

## **My Truth – Living Off Country**

I'm from WA. I live on Djarra Country in Bendigo but my mob is the Wawula people and the Kuwarra people from Western Australia.

Thank you for the opportunity to tell my truth. I think the work of Yoorrook is very important and deadly.

I want to talk about what its like to live off-country.

Living off-country is hard. I have so much respect for Djarra people and their beautiful country but I know I'm just a visitor here. When you are on your own country it gives you strength. It grounds you and makes you still. You can feel your ancestors and your elders around you. They can guide you or they can give you a clip if you've gone off track.

When you're raising kids on-country it means you don't parent alone. Your kids are supported and guided and looked over by a community of aunts and uncles and cousins.

Living off-country you don't get all those things. It can feel cold. And it can feel like you're alone.

Me and my kids are strong. We are connected to our culture. But we know we're not on our own country. And we know what we are missing. I think many mob have this same feeling. Sometimes they understand it and sometimes they don't.

I believe Yoorrook is very important. One recommendation I have for the future is that we truth telling continues beyond the life of the commission. Truth Telling cannot end in such a short period.

Thank you