

## Special knowledge about ‘Tackling Problems’ from Wally Malbunka and the Western Arrente Football Team – The Bulldogs

This is a document about the special knowledge of the Western Arrente Football Team – the Bulldogs. It talks about some of the problems we have to face on the football field and off it, and some of the ways we tackle these problems. It was put together from a conversation with members of the footy team and a separate conversation with Wally Malbunka. We hope it might be able to help other young men in different communities who are facing difficult times.

We love football here. It’s been played in this community for a long time. There is a long history. When we play we feel the old people are with us. They are alongside us. And when we show our talents, it’s like the mountain is happy, it rises in the sky. Footy is fun. It’s good for your fitness and good for youngfellas. We play together for the community and to show our skills, to mark, to run and to kick goals. We love our football.

But we do face some tough times on the football field. Sometimes tackling is hard and there can be pain. If someone tackles you really hard it can hurt. Sometimes the other players are bigger and stronger than us. Sometimes other teams push you around. And sometimes it’s hard when you are playing away from home.

When the team loses it doesn’t feel good. You can feel sad and angry and it can be lonely off the field. Sometimes you see a teammate has been drinking and smoking and you feel like you are losing your team. Or if you drink it can make your friends feel sad.

And family members sometimes pass away. If they do you have to leave the team and stay away for awhile. You have to let the team and the coach know that you won’t be playing for awhile.

When these difficult things happen, we have special ways of tackling them. Just like we tackle on the football field, we have ways of tackling problems.

We try hard and try to win. We don’t stop. We don’t give up. If we’re knocked down, we get back on our feet. If there’s trouble, we try not to get near the ones who are causing it. If things are tough on the field, that’s the time we share the ball around. And players try hard to bring the ball back. We help our team-mates. We might say ‘you’re doing all right. We need you on the field.’ We tap each other on the back or on the shoulder. We keep talking to each other and ask ‘what’s the next plan?’

Sometimes the outside supporters can help too. Other times, the crowd might be swearing at you, yelling bad things when you are going for goal. We try not to listen to them. We focus on what we are doing on going for the goal.

The harder things get, the more we try to focus on the football, on going for the ball. We might also change positions, move people around. And we listen to our coach, listen to our captain.

After the game we get all back together and talk about it, work out what mistakes we made and how we can do it better next time. We sit down with each other and make each other happy.

There are special things we try to remember. We remember that time is running and that the game will be over before too long. We remember that if you listen, train and have teamwork, then it is possible to beat the teams who are bigger and stronger than you.

We remember the old people. We feel they are with us when we are playing. And we remember when we show our talents, the mountain is happy.

There' s one other thing too. Around here it' s really hot, so we drink lots of water.

These are just some of the ways in which we tackle problems around here. These are some of the ways we get through hard times. We hope this document might help you out, wherever you are. And we hope you might share with us some of the special ways you tackle problems in your community.

We are the Bulldogs  
Red, white and blue bulldogs  
The ancestors are on our team  
And when we win the mountain sings

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