



Meet the Artist – Tanisha Lovett

Tanisha is a proud Gunditjmara & Wotjobaluk woman, who put her hand up to create a beautiful piece of art for the Ngarrang Guliwil campaign.

Tanisha was born in Stawell and has always lived between Stawell, Halls Gap, and Horsham her whole life. Her love for art developed in her teen years and was used as a way to connect with and to learn more about her culture. It was also used as a way to express herself and tell personal stories even when her voice shakes.

Tanisha was interested in creating an artwork for the Ngarrang Guliwil campaign because she enjoys creating artwork with meaning but also for her personal interest in the topic 'to know poison'.





**NGARRANG
GULIWIL**
'to know poison'



Alcohol
and Drug
Foundation



Growing up in a household where drugs, alcohol and domestic violence were present at different points of her life, it really puts a different lens on her view of alcohol. Seeing it can be positive and fun for people but then seeing the other side that can completely change your view of someone, until you can barely recognise them to be the same person while drinking alcohol.

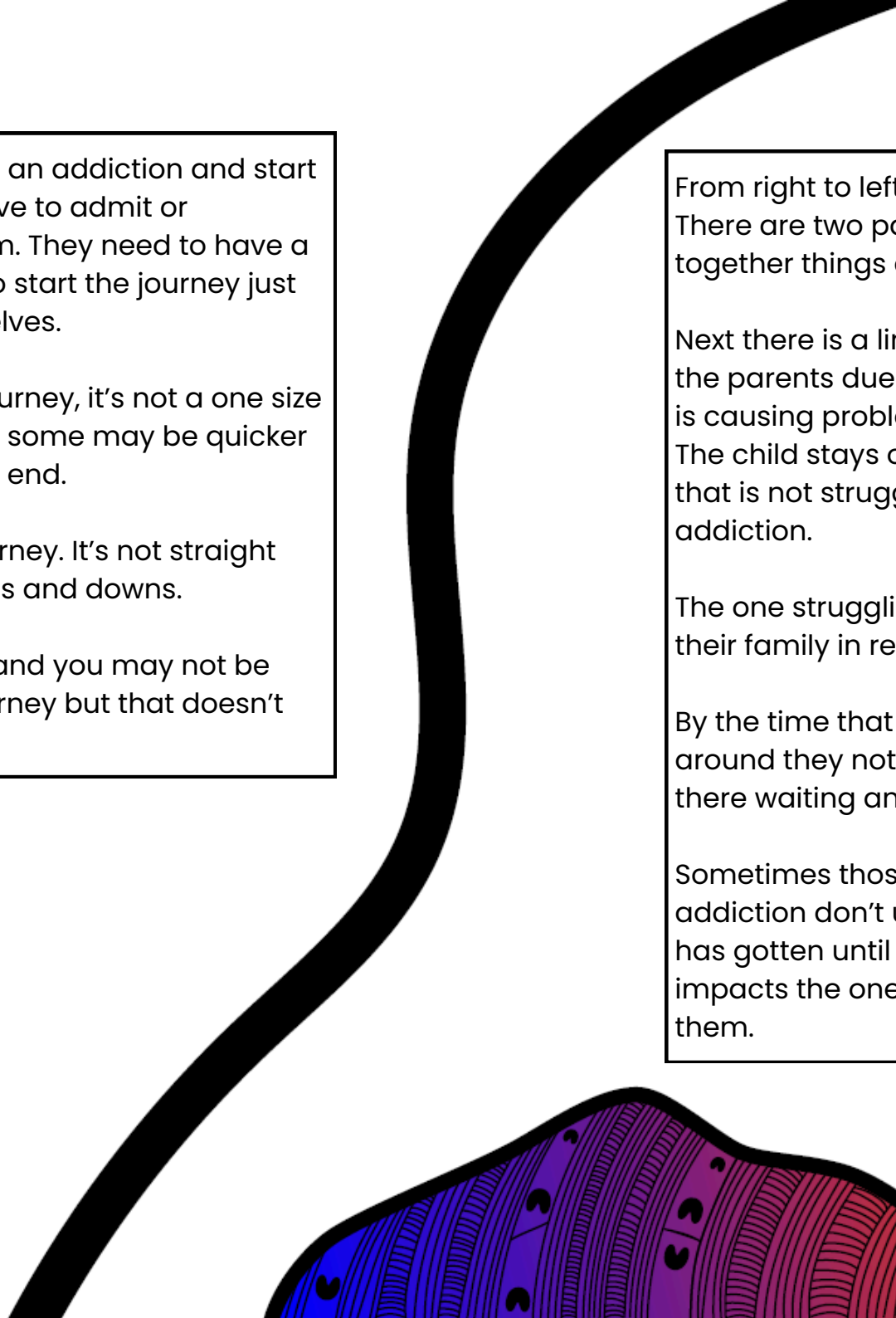
"Alcohol could be a 'reason' behind certain things but personally I don't think it should be used as an 'excuse' for anything behind consuming alcohol. If someone chooses to drink, they should take responsibility for their behaviour while drinking and know their limits to try to avoid anything bad happening to them or others around them."

"I have a love/hate relationship with alcohol. Family used to joke that I was becoming an alcoholic until even I knew it wasn't a joke anymore. I'd even defend it saying '*well at least I'm a functioning alcoholic because I had a 9-5 job, nice car, a roof over my head and a fridge full of food.*' I'd pretend I didn't know what their problem was, but I know what they meant and that they were only saying it to me because they care. They didn't want to see me go down a path of poisoning myself, body, mind, soul, or relationship with others."

Creating this artwork gave Tanisha some time to self-reflect, and an opportunity to put her hand up to openly admit alcohol has been a problem in parts of her life. "It's a cycle I can't say has broken just yet. But there shouldn't be any shame in admitting that and as a Community we should be able to come together and support each other through any hard times we may face."

"There is a drinking Culture out there but that doesn't mean that's our Mobs Culture."

To see each piece of the artwork and its meaning, continue to the next page.



Before an individual can beat an addiction and start their healing journey, they have to admit or understand there is a problem. They need to have a level of self-awareness, not to start the journey just for others but also for themselves.

Once an individual starts a journey, it's not a one size fits all. People heal differently, some may be quicker than others, some may never end.

This shows an individual's journey. It's not straight forward and there may be ups and downs.

It may look like it's too much and you may not be able to see the end of the journey but that doesn't mean it's not there.

From right to left:

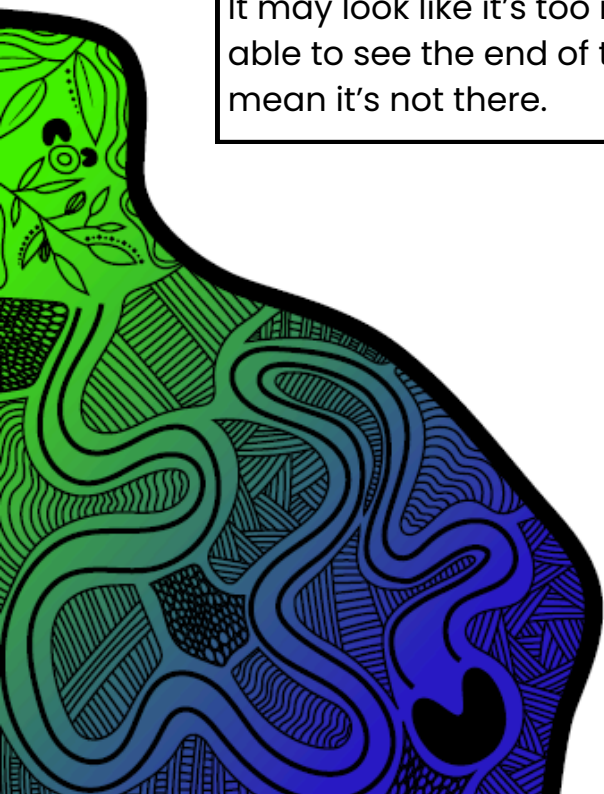
There are two parents and a child, all together things are good.

Next there is a line of division between the parents due to the addiction that is causing problems in the household. The child stays on the parents' side that is not struggling with the addiction.

The one struggling turns away from their family in resentment.

By the time that person turns back around they noticed the family aren't there waiting anymore.

Sometimes those struggling with addiction don't understand how bad it has gotten until they see how much it impacts the ones they love around them.





A part of the healing journey that may be needed is the soul. If not already connected it is important for mob to connect to Country. See the stars, mountains, trees, rivers, etc.

The tree may have a scar, but it is still beautiful and it deserves to be standing. Goanna tracks represent the pathway to Goolum Goolum's support and programs.



An individual may or may not know their support people and this may change on during their journey as they figure out what's best for them.

But don't be afraid to do this journey alone, don't be afraid to ask for help, don't be afraid to no longer hang with a crowd if they're not for you anymore.

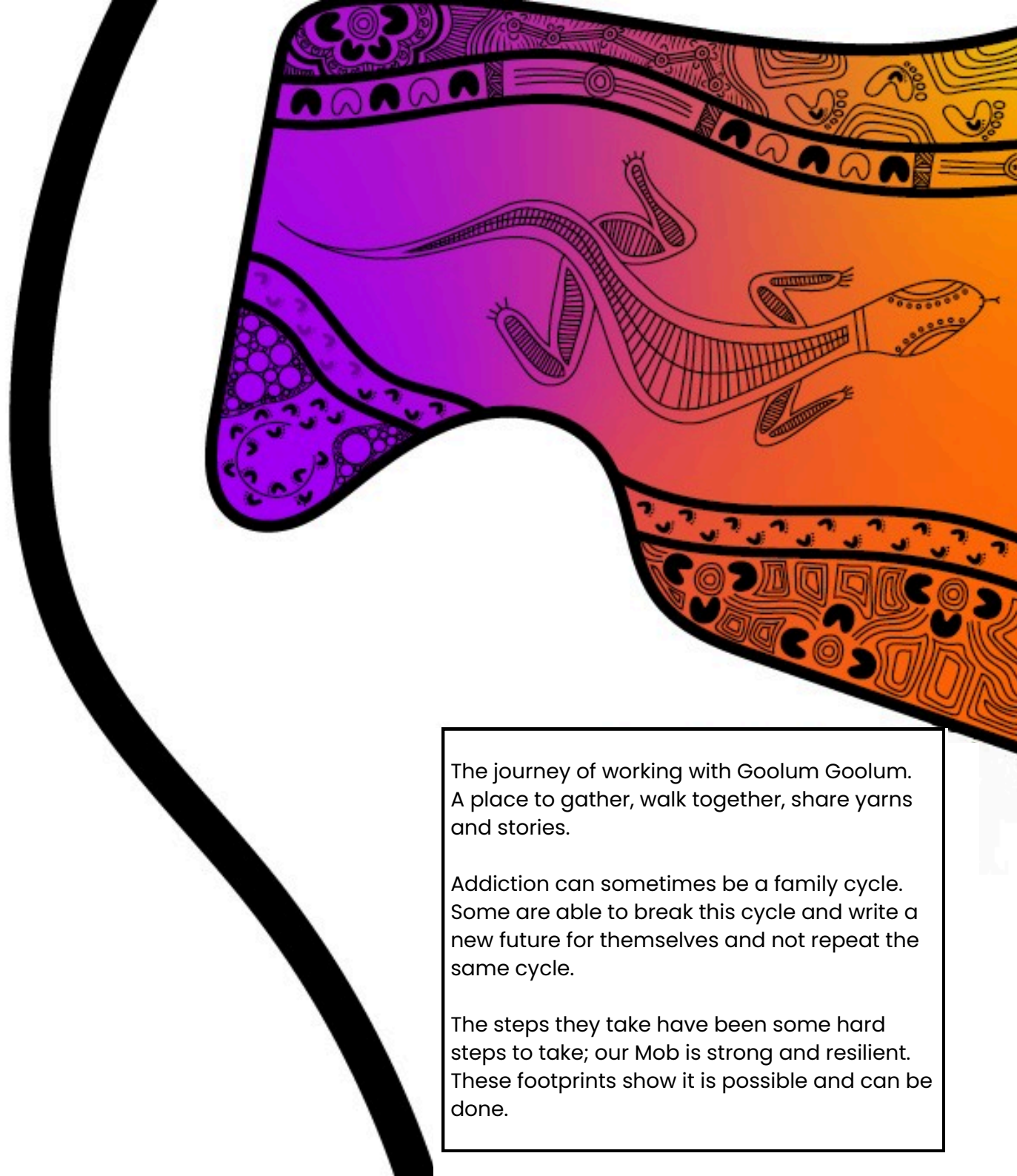
Create boundaries if you need, what you are doing is important for you and the ones you love.

Gathering place that can lead to other avenues but welcome to come to and from. Leaves surround areas to represent bush and healing.

In one leaf there are two feet, take on step at a time.

Another two leaves connect with the bottom being the roots. This can be interpreted to be the root of the problem.

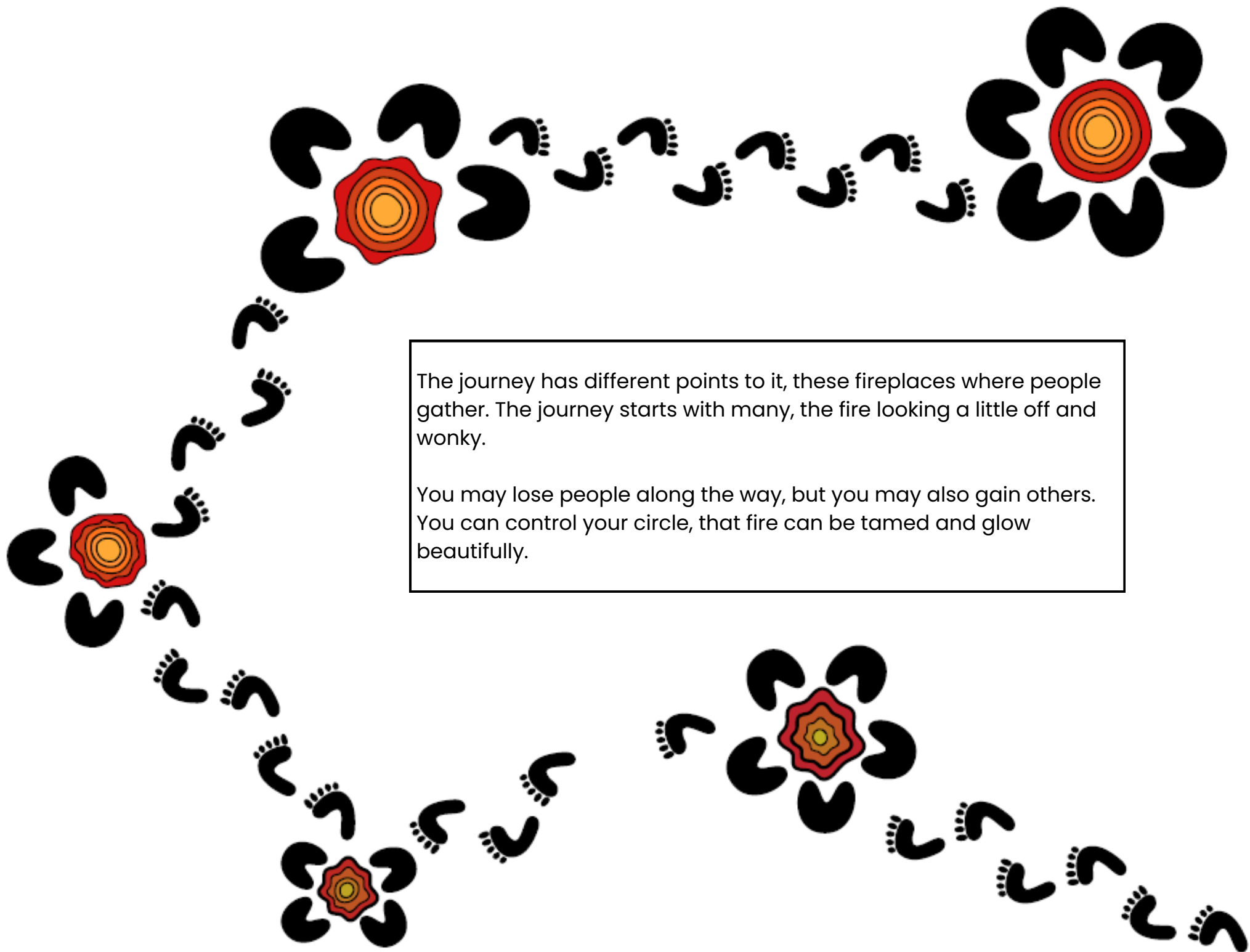
Above is a tree that has grown and is living. The last leaf sees a line of ancestors looking over us, sharing their strength.



The journey of working with Goolum Goolum. A place to gather, walk together, share yarns and stories.

Addiction can sometimes be a family cycle. Some are able to break this cycle and write a new future for themselves and not repeat the same cycle.

The steps they take have been some hard steps to take; our Mob is strong and resilient. These footprints show it is possible and can be done.



The journey has different points to it, these fireplaces where people gather. The journey starts with many, the fire looking a little off and wonky.

You may lose people along the way, but you may also gain others. You can control your circle, that fire can be tamed and glow beautifully.

