

GNIBI ELDERS PRINCIPLES



Gnibi Elders Principles artwork by Sheldon Harrington

1. Indigenous Knowledge is relevant, ethical, intelligent, effective and a useful way of knowing.
2. Indigenous peoples are active, able and worthy peoples.
3. The truth about our histories and value of Indigenous ways are determined by us, we carry this knowledge.
4. Elders hold our Aboriginal spirituality and our culture close. We choose what is open and shared and what will be closed. Aboriginal spirituality is the basis for life, Indigenous education and cultural competency, it infuses everything.
5. Our knowledge is relational. Our principles are the basis for Southern Cross University to establish and sustain an active, informed and respectful relationship with Indigenous Elders who will give considered collective input. The continuance of this relationship through the Elders group is essential.
6. Culture is sacred to us. We are and own this living culture. We do not need a 'book'. We share with you so that you can learn how to listen and hear what we say.
7. Identity is based upon things [inside] beneath the surface. Empowered, individual, affirmed identity is the basis of positive, productive, healthy and non-destructive lives – opportunities to engage and build knowledge builds *strong mob* through [inside] learning.*
8. Learning everyday with each other has to be informed and sustained by a politic of open, positive and ethical interactions.
9. We as Elders have presented these things all our lives without being heard – we are often listened to but our message is not heard nor heeded. We take this opportunity to speak in the understanding that you will listen in the right way, hear us and learn.

* [...] denotes culturally significant understandings in English words.