XII. Appendices

K. APPENDIX 1. Principles underlying the work of HAAP

RESPECT

One culture respecting another,

People respecting each other

Respect for one-self

Respect different ways of expression – including the expression of silence

OPENNESS

Being open to understand and value each other’s culture

Being open in our minds to the ideas and experience of another person

Being able to accept our differences

Openness is also about communication: exchanging ideas and passing information between each other

DIVERSITY OF CULTURES

We will do our best to learn about and work with what is relevant in all cultures.

CULTURAL EXCHANGE

By knowing each other we will become a part of each others culture.

Our working relationship is more important than our culture.

The relationship between us will enrich all of our cultures.

ARTISTIC DETERMINATION

Our excellence depends on our effort and our ethics.

We will work to achieve the highest standard.

We are committed to the discipline of arts practice.

Reciprocity A mutual obligation exists among members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities to achieve an equitable distribution of resources, responsibility and capacity and to achieve cohesion and survival of the social order. This mutual obligation extends to the land, animals and other natural elements and features. In contemporary settings the value of reciprocity continues in various forms, and may vary between locations. Examples include the redistribution of income, benefits from the air, land and sea, and the sharing of other resources such as housing.

Respect Human dignity and worth are a characteristic of relationships between people, and the way individuals behave is fundamental to a functioning and moral society. Within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures respect is reinforced by and in turn strengthens dignity. A respectful relationship induces trust and cooperation. Strong culture is a personal and collective framework built on respect and trust that promotes dignity and recognition.

Equality One of the values expressed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and cultures is the equal value of people. One of the ways this is reflected is a commitment to distributive fairness and justice. Equality affirms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' right to be different.

Responsibility Central to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies and cultures is the recognition of core responsibilities. These responsibilities include those to country, kinship bonds, caring for others and the maintenance of harmony and balance within and between the physical and spiritual realms. A key responsibility within this framework is to do no harm, including avoiding having an adverse impact on others' ability to comply with their responsibility. As well, one person's responsibilities may be shared with others so that they will also be held accountable.

Survival and Protection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples continue to act to protect their cultures and identity from erosion by colonisation and marginalisation. A particular feature of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and these efforts has been the importance of a collective identity. This collective
bond reflects and draws strength from the values base of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and culture.

**Spirit and Integrity** This is the overarching value that binds all others into a coherent whole. It has two components. The first is about continuity between past, current and future generations. The second is about behaviour, which maintains the coherence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values and cultures. Any behaviour that diminishes any of the previous five values could not be described as having integrity.
M. APPENDIX 3. Consent Form for persons participating in research projects

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
Department of Education

Consent Form for persons participating in research projects

Project Title: An investigation of the effects of CCD on settlement patterns of Horn of Africa Refugees: Using stories drawn from verbal and non-verbal responses to the “third space”.

Name of Participant:
Name of Investigator: Jill Parris

1. I consent to participate in the project named above. It has been explained to me that I will be interviewed about my experiences of settlement and joining HAAP and will do a drawing related to this experience. A written copy of this information has been given to me to keep.

2. I authorise the researcher to use the material extracted from the interview referred to above.

3. I acknowledge that:
   a. This interview may raise some difficult feelings for me and am satisfied that adequate outside support will be offered if this happens.
   b. I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any processed data previously supplied.
   c. The project is for the purpose of research.
   d. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provided will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements.

4. I agree to the interview being audio-taped and that the transcript will be given to me for verification and that I will not be identified by name on any publications arising from this research.

Signature of participant

Date

.................................................................
N. APPENDIX 4. An example of the method used in creating a mandala

Here I unpack the specific process followed in eliciting the above mandala and fully document the drawing and data extraction phases.

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**STEP 1. DRAWING THE MANDALA**

This mandala was drawn in a group setting as one of 13 mandalas drawn at the end of the HAAP drama workshops in October 2007.

| PLACE: VCA dance portable (see plan Figure 4.1)  |
| Sitting in a circle on the floor. |
| GROUP SIZE: 13 |
| MATERIALS: Paper with mandala outline and coloured pastels |
| TIME: About 20 minutes |
| ATMOSPHERE: Alive, participants were concentrating and happy |

1. I invited all HAAP participants to ‘Draw what you got out of the drama workshops’.
2. I sat with the group but did not draw.
3. I collected up drawings said that I would visit the youth centre to talk about the mandalas one on one and asked if anyone wanted to say anything in the group.
4. Once participants finished there was some general chatter and then we moved on to drama exercises.

**STEP 2. UNPACKING THE MANDALA A WEEK LATER.**

<p>| PLACE: Footscray HoACN Youth Centre  |
| Sitting facing each other in comfortable chairs with the mandala between us |
| GETTING DATA: One on one, Researcher (R) and Participant (P) |
| MATERIALS: P’s mandala |
| TIME: About 25 minutes |
| ATMOSPHERE: Quiet and contemplative |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIALOGUE</th>
<th>PROCESS COMMENT</th>
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| **Researcher:** Hi XXX are you happy to do this now?  
**Participant:** Yes. (finds her mandala among the pile)  
**R:** OK please tell me what you can see in your picture.  
**P:** I see a tree in a lovely garden. The grass is green and the sun is shining. It is a nice warm day and looks wonderful. I see these beautiful ripe mandarins. They look beautiful and I am hungry, so I go to the tree to pick one but when I get close I see there is a snake wound around the tree and I am scared to pick one in case I get bitten. | The participant is talking about things in the present. She is focused on what she has drawn. |
| (The participant looks towards the researcher with big sorrow filled eyes. The researcher looks back but does not say anything. The participant begins to rock a little looks and picks up a pen and begins to doodle on the cover of a closed book on her knee). | The rocking and doodling are ways of the participant dissipating unspent energy from the body. |
| There is silence for a while as participant and researcher just sit together. |  |
| **R:** And?  
**P:** This is such a beautiful country and we are lucky to be here. There are so many things we can do. School is good and there is lots to learn. The VCA is good and we love coming here. . . . but . . . | The participant moves from talking about her mandala to her relationship with Australia and her experiences of settlement. |
| **R:** But  
**P:** But it is so hard. It is bad what happened in Dandenong and now everyone is looking at us, everywhere. On the trams and the trains people say go home or they call us black XXX or they just laugh at us. We are scared to be on our own because people want to hurt us. They hate us and we didn’t do anything. It’s only because we are different. It makes our lives hard. Even our own friends fight because we are all so worried and there is nowhere we can go where people leave us alone. (Silence and lots of fiddling and some drawing on her book)  
**R:** It sounds very bad.  
**P:** It is. | Focus on the racism the participant and her mates face. |
**R:** There’s more.

**P:** Why do they think we are bad? . . . We had to come here we had nowhere to stay safe in Africa. They hated us in the Sudan so we went to Egypt and they were racist to us there so we could not live in peace . . . and now here it is just the same. If people knew what we had been through then they wouldn’t be so horrible to us. . . (silence)

**R:** Thank you

**P:** (looking at the mandala again) Oh!

**R:** Huh.

**P:** I didn’t see I took a mandarin. There is one in my hand.

**R:** Yes . . . and . . . the stuff outside?

**P:** Oh. I just drew that while I was waiting for the others to finish. It is just line and flowers. It’s about the group how we all sit together and dance, and have fun. I feel good when I am here.

**R:** Oh. . . 

**P:** And the hearts are someone I like in the group. (coy smile) You guys don’t tell us to behave, you let us just be ourselves and talk together. Our parents want us not to be together with the boys. It is fun here.

There is an interruption from outside and the researcher winds up the session.

1. **How - Process**

   - Clear direction is necessary when inviting participants to draw. In shaping the request the researcher sets the beginning point from which the participant accesses their non-verbal response. An example is – “Please tell me about what you expect to gain from your time with HAAP” or “Please show me what this story writing exercise has taught you”.

   - Once the participants have chosen their colours they must be allowed the time and space necessary for them to get in touch with themselves. The drawing exercise can be done individually, or in groups, and data can be elicited in both settings. However, much more information is gained in
individual settings. Drawing in the mandala is essentially an individual activity even when done in a group. Once something is drawn it becomes difficult to change. When the mandala is complete the interviewer says, “please tell me what you see” and then builds on this.

- While containing and therapeutic, the use of this approach is not intended as therapy; in data collection it appears to provide the containment necessary to protect participants and allows them to open up to the researcher without being intrusive. This is vital in the cultural context.

- I used this process with all participants in my research at the beginning of HAAP and then to capture people’s attitudes to the HAAP process at the end of my research cycle. I incorporated Diamonds (2007) process of questioning people into my final round. Several participants came to me during the year and a half and chose to use mandalas to expose difficult material to me.

Participants in the research have told me that they had fun using the mandala to reflect on what they were doing in the project. I have collected data from community elders, project workers and participants in the project. One participant said that he would not draw but all others have taken the exercise seriously and report enjoying the process. The exercise fully occupied people who immediately focused on the drawing process and became wholly engaged.

- For the work on research tools in Research Question 1 I have focused on the three participants Ezeldin, Abraham and Samia.

2. Identifying units of reflection – mandalas

In this section I will present a number of mandalas, which clearly demonstrate how participants have used their drawings to become self-reflexive.

25 Please tell me what you see.  
Please tell me what you want.  
Please tell me about any secret thought.  
Please tell me about the first step towards change.

26 For further comment on process see Parris (2008).
3. **ABRAHAM**

- **First mandala**

Drawn in response to the request: Please tell what you want from your future.

![Abraham's first mandala](image)

**Figure 0.1 Abrahams first mandala and reflections**

I want to be an actor director and tell the world about the Sudan. What the media shows of Darfur is only a small part of the reality of Africa. The Sudan has been at war for three generations and no one can talk about it. This could consume my whole life.

I want to work with youth and help them to get their stories out. At school there were five of us and now there are only two. The others have dropped out and do nothing. They have given up because there is no one to watch their backs. I like to do things simply and if I don’t have the skills I am happy to work at learning them. I build trust by talking to people about what they want. If all they want to do is watch I say fine. When people are more relaxed they usually join in. I share with people and try to always do what I say I will do. I listen carefully and love to hear what people say. Everyone has a story. I can read the mood and like to work out what people are feeling.

What I have been through has made me a responsible young man. I keep questioning my choices. If I make a mistake I think through things so I can make the most of them. Australia is an open country but to succeed you need to plan and do.

Anything stimulates me to create. An example is this pen it can be used for good or evil. It can be the beginning of anything. I can make much out of this simple pen. I
love to draw and to write and to act. Anything can put me in touch with my mind. I am able to explore the meaning of many things and love to discover the underlying meanings of actions and behaviours.

*♦ Mandala drawn on the writing retreat*

We share the sea and drink it like water  
The red is the blood, our sadness, our tears  
The tears fall down into the book for the future  
The pen is the future, tomorrow learning from tomorrow.

The two houses, the hut in Africa and the other here  
Two minds living in the same circle  
Here we survive naturally without hunting people  
Or people hunting us  
Here you survive through work not like in Africa where you depend on hunting.

*Figure 0.2 Abraham's second mandala and a poem about his pain about leaving the Sudan (September 2007)*

The last day of the pilot project coincided with a time when the Minister for Immigration made a comment that the Sudanese youth who had come to Australia as humanitarian migrants were not settling well here.

The Sudanese community\(^{27}\) saw this as a direct racial attack.

\(^{27}\) and many others including me saw it that way too
Abraham and many of the other young people were very distressed by the death of a young Sudanese man in the Dandenong and the consequent publicity surrounding migration policy. Abraham for one was so distressed that he was unable to speak about it. When I asked him what was wrong he drew the mandala below.

With this mandala Abraham chose to draw because he was unable to speak. We sat together as he carefully put his feelings on the paper. This began with him drawing the circle. A couple of weeks later he thanked me and spoke to me about his picture. He said that he had felt that he would drown in a river crossing in Sudan as they were fleeing and here again were the same feelings. He wondered if his life would always be overshadowed by other people’s prejudice.

He talked about how all the Sudanese young people felt like they were drowning together. The struggle to settle was intensified. Not only were they expected to catch up many years of missed schooling, learn to read and write a new language with a new alphabet, support their families and deal with a horrendous history but added to this burden was this ever growing burden of their host country’s prejudice. When Abraham drew this mandala he felt like it was too much.
Final mandala Series

Trees, sea, beach, green land, blue sky and fruit and mountains. Animals in the sea. A natural life with everything growing happily. The fish and the fruit represent humans. To think about what makes a natural life.

Figure 0.4 A Natural life

Two different colours for the humans (all human kind). The red is the blood. There are the same mountains and trees and sea. The future should be for all. We must work together to have a good future. A future that includes all.

The colours are not just the skin but also the good and bad in us all. I want NO RACISM I want people to be open minded to the needs of all. There needs to be equality. We need to work together openly so that we can understand our futures.

Figure 0.5 Money Purse
I really like this picture. It is happy. There could be so many emotions, the faces could be men or women all humans. Black and white are evil and good. All people have the same needs. Down below are representations of family and the world – steps to creating humanity. There are opportunities to help families step up. Everyone should have access to opportunities. People should not be discriminated against because of colour or money. We can only achieve if we are offered the opportunities. What more can we do then our best.

These relate to my feelings leaving year 12. Found only rich people could get in to Sydney film school. This really upset me. Why the gap. Even through school. We all hope to succeed, no one should carry another. We should be judged by what we can do not whether we came from families with money. I will support myself and others to find a way of getting what we need.

On the left I see money, pens, books, animals, mountains, rivers – natural life and human experience. On the right tall buildings, bicycles, cars - all that humans achieve. In the centre People coming out of the blood and death, looking to the front to the horizon, the sun and happiness. People are running away from the blood towards the sun. To survive death. I want the beautiful things of the world. Why should I run to death. What can I find when everything is here but I can’t get it. The middle is about uniting things to make them one. This is a crazy drawing. It is about survival. All the things that humans have created mean allot to me. How to survive the natural life and bring things together. The future is like the sun. How hard it is. When we rise everyone will see. One day we will not be there We as humans do not know allot. To die without achieving will be bad. I don’t want people to forget. We need to change memories. I want to see it again and make it better.
Commentary on Abraham’s mandalas

The commentary draws together data from the mandalas themselves and the commentary I have drawn from verbatim notes recorded in my field journal.

1. In Abraham’s first mandala there is little evidence of the drawing process being self-reflexive. He gives a clearly thought out response to what makes him suitable for the project and what he wants to do with his future. His drawing was done in a group setting and he was responding to my request that young people tell me what he or she want from their future.

2. The second mandala was drawn at the writing retreat. I asked each person to draw where they were at. Abraham had been thinking about the Sudan because he had been working on a play relating to his leaving Africa with the drama director. Earlier in the evening he had begun to talk about the death of his father but had been interrupted.

He sat quietly with five other people and focused deeply on what he drew. His movements were slow and rhythmical. He chose one colour and then another as he worked at producing the right mix. He paid intricate attention to each small detail. He moved towards and away from his work. He sighed occasionally as he drew. He then sat quietly for some minutes, seemingly unaware of others at the table. Finally he took another piece of paper and began to write. When we began to talk about our drawings he was pensive and spoke very quietly. He said that he was thinking of home. While he was articulate he was hesitant. He had not yet come out of his reverie. Later he talked about the warmth of the companionship on that evening. He said this was the first time he had been on a holiday.

3. The third mandala was drawn at Abraham’s request. He asked if he could draw because he was too upset to talk. He was tense and uneasy as we sat down together. Neither of us spoke. He took my field journal and drew. He drew a circle and then began on his picture. As he worked slowly, quietly and rhythmically he looked towards me from time to time. I guessed that he wanted to ensure my attention. We were together but silent. The process was slow and meticulous. Abraham had tears in his eyes but did not cry. My feelings were tumultuous as I
sat with Abraham. It felt as if my gaze held him as he drew. I was totally with him. We were together in a place without time and I knew at my core that this was important. After about twenty minutes together Abraham closed my journal. I asked if he was OK. He nodded, returned my journal and left. This had been an intense time for both of us; Abraham had conveyed deep fears and anger without a word. He had taken a news item and embodied his unique and personal experience of this in a self-reflexive commentary on reawakened trauma. He had taken me with him into his pain and humiliation. I felt immensely privileged by his trust. A couple of weeks later Abraham confirmed that this process had been positive. It was at this point that he put words to his creation.

4. In Abraham’s final set of mandalas he again chose to take the opportunity to personalise his experience during the time I had known him rather than focus on what HAAP had contributed to his settlement. When we planned the meeting he asked for me to set aside enough time.

He had been agonising for the full eighteen months about how to negotiate his future and had been confronted by the reality that he would not be able to achieve his goal of getting into the course of his choosing. He chose to use our time together to work at his stuckness. He revisited his longing for home, for his lack of choice in leaving Africa and his longing for a life where he was in control. The drawings took a long time. By now he knew I would not interrupt. He knew also that I would wait for the words. His full attention went into what he was creating. He did not look up but I sensed that he felt my gaze.

When he was done drawing he spoke, hesitantly at first and then quite feverishly as he talked about the issues of war and desolation, of migration and settlement and of all the issues that got in the way of him being able to become a settled member of Australian society. When he was spent he looked at the pictures and addressed the four Diamond statements (Diamonds, 2007). He had used our time together to hold himself as he explored the wide-ranging impact of his settlement experience. Once the words were down on paper he said. “I am happy now. Thank you” and left.
A year after this meeting Abraham said, “I trust you because you take the time to listen. I know that you want the best for me.”

4. EZELDIN

At the first meeting to plan for the HAAP project Ezeldin said that he was concerned because he performed often but people seldom listened to what he had to say. He said that his first goal with HAAP was to learn how to say things so that people would listen, understand and take notice of his message.

Ezeldin did not attend the workshop in which the first data collection round occurred. When I first met Ezeldin in the workshops I found him reserved. He did not want to be interviewed at all, or photographed. He had had a bad experience. A woman had approached him and a group of his mates and taken many photos and then used these to accompany a story, which had nothing to do with them. This had made him wary. He said that while he wanted people to listen to what he had to say, they only took what they wanted to hear. I was concerned not to reinforce his concerns about people who had misused his trust so I waited and watched, and tried to approach all interactions gently. Ezeldin’s reactions shifted considerably at the writing retreat.

Perhaps I had earned my stripes or perhaps Ezeldin was as shy as I am. Anyway, whatever the reason, things changed.

(Field notes May 2008)

Ezeldin was warm and open on the retreat. He laughed and chatted; and seemed to enjoy everything.

Mandalas drawn at the writing retreat

Ezeldin’s story is yet another of loss and fear and courage. He did not say what happened to his dad but he came to Australia with his mum and step dad, grandmother and younger siblings.
I can’t explain this picture. There are two or more people. There is half a green face that is angry and there is the purple face of a girl and then two people with a big red line separating them. The outside frame has night one side and day on the other. The guy on the right side is wanting to get to the cool air. The angry face sees the two people and one is running away from the heat. He doesn’t know how to help people. The heat is coming out of the people. There are lots of angels. These people may fall from under the grass and the world into a big hole. The arrows point the way up. The leaves go around so they may find the way. There is a good feeling around the arrows going up. The people know where they go. The orange colour is a Chinese symbol maybe an angel has wings holding him. The blue is just fill and the green is grass.

In the next picture is the beautiful house we are staying in. The tree represents the trees we saw and the blue angles are the water zig zag next to the road. The big mouth is the chili and the help is Sarah being sick. The black triangle is when The HAAP artistic director made Sarah kiss me on the cheek and I wasn’t happy. The help is also the help from the film. It is in my mind but I don’t know what. I felt bad to act that part. The person was not brave or good enough to save the people but at least 1 is alive.

Figure 0.8 Mandalas drawn at the writers retreat May 2008
A few weeks later
Be what you are
I never draw
a picture before
I can’t explain
what I just
did, is time to
be a brave sun
Come back
Home Mom,
You did enough
I can take over now
My sister and my
Brother huh,

Deep meaning sometimes kills your dream,
Acting funny you will
lose your main game
Why do we pick the dum one to be on the top
And the smart one to miss the opportunity

People do need help
Do you care
If I was
With no God.
My time is up.
I need a key
To open your door
If you want to.

Figure 0.9: Rap Accompanying Ezeldin’s Retreat Mandalas

Final mandala Series drawn in November 2008

Figure 0.10 Ezeldin’s final six mandalas

The sea is confident it never rests and always makes a noise. Everyone can hear it but no one complains or judges. When we came we brought nothing. We would love to be here for 5 years. The sun is something you see ahead and the birds are flying in the sunshine. It is hard to find because the ocean is big. There are both beautiful and dangerous fish. I want to represent the fish. No one knows the ways of the sea. It is deep and no one can build there. I want to be myself and to learn more.

There is a green tree and a house and another way out. Without the tree no one will live in the house. There will be no oxygen. The house is plain and you cannot see what is inside just as you can’t see inside a brain. One should not judge people from the outside. The tree represents the supportive community who watch the project carefully. I am not sure yet. The road is a secret for me. I need to find out about myself before I move on. I need to know what I do and why. The houses are not beautifully designed. The community must help make the house beautiful. I cannot tell them what they must do.
The sad face represents many people. When you are sad too many people ask questions. You will not have the answers unless you have been my friend for many years. You cannot talk to just anyone. To let the sadness and anger out of our hearts is difficult. It will be a relief when we know why we were sad and the sadness is gone and we can smile. Sadness may mean life. Happiness is a clear future. To understand what I am saying in my heart.

A tall building. The sun is shining but there is only one door. When we started we thought that we were at a high level. We believed we could make whatever we wanted. We didn’t think about the foundations or how high the building was. Now we are not sure where we are going. I would like 2 or 3 doors, more ways. More buildings in the city, more in the state and the country. I wish there were more opportunities like this project. I want everyone to know that we need more opportunities. Find the job opportunities. For me next year there is maybe a job at St. Albans primary, workshop support in Braybrook as an assistant teacher at VCA. I have come a long way and have a long way to come but have a long way to go. I want to go deep inside the ocean to find the secrets. I want to understand the meaning of my name Ezeldin.

This is the project. It has only one eye. There is only one way in and one way out. From the beginning there was the freedom to come and go as we liked. People didn’t want to speak because they are scared of their futures. Some people are dangerous. Others may just need a little support. You need both eyes to see bad and good. Be careful who you let in and let those who want to go out.

Let people choose their art/craft we don’t know where this may take us. Keep your eyes on who is good but give all a chance. This project is about getting everyone to work together in one room. It is the people from the community who give us hope. Give us hope and strength to hold on and follow the right path. The chance to study and have scholarships is wonderful. We can give our passion.

With this we may be able to hand the passion on to the next generation. I won’t be able to change things for them but I can walk beside. Keep on moving forward together. Develop my skills.

The sad face represents many people. When you are sad too many people ask questions. You will not have the answers unless you have been my friend for many years. You cannot talk to just anyone. To let the sadness and anger out of our hearts is difficult. It will be a relief when we know why we were sad and the sadness is gone and we can smile. Sadness may mean life. Happiness is a clear future. To understand what I am saying in my heart.
1. In his first set of mandalas Ezeldin became fully absorbed in what he was doing, but did not take long to do his drawings. While he waited for others he wrote a couple of what he called rap songs. It seems to me that he was doing his own right brain, left brain processing by beginning to make connections between his drawings and his words.

At the time of the writing retreat I did not particularly notice how Ezeldin had begun connecting on his own but it became very clear to me when he came and asked for help with his storyboard that he engages directly with his creations to make meaning of difficult events. This process is discussed in the section on filmmaking.

2. By the time Ezeldin contributed to the final mandala series in November 2008 he was very used to the process and to collaborating in data collection. He had talked to me about how he enjoyed using art to help him understand his feelings and immediately began drawing. He told me that he was happy for me to continue what I was doing while he drew. I had said that at this stage I was hoping to look back at the eighteen months of HAAP and see what we had learned so that we could contribute to forward planning. I told him that once he had completed drawings of each of the stages he believed HAAP had been through we would discuss each under the four statements I had taken from Diamond (2007). He drew for about an hour and then called me.

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Commentary on Ezeldin's mandalas

Here is a guy building a wall (a bricklayer). He may be building a house or the Great Wall of China. Our project was started with one brick. Now we are half way. We didn’t stop. The people who started are still with us and supporting us with faith and strength. That is why we have kept coming. God knows where we will end up maybe artists or perhaps bricklayers or cleaners. We are not sure who will be what. Without bricklayers there are no houses. This is the question for HAAP, for CCD and for the actors. There are so many bricks. I want to know whether I will end up as cinematographer. I will see what happens to all the participants. Are we going to lead the young people in the right direction? The people who are organising need to direct the project. We need to be responsible to progress as artists.
As we began talking I was again aware of Ezeldin’s keen interest in making the connections between what he had drawn and what he saw. He loves metaphor and uses it well. Examples include the depth of the sea representing his uncertainty about his future and that of his co-participants. He talks about HAAP as a tall building with only one entrance to highlight the lack of learning opportunities for young people and a tree that brings oxygen represents the support of the HAAP community. He talks about the need for HAAP to offer more points of entry.

His metaphors lead him on to talk about how careful the Sudanese young people need to be in choosing who to trust and finally says he is not sure how big HAAP will grow or if HAAP will lead people in the right direction and clearly defines the differences in responsibility between the roles of the young people who make the art and the leaders who set the direction.

In all Ezeldin says he is deeply connected to his feelings and shares them openly with me. There is a trust and a respect.

Ezeldin says of himself that he has learned well. He talks about an understands at an embodied level and says that his relationship to his creative self is important and potent. He talks about how art is a catalyst that assists him to symbolise unformed difficult emotions and he uses his art to make meaning of them. He also enjoys and knows of the value of working with another whom he trusts, to help him see what is in his art, and to translate this into words. With the necessary words he can understand and formulate his ideas at an intellectual level and communicate these to others. As this was the task that Ezeldin set himself at the beginning of the HAAP he has achieved at least a beginning to his quest to learn the processes by which he can navigate his future. For me as researcher working with Ezeldin as a collaborator has proved invaluable as I have not only gained an in depth understanding of the reflexive process but have also experienced and understood at a very human level many of the issues that face him and other young African refugees who struggle to settle and make Australia their home.
Figure 0.11 June 2007

The big star is me doing a lot of things for the small stars to glow like me. I am trying to help each person. There are so many from so many different countries and cultures. With some it's by talking or listening. Some feel no one listens to them. Teaching them to dance takes their minds somewhere else. When they concentrate they don't think about their problems. I encourage them to listen to their families so that I can keep contact. I don't ask about home but they tell me. As they feel calm they talk about it. When they come out I give them ideas.

There are some young people who drink and smoke weed to deal with difficulties. These people try to push others into the fire like them because they don't care about the world. In my centre some are good and about half try to pull them away. I take what they say and talk calmly. When they see me listen and not change they begin to follow. They see the others, have fun and we laugh and talk.
Samia drew two mandalas before she went to Perth to be betrothed.

Figure 0.12 Peace and Love (January 2009)

This picture is about peace and love and people living together with respect. The colours represent people from different countries. The blue represents the sea and Australia where we all met. I have learned how to work with people in groups, how to talk and how to be responsible. In the HAAP group people were always at peace. They laughed and cared for one another’s feelings.

This did not happen with other white people and without it you will never go forward. This is what I believe. Respect is when I understand a person without knowing them well. It is important that you do not get into another’s business without permission. They must invite you. When someone has issues don’t take it outside. You always tell me what you feel face to face and don’t take it outside. By inviting me to your home and sharing salt and bread with me you became my friend.

VCA work is slow motion. Sometimes people need pressure so they focus more on what they are doing.

The yellow line means that first people got to know each other and the laughter came next but you do need to get to the point. I liked the workshops and the group with getting to know each other but it needed to be more intensive.

Two days a week perhaps, and we needed the space that we thought VCA would get us.
We all still remember back home, we will never forget and I still pray for the people in Darfur to have a beautiful life. I want people to see the red of the flag it is people’s blood, the children, the young people and those who are older. It is their blood.

The black is the war. The green is the beauty of the trees and stuff and the wonderful veggies and fruit. The white is what they need. PEACE.

I always think about them, asleep, eating or doing anything in my life. I am so worried about the war. I see it on my mum’s face and it hurts me. Dad doesn’t talk about it because he tries to protect us. But he brought us here to get an education so that we can go back and help. I want to do the youth centre to help children and young people because they are our future.

The war has stopped us thinking we may sing, dance and act but we can’t do what we should because we are always thinking about the war. We become obsessed with the war. How can we in Australia help?

You give us an education. Perhaps Australia could give us a ticket to go back home and help. Australia is so rich. All I need is to see them smiling and happy. That could be my whole life. I would love to volunteer. I would like to go for a year.

Tears

I try not to cry because I am scared that I will not stop. My heart is burning with anger, sadness and fear. I cannot settle while I have sisters and cousins who have no food. Sometimes I don’t eat for days to see what it is like. Often I smile so that people will not see my sadness.

I want to give big thanks to Australia for what I have learned, the language, to be responsible, to care for different people from different countries.

What Australia needs to do is be happy to give us that and to let us go back and do what we need to do at home. We need to have this chance for you to say OK go and share what we have given you with the world.
Samia’s final mandalas

Figure 0.14 How people didn’t care (November 2008)

Everyone was in a different world, doing their own stuff. If there had been some way to help us with all the stuff from home but the youth centre closed and we lost hope. If we had still had the youth centre we would have still believed that you were there for us.

Figure 0.15 Happy people (November 2008)

I loved how we met and communicated. We respected each other, young and old. It was the best thing that old and young cared for each other and showed respect. It was great that talk did not go outside. Everything needs to be the same. Respect, love and caring.

I didn’t believe we could make it because of home issues.

Take more trouble to make it happen. You should have made it clear what the outcome would be from the beginning. How could we understand without this?

Commentary on Samia’s mandalas

Samia had been taught from an early age that her task in life was to support others and all her mandalas were evidence of this overarching responsibility. Her process always began with a smile and a question about how she could help when she could not draw. She was always keen to collaborate so that together we could help her Young Survivors.  

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28 Samia worked as a youth support worker and mentored a group called the Young Survivors in dance.
I developed a friendship with Samia as she often sought my help with issues to do with “her” young people. We laughed together a great deal as we wrote resumes, developed a website for the Young Survivors, attended digital story telling classes together as well as attending the HAAP drama workshops. She told me a story and I wrote a play from this. She told me a great deal about her history in Africa and her life since coming to Australia. She said I was just like any other friend despite me being a sixty-year-old white woman and she a twenty-year-old Sudanese woman. Despite all this I found I did not understand Samia. Somehow she was constrained by her position as the oldest daughter in a family who were not finding settlement easy.

- In her first mandala Samia did not reflect and kept talking as she drew. My impression as we sat together was that she could not allow herself to get in touch with what she felt. This was confirmed by her very early comments that she had to worry about others not herself.

- Samia drew her second set of mandalas just before she went to Perth to begin a life with her betrothed, a man her parents had found for her. She did not question this. She said it was her duty as the oldest daughter in Australia. We spent some time together as a farewell and the mandalas were Samia’s parting gift to me. As she sat down to draw she became overwhelmed with feeling. She drew quietly and intently in the first of her two mandalas and then talked about how important HAAP had been to her and that she was now giving up her chance of a life she was choosing because it the Sudanese way that this should happen. Samia gave me some very honest feedback on the HAAP project and I was content to let the drawing go.

As I was beginning to pack away Samia asked me to stop. She said “I need to draw for me” and began to draw. The tears brimmed in both her and my eyes as she poured out her pain for her lost land. She drew and rocked and drew some more. No words just silent un-spilt tears. Then stillness as we both sat with her pain. Slowly the words came as she poured out her grief for her land, those left behind and the horrors she had faced as a young girl, and her longing to return to Africa. There was no doubt this was therapy. Samia had
chosen to use the safety of our relationship to express and then voice her despair.

- Samia drew her final set of mandalas when she returned to Melbourne for a visit. She was pleased to see me and happy to chat but she had disconnected from the HAAP. She gladly drew in the mandalas I offered her, told me what a wonderful friend I had been and quickly drew and talked about her experience of HAAP. She had gone on to another phase in her life and wanted to talk about other things. She was pregnant, excited about marriage and a little sad that she had lost her opportunity to act. We said goodbye and I did not hear from her again until she invited me to come and say hallo to her baby.

6. WORKER

Figure 0.16 January 2009

For this worker using the mandala as a research tool did not add to the process. She said that she did not find depth in the process.
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Appendices 1-4

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