School of Medicine, University of Queensland
Director, Queensland Forensic Mental Health Service, Metro North Hospital and Health Service (MNHHS)

Senior Investigators:

Kimina Andersen (Queensland Forensic Mental Health Service, MNHHS)
Dr Andrew Aboud (Prison Mental Health Service, West Moreton Hospital and Health Service)
Angela Scotney (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health Unit, MNHHS)
Associate Professor Stuart Kinner (School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne)

Research Assistant:

Ms Kym Kilroy (Queensland Forensic Mental Health Service)

Research Manager:

Ms Fiona Davidson (Queensland Forensic Mental Health Service)

The Family Business Findings

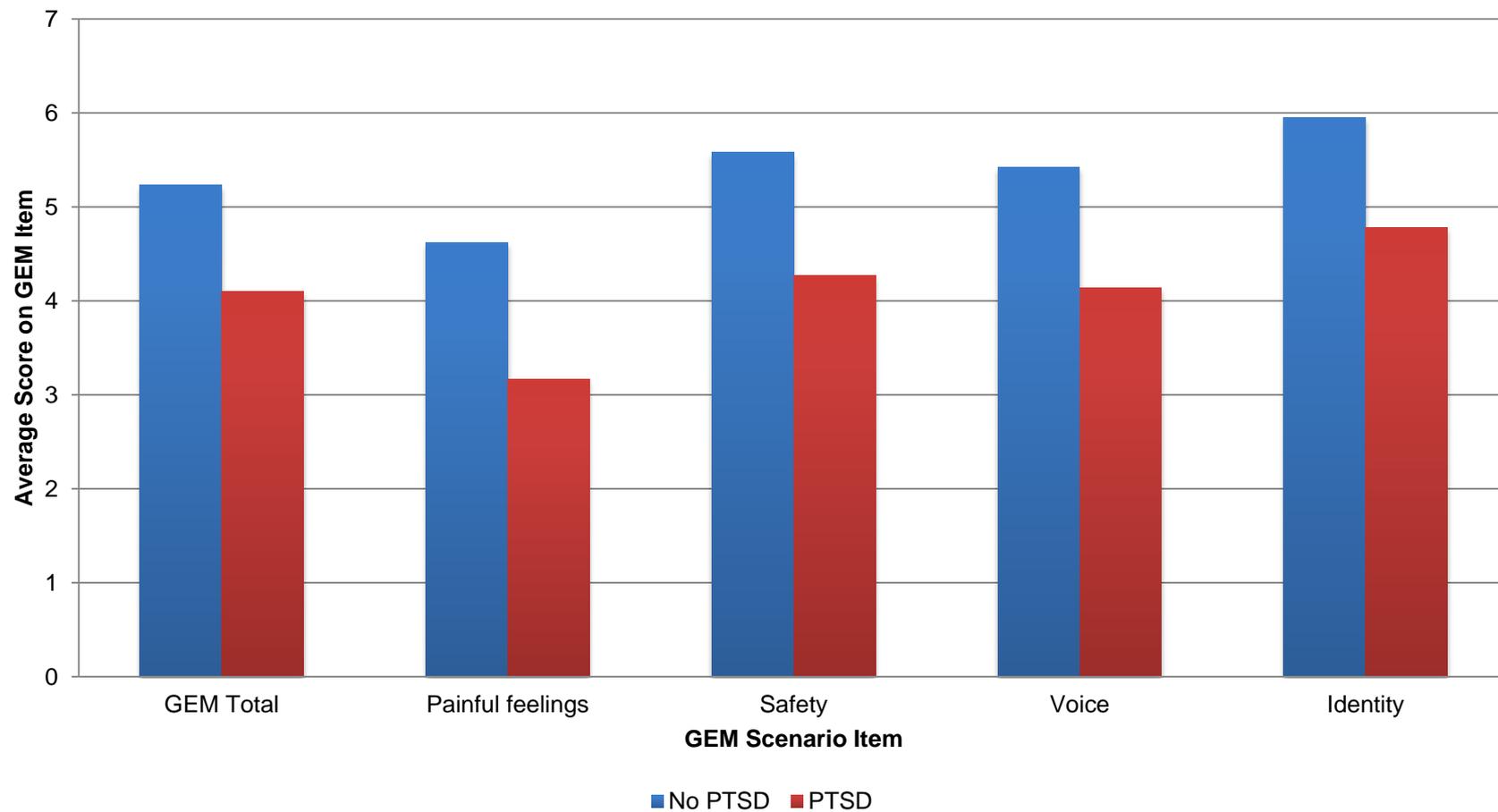


Appendix 9: Growth and Empowerment Measure (GEM)

| Growth and Empowerment Measure Mean Score (Individual scores range from 1-7 with 7 indicating higher level of empowerment) | PTSD n = 59 | Non PTSD n=55 |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| How do you deal with painful feelings and the bad things that have happened in your life? | 3.2 | 4.6 |
| How do you deal with safety for yourself? | 3.7 | 5.1 |
| How do you feel about making changes in your life? | 4.2 | 4.9 |
| Do you have a strong sense of knowing who you are? | 4.8 | 5.9 |
| Are you able to speak out and be heard in your community? | 4.1 | 4.4 |
| How do you see your relationships with other people? | 4.3 | 4.9 |
| Mean Score GEM 6 (includes 6 items as listed above) | 24.6 | 31.4 |

(page 63)

PTSD is strongly associated with disempowerment of women in their daily lives – especially through unresolved emotional pain and lack of safety, voice and identity



From Heffernan et al., 2015

Current Analysis: Questions we're answering thru the GEM (PhD, Sarah Gaskin)

- What are the most urgent areas of empowerment needing focus at individual and service level?
- Any differences according to entry mode, age, Indigenous status, type of AOD etc?
- What kinds of challenges are present for those with comorbidities?
- Has there been any change in outcomes over time – linked to service changes?
- Are there any items that predict program completion?
- GEM Junior and Youth GEM in development

Yarning after the GEM: What are your empowerment challenges? How can the service assist?



>15 Years of Collaborative Research on Empowerment & Social & Emotional Wellbeing

Huge thanks to the Creators and Developers of the Family Well Being Program, the Aboriginal Education Development Branch, SA

Some of our Key Collaborators in this Work:

CREW/UQ: **Dr Arlene Laliberté, *Lyndon Reilly, *Rachael Wargent, *Vicki Saunders, *Teresa Gibson, *Victor Gibson (HV)

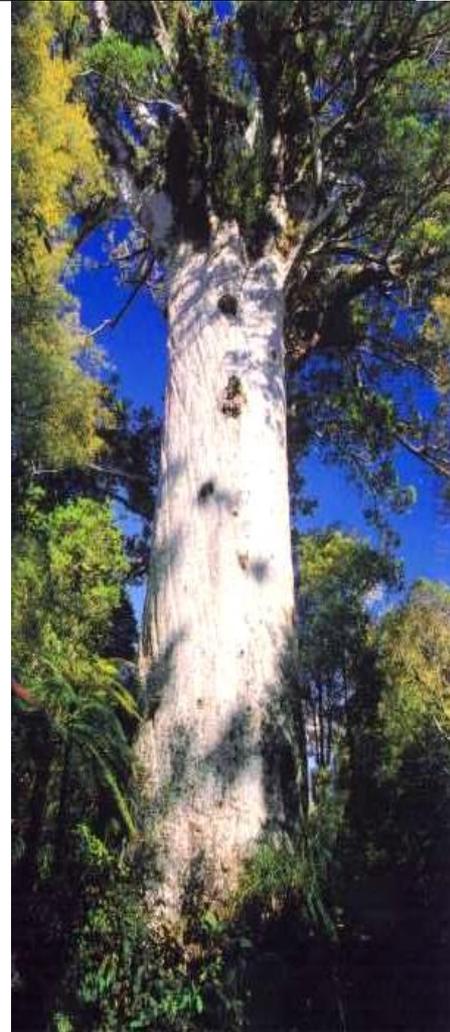
ERP Partnership with James Cook University - Komla Tsey, *Yvonne Cadet-James, and many others, Chris Doran (Newcastle Uni)

David Kavanagh, Ian Shochet & Andrew Wilson (QUT), Ernest Hunter (QH), Tricia Nagel (M)

Key Organisations involved along the way:

ACCHS: Mulungu, Gurriny Yealamucka, Goondir, Waminda, Roworr Pormpuraaw, Wuchopperen, Tangentyerre Council, Apunipima CY Health Council, RFDS, Menzies, Queensland Health, Panyappi - SA Metropolitan Aboriginal Youth and Family Services, Garma Festival Youth Forum, Balunu Healing Program, Ngala Nanga Mai pARenT Group, Gamarada Healing & Lifeskills, Oolong House, Waminda Women's Group, Red Cross SAM Our Way, Gamarada Men's Healing and Lifeskills Program, Life Life Well Mareeba

Main Funders: QH, NHMRC, AHMAC, CRAH, Apunipima, NSPS and FAHCSIA



THE FRUITS OF CHANGE

Positive Parenting
Strong Families
Upbeat Youth Focussed Culture
Spiritual Enhancement
Strong Future

Embracing Life
Freedom from Alcohol & Drug
No Abuse
No Violence
Social Justice

Graphic by
Lyndon Reilly



Alcohol and other drug training and
workforce development Queensland

Thanks for joining us today!

Please fill out a short evaluation

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8Z8VSJK>

Join us next week for

***“Getting Ready for Change”: Improving entry and retention
into allied health services.***

Presented by Kim Sander and John Kelly.