

Ko Rangitoto, Ko Waitematā: Cultural Landmarks for the Integration of a Māori Indigenous Psychotherapy in Aotearoa

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Abstract

Rangitoto is one of many small islands within the Hauraki Gulf which sits at the entrance to the Waitematā harbour. Rangitoto was formed through a series of seismic eruptions approximately 600 years ago when liquid lava cooled, quickly forming a naturally occurring volcanic glass known as obsidian. Set between the layers of volcanic ash are human footprints bearing testament that local Māori of that time witnessed the formation of Rangitoto. Waitematā is one of two harbours surrounding Tamaki Makaurau covering 70 square miles of water, spreading out into the Hauraki Gulf before opening out to the mighty Pacific Ocean. Since the first settlement in the 13th century (Irwin & Walrond, 2012), Waitematā has been a navigator's haven providing deep channels, slow currents and a safe tidal range where the many residents of Tamaki Makaurau and visitors from afar have enjoyed and admired the beauty of both Rangitoto and the Waitematā. Rangitoto refers to the luminous blood-like sky created by the volcanic eruption. Wai te matā refers to the dark sparkling waters created by the reflective glass like obsidian (McLintock, 1966). In this article, I draw upon Rangitoto and Waitematā as natural and cultural landmarks for the integration and application of a Māori whakapapa construct in clinical and therapeutic practice. Appropriately, Rangitoto and Waitematā together provide a silhouette of both figure and ground for a Māori indigenous psychotherapy approach and a construct for developing cultural competence in Aotearoa New Zealand. In doing so, I discuss firstly, the importance of understanding whakapapa as a social and whānau systems construct; secondly, the relevance of understanding and integrating Māori methods in the practice of psychotherapy; and thirdly, Pūrākau, an indigenous Māori storytelling approach, which is relevant in the therapeutic setting.

Waitara

Ko Rangitoto tētahi o ngā moutere ririki maha kei te whanga o Hauraki ā, e noho nei i te

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wahapū o te Waitematā. I ahua ake a Rangitoto mai i ngā rū o te whenua e ono rau tau nei pea ki muri, arā nō te mātaohanga o te puia ko tōna otinga ko te tūhua. Kei waenga o ngā paparanga puia he tapuwae tangata, te whakaaturanga o te kīteatangahia e te kanohi Māori te ahunga ake o Rangitoto. Ko Waitematā tētahi o ngā whanga e rua e tāwharau ana i a Tāmaki Makaurua. E whitu tekau pūtakerua maero te takotoranga wai tere atu ki Hauraki i mua i te rerenga atu ki te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa. Mai i te nohoanga tuatahi i te rautau tekau mā wha, he wāhi ruruhau mō ngā kaiwhakatere waka na ana taiawa hōhonu, taiawa āta rere, ā, he tai haumaruru. He wāhi kaingākauhia e te marea noho i reira, e ngā manuhiri o tawhiti, whakamiharo atu hoki ki te ātaahua o Rangitoto rāua tahi ko Waitematā. He tohu te ingoa Rangitoto ki te pīataatanga rite ki te toto o te rangi i te pahūtanga o te puia. Ko Wai-te-matā, e whakapā ana ki ngā wai pīataata mai i te ātanga o te tūhua. I roto i tēnei tuhinga, ka huri au ki a Rangitoto rāua ko Waitematā hei maunga hei awa whakapapa whakauru whakahāngai i te whakapapa Māori ki ērā o ngā āhuatanga whakapā atu ki ngā mahi haumanu. He tika tonu kia tū mai a Rangitoto rāua ko Waitematā hei whakarātonga āhua hanga, pouhere hoki mō te ara hai whakaora hinengaro Māori, ā, me tētahi hua whakahiato mātauranga ahurea i Aotearoa. Koia nei, ka whakaara ahau, tuatahi i te take nui me mātatau ko te whakapapa hei hanga pūnaha hāpori whānau hoki; tuarua, te pānga o te mātauranga ki te whakaurunga o te momo mahi a te Māori ki te mahi a te kaiwhakaora hinengaro; ā, tuatoru te Pūrākau, te ara kōrero paki a te Māori e hāngai nei ki te horanga haumanu.

Keywords: cultural landmarks; Māori whakapapa construct; Māori indigenous psychotherapy; cultural competence

Mihimihi

Ngā te kupu tuatahi: Ka tuku ki to tatou kaihangā.

Koia rā te timatanga me te whakamutunga o ngā mea katoa.

Ngā te kupu tuarua: Tiro tiro ki ngā uri, ngā mokopuna o Papatūānuku a Ranginui

Ngā te kupu tuatoru: Tiro tiro ki te whare tāngata — Kia hiwa rā! Kia hiwa rā!

Te whare e tū nei — Kia hiwa ra! Kia hiwa ra!

E ngā hau e whā rau rangātira mā tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa!

Acknowledging Figure and Ground

My first acknowledgement must go to the great Ihowa Matua Kore: the parentless one, the creator, the one who has created the beginning and the end of all things through eons of time. I acknowledge our universal parents: Papatūānuku, the primordial Earth mother, and Ranginui, Sky-father, where the multitudes that have gone before us have assembled in the heavens. Let us observe and behold the descendants and the many grandchildren of earth mother Papatūānuku and sky father Ranginui; behold the magnificence of the parental universe. I acknowledge te whare tāngata | the house of humanity where we mortal beings take our place in the great universal scheme of things. It is through this magnificent whakapapa, this genesis that I have learnt that I am, as you are, as we are, descendants of a

phenomenon much greater than us. I have acknowledged the grandeur of this whare, which has housed both the living and the dead: Kings and Queens, heads of state, ministers, politicians, professors, writers, and artists — a diversity of people from many walks of life including representatives from every Māori nation in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Tihei wā mauri ora!* May the breath of life behold you in the presence of Tumutumuwhenua for, indeed, this house is distinguished. I acknowledge all who have gathered here today swept together by the four winds and assembled under the cloak of Ngāti Whātua.

Ka titiro ahau ki waho ka kite ahau ko Rangitoto te maungā ko Waitematā te moana, tēnā kōrua. When I look outside I see Rangitoto and Waitematā, greetings to you both.

Together Rangitoto and Waitematā have witnessed both the calm and turbulent years of the whenua on which we stand today. As landmarks, Rangitoto and Waitematā have been the ancient observers of intertribal associations and conflicts, continual cycles of birth, death and marriages that have created new whānaungatanga connections and bonds. It is significant that the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP) have gathered here at Ōrākei on this whenua for our 2013 Conference. This whenua will remain etched in the minds of many Māori, Pākehā and New Zealanders who witnessed the unjust and unequal treatment of Māori by a powerful, hard-hearted, and hegemonic state. Through their sheer determination and deep understanding of what it means to be tāngata whenua, Ngāti Whātua prevailed through the most difficult years. The reclaiming of Tumutumuwhenua remains as a bastion for Māori assertion and strength and this whenua will always be a reminder of the unnecessary and unjust treatment of Māori. We are destined to repeat these injustices for as long as we turn away, remain ignorant, and deny these experiences while contemplating our ambivalence about bicultural relationships. In the words of Ranginui Walker (1990): “so long as this unequal power relationship persists, the struggle of Māori for a just and equitable society is a ‘Struggle without end’” (p. 46). I hope that the turbulent years will herald the turning of a new tide where the importance of bicultural partnerships and plural realities in psychotherapy practice and training are embraced with confidence (Tudor, 2011). I am reminded that Treaty settlement negotiations remain ongoing and at the forefront of the Tūhoe nation, another example of Crown injustices, illegal confiscation, and the unequal treatment of Māori. An acknowledgement of these injustices will go part way to the recovery of the Tūhoe nation where the children of the mist are free to delight in the magnitude of Maungapohatu once more. It is right that I also acknowledge Rangimarie Rose Pere who was invited to be a keynote speaker at this Conference but who, sadly, is unable to be with us at this time. I want to take this moment to recognise Rangimarie Rose Pere as a storehouse for tikanga Māori and Tūhoe knowledge. I thank her with aroha, for her generosity of heart and soul, and for the many blessings she has shared for the betterment of humanity. To this I add one of her many gems for us to treasure: “The great sea of life knows both tranquillity and turbulence. The canoe that crosses its depths must know from whence it came” (Pere, 1988, p. 6).

This article is based on a keynote speech delivered at the NZAP’s 2013 Annual Conference held on Ōrākei Marae, Tamaki Makaurau | Auckland. For those readers who were present, I hope that you valued the opportunity to experience the relational dynamics and interrelated dimensions of these relationships that were fostered through a Māori

environment. For those who were not, I hope this article conveys some sense of those dynamics and relationships fostered by such an environment. Some of the dynamics which were operating within this sphere included Ranginui and Papatūānuku, whenua and turangāwaewae, and tikangā protocols such as the observance of powhiri and karakia. The carvings within the wharenuī are all symbolic representations of important ancestors, a constant reminder of the spatial relationships between the living and the dead. The fabric of our existence is woven through, aroused and stirred within the wharenuī. In describing the wharenuī, Walker (1996) has captured the essence of the house:

a cultural statement, an assertion of mana Māori and cultural traditions The carvings depict ancestral deities from the celestial realm of Te Po and tribal ancestors from the terrestrial realm of Te Ao Marama (the world of light). These homes are a symbolic expression of identity and cultural pride, the interior walls lined with tukutuku (woven) panels and poupou (carved panels) synonymous with the embodiment of identity and included both male and female carved poupou. For Māori the ancestral home functioned to conserve tribal history, ceremonial activities, and traditional needs such as tangihangā (funeral processes) and provided an integrative function ... the meeting house is the most potent symbol of Māori identity and cultural pride. (pp. 48-50)

For me, this Conference aroused many emotions and I was fortunate to share these with whānau who stood with me and beside me in the wharenuī. My aunt took the time to explain that as a whānau, the last time we were here was to mourn the loss of her brother and my uncle. My uncle participated in the life and development of Ōrākei over many years and in doing so, the whānaungatanga ties that we have with the people of Ngāti Whātua o Ōrākei remain burning in our hearts for each other. Further along in this article I expand on what I mean by whānaungatanga. Delivering a keynote address under these circumstances was a very humbling and an emotionally difficult experience for my whānau and myself. The tukutuku panels and the carved poupou remain as symbolic representations of tupuna who silently observe and listen to all that takes place within the wharenuī. I am reminded that what happens here on this earth, and in this whare, are noted in the spiritual realm. These cultural representations serve as a reminder to my own wairua and vulnerability that were stirred by the intermingling of wairua energy; that which is both animate and inanimate. Again, I am reminded that wairua knows no end continuously flowing through the hearts and minds of my whānau for our deeply loved and missed brother, uncle, father, and grandfather. It is unlikely that the written words will capture these personal experiences of being in the wharenuī and as such the reader, who was not present, cannot enjoy the fullness of the lived experience.

By virtue of our surroundings and where we had chosen to gather for the NZAP 2013 Conference, I was duty-bound to discuss the importance of whakapapa in my keynote address. I will therefore draw upon distinct bodies of knowledge from the combined influences of my whakapapa demonstrating that Māori ideology and Western ideology, while different and yet similar, can co-exist alongside each other and can be integrated into psychotherapy practice.

Whakapapa: A Social and Whānau Systems Construct

A fundamental cornerstone in Māori philosophy is the belief that everything both seen and unseen has a whakapapa. This view is central to traditional Māori lore and, as Barlow (1996) has noted, is a cultural imperative:

Whakapapa is the genealogical descent of all living things from the gods to the present time. The meaning of whakapapa is “to lay one thing upon another” as, for example, to lay one generation upon another. Everything has a whakapapa: birds, fish, animals, trees, and every other living thing; soil, rocks and mountains also have a whakapapa. Man also has a genealogy. Whakapapa is a basis for the organisation of knowledge in respect of the creation and development of all things. (p. 173)

Barlow (1996) classified Māori whakapapa in four distinct ways which include: cosmic genealogy; genealogy of the gods; genealogy concerning the precursors of human life form; and the genealogy of the waka or canoes which arrived here in Aotearoa from Hawaiki. Māori tribal boundaries had been defined through warfare and relationships. Māori social structures were organised into distinct groups and tribes, which were based on canoe ancestors and genealogical descent lines. The discovery of land by ancestors, cycles of birth, death and burial; all established communities. The shedding of blood spilt in defence of land, and sustenance derived from land and waterways, influenced the way in which Māori people and tribes identified themselves (Walker, 1996). An established tribe (iwi) had jurisdiction over their tribal territories and these were marked out according to significant landmarks (Tomlins-Jahnke, 2011). Through the relationship Māori people established with Papatuanuku, earth mother, and Ranginui, sky father, Māori came to see this relationship as a joining with the land and, literally, to view themselves as tangata whenua | the people of the land, to which, from this perspective, Māori can be seen as being symbiotically attached (Walker, 1996).

As with all iwi, Ngāti Whātua is a confederation of smaller sub-tribes or kinship groups, known as hapū. The term hapū is synonymous with our understanding of pregnancy: to be pregnant or to be conceived in the womb and whānau is to be born into family (Williams, 2000). As the sub-tribes or kinship groups are created following cycles of many pregnancies, the word hapū is used as a descriptive term to mean pregnant and sub-tribe. The word whenua means both placenta or after-birth and land or ground (Walker, 1996). Following the birth of an infant, it is traditional Māori practice to bury and dedicate the whenua to Papatuanuku in an appropriate area designated by the hapū. This wholistic ritual is a continuous reminder of our absolute dependence and therefore intrinsic connection to Papatuanuku, the place where whenua is nurtured within the primordial mother, and embodied forever more. (The word holistic is spelt in this way to capture the “whole” essence of a Māori philosophical world view, for further discussion of which, see Pohatu, 2003.) In turn, this new whenua will add to the revitalisation of flora, fauna and the rejuvenation of land. This sequence of events contributes to the cycle of life where reciprocity enables the dedicated whenua (placenta/after-birth) to provide sustenance to the whenua (land), on which people are fostered and the new infant

nurtured — and hence the dual meaning of the word whenua.

In the Māori language a causative prefix is often used to connect one word with another, both to ensure that links are not lost, while allowing enough flexibility to capture further meaning and ideas. For example, when the components of the word Papa-tū-ā-nuku are separated out, we can appreciate its deeper, etymological meaning, thus: Papa — earth, ground, foundations; tū — stand; and nuku — wide, extensive. Similarly, whaka is the causative prefix in the word whakapapa.

To return to my own whakapapa story as an example: Ngāti Whātua is my iwi, and iwi are the amalgamation of smaller hapū which occupy an area or territory. The hapū and, therefore, the iwi originate from a common ancestor. The word iwi is often referred to as the nation or tribe, though it also has its origins in the word bone, as in reference to the bones of people. The tribal territories of Ngāti Whātua sit between Tamaki Makaurau, from the Tāmaki River in the South of Auckland to Maunganui Bluff on the West Coast in the North, across to Whangarei Harbour on the East Coast. Whakapapa relationships are kept alive through participation, support and marriages. My particular hapū are based in the northern region near Maunganui Bluff. The two sentences that follow on from this one are intended to demonstrate how the word whenua is used interchangeably in conversation and is based on actual events. My daughter's whenua is buried at one of the highest points in Ngāti Whātua, directly on top of Maunganui. I believe that her whenua will keep her wairua (spirit) connected to the whenua of her whakapapa whānau. From this position, she is given a spiritual vantage point, where she can see her Hokianga relatives in the north, her Ngāti Whātua relatives in the south and, further beyond, to her Tainui relatives. From the top of Maunganui and on the clearest of days you can look southward and see the snow peak top of Taranaki, appearing as if from the ocean. I have had the good fortune to see this distant maunga more than once in my life from Maunganui.

My links to Ngāti Whātua of Ōrākei have continued through marriages and births with relatives living in some of the houses surrounding this marae. Resulting offspring ensure that the post of Ngāti Whātua in the south, where Ōrākei hold the southern post, and Ngāti Whātua in the north where Tama te Ua Ua hold the northern post remain strong through whānaungatanga (extended family) ties. It was, therefore appropriate that, in my keynote speech, I greeted and acknowledged my cousin Tui who came in support of my whānau and me. Tui and her siblings are the resulting effect of a dynamic tribal construct, where their whakapapa links them directly to Ngāti Whātua ki Tamaki and Tamaki ki Maunganui. These whānau and whānaungatanga relationships have been nurtured, and we are not strangers to each other. Closeness and distance is not measured by a numerical genealogy system where the assumption surmises that the greater the number the more distant the relationship. Whānau and whānaungatanga relationships are determined by tupuna where the qualities of these relationships are measured through participation and involvement with each other. Whakapapa and whānaungatanga are all about relationships, where reciprocity is a key component to the maintenance of this collective system. The marae and whareni are central to the fostering of relationships and a secure Māori identity (Walker, 1996; Durie, 1998). At this point I will close the discussion concerning my personal whakapapa to conclude with the following:

Maunganui is the mountain,
Kaihu is the river,
Rongomai Te Ariki is the ancestor,
Mahuhu ki te Rangi is the canoe,
Te Uri o Hau is the hapū,
Ngāti Whatua is the tribe.
I am Ngāti Whatua and Ngāti Whatua is me.

Whakapapa whānau, kaupapa whanau, and Māori

In response to the first European immigration, the various tribes throughout Aotearoa amalgamated under our tribal similarities and shared beliefs, choosing to identify as Māori. The term Māori, meaning usual or ordinary (Williams, 2000), was chosen to differentiate Pākehā, the new immigrants, and the usual ordinary people who were occupying these lands long before. However, in response to each other, Māori *continue to* identify and distinguish ourselves from each other according to our whakapapa links to whānau, hapū, and iwi. The word whānau is generally well integrated into every day conversations particularly in the health, education and social services sectors. Confusion can occur when whānau is used interchangeably to describe two situations:

The two pre-eminent models of whānau from the literature are whakapapa (kinship) and Kaupapa (purpose driven) whānau. Whakapapa whānau are the more permanent and culturally authentic form of whānau. Whakapapa and Kaupapa whānau are not mutually exclusive. Whakapapa whānau will regularly pursue kaupapa or goals, whereas kaupapa whānau may or may not have whakapapa connections. These two whānau models construct whānau identity differently but the intent of both models is to contribute to the achievement of whānau ora by means of building and strengthening bonds of kinship and giving effect to the collective practices of whānaungatanga (whānau support). (Te Aho, 2010, p. 24)

A whakapapa construct recognises the shared attributes of a particular group of people with common tribal orientations. Whakapapa is an acknowledgement of one's existence through genealogical links. It also encompasses an understanding that individuals within the whakapapa system can maximise their social and cultural knowledge for the advancement of the whole whānau. Kaupapa whānau play a key role in advancing the aspirations of Māori through collective and shared purposes. Kaupapa whānau are drawn together for a whole host of purposes that can include involvement in sports clubs, parent support groups, national groups and collectives through to professional and discipline-focused groups (Durie, 1994).

The discussion on whakapapa is a critical cultural phenomenon that continues to go through cycles of change as connections and relationships are no longer limited to Māori. Māori whakapapa is now merged with many non Māori descent lines which will influence the way in which Māori whakapapa values are upheld or regarded. Māori are no longer tied to whenua in the same way in which our ancestors were and these disconnections to

both whānau and whenua shape our responses to the needs of Māori whānau.

Māori lifestyles are diverse (Durie, 1994, 2001); and our interactions with greater societal forces now influence the choices Māori whānau make for themselves. For some, these interactions may have created isolation from important socio-cultural experiences. The process of socialisation that occurs in childhood is where Māori development is fostered, where the understanding of Māori relationship dynamics and values are nurtured. The wharenuī and the marae complex accommodate the various stages of human development from birth to death where roles and responsibilities are designated according to age appropriateness (Tate, 2012). In the absence of these early childhood experiences uncertainty can occur which can create an insecure Māori identity with a resultant identity crisis problem. However, Māori who have been well grounded in their whakapapa Māori are well aware that whānau who whakapapa to iwi have obligations to protect and care for whānau. Whakapapa is instrumental to whānau, hapū and iwi and without it we would not have a future. Kruger et al., (2004) stated this plainly: “Without whakapapa whānau, hapū, and iwi would not exist” (p. 11).

Having an understanding of both whakapapa whānau and kaupapa whānau can open up a range of issues in the assessment process. A thorough assessment will help to shed light on emotional and social relationship issues and inter-generational patterns of behaviour which will help to inform the therapeutic treatment plan. Such an assessment can also help to ascertain where conflicting identity issues need attention and to highlight any consequential issues to follow through with in the therapy sessions. Engagement with a whakapapa construct requires specific Māori knowledge. Where there are limitations in respect of Māori knowledge, the practitioner is strongly advised to seek appropriate cultural supervision to give support to the process (for further discussion of which, see Morice & Fay, 2013). Training institutions also have a key role in ensuring that the training programmes are preparing students to work with a diverse range of people and to uphold their partnership obligations to Māori. Trainees need to be provided with the opportunities that equip them to work effectively with Māori and ethnic minority groups (McKenzie-Mavinga, 2009, cited in Lennox 2010).

There is another important aspect of the whakapapa whānau systems construct which is concerned with the individual characteristics of a person and relates more fundamentally to the spiritual and genetic characteristics, referred to as “Te Ira Tangata” (see Figure 1).

Mead (2003) has explained the importance of the “Ira” in relation to whakapapa in the following statement:

Whakapapa is a fundamental attribute and gift of birth. It is the social component of the ira, the genes. A child is born into a kinship system which is already in place and has been for many generations. Every individual is a beneficiary of two whakapapa lines, the mother’s and the father’s. Sometimes a child can only claim the whakapapa of only one parent. This single whakapapa line is sufficient to define a place within the hapū of that one parent. Whakapapa provides our identity within a tribal structure and later in life gives an individual the right to say, “I am Māori.” (p. 42)

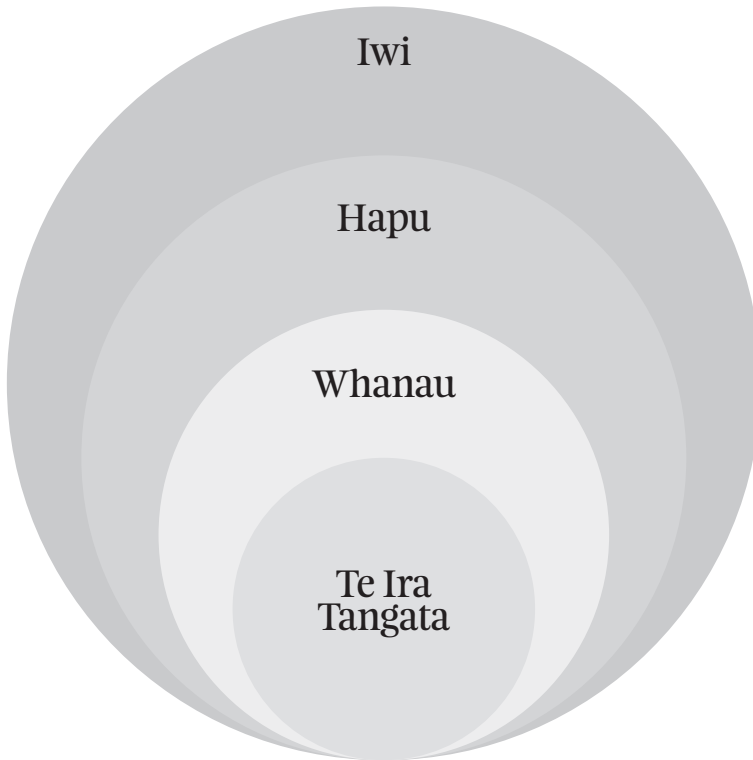


FIGURE 1. WHAKAPAPA: A WHĀNAU SOCIAL SYSTEMS CONSTRUCT

Whakapapa as a whānau social systems construct is a dynamic arrangement which is relevant to the practice of psychotherapy in Aotearoa. The failure to acknowledge and/or to minimise the importance of whakapapa limits Māori potentiality in the therapeutic space. To have a good understanding of this dynamic system requires training and supervision to equip practitioners to work effectively with Māori. Training institutions have a major part to play in the development of trainees and practitioners and therefore an important role in reducing existing mental health inequalities (Robson & Reid, 2001; Durie, 2001; Lennox, 2010). The implications of not understanding this system are wide-ranging. Hovering around these issues can reinforce contextual power issues which are, in effect, fostered through training institutions which are less willing to incorporate theories outside of their own milieu of Western Eurocentric culture (Lennox, 1995). The norms of whakapapa whanau are substantially different from family life and the communities in Europe (Gendzier, 1973). Incorporating a whanau social systems construct into psychotherapy will highlight the subtleties in the whanau dynamics and help to uncover existing conflicts.

Kaupapa Māori Research Methodologies and Māori Methods

A positivistic methodology restricts and rejects Māori customary practices by reducing cultural norms into black or white categories which have notions of negative and positive attached to them, respectively. Amongst others, Tomlins-Jahnke (1996) has critiqued the scientific positivist approach for its assumption of “value free inquiry” and that its “Basic imperatives include the primacy of behavioural language and method, the elimination of metaphysical terms and any unverifiable statements relegated as unscientific and therefore meaningless” (p. 39). The task of unpacking this value-laden discourse reveal the dynamics of power and control and the way in which mechanisms in society contribute, for instance, to partner violence where coercive and abusive power prevails (Hall, 2010). Indeed, Bishop and Glynn (2003) have suggested that the positivist position leans towards a social pathology form of investigation. The powerful positioning of the positivist and, more broadly, quantitative methodologies does little to reflect or legitimise Māori epistemology or epistemologies.

Crotty (1998) emphasised the importance of describing the epistemology embedded within a theoretical perspective and the chosen methodology and methods. According to him, epistemology is “a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know” (p. 3). The ontological impetus embedded within the research question and the way in which data is collected, analysed and interpreted, derives from philosophical theories entrenched in a Māori epistemology. Importantly a Kaupapa Māori epistemology challenges the positioning of power when considering research issues and the dominance of traditional individualistic research approaches (Bishop & Glynn, 2003). In the pursuit of self-determination, sovereignty and protection of Māori knowledge, Pihama, Cram & Walker (2002) defined Kaupapa Māori as “Māori desires to affirm Māori cultural philosophies and practices” (p. 38). Kaupapa Māori research encourages a social consciousness concerning issues of injustice and of social change while recognising the importance of Māori language, values, history and te ao hurihuri | contemporary realities (Walker, 1990; Smith, 1999).

The idea that Kaupapa Māori research is undertaken by Māori, with Māori, for the benefit of Māori has been hotly debated amongst Māori researchers. While there have been criticisms by Māori as having been the subject — or, perhaps, more accurately, the object — of research and associated with, often negative outcomes of Western based research by non Māori, Māori have also debated and considered the appropriateness of who is best qualified to undertake research into the lives of Māori. Viewpoints include opinions concerning the necessary attributes of Māori researchers with regard to gender, age, whakapapa, knowledge of tikanga, the degree of involvement in Māori communities, and tribal differences. Discussions about the desirability of collaborating with other Māori and/or Pākehā, and about the degree of Pākehā involvement or, indeed, whether Pākehā can or should be involved at all have also been considered (Bishop & Glynn, 1992; Walker, 1993; Durie, 1994; Irwin, 1994; Smith, 1997/2000; Tuhiwai-Smith, 1999; Pihama, Cram & Walker, 2002). Further debates have centred on generalised statements which can be problematic, such as claims that Māori people are best qualified to undertake research with Māori. Walker (1993) raised the issue regarding the appropriateness of

Māori writers, questioning levels of understanding concerning tikanga Māori and whether the skill sets necessary for scholarship are upheld. There are existing parallels found in qualitative research which appear better suited to Māori concerns regarding research methodologies. Critical theory, feminist theory, and phenomenological approaches as well as participatory action research, and the heuristic method: all embrace ideologies that help to reflect the complexities of people's lives and their social reality. Kaupapa Māori is much more aligned to critical theory traditions (Bishop, 1996) and the qualitative data-collecting techniques promoted by feminism which are participatory, interactive, and inclusive of the participants. The works of Freire (1972) have also assisted Māori to develop Kaupapa Māori as an emancipator and empowering approach that strives for social justice.

When examining the position of Kaupapa Māori methodologies alongside Western principles of research, Moewaka-Barnes (2000) suggested that: "The need to define, discuss or explain its existence in itself serves as a reminder of the power of colonisation" (p. 13). Māori are encouraged to undertake innovative research through participation in transformative change (Smith, 1999). While the accompanying philosophies embodied within Kaupapa Māori allow for transformative change, Ratima (2003) maintained that Western methodologies can be adapted and applied alongside Māori approaches in ways that are consistent with a Māori inquiry paradigm. This may include face-to-face or *kanohi ki te kanohi* interviewing techniques; and focus groups or *hui* (gathering/meeting), set up with the intention of discussing a single purpose.

Māori Methods in Psychotherapy

Why is it so important to engage with Kaupapa Māori research methodology and theory, and to integrate Māori methodologies into our therapeutic practice? Psychotherapy, counselling, and psychology all provide opportunities for people to work through conflicts and unresolved issues, so that balance and harmony can be achieved in life.

Early records of first contact with Pākehā testify that Māori enjoyed good health, suggesting that we had good health systems in place (Robson & Reid, 2001). Since early contact with British settlers a consistent pattern of declining health and increasing mental health problems have prevailed (Durie, 1994). There has been a systematic breakdown of our whānau structures, created essentially through cultural dominance, where Māori continue to seek redress for past injustices (Hall, Morice & Wilson, 2012). The resultant social injustices, structural inequities, and the imposition and assumptions of British imperialism are infused in our systems. These unequal assumptions are persuasive where our institutions have continued to maintain the dominant discourse. Like other ethnic minority groups Māori experience marginalisation through education systems which fail to incorporate the ideologies that come from non Western culture. Maintaining the status quo can lead to feelings of anger and frustration arising from embedded and institutionalised racism, where the education system reinforces inequalities (Friere, 1972; Ahmed & Webb-Johnson, 1995; Fernando, 1995; Tuhiwai-Smith, 1999; Robson & Reid, 2001). Māori fortitude has also raised Pākehā consciousness, frequently in the face of disdain, resistance, and resentment. Pākehā who have listened

and who were prepared to look at our history and Māori—Pākehā relationships have also been instrumental in educating and raising awareness (King, 1992/2003; Metge, 1995/2004; Belich, 1996; Orange, 2004). In Aotearoa there is an increasing number of Māori counsellors and social workers who are asserting the appropriateness of Kaupapa Māori approaches. As practitioners, they are applying this approach alongside their usual and requisite theoretical knowledge. This assertion is a reflection of Māori determination and a reflection of the integration of Kaupapa Māori and Maturanga theories into their training programmes (Karena, 2012, Pohatu, 2013). Māori psychologists, Māori nurses and doctors are also forging forward to advance Māori health in their respective disciplines and having these defined within a Māori frame of reference (Durie, 1994; Cherrington, 2009; Wilson & Baker, 2012). This does not mean that Māori are not open to new ideas or reject all forms of Western or other knowledge. These are all attempts by Māori to address disparities and remain solution-oriented concerning Māori difficulties. Psychotherapy in Aotearoa is relevant to all people; Morice (2009) has reminded us of the comparativeness of psychotherapy for Māori, stating:

The need for a Māori psychotherapy is relatively obvious to anyone who is Māori. The purpose of a Māori psychotherapy is no different from the purpose of Pākehā psychotherapy for Pākehā or tau iwi. However, as long as psychotherapy remains monocultural, it will remain unable to meet the needs and aspirations of Māori practitioners and Māori clients. (p. 15)

The point here is that the norms and values of Māori culture need to be taken into account. This is not an argument for or against Kaupapa Māori (Smith, 1997; Tuhiwai-Smith, 1999), however it does confront the issue of theoretical privileging — which influences standard practice, policies, and the values and assumptions of the majority population. Inevitably these become the norm in society where majority Pākehā feel well justified on insisting that we are all one people: we are all New Zealanders. Pākehā have come to make Aotearoa their home and there are many who can claim four or more generations and have intermarried with Māori. Overlooking obvious differences in the therapeutic process is to deliver a disservice to and further subjugate Māori, which can lead to silencing, the contradiction of the purpose of a good therapeutic experience. Constructs that are universally applied do not consider well enough cultural context and, therefore, cultural definitions (Ahmed & Webb-Johnson, 1995).

Definitions of illness, i.e., in terms of pōrangi, wairangi, haurangi, and kahurangi (Hall, 2012), will influence the issue central to a particular cultural group, and, therefore, the types of problems Māori clients present will also be influenced by their own frame of reference. The reality for Māori in Aotearoa is that we live within a bicultural context and have no choice in this; the bicultural context for non Māori in Aotearoa is a question of individual choice, and, thus, the bicultural relationship is something non Māori can step in and out of at any time (Hall, Morice & Wilson, 2012; Morice & Fay, 2013). The relationship Māori have with non Māori is, therefore, fraught with difficulty and apprehension due to this hegemony. Understanding the unequal power dynamics of the Māori—non Māori relationship is important to the way in which we address health

issues for Māori whānau. It will require the relinquishing of power on the part of non Māori in order for Māori to have an equitable share of the available resources (Hall, 2010). Māori want to be involved in health solutions for whānau. All contemporary Māori health perspectives seek to widen understanding of health and to translate health in terms which are culturally relevant and significant, and to balance the Western medical model with an awareness of social and cultural factors. In the final part of this article, I describe one example of a Māori method in psychotherapy, based on Kaupapa Māori methodology, that of pūrākau.

Pūrākau: An Introduction

Before the advent of a written language, all ethnic and cultural groups were reliant on narrative accounts, with storytelling providing the prologue to the establishment of relationships. As the narrative deepens we build understanding and learn to grow together, especially and particularly when this engagement is in the face of the other. Pūrākau is a traditional Māori storytelling narrative that originates from a Māori oral tradition prior to the arrival of Pākehā and the establishment of a written language. Every aspect of traditional Māori life had to be communicated for survival purposes and imparted through Māori methods/practices which, in turn, fashioned cultural norms and imperatives. The transmission and dissemination of Māori knowledge was organised, constructed and expressed through various traditional oratory media such as pūrākau. Further forms of traditional Māori narratives and oratory continue to find expression through moteatea (traditional song), reciting whakapapa (genealogies), whaikorero (speechmaking) and whakatauki (proverbs) (Lee, 2005). As Cherrington (2009) put it:

Indigenous knowledge can include all areas of Te Ao Māori, both traditional and contemporary. The values and beliefs behind tikangā (customs, meanings, practices) and kawa (protocols, ceremonies) are forms of indigenous knowledge. The reo (language), waiata (songs), whakatauki and pūrākau are all forms of indigenous knowledge. (p. 12)

Pūrākau were and remain an important aspect of the Māori language, providing an essential mechanism for the communication of day-to-day affairs concerning whānau, hapu and iwi. *Pūrākau* have just as much relevance with modern Māori practices as they did for traditional Māori society, and are embedded in our day-to-day reality, thereby providing historical and contemporary reference points for cultural understanding. The complexities, careful construction and delivery of each form of narrative is considered highly skilful. In both early and contemporary Māori society, it was/is often associated with learned tohungā (specialists) and chiefly rangātira (leaders) (Dewes, 1975; Bishop, 1996; Mead, 2003; Lee, 2009). However, pūrākau were not reserved for the existing hierarchy or leaders of traditional Māori society; pūrākau provided a platform for all Māori to relay their personal experiences and to convey their unique stories.

Since the time of first contact with Pākehā, Māori have engaged with the concept of written language through letters, manuscripts and books, learning to appreciate both the

benefits and the disadvantages of this new medium. Māori continue to benefit from written language as a medium for communication and as a storehouse for preserving important Māori knowledge. Furthermore, reading and writing is integrated into contemporary Māori lifestyles to varying degrees where Māori now have greater access to Pākehā knowledge — and Pākehā have insights into the Māori world. Many of these insights have been provided largely by Pākehā ethnographers such as historians and anthropologists who have made valuable contributions to the way in which contemporary Māori make sense of our lived reality (Metge, 1971/2010, 1995, 2004: 2010, Orange, 1992, 2004; Belich, 1996; King, 2003). However, early ethnographers and writers, such as Anderson (2000) and Colenso (2001) have created dis-ease in Māori communities, from which Māori have highlighted the misunderstandings that can happen when Pākehā interpretations of Māori values, systems and constructs, such as *pūrākau*, occur. Walker (2004) raised concerns regarding the expropriation and transformation of knowledge by colonisers where tribal *pūrākau* were tampered with to form the basis of Māori myths and legends. The denigration of Māori knowledge, beliefs and values through the re-shaping of Māori narratives and *pūrākau* have destabilised the foundations of traditional knowledge. Similarly, Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) drew attention to the epistemic status of philosophical frameworks, particularly when narrative representations are often degraded. To counter demeaning claims Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) suggested: “In our view, narratives are the form of representation that describes human experience as it unfolds through time. Therefore, narratives are, arguably, the most appropriate form to use when thinking about inquiry undertaken within a pragmatic framework” (p. 40). Engaging with *pūrākau* as a cultural tool and research method enables a pragmatic Māori approach which provides a mechanism for discovering meaningful insights into Māori experiences. I have utilised *pūrākau* as a Kaupapa Māori research approach and as an analysis method in my research concerning partner violence and Māori mothers’ experiences (Hall, 2014). *Pūrākau* is a legitimate Māori discourse which has enabled Māori research participants the opportunity to relay their stories from a Māori position, and allowed me as the researcher to analyse the content of their story-telling. As a Māori psychotherapist and as a Māori researcher, *pūrākau* enables me to work with Māori whānau, so that they can tell their unique stories. This is with all the nuances that both traditional and contemporary language affords the whānau member through a culturally-relevant method, and to have these heard through a culturally-relevant technique, *Ata-whakarongo-deliberated listening* (Pohatu, 2013). As a method, *Pūrākau* can be applied in the psychotherapy context where it comfortably co-exists alongside a narrative approach. Goldberg, Muir and Kerr (2000) suggested that:

Psychoanalysis is based on narrative. The patient tells the *story*, and the therapist listens and, tries to make sense of it, to find *meaning* in its inchoate swirls, to fill in the gaps and lacunae, to shape its eruptions and collapses ... Meaning enables separation to occur without irremediable loss. The secure base is never entirely safe. Breaks, gaps, losses are as intrinsic to the rhythm of life as are attachment and connectedness. Narrative bridges these inevitable discontinuities in experience. (p. 34)

Pūrākau is an indigenous Māori construct that values the subjective experience of the storyteller. Pūrākau (plural) are synonymous with te reo Māori, narrative approaches in which body language and verbal communication remain at the crux of human relatedness. Pūrākau have survived the passages of time, serving to connect us with the past, present and future. Pūrākau encapsulates a time-honoured tradition equal to many indigenous cultural narrative storytelling approaches throughout the world and one that resonates with a natural fundamental storytelling approach.

The associations between the assumptions of the therapist and the interrelated transference issues and projections can, if not managed well, isolate the client from gaining meaningful insights into their cultural identity, cultural practices and conventions, as well as the special circumstances in which they find themselves to be. To highlight this clinical dilemma I provide the following vignette from my own practice with a young Māori woman.

Throughout the therapeutic session we were communicating mostly in English where Māori terms and kupu (words) flowed between our dialogue with each other without any apparent difficulty. At one point I presented her with a possible interpretation of the situation she had been trying to make sense of for some time. She pondered thoughtfully for a short time before asking, “Does that mean the same as mauri moe?” to which I responded “Yes.” Making these culturally-relevant connections enabled us to explore “mauri moe” through Pūrākau and Āta-whakarongo (Pohatu, 2013) in a deliberate and reflective manner. This process permitted us in our work together to make sense and gain further insights into a set of unhelpful repetitive behaviours that she was working to overcome.

This short illustrative example raises questions concerning issues that need to be considered in the psychotherapy space. Here I mention a couple. Firstly, cultural knowledge has assisted the therapy to progress. Without cultural knowledge we run the risk of isolating and separating (or splitting) the client away from her own cultural reference points. Secondly, in the absence of cultural knowledge the client is effectively silenced, where she is unable to access her understanding of her world and therefore subjugated by the therapeutic experience. As a culturally relevant analysis method, Pūrākau enables me to “remove the mist from the myth” so that the core issues can be revealed. Pūrākau provide the opportunity to journey to the heart of the problem where the process of healing can begin through a deepened understanding.

Summary

Gestalt principles concerning figure and ground encourage us consciously to distinguish between what is most recognisable and those aspects that are not so obvious, and yet are all necessary parts of the whole. Rangitoto and Waitemata are environmental landmarks that are culturally relevant to the nature of our relationships: together a simple silhouette of nature, seemingly unconstrained by our imaginings of life’s complexities. For Māori

these are important landmarks, whereby Rangitoto reveals the footprints of our tupuna and Waitematā the sea on which our tribal canoes journeyed from Polynesia. Representing figure and ground, Rangitoto and Waitematā are symbolic reminders of difference and togetherness. As Māori and Pākehā we have cohabitated and coexisted alongside each other for many years now, immersed within the fabric of life. There have been turbulent times and times of tranquillity. We have fought with ourselves, fought with each other, and fought alongside each other. Together we have created bi-racial and bicultural children who need positive experiences of themselves. The psychotherapy experience need not be divisive however it can be a mana-enhancing experience for us all. The basis for respectful coexistence in Aotearoa is biculturalism. The principles of Gestalt psychology resonate with this idea, as does Māori philosophy in which all aspects of our environment must be considered, whether seen or unseen, obvious or less obvious. The characteristics of a Māori approach to psychotherapy will include Māori methods and matauranga Māori alongside theoretical psychotherapy knowledge and together both will inform each other.

Ko Rangitoto te Maunga, Ko Waitematā te Moana: a silhouette of both figure and ground for a Māori indigenous psychotherapy.

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