

ACTIVITY 1B: WHAT IS HEALTH?

Read the following example of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Peoples perceptions of health and non-Indigenous Peoples perceptions of health then complete the questions below.

How is health defined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples?

- There is no one term that translates health in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages – generally it is seen as ‘Life’. (Gatjil Djerrkura, NT).
- ‘Not just the physical well-being of the individual but the social, emotional, and cultural well-being of the whole community. This is the whole-of-life view and it also includes the cyclical concept of life-death-life.’ (National Aboriginal Health Strategy Report, 1989).
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples view health as a collective asset whereas many non-Indigenous western cultures see health as an individual asset.

How is health defined by non-Indigenous peoples?

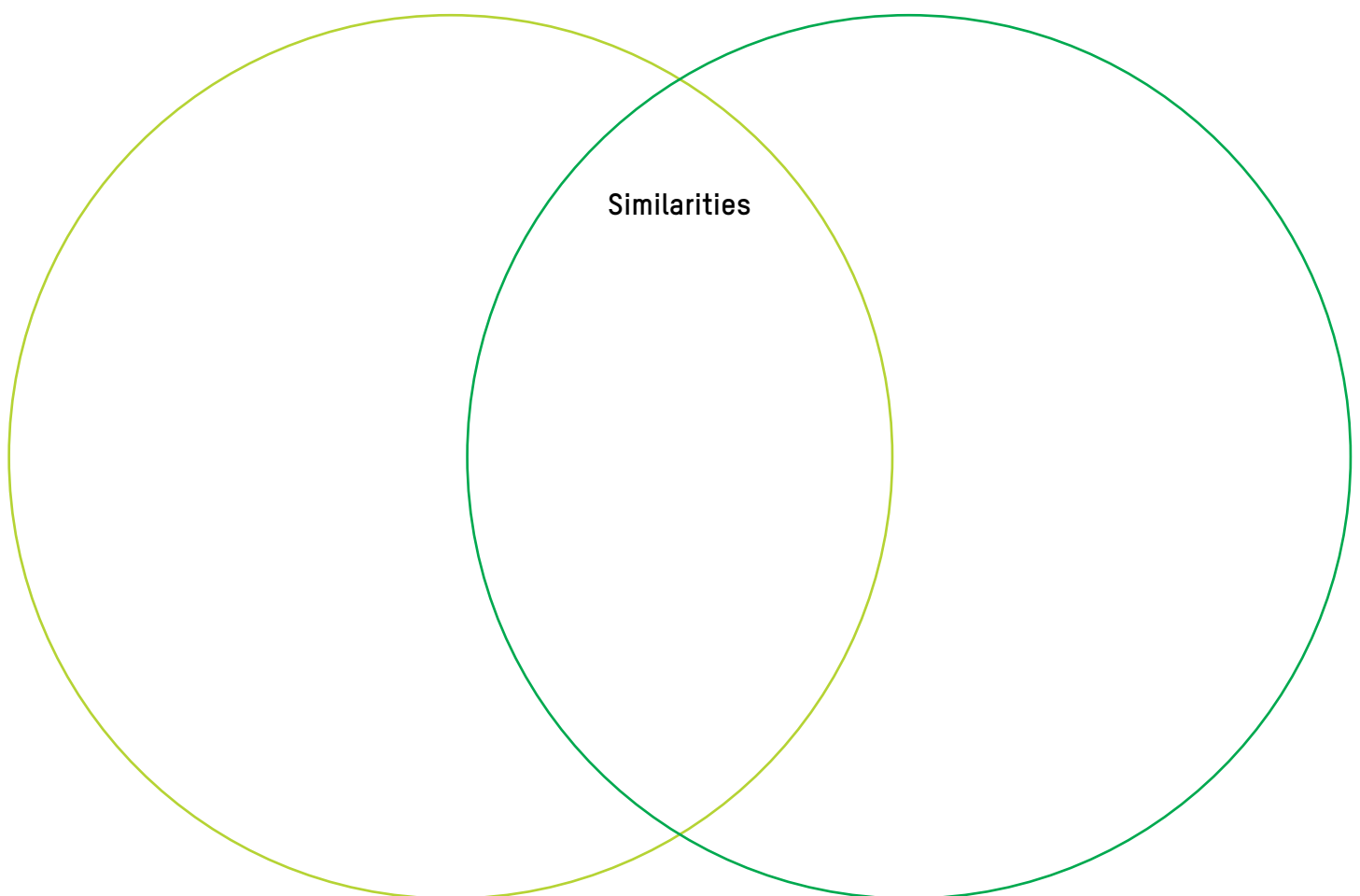
- Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (World Health Organisation, 1948)
- Health is the absence of any disease or impairment (Sartorius, N. (2006). The Meanings of Health and its Promotion. Croatian Medical Journal, 47(4), 662–664.
- Health is a state that allows the individual to adequately cope with all demands of daily life (Sartorius, N. (2006). The Meanings of Health and its Promotion. Croatian Medical Journal, 47(4), 662–664.
- Health is a state of balance, an equilibrium that an individual has established within himself and between himself and his social and physical environment. (Sartorius, N. (2006). The Meanings of Health and its Promotion. Croatian Medical Journal, 47(4), 662–664

1. In the Venn diagram below, identify similarities and differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous understandings of health and wellbeing.

- In your own words, list how health and wellbeing is viewed by Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.
- List the similarities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous understandings of health in the overlapping section.

Indigenous definition
of health and wellbeing.

Non-Indigenous definition
of health and wellbeing.



2. In small groups discuss:

- a) The similarities and differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous understandings of health and wellbeing
- b) How non-Indigenous populations can learn from the Indigenous Australian definition of health and wellbeing.

3. In your small groups, brainstorm and create a mind map to present your beliefs of how non-Indigenous populations can learn from the Indigenous Australian definition of health and wellbeing.