

Hashwina - 00:08

Hi everyone and Vanacm welcome to the first episode of MY Voice, a podcast powered by the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network in Australia. My name is Hashwina. My pronouns are she and her, and I am your host for today's episode.

Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge that this podcast was recorded on unceded Wurundjeri and Gadigal Lands. We acknowledge the rich storytelling tradition that is weaved within Indigenous cultures across Australia. We would also like to acknowledge the years of hardship and turmoil endured by our First Nations communities and thank them for their continued advocacy, care and connection to their lands. We would also like to acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded. This was and always will be Aboriginal land.

Welcome to my voice. This podcast was developed by the Youth Ambassadors Network (YAN) within MYAN, or the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network, is an advocacy not for profit body located in Australia and we provide advice to the government and capacity building to those who work with young people. We at YAN are a passionate group of young multicultural advocates who work across the country to inform, advocate, and amplify our voices to influence the national agenda and positively impact policies regarding multicultural youth. This is a podcast that features young leaders who each tackle a current issue happening in the country. In each episode a different youth ambassador will be deep diving into a topic, with a special guest of choice, having a chat about a topic that is of interest to them. I'm Hashwina, your host for today, and the current Victorian Ambassador and I work as an environmental researcher. As a Proud Tamil woman and a migrant to Australia, or as long as I can remember, I've been passionate about advocating for fairness and justice for marginalized communities. I love this so much and I've worked and volunteer in this field for the past ten years, and I continue to do this as I keep going on with my journey, and with that let's get into it.

Our first guest for today is Alicia Johnson, Alicia (AJ). Would you like to say high to our listeners?

AJ - 02:30

Hey, everybody! Super honored and excited to be here with you come and have a yarn.

Hashwina - 02:39

Alicia is the First Nations woman, P. H. D, scholar activist and a podcaster herself, Alicia is a proud, Barkindji – Latji Latji – Buri Gubi & Wakka Wakka woman. She grew up in rural New South Wales and located to Sydney as a teenager with her family for better opportunities and access to education. Alicia is a PhD candidate at Sydney University, writing on environmentalism and highlighting the importance of Indigenous knowledge and the influence of eco feminism. Alicia is passionate about highlighting the importance of producing content online, contributing to the moment where First Nations people are retailing many narratives through an Indigenous lens. She has been challenging Australian beliefs and opinions regarding Aboriginal people historically and on a contemporary basis, especially the lived experience of First Nations women, the impacts of colonization and the importance regarding their bodies and reproduction. Welcome to our podcast, AJ thank you so much for taking the time out to be here today. So to begin, could you tell us a little bit about your journey and what got you into the space of influencing and activism?

AJ - 03:56

Um, yeah, so I guess I've always been a bit of an activist without even knowing what that meant and I feel like for a lot of Indigenous people as well in this country. It's kind of born into our identities without advocacy and fighting and standing up, and a strong core belief and value in humanity, we wouldn't be here. So it's a result of our resistance that we are here, and our advocacy. So that has always been a part of my identity. I was really lucky to have two really proud Aboriginal parents, and since I was a child, they always taught us to be proud of who we are, proud of being First Nations to this country. This country belongs to us. It always was and always will be. This discourse was also always in my home, but I also have parents that are very private. I have parents that prefer not being in the limelight, but in saying that they were always staunch in their belief. So in high school, I kind of began speaking out through a lot of racial degradation and abuse, unfortunately, and then eventually working my way into the SRC I was the first Indigenous school captain of my school, and then from there into uni into academia, and then one afternoon decided to download Tik Tok, and that's where it all kicked off.

Hashwina - 05:28

Oh, that's amazing. And I feel like everyone almost stumbles their way into being on Instagram and being on social media. It's just you know one of those things that yeah, you just get into and you currently speak about a lot of press topics online, ranging from body image issues to motherhood, and with social media, there's always a trending topic that's always changing every single day. You have a really big platform that I think, combined, have more than 68k on Instagram and Tik Tok. What do you think are some issues that were more amplified online about Indigenous affairs?

AJ – 06:14

Yeah, so I think. unfortunately, the information that is predominant on our Australian media, there's a lot of information on social media as well, and interestingly enough, really ill-informed opinions around Aboriginal people, but also into our specific experiences as well be at land rights, substance abuse, child abuse, all of the above. So unfortunately it's really racially motivated opinions were formulating online and I jumped on there and wanted to speak straight facts. I also like to intertwine with my content, my lived experience, but also true, cold, hard facts from evidence. So I think that's a thing on social media, a great opportunity where so many non-Indigenous people or allies can learn from us and can connect to us but unfortunately as well, Aboriginal people quite frequently have to do a lot of labor in regard to truth telling.

Hashwina - 07:11

Yeah, yeah. That's so true. I think Australian media definitely needs to do so much more with regards to giving First Nations people their platform to speak for themselves, because there's too much misinformation or misrepresentation, and I think that's the best thing with social media is that you get to be the curator of your own story and no one else is painting a different picture.

AJ - 07:32

So true.

Hashwina 07:34

I also know that you're currently pursuing Ph. D. So could you tell our listeners a little bit more about your research and what got you into academia?

AJ - 07:48

For sure, so, um, again, that was kind of an accidental story. When I was a young child, I lived in a small town called Broken Hill, it's a mining town, and during primary school I received a really, really poor quality education. In my town, Teachers arguably believed that Indigenous children wouldn't grow up to be anything or anyone, so my parents identified that there were a lot of problems coming to the surface and decided to move us to Sydney. Like a lot of Aboriginal families, we have to leave our traditional lands and come to city hubs for better opportunities. So throughout this kind of revitalization with my education in a school in Sydney, and also meeting and learning about new cultures and new identities and new religions and new knowledge bases, as well, I became really inspired and in love with education, and also as well, had to work really hard to kind of catch up to my peers, but also importantly as well, learning is a passion of mine, connecting to my advocacy. I identified really early on that people with my lived experience aren't writing books, arguably aren't giving presentations. Aren't in these spaces. Then through high school became like speaking out and really realizing that our thoughts and opinions and experiences weren't being captured in the work or the materials that I was accessing, And then again, when I went to university in my bachelors, I just saw a real deficit of people as well that are from community. I'm sure, as you know, as a person of colour, there's a real difference between... Just let me state this... Just because you are Indigenous or from a specific racial demographic does not mean that you have, that you are an expert, or you have lived experience. So some of the material that I was reading as well, I think to many of the listeners into this as well, it will not hold as much relevancy, or it may not be truthful to your own experience, and I think that was well was just as inspiring the contrast between the inaccuracy of non-Indigenous, or predominantly white academics, but also some Indigenous academics that may have had more affluent life styles or access to more resources in comparison to what I had, and as well the experience of having perhaps a non-Indigenous parent compared to someone that had two, and that is something that I'm really largely starting to look forward to, but also I'm saying that having a daughter who has a dad as a refugee from Sierra Leone, and seeing how that itself is going to shape her identity in her journey, so I think those intricacies is what is a really big inspiration behind my work.

Hashwina – 10:37

Yeah, that's so powerful and you know a lot of what you are currently doing in academia, I look at a reclaiming your space which has been so white and so one sided and I think you know, I hope for the space to be more accessible and more inviting for other First Nations people in the next five or ten years. I can only hope. But yeah, one of our main topic of discussions for today is actually National Close the Gap Day which is coming up on the 17th of March. For our listeners who don't know, Close the Gap Day is focused on ensuring life opportunities and outcomes for our First Nations people, and make that equal to that of non-Indigenous Australians living in the country. With these topics that

constantly come up, whether it's the media or discussion. I feel like a lot of it is just headline that happens on just one day of the year when they want to talk about these issues. But what do you think are the specific issues that affect the health and wellbeing of young First Nations people?

AJ – 11:54

Yeah, so that's an amazing question and again, one of the reasons why I was really excited to come and have chat with you is that effort that you've put into understanding this important body of work which is closing the gap. So I encourage everyone that is listening into download the file, sorry the document, and actually have a listen. Sorry have a read. There are many different portfolios within that, closing the gap, but it's actual an agreement by 2020, or 2031 I believe, to achieve a series of strategic policies to improve the livelihoods of Indigenous people. So this is from education, This is health, this is child removal rates. This is our incarceration rates, and this is also our youth incarceration rates. And this is also closing the gap which many of you may have heard of in our life expectancy where Aboriginal men I believe are dying twelve to fifteen years younger than non-Indigenous people in this country, and Aboriginal women will die ten years younger than everybody else, and again, that is a result of the racial discrimination, bias and mistreatment of Indigenous people within the medical space, but also again, inability to access culturally safe health care. So Aboriginal people are not going to doctors because of the history of mistreatment in regard to the medical space, but also importantly racism.

Hashwina - 13:25

Yeah, yeah, I remember listening to one of your podcasts or interviews where you detailed your own experience with the medical system and how difficult it was for you as a just going through birth, and seeing how deeply in this country, there's still that, you know, that position of authority within the medical system where they feel like they can treat you in whichever way they want to treat you and that's just not fair on any account. Everyone deserves that basic right and respect to equal health care. And the document you were referring to. Would that be the National Agreement on closing the gap?

AJ - 14:16

Exactly. So I encourage you all to have a good read. It also has like all these stats, so you're able to have a read about the agreement that the government made in the fact that in 2023, they're failing, but also kind of some of the remedies that Aboriginal people are making, so we're always really proactive. A lot of people in this country love to paint us as always complaining, or we always want to have a moan, but we will always have a moan, but we'll always provide strategies to improve and arguably that moan is more importantly an outcry for justice in this country.

Hashwina - 14:44

Yeah, For sure. In this I think Campaign towards you know, achieving justice and equality, what do you think organizations like MYAN can do to help advocate for that better? And what can we do as allies to help champion the cause of First Nations people's health?

AJ - 15:03

Yeah, I think what you've done today is a great example, inviting Indigenous people into your workplaces or your spaces as much as you can. I'm sure many of you being young people yourselves and listening in will hopefully have different ways to engage with Indigenous people and our knowledges, but also importantly to be an ally it's a real personal experience and I also like to think it's like my own experience with other Indigenous groups around the world that are experiencing injustice, whilst I navigate my own, whilst I'm fighting for the plight of Aboriginal or Indigenous people on this continent. Arguably the same things that we're fighting for is really across the globe. You know, if it's access to health care or the medical field, if it's access to clean water, if it's access to food, that is at affordable price, if it's children getting adequate education without being discriminated against, and unfortunately, genocide. We're seeing Aboriginal children being removed from their families and put in systems where they're abused and degraded for being Aboriginal, removed from their families and their communities and their identity. Also, importantly, through reading that closing the gap report, Aboriginal children once they put into care are more likely to have permanent care orders than non-Indigenous children. So what that means is they're going and they're never coming back. And this is a really large secret that this country loves to hide, and when Aboriginal people are talking about genocide, many people will compare to other countries but we really have to start to understand that this was the last continent to ever be colonized. The British have a very systematic, very sinister, and a very insidious form of colonization, where it's based on mechanisms and institutions, and that is what we're seeing in contemporary society with black deaths and custody, Aboriginal people are dying when police have a duty of care. Black deaths by pursuit, so police chasing Indigenous people be in vehicles or on foot, which is causing their death. We also see incarceration rates of our children, so Aboriginal children as young as six, in some areas of this country, sorry ten, are being incarcerated. There's also really horrific stories where Aboriginal children, women and men are stripped searched. In particular this is most distressing for our youth, which is illegal but also again, combine that with our horrific suicide rate in this country. So as you can see, there is a multitude of different characteristics that is happening and again, understanding the complexities of genocide and through exploring the experiences of other Indigenous people around the globe. It's really inspiring if I look at different continents and how people respond, but also their strength and power to still stand strong and their determination to give their children a better future. I'm sure just like your parents or people that are tuning in, I find that inspiring, and that as well is the key importance of having people who may come from refugee or immigrant backgrounds to become active allies in our plight and really connect with that feeling that is our spirits.

Hashwina - 18:29

Very, very, very well said, and you know a lot of the issues that you raised and you spoke about, a lot of them are just unfortunately ingrained within this government. They're extremely systematic. It's almost like they are done with the intent of erasing our First Nations population and every year we speak about improving the outcomes for our First Nations people. Yet there's little that's done. What do you think the government can do better? There's a lot they can do. But with regard to the topic of First Nations physical and mental health for our people, what do you think they can do better?

AJ - 19:07

Yeah, so it's amazing you asked that question and luckily enough I have been employed in particular in regard to the child protection space in a previous job, and that was in an Aboriginal organization, so across the country, we have many, many different Aboriginal organizations against some of you young people in your student capacity, even through your own education, may have heard some of these. You know, we've got Aboriginal legal services. We've got average health care, So Aboriginal medical centers, but I've also got organizations that do different things, so we've got ones that work in the child protection space, Some work in mental health, some work for the elderly, some work with people in prison, some work with homelessness or domestic violence. So I think the government supporting these organizations are really imperative and again, kind of listening to those strategies that are being captured in something like closing the gap report. Really reading that and understanding that Aboriginal people are experts in what we're talking about, and start to implement some of those recommendations.

Hashwina – 20:15

Yeah, so a real productive action in funding mainly, and just literally doing what they're saying they're doing, which is implementing the strategies that they line out in these reports. Yeah, I completely, completely agree. You spoke about this a little bit earlier about your daughter, Um, having a non-Indigenous father and we can see in your social media that you openly document your relationship with. It's so beautiful

AJ - 20:48

Thank you

Hashwina - 20:49

And it's really nice how in your own way is bridging that gap of understanding between, like you know, for those from non-Indigenous background of migrant refugee backgrounds about what they can do. You know, being an ally for the community. Do you think there's someone who holds a responsibility for educating migrant and refugee communities? Because when they come into this country, there's a lot of emphasis on, for example, celebrating Australia Day or taking up the citizenship test or um, you know, doing a lot of things to assimilate into this culture. I say assimilate with open coat bracket. But do you think it's anyone's responsibility, really, to be educating them?

AJ - 21:38

I definitely think this is a really unique experience and something that I am really looking to explore more this year online. It was only through being in a relationship with my daughter's father for a number of years and becoming connected to his community that I understand primarily the experience of people that are refugees. So I went to high school with refugees or children who were refugees or their parents. I went to school in Dough Hill here in Sydney, which is, there was a very racially diverse area and also low socio-economic in nature. So I was going to school with these children, many of which completed recently, a language or a high school, some type of course. So I

was lucky enough to grow up around that experience, but I never heard it. Australia does not talk about the experience of refugees.

There are no supports for refugees, having a partner that I did for a number of years and seeing how his family were kind of processed, the lack of support for their mental health, the lack of their support in regards to housing, in regards to education. So I think interesting enough, our government is failing people who are coming here, and a myriad of different capacities, and arguably the most vulnerable, which are those that are from war torn countries or countries where they had to flee in general. But unfortunately I did not know about that plight and they did not know about my plight, and I think again, that's really to the power dynamics, but also in saying that, as well the lack of information, I think now more than ever. So I met my daughter's father when I was nineteen. I'm now thirty. I think now more than ever through the role of social media, through connectedness, through platforms, like what we're speaking on today for the first time. More than ever. We're able to create those bridges because our government is never going to do that. And it was like a blink that I was nineteen but it has been a long, long journey. When I was Nineteen, there was nothing like this. There was Facebook or msn, I think, but again, that was also really largely regulated and importantly as well, different collectives were kind of divided in the social media space, so I think now a really nice and exciting time. I also have had conflicts in discussions with my daughter's father and conveying to him my experience, for example, when we would drive in a car and I would tell him "the police are here, sit straight, you know, turn the music down. Take your hood off" and he would say "I'm not doing that. I'm not taking that off" until we were pulled over maybe three or four times. Then he started to realize the surveillance that we go through, my rightful fear of police. That importantly, the ways that we are over policed and they are constantly an agitator in our livelihood. So I think many of you do not have to have such an intimate experience with Indigenous people. But platforms like today, where we're speaking about our realities are a really important way. And also, if you do have Indigenous people in your life, have those yarns. Have those conversations in a safe way but also share a bit of your own journey, share the journey of your parents or your grandparents. We want to know, we want to connect to you. We want to know your story. I think those moments are so essential.

Hashwina - 25:09

Yeah, yeah, I completely agree, I think once we start sharing our backgrounds and histories, I think there might be a lot that we might find in common more than what can separate us and and it's really about seeking out those opportunities, I believe, to put yourself outside of your comfort zone to connect with the community and have that sense of, you know, create the sense of belonging. Yeah, and do you think beyond the stereotypical signing a petition online or attending a rally, do you think there are more active ways for migrants to be active allies and start their decolonization journey?

AJ - 26:00

Yeah. I think that's a really great example in regard to what it means to be an ally. I think right now we're seeing a really big push and I have talked about this online behind the commercialization of allyship. Now, this does not just pertain to Indigenous people, this may relate to people that may belong to the queer community as well. This may belong to an experience of Pacifica maybe different cultures throughout Asia and South East Asia, where people will really be come to wear or purchase our items. But are they learning about what they're wearing? Are they understanding what

these items mean to us? Be it a shirt that has a Pacifica design or something from South East Asia, that may be a carving in their home or painting? Do you understand what that means? Do you know who created that art work? Do you know how centuries-old these elements are? So I think that's another important element is supporting these businesses is very important and paramount, but also importantly learning the stories behind them and I think that's the same thing with the protest. Hell, Yes, get out. Show up. Participate. But did you talk to your parents about what you learned? Did you talk to your cousin who's a seething races about what he knew, or your best friend who doesn't want to talk about Indigenous issues? Did you talk to them? Because that is where the real work is going to be done in your home.

Hashwina - 27:35

Yeah, I agree beyond just the performativeness and the decorative actions, I think it's really, really important for us Migrants to have those uncomfortable conversations with our friends, family members, and actually educate them about. You know the consequences of their actions, whether that's voting for really bad politicians or you know what I'm going to say next, which you is you know, partaking in the referendum. Um, there's a lot that we can do beyond just signing a petition online. Having said that we had a very important landmark referendum coming up this year. What are some key things that you would encourage our listeners to do leading up to this referendum to either advocate for it or you know help educate about it.

AJ - 28:34

So this again is a really important turning point. It's much like the change the date of Australia Day, or abolish Australia Day. So I am abolish Australia Day, and when it comes to the referendum, I am against the referendum. This country has had, like Closing the gap report, we also have the Bringing them Home report, we also have Black Deaths in Custody Report that was released in 1993, with strategies to prevent Aboriginal people from dying in prison, and not one of those were picked up, and as a result of that we have over 200 hundred black deaths in this country. So our government has had many opportunities, even right now, With the plan of 2023, to implement these strategies, our government has had many opportunities to get behind what we're calling for and what we have a consensus on. Aboriginal people do not have a consensus on the referendum, not all Aboriginal people in this country are aware. If you go to my dad, you go to his community, arguable, you go to my mother's community and try to have a yarn to them. There are many people that do not even know what the premise of this referendum is. That in itself is problematic and importantly, it has not been endorsed largely by Indigenous people. So I think my tips and advice would be do your research. Have read around some of the paradigms. All you have to do is give it a Google. Many average people are speaking up and out and against the statement, and I think I'll be one of those people contributing discourse soon, and I think again, this is a really important element around consulting Indigenous people, and many of you in your work will probably have heard about this. It is really essential to consent us because without it, without that power to the people, the end goal is obsolete. It is not going to get there.

Hashwina – 30:33

Yeah, yeah, I completely agree. There's been a lot of discussions online and debates online about this, and every single time I look at it in the media, I rarely see an actual Aboriginal person being consulted to speak on it. You know, has a million opinions from Pauline Hanson to everyone else about what they have to say, But at the end of the day, are we speaking to people like your dad? Are we speaking to people in rural towns Um about if they even know about this topic and how it impacts them, but also how are we using this, I think as an excuse to hide away from all these other issues that are there? You know. All The issues you highlighted throughout the course of this episode we need to not only work towards this as an end goal, but we need to also look at everything else that's happening in our country right now, and work towards that as well. You know.

To wrap up a lot of our discussion today has been about. You know what we can do to support the First Nations community. We can do as migrants and refugees, and what the attention needs to be directed to. But do you can you recall or do you know any positive examples that you have seen between migrants and First Nations communities that give you hope for a more positive and collaborative future?

AJ - 31:58

For sure. So I lived in western Sydney for ten years, proudly lived in Bankstown, and during my time living out there and then Granville, living in these two areas, spending literally ten years raising my daughter up until this year in western Sydney, I think is a real, a real indicator of a community and a life style that is accepting of race, representation of community where different languages can live together. Now, I'm not going to romanticize these areas we have in western Sydney, as well a lot of police brutality, police racial discrimination against other races I witnessed, but in the community I not once experienced any racism. I not once had someone look at me like I didn't have a right to enter their restaurant or their beautician or their hair dresser. I never once walked into clothing store owned by people of color or work by people of color, and was made to feel uncomfortable. A grocer. You know, one day I'm going and getting spices from the Middle East, the next time in a jeweler looking at jewelry from I don't know, somewhere overseas, maybe an amalgamation of multiple cultures, right. I never once felt uncomfortable. I think that's what I missed. I'm living in the inner west, or I miss it, and I think the beauty you walk through the streets, so many different languages, so many different people were in traditional, were so many different religions, and when you move into other areas that are predominantly white, you really see in erasure. So I think the beauty that I experience in western Sydney, and I'm ready to pack up and move back there. Let me tell you that much, and my daughter as well, her exposure, her exposure to people. You know, if it's religious garb. You know. And where I'm living now and someone wears their cultural ware or they wear their religious garb, everyone's jaw will be on the table. In western Sydney, we're just like it's okay. Live your life, whatever you look great. So I think these snippets of our community throughout this country, if it's interracial relationships, if it's school, if it's community initiatives, if it's moms and bubs groups that I was a part of that had like ten different nationalities in the space, all of our children playing together, getting to know these mothers, connecting to this Mothers. These initiatives need support. Now also what I do want to state. These initiatives such as your own, need funding from our government. The Moms and Bubs group that I went to in Granville was defunded and closed down and shut, the community centers where which are leading multicultural spaces. It's people accessing language English lessons which happen in these community hubs, or being able to connect to each other as a community. These need funding as well from our government. And if you look at incarceration rates as well of people from these communities, and what I mean by these communities, I mean communities that are racially diverse we're also seeing things unfortunately,

like lack of housing support were seeing these communities become low social economic. We're seeing crime increase. We're seeing lower expectations of education. So children that live in these areas that are racially diverse, they are not getting as much funding as other areas, so I think as well, let's start having yarns about how we connect but let's also start having yarns about how our government is failing people.

Hashwina - 35:48

Yeah, preach.

AJ – 35:49

Don't get me started on my western Sydney. I'll be here all day.

Hashwina – 35:51:

I mean at the end of it, I think all of it comes back down to how our government is failing us in totality, as people of color, as racialized people and First Nations s people. Um, and yeah, just so much can be done with you know how they allocate their budget. So if anyone's listening, please take notes because we have a lot of areas that you guys can improve in your budget.

AJ – 36:20

I guess one last point I have for this podcast

Hashwina - 36:21

Yes please go ahead

AJ - 36:25

I think I had a yarn about this at one of the presentations that I delivered. What we have to understand is when you have your wedding, or whoever is listening to this, one day when you get married, you may even have a funeral, you may have a birth, when you cook your traditional foods, when you wear your garb, when you speak your language, when you teach your children, or you connect to your religion or religious practices, cultural practices, when you walk into a shop that is in your mother tongue, and you have items that have been brought here that you can use to cook or clothes. Even you know herbs and spices or medical, are things that may have medicinal benefit. You have to understand at what price that has been allowed. You have your places of worship. You have practices around your burial that you're allowed to openly do, and rightfully so. That has come at a cost, and that's come at our cost. We, less than fifty years ago, if an Aboriginal person was speaking the language their child would be at risk of removals. If we, arguably, to this day we have to petition to governments to practice traditional law around burials and complex elements such as embalming, and this is issues that impact all Australians and will become more increasingly prevalent as we

continue to grow as a Country where the assimilationist policies will, will infringe on what you have now, because that is the nature of our government moving towards assimilation and really denying Australia's identity and the complexity. So I'm asking you as listeners to this, and if you've made it this far, think about the beauty of your identity and being able to practice freely. But how for us that was never afforded since 1788, when the British arrived. When I die, I will have a very western, a very white burial. When I speak to my daughter, I can speak snippets and bits of our language, but I largely speak in English. When I get married it would be a church or under a tree, because we don't know our practice is, my tribe specifically in the state of New South Wales, so I just want to leave that notion with you all. At what cost has your freedom been attained? And unfortunately, that was at our emancipation.

Hashwina 38:50

Yeah, so beautiful, so so so eloquently spoken and just so much clarity in every single thing you've said Alicia. Thank you so much for taking the time today to share your insight, your lived experiences, and just all your profound knowledge today. And you've been spitting some wisdom, left, right and centre.

AJ - 39:15

Thank you so much for having me. Like I said, I think this podcast and body of work is so important and it's going to be a great learning resource and I can't wait to listen to the other episodes as well.

Hashwina - 39:26

Yes, we're so so grateful to have you here. before we finish, do you have anything that you'd like to plug our listeners to any collaboration you, you have coming up, and where our listeners can follow you your channels, your socials. Is there anything you'd like to plug?

AJ - 39:46

I guess one last thing I want to have again being probably the older auntie to many of you or the older big sister. Stay strong. Whatever it is, whatever you're going through in life, whatever setback you've had in this country, and arguably the discourse or the, the loss that is happening around the world right now again in regard to humanity, but also environmental degradation and assimilation and genocide. Stay strong. Don't lose hope. Connect to others that want to be under the quest of good and what's right. And if you have your setbacks, you have your moment when you're like "Oh, my gosh, I'm so overwhelmed or I'm exhausted or I don't want to study, or I don't want to do this extra curriculum activity, or I don't know what I'm doing. Where do I go? Where's my job?". Know that you are on your own path in your own journey, and is not easy as well and whatever setbacks you have from our country and again, it may be that discrimination. It may be privilege. You know, privilege can often give you a nice slap in the face of others as well in this country. And what white supremacy really generates, you stay strong and connect to others on the same journey. Don't isolate yourself.

Hashwina - 41:01

So beautiful. So I feel like I need to listen to this podcast again for myself. Just re-listen to everything you're saying, like an audio book. Just inspirational. So good. And where can listeners find you? Where can we follow you? Where can we follow your work? Plug in your channels.

AJ – 41:20

So I have my Instagram, which 8983aj. And if you go to my Instagram account, you're also able to click my own podcast. So I have a podcast called The Yuku Podcast. I'm planning on releasing some content very soon and again, Just kind of sitting down coming together and having a really good yarn because as we know, podcasts in Australia are really poor quality, boring and substandard. So excited to listen to this body of work and contribute to and really shape Australian podcasts.

Hashwina - 41:49

So please to our listeners, subscribe to The Yuku Podcast right now.

AJ - 41:53

Thank you

Hashwina – 41:54

I'm going to have to listen to what A J has to say (on the podcast), But thank you so much, Alicia.

AJ - 42:00

Thank you.