

T-TRIM (Transition Training for Remote Indigenous Ministry) in July

By Margaret Miller

With Northern Territory and state border restrictions challenging everyone's plans, it is with thankful hearts that Transition Training for Remote Indigenous Ministries (ie.T-TRIM) was able to deliver four days of training at Nungalinga College, Darwin in the second week of July this year.

A special thanks goes to Rachel Borneman of Mission Interlink NT who co-ordinated the 4-day program. It was a privilege for me to be a part of a team on the first two days, Tuesday 13th and Wednesday 14th, that presented the 'Christian Spirituality in Aboriginal Australian Context' Unit. The Unit included 9 sessions, with presenters representing Nungalinga College, World Outreach, Pioneers, YWAM Darwin, Wycliffe / Mission Interlink and Coordinate.



These first two days offered only a limited amount of time to provide a 'taster' for new recruits. The team worked hard to have the material as sensitive and balanced as possible, in presenting the variety and complexity of views on Christian Spirituality, that may be found in Aboriginal Communities of the NT today. A number of Aboriginal folk contributed via video stream in order to achieve that balance.

Due to NSW and NT's travel restrictions, I was in 'lockdown', so joined remotely via Zoom, from Sydney. With a powerpoint and shared screens I presented for the 'The 3D Gospel +1' session that addressed the cultural biases that influence our understanding of, response to and communication of the gospel cross-culturally.

Here are a sample of some points made with powerpoint slides;

1. Every culture has a combination of the '3+1' cultural biases when understanding the gospel... including Western Christianity!
The '3D Gospel' makes for a great tool to explore difference in cross-cultural ministry. It describes three different lens ie; 'guilt-innocence', 'shame-honour' and 'fear-power' with one more added recently; the lens of 'pain-pleasure'.



1 T-TRIM : coordinated by Mission Interlink Northern Territory is designed to address the orientation and training needs of new recruits across a range of agencies, aiming to work with Aboriginal communities of the Northern Territory
2 Georges, Jayson: "THE 3D GOSPEL" Ministry in Guilt, Shame and Fear Cultures ©2014

T-TRIM in July continued

2. On this slide Danjanbarr, provides an analogy of a 'tree planted in its natural soil'. Other Aboriginal voices also shared this analogy of planting in 'the natural / fertile soil' of their Aboriginal culture. So what does that mean? 'Planting Christ in the natural soil' was unpacked using the four lens, to identify the cultural biases of Aboriginal Australia to the gospel.

preparing the message in a culturally appropriate way for the listener to understand

*If we, as people, are set free to be planted in our native soil,
...if we are free to do the things that we do naturally,
...then there will be results.*



*ie. good fruit..
in the right season ..
to share around...*

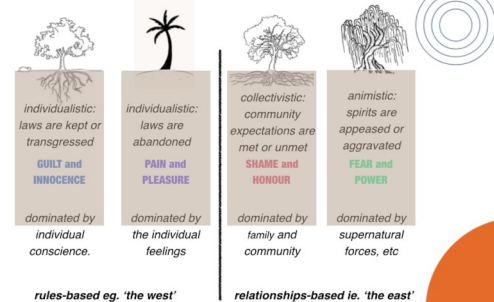
We want to be able to tell our children...



by Danjanbarr

3. On this slide, the 4 cultural biases were explored in light of the complexities of Aboriginal Australia and the Fourth World context (see T-TRIM in April). So which lens' are most appropriate when in ministry? Is it a lens where sin brings guilt, shame, fear, pain or a 'combination' of these? Which ones are most significant to the Aboriginal Australian context and why?

Worldviews : West vs East(non-west)



sources:
1. 'Global Map of Culture Types' by honorsname.com
2. David Williams in video 'Pain and Pleasure Worldview'

I presented examples of how Aboriginal Australians connect with Honour and Shame and Rachel presented examples of Fear and Power Worldview. Then on the second day participants had the opportunity to go deeper by applying the '3D Gospel +1' practically, exploring the Scriptures and 'Gospel Beads' to tell the Gospel story from a 'shame-biased' perspective.

This training proved to be very positive for those who could get there. Here are some comments from those participants who could be there..

"T-TRIM provides insight into the struggles of Aboriginal ministry, working frameworks, and future directions."

"The message of the Bible is universal. The best way to communicate that message and to engage well with other Christians is not universal. This course has helped me to gain more understanding of Aboriginal culture and better equipped me for ministry."

"Appreciated the sensitive way the training content was presented, and also the amount of organisation that went into running the training."



Rachel and participants who completed T-TRIM in July

Our Health Day at TTRIM (Transition Training for Remote Indigenous Training)

By Louise Macdonald



After Eighteen months of planning our team of facilitators from many churches and organisations in the Northern Territory and led by Rachel Borneman from Mission Interlink pulled off the inaugural Transition Training for Remote Indigenous Ministry program. From the outset I have been committed to creating a course that provides a positive learning environment for adults wanting to work in Remote Indigenous Ministry. For many of our Ministry settings orientation to working out bush has been along the lines of dive in the deep end and see if you can sink or swim. This model of learning has left a legacy of failed work placements, both for the new workers and the communities that they were intended to serve.

From my perspective I was hoping to contribute to a course which would firstly provide opportunities for participants to reflect deeply on their own cultural backgrounds, world views and personalities, and then secondly offer an introduction to the foreign world of Indigenous culture that they were about to enter, and then finally to prepare people to be able to learn from the Indigenous people whom they will meet while living and working in remote communities. We recognise this program is the first step in a long learning journey.

The health day developed partly because I have a background in nursing but it could just as easily have been a day on Education or Housing. We settled on Health because no matter



what your role is in community your own health and the health of the people you are living and working alongside will influence work patterns and program design. I certainly always factor in the need for a car and a driver to be available to provide transport to clinic or hospital whenever I'm planning a translation workshop. I also expect to think about childcare as at least one Grandparent at a workshop is going to need to care for a child whose parent is either sick or managing other sick children.

Health Day continued

We started the day with a devotion on Mark 7:31-37 Jesus made a deaf mute man better. This passage started a theme throughout the day of how care is a strong principle that guides much of Aboriginal culture starting with the kinship system which after 9 days was still confusing participants.

Next we explored the Social Determinants of Health and how the social contexts in which one currently lives are going to dramatically change when moving into a remote community.

Pastor David Crawford then shared stories from his lengthy experience as a Translation Advisor with AuSIL in the APY lands of North Western South Australia and his years as a hospital Chaplain in Darwin. David was able to give us some insight into traditional healing practices.

More theory was then tackled in a session on Cultural Safety. In this session we explored the definition: “ Cultural Safety requires that each human being receives care REGARDFUL of all that makes them unique” and the two principles that are required for Cultural Safety are firstly – Reflection on your own identity and secondly How will your understanding of yourself then change how you approach people from other cultures? Cultural Safety is a guiding framework that enables the person who receives your care to be the only person who can decide if your care is culturally safe; in other words Cultural safety is only achieved if the person being cared for feels culturally safe. Then we explored the differences between feeling uncomfortable and feeling unsafe. Being uncomfortable can be a positive indication that if you sensitively stay present in the uncomfortable setting and listen and reflect this will be a space for learning and successful relationship building.

After a hearty Nungalinga lunch a panel of Chaplains – Lindsay Parkhill, David Crawford and Rosemary and Derik Snibson offered an hour of very moving story telling from their decades of experience in the Northern Territory. Their humility and vulnerability made for a very moving session.

The day finished with Dr Brad Martin giving very practical advice on caring for yourself in community.

This final four days of the TTRIM course starting with Indigenous Christianity and finishing with language after the Health day hopefully will be the beginning of a program that we can offer regularly to Christian workers wishing to move into remote Indigenous Communities.

David, Rachel, Louise, Glen, Kim, Tony, Rob,
Rosey and Lindsay

