



Glossary of Healing Terms

Strong Spirit • Strong Culture • Strong People

This glossary contains words that appear frequently in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healing.

Term	Definition
Healing is:	
Culture	Culture is knowledge, practice, a unique world view and a way of living. It may manifest in knowledge about artefacts, tools, and art, connection and knowledge of places and people. It may also be considered as the way of living which we learn and teach to our children.
Cultural Connections	Cultural connection refers to both the relationships with community and kin and also the inner relationship to culture. It may have close ties with undergoing cultural practices and maintaining relationships between self, kin and community.
Wellbeing	Wellbeing is an existence in which we, as individuals and as community, are strong, proud, happy and healthy on physical, spiritual, emotional and social levels.
Community Control	Community control means the community is responsible for decision making within that community or organisation. It also refers to a specific organisation type and structure.
Country	Country directly relates to the culture of people and land on which individuals and communities reside and belong. This is more than a physical connection encompassing a social and emotional state.
Identity	Identity is a sense of self and community, the recognition of ourselves as unique to all others. This is not necessarily exclusive and may encompass many forms of identity within other cultures and people.
Kinship	Kinship refers to relationships and the way people behave within community and understand their roles and responsibilities.
Tradition	A tradition is a practice or understanding of the proper way of doing things, for example, in ceremony.
Leadership	Taking control, developing solutions and managing processes and outcomes.
Spiritual	Spiritual relates to a sense of strength drawn from cultural practice, understanding and knowledge, relating to otherworldly.
Reconciliation	Reconciliation involves building mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and other Australians allowing us to work together to solve problems and generate success that is in everyone's best interests.
Closing the Gap	Closing the Gap refers to the campaign to close the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians including better housing, health, education and employment options.

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Holistic	An holistic approach to healing is a complete approach, dealing with the whole of a person's or community's experience.
Journey	Healing as a process is a journey, not a destination.
Stolen Generations	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were removed from their families and communities under past government forcible removal policies for the purposes of separating them from their culture, family, land and identity.
Healing from:	
Forced Removals	Forced removals refers to the common practice of the Stolen Generations era of taking children away from their families and placing them in homes, other institutions or with non-Indigenous families.
Trauma	Trauma is the psychological result of the pain felt related to an experience that is outside normal experience. It is not limited to one point in time, but can apply to prolonged and ongoing events. Trauma may manifest itself in physical or emotional violence, abuse and addictions.
Intergenerational Trauma	Intergenerational trauma results from an older generation passing their traumatic experience or sharing the traumatic experiences of others through stories or enactment to the next generation in a way that results in a traumatic experience in the younger generation.
Colonisation	Colonisation refers to the process of the British occupying the land of Australia. This was on a large scale and curtailed the practices and existence of Indigenous communities.

