Heart story 1

I’m from the Kimberleys, from around the Broome, Dampier Peninsula area. Grew up in Broome but my father and my grandmother on my paternal side are from the Bard language group, which is up on the Dampier Peninsula. But my mum is from the Pilbara and from her side we’re Injibandi, but don’t know too much about that because her great grandmother was removed and so we know that... We know that we are Injibandi, but haven’t really followed that story up.

But I’ve been living in Perth for the last 30 years... And looks like, you know, I’ll pretty much spend my retirement in Perth because my family’s here and they’re growing up in Perth so, you know, home is where the heart is and Perth is kind of my home at this point in time.

Broome will always be country and Perth will never be my country, but it’s a place where I now live. And I must say that when I do go back to Broome, and not so much Broome these days, but when I go up to the Peninsula and go out to country it’s a wonderful feeling of just... In terms of your lian, of just being back home. Like going out to the beach and particular places and sitting down and just sitting in country, you just... I don’t know... It’s so healing and it’s so grounding. So I think with Perth, it’s me having to learn a new relationship with country and I haven’t quite done that because I’ve been so busy working.

Lian is sort of like your spirit, your soul... It’s sort of in this heart area, so yeah, it’s more like your spirit. And, you know, some of the Elders will say the lian is sick or your lian is not quite well, so it’s around... Yeah, your spirit.

When you’re in country your lian is happy but when you’re not in country and you’re in places where perhaps it’s foreign to you, or you are not feeling a connection, your lian can be sad or not well.

Perth is Noongar country and there are different spirits here and different stories and different relationships, which I’m not a part of because that’s not something that I’ve grown up with. It’s something that I’ve learnt through the generosity of the Noongar colleagues and friends that I have who have taught me about Noongar country and have accepted my presence in Noongar country. But in terms of knowing places we can go, that’s something I’m still learning.