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As Many Australians Head Back Into Lockdown, What Coping Techniques Can We Learn From Indigenous Wisdom?

A lot of Australians will be feeling frustrated at the moment, with the country's biggest city in lockdown and others on tenterhooks.

Many of us will be struggling – having thought we were through one of the toughest years in our history, only for the pandemic to rear its head again and devastate lives and livelihoods.

At this time, it can be useful to look for advice outside your usual sphere of influence. Evolve co-director Aunty Munya Andrews is sharing some wisdom from Indigenous culture to try and help people manage their way through another tough time.

1. We are never alone

“Aboriginal Dreamtime teaches us that we are never alone – our ancestors are always with us. And so I've never grown up feeling lonely, knowing that ‘the old people’, as we call them, are around us. We can talk to them at any time. I've never felt that social isolation that westerners do.”

2. Just Ride the Waves (and go with the flow)

“Indigenous people have had everything thrown at them – from genocide to restrictive legislation among many other things. It's nothing new. But we deal with it accordingly and with our head screwed on tight because we know that the ancestors will always look after us.”

3. Seek the Answers Within

There is a practice called *Dadirri* (or ‘deep listening’) taught by Nauiyu elder Aunty Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann, that Aunty Munya and her co-director of Evolve Carla Rogers say has been particularly helpful to them.

“It's about really listening to yourself, and listening to your fears – but not trying to *control* your thoughts.”

Rather than obsess over the constant flow of COVID-19 news hoping for good signs, Carla and Aunty Munya say, we should be trying to find solace within.

Carla Rogers and Aunty Munya Andrews are available for interviews.

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