

Seasons for Healing



A small group program supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults dealing with issues of loss and grief.

The program does not provide counselling or therapy.

What does it do?

A culturally appropriate small group education program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults reducing isolation and teaches coping skills to deal with the hurt that change and loss bring.

Who is it for?

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults who are dealing with the often complex and multi-dimensional grief and loss experiences in their lives.

Change affects everyone differently, as does grief. It's the impact of the change, not the event itself that *Seasons for Healing* focuses on.

Seasons for Healing was developed in partnership by Good Grief and Aboriginal Family Support Services with funding provided by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation.

Seasons for Healing Companion Training is available to interested agencies. For more information about training or the program, please contact Good Grief National Office (612) 8912 2700 or info@goodgrief.org.au



How does it work?

Seasons for Healing uses a person centred approach. People in the group support and learn from each other in a range of activities designed to invite reflection, sharing and conversation. People in the group learn that they are not alone in dealing with the effects of change, loss and grief, and have the chance to listen and speak, make decisions, solve problems and think about plans for the future.

Esteemed Aboriginal artist Bronwyn Bancroft has created a unique and moving series of artworks to illustrate the *Seasons for Healing's* messages. Participant journals and posters featuring Bronwyn's painting are used to support the groups as they move through the program

How is it delivered?

Two trained "Companions" co-facilitate the small group program with 4-7 participants. *Seasons for Healing* contains four 2.5 hour sessions delivered over two or four days.

Where possible, and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Companion should be one of the two co-facilitators supporting each group.

Outcomes

The *Seasons for Healing* program provides the support and space to:

- **Learn** about how different people respond to change, loss and grief
- **Explore** their own story and how this relates to the story of the seasons
- **Understand** that it is normal to experience a range of grief reactions
- **Learn** about how to manage feelings and memories
- **Take** part in a supportive peer group
- **Use** their new learning within their relationships with family, friends and others
- **Make** plans for their self-care in the future

Evidence

School of Social and Policy Studies, Flinders University

Evaluation Report for Aboriginal Family Support Services SA concludes that;

The *Seasons for Healing* Program meets the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation National Performance Indicators, and in particular the National Outcomes of:

1. Strengthened social, spiritual, emotional and physical wellbeing
2. Strengthened connection to culture
3. Strengthened cultural identity and pride

(Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation 2011)