

# Editorial

*John O'Connor, Margaret Poūtu Morice (Ngāti Porou),  
and Wiremu Woodard (Tuhoe)*

Korihi te manu  
Tākiri mai i te ata  
Ka ao, ka ao, ka awatea  
Tihei Mauri Ora!

The bird sings  
The morning has dawned  
The day has broken  
Behold, there is life!

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā manu tioriori, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa!

In the first paper in this special issue of *Ata*, Haare Williams offers his evocative and poetic reflections on life and ageing. In so doing he invites us to avoid phrases such as “growing old” and “retirement”, but rather to embrace the gifts that our ageing offers us. He comments, “Knowing how to age ... is a taonga that is meant to ripen character ...” (p. 20). Reading this brings to mind Melanie Klein’s (1975) explorations on envy and gratitude in which she suggests that ideally, “In adult life, parents can share the pleasures of childhood and avoid interfering with them because they are capable of identifying with their children. They become able to watch without envy their children growing up” (p. 259). Such invitations evoke the possibility that if we are indeed all the ages we have ever been, then, to allow ourselves to age with grace and acceptance, is to remain as connected as possible to all these ages, including the youngest, most tender and infantile aspects of our being, right through to the most self-reflective and rich sense of ourselves, as we have learned from experience, continuing to grow into who we are, whilst, as Haare suggests, always open to the uncertainties that each day offers.

The taonga that is the process of growing was the focus of the 2018 NZAP Conference in Dunedin, and is the focus of this special themed issue of *Ata*: “e tipu ana ... as we grow...”. This issue contains five papers based on presentations provided at the conference, including Haare’s key note address and four other presentations. In addition, the issue contains two further papers not presented at the conference (by Emma Ellis, and Karlene Mamea et al.) and Karen Begg’s poignant book review, all of which are consistent with the theme of this issue.

We are very appreciative of the efforts of the organisers of the 2018 Dunedin NZAP Conference, who provided a conference which was both rich in its content and graciously warm in its atmosphere. It was the early foresight of the 2018 conference organisers which enabled the papers in this issue to be initially generated. Our sincere thanks. (Whilst we are not able to publish Anne Alvarez’s key note presentation from the conference in this issue, a video recording of her presentation is available to be viewed on the NZAP website: <http://nzap.org.nz/2018-conference/abstract-dr-anne-alvarez/> ).

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We are very pleased with the diversity of voices reflecting on the theme of this issue. Indigenous Māori, Samoan, British, African, and Pākehā voices combine in this issue to offer multiple perspectives on the nature of growth within clinical context, within cultural frames, within the psychotherapist, within patients, and in life itself. The papers explore themes of growth as culturally and relationally mediated, in utero and from birth, through the process of growth within and outside of psychotherapeutic relationships, during the process of ageing, and in meeting the end-of-life.

We begin with Haare William's poignant reflections on the ageing process. Haare offers us a lyrical invitation to join with him as he reflects upon his own experiences growing through the decades. In doing so he offers reflections not only on his personal history but upon the history of Aotearoa New Zealand over the last 80 years. His poetic style provides a moving insight into the experience of being a Māori man growing through the decades within the Aotearoa New Zealand context. In so doing Haare also invites us to experience the process of ageing from a Māori perspective in which wairua is at the heart. Both political and personal, Haare's spiritual reflections upon ageing challenge European concepts of "retirement" and "old age" as constructions designed to leave us feeling more and more useless. Rather he invites us to embrace and revere the taonga that is ageing.

We are delighted that this indigenous voice is followed by a younger Māori wahine voice, that of Anna Fleming, who explores Western and indigenous perspectives on attachment. Anna suggests that, whilst Western and Māori perspectives share a common focus on the significance of close personal attachments, European psychotherapeutic concepts of attachment, with the focus on primary, early, and often maternal infant attachment, are too narrow, and that an understanding of attachment to the nonhuman world as informed by indigenous Māori perspectives on attachment and psyche is essential to the practice of psychotherapy in Aotearoa New Zealand. Anna begins with her own experience growing up and integrates this with a review of literature, highlighting the significance for Māori attachment to wairua, whenua, whānau, hapū and iwi, and māramatanga, and the significance for clinical practice these concepts necessitate. Anna reflects upon the often-marginalised nature of this knowledge and the crucial challenge of re-establishing the primacy of such indigenous knowledge for psychotherapy in this country.

Kay Ryan offers us a moving and tender exploration of her experience as a psychotherapist as she encounters patients at the end of life. She reflects upon her experience as a therapist working in a hospice over many years and integrates this with a range of literature and research as she invites us to engage deeply with others at the end of life, and the profound meaning such encounters can have for both therapist and patient. In doing so she invites us to reflect upon the disturbing and often deeply enriching experience that facing into the end of life evokes in us and in our patients.

Crispin Balfour offers his sensitive reflections on clinical work in which he is guided particularly by Donald Winnicott's papers "The Capacity to be Alone" (1958) and "The True and False Self" (1960). He begins by reflecting upon the death by suicide of six young people. This is a beginning point for Crispin exploring the possibility that for some who complete suicide, this may reflect a sense of "rage without a home", the need to "put up a front to the world", and the lack of "a capacity to be alone" (p. 50). Crispin eloquently explores the significance of these ideas as they guide and influence his clinical work and integrates a

range of clinical vignettes to illustrate and illuminate his thinking; in so doing he movingly demonstrates his capacity to be with, and be alone with, his patients.

John O'Connor describes his potent and tender capacity to utilise his mind to receive the most disturbing aspects of his patients' minds, in order that these might be available for thinking and feeling within the therapeutic relationship. He integrates a wide range of analytic, transpersonal, and relational literature to explore the challenges of Keats' concept of negative capability, when faced with difficult and potentially lethal destructiveness in the patient. A range of clinical vignettes illustrate John's ideas, including the challenges of cross-cultural clinical encounters, as he offers us the thought that the psychotherapist on the one hand must be receptive to receive the disturbance of the other, whilst also challenged to find one's own mind and to use this capacity, sometimes forcefully, to speak the truth as freely as possible with patients, in the service of seeking to free imprisoned aspects of psyche.

Emma Ellis offers us a skilful exploration of the clinical challenges and possibilities of working with internalised racism within the client, the therapist, and the therapeutic relationship. She begins by reflecting upon her growing up in England, the child of a mother born and raised in Zambia, Africa. She describes how her parents' interracial and cross-cultural marriage led to her own preoccupations with racial and cultural identity, and how this has led her to explore the clinical challenges of internalised racism. Utilising the themes emerging from her research in which she interviewed a number of psychotherapists in Aotearoa New Zealand, Emma offers us a provocative and profoundly useful map for working with internalised racism including the opportunities enabled by the therapist being direct and explicit about racial and cultural differences within the therapeutic relationship.

Karlene Mamea, Dr Julia Ioane, and Dr Peter Slater provide a very relevant and thought-provoking consideration of the growth of a Samoan sense of self. Given the increasing Samoan population in Aotearoa New Zealand, the authors helpfully introduce a wide range of Pasifika literature and ideas, inviting us into a beginning understanding of the nature of a Samoan sense of self and the cultural, geographical and mythological influences upon this. The authors also helpfully offer some beginning considerations of the relationship of these ideas to psychoanalytic conceptualisations of self, highlighting similarities and differences.

Finally, we are delighted to offer a review of Rangi Matamua's book, *Matariki: The Star of the Year*. In this review Karen Begg provides a sensitive overview and critique in which she reflects upon Dr Matamua's deep understanding of Māori astronomy and culture.

As previously advised, Professor Keith Tudor completed his work as co-editor of *Ata* with the publication of the last issue of 2017. We thank Keith for his outstanding work over many years as a co-editor of this journal: Keith was dedicated, skilful, and profoundly influential in enabling this journal to reach the high standard it has attained; tēnā koe, Keith. This is the first issue of which John O'Connor has been a co-editor of *Ata*. We are delighted to have John join us. We thank Hineira Woodard for her generous and very able work providing te reo Māori interpretations of the abstracts; tēnā koe, Hineira. We also thank our editorial assistant Karen Begg for her superb and diligent work throughout all stages of production of this issue. The quality of the *Ata* journal owes much to Karen's ability, and eye for detail; tēnā koe, Karen. Our deep thanks to our creative, skilful, unfailingly

## EDITORIAL

cheerful and always punctual designer Katy Yiakmis; tēnā koe, Katy. Finally, we thank you, the reader (NZAP member or subscriber), for your continuing support of the journal; we hope you will find this issue an evocative, provocative, enjoyable and engaging read, and we look forward to editing the next issue.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

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