

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

TRAINING SCHOOL

## HUMAN DEVELOPMENT TRAINING SCHOOL REPORT

### TRAINING SCHOOL

The first Human Development Training School in Australia was held at Oombulgurri, West Australia from 30 April to 29 May, 1978. Forty eight participants representing eight Aboriginal Communities from across the nation took part in the school. A global staff composed of five Australians, four North Americans, two Malaysians, and one Indonesian conducted the school. They brought with them experience from working in Human Development Projects in eight other countries and Australia plus experience in the Human Development Training Schools in India and Korea. The school was located in the Education Complex at Oombulgurri. The Adult Education Centre served as dining hall and the main meeting place. Tents and beds supplied by the Australian Army provided the school's dormitory.

### INTENSIVE SCHEDULE

The School began with an opening feast. Representatives of the faculty, community and the participants spoke of the possibilities of the school and its relevance to the development of Aboriginal communities of today. The following day was spent in orientating the participants to the whole curriculum and in an extensive tour of the Oombulgurri project. Each day thereafter the school met at 6:00 a.m. for breakfast and early morning collegium. This included opening exercises, roll call, singing and a conversation on current news around the world. By the second week, the participants were carrying leadership roles in these events. The collegium covered a range of topics from presentations and discussions on different parts of the world to practical methods as to how a community can work together. A 30 minute break ensued at which time participants and faculty joined in teams to do enabling tasks such as washing dishes and cleaning grounds. From 8:30 to 12:00 each morning a presentation and workshop were held covering the modules in the curriculum. Over lunchtime participants and faculty joined in their teams to work on pedagogy. There participants gained actual practice in creating and giving talks, leading meetings and doing workshops. After an hour's break the school worked from 2:00 to 5:00 in the afternoon viewing films, completing workshops and other practical work. At the close of each section of the curriculum a plenary was held of the whole school to review and report on the results. The evening Tea began at 6:00 p.m. at which time an Evening Roundtable was held where the day was reviewed and discussion arose from the participants. The Roundtables usually concluded around 8:00 p.m. after which there was time for individual study and preparation for the next day.

Besides the regular curriculum there were work days, an extended trip, Aboriginal Heritage course and a Community Meeting. Work days were tied into the curriculum. For instance, the work day following the agriculture module was carried out with the Oombulgurri community planting their garden and laying pipe and trickle irrigation. The workday following the Health Module consisted of building leach drains for water taps to rid the community of breeding grounds for hook worms. A two and one half days trip to Kununurra to see the Ord River project and local industries was one of the highlights of the school. Here they were able to see a wide assortment of agriculture projects and a broom factory run by Aborigines.

#### SPECIAL EVENTS

Another highlight of the school was the Aboriginal Heritage Course where many of the participants saw for the first time that their culture was a complex civilization with refined languages and highly developed care structures. At the conclusion of the course a hike was taken to caves near Oombulgurri which have ancient paintings and where some of the elders spoke with the participants about their tribal past.

A Community Meeting was held by the participants themselves, giving the talks and leading the workshops and plenaries. Celebrations were held following each workday and a grand closing celebration was held with the entire community. Two bullocks and three pigs were cooked in a ground oven and many other dishes were prepared by community members and school participants. The Education complex was decorated and lit with spotlights and a stage constructed. Reports were given and entertainment arranged by the participants.

#### BASIC CURRICULUM

The three curriculum cycles were extremely well attended throughout the school. Serious study and hard work tended to increase in proportion to the participants grasping the critical nature of the present historical plight of Aborigines and their need to develop their communities. Becoming aware of people like themselves across the world who are also struggling to develop themselves gave them encouragement and a new picture of their own task. The Agriculture module in the economic cycle was highly rated in the participants' evaluation of the school. There was keen interest among both men and women in ways to make their people self-sufficient and to engage them in the process. In the Industry and Commerce modules the steps for setting up a store so that profits from the store can be used to improve their local community were closely followed as were steps to set up pig and chicken industries. In the Social Cycle, the Health module drew the greatest interest, particularly the community health workers model used at Oombulgurri in which local people are trained to care for community needs.

The Education module brought out a great deal of concern, especially in building curriculum to train people in the community for practical tasks. The participants also worked on how to build incentive among school age children to continue their education and how the community could enable this to happen. The Community Development Cycle saw participants make table top models of a community incorporating values of functional use of space beauty and tradition. They also created symbol systems and organizational designs for effective community living.

#### FACULTY REFLECTION

Following the school the faculty did an extensive reflection on the school and arrived at four basic learnings. The first was that Aboriginal people were extremely concerned about their future and deeply desirous of practical methods that would enable them to be self-sufficient and self-reliant. On a daily basis different participants would recount the destructiveness of the present situation upon Aborigines which forced them into a dependent relationship and cut them off from any economic development. Their vigorous work in the economic and methods sections that often went beyond the required hours were evidence of their desire to be self sufficient. The second learning was that the participants were deeply interested in their heritage, but they did not desire to live in the past. Rather, they desired to know of their past in order to have a guide to construct a new future.

The third learning was that the participants were not just interested in themselves or their immediate community but all Aboriginal people. It was at this level of concern that their motivity was released and their ability to work and think through issues heightened. The fourth learning was that the intensity of the participants' response was directly related to the clarity of the context of what they were doing. As long as they could sense that what they were about was equipping them to be helpful to their people they were exceptionally attentive and eager. They were greatly excited about learning how to lecture, lead meetings and put thoughts together into a speech, because they knew this was in important need of their people.

#### FUTURE RECOMMENDATION

During the students' evaluation one suggestion was repeated several times and that was that another school of this kind should be held soon. They suggested Murrin Bridge as the site, and began to list people who should attend. Several volunteered to serve as faculty and enablement personell. We believe that this is an important step toward what needs to happen in the future. Along with this we believe that the Walkabout Community Meetings also need to be continued and make use of a number of the participants who have volunteered to do this. A large number of Aborigine people need to go through this training, so that increasingly they can take on a larger role in doing their own practical training and so the basic images of self-sufficiency and self-reliance along with the practical methods can be shared widely.

ICA		HUMAN DEVELOPMENT TRAINING SCHOOL					Oombulgurri 1978	
	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	
1	Orientation Day	The Twentieth Century				COMMERCIAL MODULE	Reflection	
		AGRICULTURE MODULE		WORK DAY	INDUSTRIAL MODULE		SCHOOL PICNIC	
		Roundtable		Roundtable				
2	Ur Images		WORK DAY	Ur Images		ABORIGINAL HERITAGE		
	HEALTH MODULE			EDUCATION MODULE				
	Roundtable			Roundtable				
3	Imaginal Education		FIELD TRIP TO KUNUNURRA	Human Sociality		COMMUNITY MEETING		
	WELFARE MODULE			LIVING ENVIORMENT MODULE				
	Roundtable			Roundtable				
4	Individual and Family			LIFE ODYSSEY	HDP COUNCIL	FEAST  CLOSING EXERCISES		
	IDENTITY SYSTEMS		CORPORATE PATTERNS					
	Roundtable							

## HDTS COMMENTS

The school gave me not only common knowledge but something I didn't realise was even there and I know that will take me through my entire life. Also I feel sad about the people who will not help the future of the Aboriginal people in determining their own way. I hope they will change.

The school was very helpful to me in lots of ways. I got some ideas about starting different things. There are problems up in our community as well as here. It is good to get ideas from other people. I feel we could have a very good market garden with a bit of a start, that is money, because we have good handy man in Mr. Bill Riley.

I found out that the HDTS helped me to know more about agriculture. Most important thing that I learned was that we Aborigines have been depending on UEB which is just the same as saying that those blacks won't work not while we give them government income. They are idiots. I found out through the school that if we're going to do something about it NOW IS THE TIME. By having a big community meeting all over Australia. Just to show that we have woken up. And are going to start a new and better life for ourselves. By doing that we will be able to make market gardens, selling our crops to our own communities, and have our own men working for us, which will keep 'em off UEB and other income off the government.

WE ARE GOING TO MAKE IT.

I found the school most helpful, coming to Oombulgurri and seeing how the place is run and standing up giving lectures. Because if I go to another school like this I won't be too scared to give lectures. And I have learnt a lot of new things and new ways to stand up and talk.

I found out more about agriculture than I already knew, such as growing vegetables and found out about different communities.

I found the school most helpful in learning how to plan community meetings, stake meetings, guilds, agriculture, education to train people in pre-school, clinic in the health work. To know that Aborigines can do it, and we can plan for future development.

I found this school helpful to me because I learned how to tell other communities and my community how to pull together and share things in the future.

I found the Industry and the Health was helpful to me because in the Industry we learned about poultry farms and the piggery and the dairy. When I get home I will see if the council would start a piggery, a poultry farm and a dairy at Point McLeay. The community needs equipment to keep others healthy. They showed us what they do at the clinic, to help the community. The doctor comes once a week or when there is an emergency. They have two nurses and three Aboriginal girls as helpers.

I found the school was a most important part in the lives of Aboriginal people throughout Australia, in learning how to give lectures on problems in their communities. Also how to be self-reliant. It also showed that Aboriginals can be self-sufficient in managing their communities without assistance from the State Government.

When I first came to school in Oombulgurri I was a bit frightened, then I got used of it and I learned a lot about Agriculture, Industry, Commerce, Health, Education, Welfare, Living Environment, Identity Systems, Corporate Patterns, and talking about Community Meetings.

This school helped me in ways such as

- 1) showed me the subjects that are related to a community programme.
- 2) It showed that Aborigines can and will develop their own communities without any support from the State Government, and any other assistance.
- 3) It also showed that the future for the aborigines, is that, they will stand on their own 2 feet and can show the world that people with different colours is no different from any other person and can be self-sufficient.

I found the school very helpful. It helped to freshen my mind. It also worked wonders with the two young people that came with me. I thank you all for what you have done for my people.

I found out that this people needs more education of how to run this place by themselves, and how to build their own homes. It could help them to help the elders.

Well, it helped me to know a lot of things that I didn't know before like Corporate Patterns and Life Odyssey and how to do lectures and how to overcome and have the power that Aboriginal people can get up and have a lot of guts to build their community.

When I go back to my own Community I will be more outspoken. I can be able to stand up and talk to the Community. I have learned of important things in life, that I never really sat and thought of them before coming to this school. I only thought of my own family's future and not of my people. All of that has changed now, and I will never forget Oombulgurri as long as I live.

This school has learnt us a lot. It showed us how to start a market garden, gave us new ideas on what we are going to do when we get back to my home community. And I know that when we do get back home things will really start to change. I recommend that there should be more schools like this in Australia. There should be about two in every state and Australia will change a lot.

How I found the school helpful to me was coming to Oombulgurri and having some fulfillment in seeing how they started the piggery, the poultry and the market garden here in the hottest part of Western Australia. The most helpful thing was the HDTS. It gave me more spirit and knowledge to understand the way we Aboriginals live. It would be great to go back and try to make a better community.

What I found helpful is to be able to lead a meeting. If I decide to do something I know I'll be able to do it, if I really try hard.

When I first came to this school in Oombulgurri and I started to learn about how to plant pumpkin seed in the garden. Also I learned agriculture and health. I wanted to do the lot but I didn't have much time.

The school was helpful to me meeting people from other places.

I found the school was very helpful when we talked about health and welfare.

Learning to help other people to help others. A school is a good place to learn. You meet lots of people.

When I first came to Oombulgurri school it was good. We learned to do health and some more on work days.



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