



# Indigenous Cultural Immersion Experience

26<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> April 2026

with

Indigenous Ministries Australia in partnership with  
Dareton Youth & Community Centre

Latji Latji and Barkindji country

## Contact details

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## The main thing – relationships (and fun)

The main aim of IMA discovery trips is to begin to explore relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and communities to work towards a reconciled and healed Australia based on God's justice and mercy.

The most important aspects of learning and connecting with this exposure event are:

- **Listening and Learning** — setting aside preconceived ideas and opinions and being open. 'Asking *yapa* (first nations people) direct questions almost never results in direct answers. *Yapa* way is to learn through watching and listening, not through interrogation' — Joan Fleming
- **Relaxing** — Our hosts at Dareton are keen for us to have a relaxing time, doing things together but not at the expense of relational connection. We can focus on 'being' present and together, not so much on 'doing'.
- **Respect** — respect for Elders, culture, the land and each other, a key Aboriginal cultural value.

While we will be learning about lots of new things for many of us, some of which will be challenging, our time together is also meant to be fun so don't forget to enjoy yourself!

## Planning the trip and staying in Dareton

### Accommodation and meals

We will be staying the first night in Mildura and then at the Coomealla Club Motel in Dareton in shared cabins with full bathroom facilities, kitchen and outdoor covered BBQ area. All meals will be included including a BBQ dinner at the Dareton Youth & Community Centre, and a celebration meal Kangaroo stew! Breakfast and Lunch each day will consist of cereals, spreads, sandwich and wrap ingredients to make your own.

### What to bring

Dareton weather in April is usually a comfortable 25 degrees daytime highs and an average of 12 degrees overnight low. It is advisable to bring casual clothing and personal effects suitable for those temperatures including:

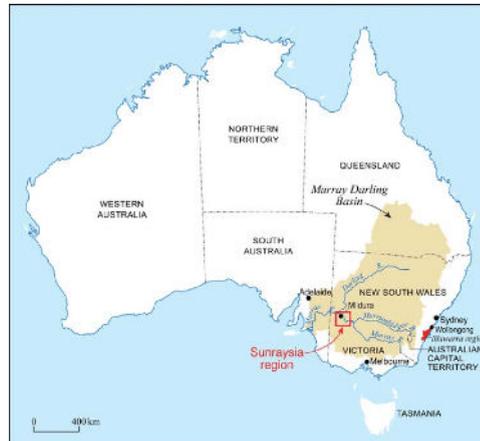
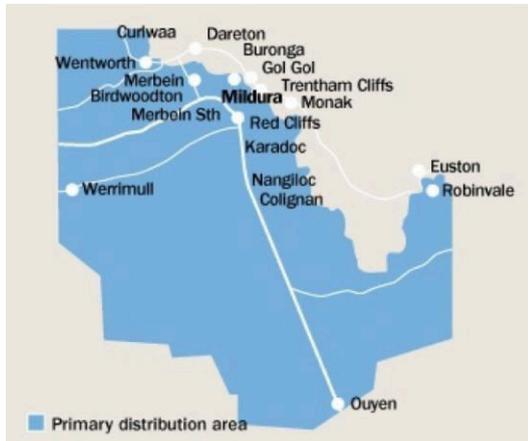
- Warm clothes for outdoors at night, beanies and gloves if desired
- Raincoat or similar in the event of rain
- Walking shoes or similar quality runners
- Toiletries, sunscreen, torch, medications and other personal effects

### Activities

Our activities will include:

- Cultural welcome ceremony
- Tour of the Dareton primary school with traditional Indigenous games
- Cultural awareness and Cultural safety input sessions
- Campfire reflection and yarning times
- Dadirri prayer and contemplation time
- Visits to significant cultural and historical sites

## Dareton background



Dareton is the centre of the Coomealla Irrigation Area, best known for its superior dried fruit and wine grapes. The irrigation area was once known as 'Nine Mile' and owes its existence, in part, to the visionary 'The Million Farms' scheme that flourished following World War One.

Pioneering families sowed the seeds of irrigated horticulture here in the mid-to-late 1920s, but it was the influx of soldier-settlers following World War Two, under the auspices of the War Services Land Settlement Scheme, that supplied the impetus for rapid growth and development.

**'They came and conquered, transforming the bush landscape into a neat cross hatch pattern of flourishing vineyards and orchards, literally carving out a prosperous future by hard work and sweat'**

**Health Issues:** The community experiences the same health problems as other Aboriginal communities in Australia with a high rate of Diabetes, cardiovascular disease, smoking and drug and alcohol related diseases.

**Domestic Violence:** Domestic Violence issues in the Wentworth Shire ranked 9th in the state of New South Wales in 2006,

**Drug and Alcohol Abuse:** Drug and Alcohol is an ongoing issue in the Wentworth Shire, this issue is linked with health issues, DV offences and other crime. There is one D & A worker in Dareton and the closest Rehabilitation Centre in NSW is Orana Haven in Brewarrina. This centre is approximately 900 kilometres from Dareton. A high number of Aboriginal youth in the area are using marijuana as well as alcohol, the nearest youth drug and alcohol facility is in Ballarat in Victoria.

**Teenage Pregnancies & Youth Issues:** There is a high rate of teenage pregnancy in the Aboriginal community in the Wentworth Shire. Girls as young as 13 are having babies, this issue is not being reported or addressed by families and relevant organisations.

**Mental Health Issues:** Mental health incidences are increasing due to the increase in drug and alcohol abuse, health services are seeing an increase in clients with dual diagnosis.

### **Transport - airport and local**

Local transport will be provided and airport (Mildura) pickups and drop-off will also be provided.

### **Special Connections**

Global Mission Partners (through IMA) has been partnering with Indigenous ministry and Indigenous focused programs in the Dareton area for over 12 years. Our hosts are Will Ward and Dellice Byers along with Sian Lee Harris (Dellice's sister) and other family and community members. Dellice and Sian are Barkindji, traditional owners of the Dareton area and Will is a Kamillaroi man from northern NSW. We will also spend time together with Ilker Deli, the DY&CC manager and Clinton Waters, the DY&CC Chair.

### **Dadirri / Meditation / Prayer / Contemplation**

There will be (screen free) time set aside each day during the trip for quiet reflection in whichever tradition you like to practice. We'll be sharing about the Aboriginal practice of dadirri.

The word, concept and spiritual practice that is dadirri (da-did-ee) is from the Ngan'gikurunggurr and Ngen'giwumirri languages of the Aboriginal peoples of the Daly River region (Northern Territory, Australia).

Dadirri is the deep inner spring inside of us. Dadirri is to listen deeply. Aboriginal Elder Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr tells us to listen deeply is to connect.

# Program

## **Monday 26th**

- Fly/Drive to Mildura
- 5:00pm Arrive Mildura Travel to Dareton
- 6:30pm Dinner at the Coomealla Club
- 8:00pm Overview and orientation
- 9:00pm Dadirri - reflection time

## **Tuesday 27th**

- 7:30am : Breakfast
- 8:45am : Travel to Dareton
- 9:00am : **SESSION 1** Welcome to Country - Aunty Dellice
- 9:30am-11:00am : Cultural facilitation with Will and Dellice Ward
  - What is Cultural Awareness?
  - Impacts of Colonisation
- 11:00am : morning tea
- 11:45 pm – **SESSION 2**

- o Perry Sandhills / Traditional Games - 'Bourinjin'
- 1:15pm : lunch together at Wentworth where the rivers meet
- 2:00-3:00pm - **SESSION 3**
  - o Snake Island / Scarred Trees
- 4:30-6:00pm : Check-in to accom and Visit to DY&CC
- 6:30pm BBQ Dinner and Campfire debrief
- 9:00pm : Dadirri – reflection time

### **Wednesday 28th**

- 7:30am : Breakfast
- 8:45am : Travel to Dareton
- 9:00am : **SESSION 4** Welcome to Country - Aunty Sianlee Harris
- 9:30am-11:00am : Cultural facilitation with Will and Dellice Ward
  - o What is Cultural Safety?
  - o Importance of Cultural Safety / Activities
- 10:30am : morning tea
- 11:00am – **SESSION 5**
  - o Cultural Art session and story telling with Aunty Sian Lee Harris
- 12:30pm : Lunch
- 2:00-3:00pm : Visit to BMEET gallery and Namatjira community
- 4:00-6:00pm : Visit to DY&CC
- 6:30pm Kangaroo stew dinner
- 9:00pm : Dadirri – reflection time

### **Thursday 29th**

- 7:30am : Breakfast
- 8:45am : Travel to Mildura
- 9:30am : Depart for Melbourne (Airport)



### **Risk management**

We encourage respect and sensitivity towards the local community and other attendees. If you have any questions about this, please don't hesitate to direct them to me.

- If you intend to leave the Dareton area outside of organized times please let me (Nick) know either directly or via text (0414695295)
- If you incur an injury or need to attend a doctor or hospital, please call me on 0414695295
- Please let me (Nick) know if you have any medical conditions that may affect your ability to participate
- We'd encourage all participants to consider having a 'dry' weekend and not consume alcohol or drugs whilst on this trip. There is a no alcohol policy whilst on the DY&CC
- Please note accompanying minors will be the responsibility of their parent or guardian at all times.

### **Social Enterprise as self determination**

Our First Nations hosts in Dareton operate Immersion experiences and hosting of other groups as a social enterprise model so by participating in this experience you are helping to directly support an Indigenous led faith community and are investing in new and emerging Indigenous leaders.

### **Photos**

DY&CC, Dareton and the Sunraysia region are great places to take beautiful photos so bring a smart phone or camera. As a general guide, always ask for permission to take a photos if includes people and try to avoid taking pics with young children or if you do, make sure you definitely get permission

### **Online**

Keep up to date with DY&CC and IMA on our socials

### **Sharing your experience**

IMA and Dareton Youth & Community Centre would deeply value your feedback on your experience. A brief story or reflection (emailed to Nick) will help us continue to promote and develop our partnership and raise support for more opportunities like this.

# Dadirri

## **Dadirri / Meditation / Prayer / Contemplation**

The word, concept and spiritual practice that is dadirri (da-did-ee) is from the Ngan'gikurunggurr and Ngen'giwumirri languages of the Aboriginal peoples of the Daly River region (Northern Territory, Australia). It has many similarities with the Christian practices of contemplative prayer or other religious traditions with meditation practices.

Dadirri is the deep inner spring inside of us. Dadirri is to listen deeply. Aboriginal Elder Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr tells us to listen deeply is to connect.

Dadirri is deep listening.  
It's listening to the land.  
Listening to the spirit speaking through the land.  
Listening to the stillness.

The stillness in the water flowing,  
The wind blowing,  
The birds singing,  
The ground humming.

## **Some basic techniques you can try**

- **START:** Pay attention to your body.
  - Get comfortable but not in a sleeping position!
  - Stretch all your limbs, clench and release: start with your toes, then your legs, through your chest, arms, hands and fingers. Finish with your head, eyes, mouth teeth.
- **TECHNIQUE 1:** Pay attention to your breath
  - Breathe in slowly on a count of 3
  - Hold your breath now on a count of 3
  - Release your breath slowly on a count of 5
  - Keep repeating
- **TECHNIQUE 2:** Pay attention to your ears
  - If you are stuck in your head, listen to the sounds you can hear around you, outside of your body?
  - How far away are they? Where, in the space around me, are they?
- **TECHNIQUE 3:** Pay attention to your thoughts
  - Most of us have a monkey mind – we can't slow it down or control the constant stream of thoughts – that's normal and OK
  - If you experience anxiety or other issues this often is most noticeable in your thoughts
  - First, just notice your thoughts as they turn up but don't follow up with any more thinking on them
  - Welcome them but don't pay them anymore attention
  - Begin to practice letting them go
  - Visualisation can be helpful here... picture gently putting each thought into a paper boat and releasing it in a stream... or letting the breeze take it away like a small piece of paper

- o The important thing here is to not stop thinking or being hard on yourself if thoughts keep coming, just to practice letting go of your thoughts over and over

We are one with the land – sacred and unique. All of us belong, and we celebrate together. We feel *dadirri*, the deep spring that is inside us. We call on it and it calls to us. When we listen to the land we are made whole again.

We listen to the sacred stories, told and sung to us as we gather around the campfire. They sink quietly into our minds and we hold them deep inside. We learn by watching and listening, waiting and then acting. As we grow older, we ourselves become the storytellers, and pass on all that we have learned. In the ceremonies we celebrate the awareness of our lives as sacred. This is the way of our people. — Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr

# Intercultural Framework

**Intercultural Framework**  
by Mark Yettica-Paulson  
Chief @ Super Native Unlimited

**The Green Space** is for Innovation in collaboration for cultures. It is where a new way forward is developed. In most cases it will be a hybrid form of existing knowledges, but can also represent a break-through paradigm shift.

**The Deep Purple Space** is for our deep cultural memory. It is where we draw our deep sense of belonging. It is where our mental models of the world, our beliefs and values originate. This is the space where we justify our place in the world and our ways of relating to others.

**The Red Space** is a teaching space. It is where we take on the posture of a teacher or a learner and often both. We either face across the Ochre Riverbed and teach others about our cultural ways or we face towards the Brown Background to teach our own peoples.



**The Light Purple Space** is for culture awareness, signifying an awareness of us and others. It is where we assess the risk/reward and threat/opportunity dynamics of working with others.

**The Ochre Riverbed** is where the cultures meet. It is the common or shared space. It is where pragmatic and innovative collaboration happens.

**The Brown Land Background Space** is the culture that we live in. It is often not obvious because it is our natural lifestyle. We do notice it when it clashes with others or is threatened by others.

**Blue Space** is for cultural practice and participation. It is where we perform activities that strengthen our sense of belonging and deepen our identity. This space is where we actively, and sometimes intentionally, live out our cultural activities either in lifestyle activities, festivals, ceremonies or commemorations.

**The Yellow Space** is for pragmatic collaboration. It is where energy and activity is focused on immediate practical solutions in working side-by-side in collaborations. This space relies on existing knowledge and relationships to work through current barriers to achieve more immediate outcomes.