

Kainga: Healing Home with Indigenous Knowledge

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Abstract

This article, which is based on a keynote speech delivered at the 2011 Annual Conference of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists, firstly briefly elaborates the concepts, pōrangī, wairangī, haurangī, and kahurangī as significant aspects of psychological functioning, and suggests their importance for psychotherapy. The second part of the article discusses the psychological and social impact that partner and family violence has on Māori women and children in making them seek refuge from their own home — and links this to the broader context of how Māori have been dispossessed and alienated from “home” through colonisation.

Ko tēnei tuhinga, tūāpapa nō te korero matua i te 2011 Hui Wānanga ā-Tau a te Rōpū Kaiwhakaora Hinengaro o Aotearoa, tuatahi, e whakawhānui ake ana i ngā aroro: pōrangī; wairangī; haurangī; me te kahurangī, hai ariā tāpua mō te āheinga hinengaro, ā, ka huatau i tō rātou uara nunui mō te mahi hinengaro. Tuarua, e matapaki ana i te hua ki te hinengaro, me te hāpori e pirii nei ki te tūkinotanga whānau, ā, te huatau o ēnei ki ngā wāhine Māori me ngā tamariki e tahuri nei ki te whai whakamarumarū i waho atu i ō rātou kāinga — ka tui atu i tēnei ki te aroro whānui he pēhea i tau ai te rawakoretanga me mōriroriro tanga mai i te whakatomokanga iwi.

Keywords: Kaupapa Māori; pōrangī; wairangī; haurangī; kahurangī; family violence

Mihimihi

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā waka, e ngā hau e whā rau rangatira ma tena tātou katoa i huihui mai nei i tenei ra. E mihi ana ahau ki te tangata whenua o tenei rohe nō Ngāi Tahu tena koutou katoa ngā, maunga tiritiri o te moana nga mihi nunui nō reira, tihei mauri ora!

Hall, A. (2012). Kainga: Healing home with indigenous knowledge. *Ata: Journal of Psychotherapy Aotearoa New Zealand*, 16(1), 19-32. DOI: 10.9791/ajpanz.2012.04. Copyright © 2012 New Zealand Journal of Psychotherapists Inc.

Greetings

Greetings to all who have gathered from the four winds esteemed by our various languages and migration vessels. I give great reverence and respect to the people of this land, the Ngāi Tahu people who have occupied this place surrounded by the immense mountains and vast waterways, (known by us as the Southern Alps). I greet you all, therefore may the sneeze be life sustaining.

An Orientation towards a Māori Constellation: Pōrangī, Wairangi, Haurangi, and Kahurangi

I am pleased to be invited to speak at this conference in Dunedin and to have the pleasure of addressing you all. I am also delighted by the conference theme “Home is Where we Start From” as this resonates with me and enables me to engage with it actively in various and different ways. I want to take this opportunity to introduce the concepts pōrangī, wairangi, haurangi and kahurangi, notions which derive from the natural world. These four very important aspects of psychological functioning are uniquely Māori and sit within a Māori epistemology and are significant in our understanding of the total range of human wholeness. I will attempt to bring together my impressions of pōrangī, wairangi, haurangi and kahurangi, weaving these concepts throughout this paper. There is virtue in this, in that we begin to weave a spiritual fabric which stirs the unconsciousness to consciousness in a way that is both culturally responsive and reflective and one that echoes the dynamic and dialectical nature of psychotherapy.

Pōrangī, wairangi, haurangi and kahurangi were words that I picked up or overheard in Māori conversations sometime during my childhood or adolescent years. Being the young person that I was at that time, I was much more interested in age-appropriate activities and never really stopped long enough to consider what thoughts were being conveyed. I took pōrangī and wairangi to mean something like “mad” or “confused” or to ramble aimlessly and “haurangi” was associated with drunkenness whilst kahurangi was much more associated with something good or great. Admittedly my own lack of fluency and limitations with the Māori language would have no doubt contributed to any misgivings I may have had in terms of comprehension. However some years later I was re-introduced to these words by Paraire Huata, during a series of excellent marae-based wānanga (traditional lore-based educational learning). Paraire is a man of many talents with a background in teaching and training in the mental health fields of Counselling, Social Work and, among many things he is a current member of the Psychotherapists’ Board of Aotearoa New Zealand (PBANZ). He is passionate about therapeutic interventions and approaches which are uniquely Māori and has contributed greatly to the development of Māori health practitioners. Paraire descends from one of the largest tribal nations Ngāti Kahungunu and as a father and grandfather to his tamariki (children), mokopuna (grandchildren) and whānau (family) he continues to maintain, foster and nurture the important link in and between his descent lines contributing with passion to the visions of Ngāti Kahungunu. Thus, for me, pōrangī, wairangi and haurangi were transformed from mere words to huge Māori concepts which have great depth of meaning and are strongly influenced by the spaces between Papatuanuku (Earth-Mother) and Ranginui

(Sky-Father). They are concepts drawn from the natural and spiritual world which inform our humanness or, more specifically, our psychological and sensory perceptions. These concepts, however, have been negatively misrepresented and etched into the minds of Māori and non Māori alike to take on meanings which are much more associated with madness and craziness. If we deconstruct this discourse, we will find that at the most basic level each word has embedded within it several meanings. Furthermore, if we were to circumnavigate all the tribal groupings in Aotearoa, we would, no doubt, find a number of responses. This is for several reasons. Here I mention two. Firstly, a traditional Māori analysis of the world would have been strongly shaped by the natural world and metaphysical world. Traditional Māori were much more engaged with their immediate environment and, thus, any self-reflection on or analyses of these concepts would have been informed by the natural surroundings of our tupuna (ancestors) (Tau, 2002). Secondly, some of our responses have been influenced by our engagement and first contact with Europeans. The process of colonisation challenged us to think outside our own cultural domain and consider perspectives of others. In terms of colonisation Tau (2002) stated:

It was because of culture clash that people thought about how people thought. And this is, I think, the great thing about colonisation: placing all the moral issues aside, imperialism required us to think and ponder the meaning of the world outside our (Māori) episteme. (cited in Nairn, Pehi, Black & Waitoki, 2012, p. 173)

At this point I would like to add, that there is a body of knowledge concerning Te Kauwae Runga which focuses on the many dimensions of celestial Māori lore and again Te Kauwae Raro which focuses on terrestrial lore. These teachings are promoted within Māori places and spaces such as whare wānanga (houses of teaching and learning). To explain further pōrangī, wairangī, haurangī and kahurangī are concepts which sit within Te Kauwae Runga and Te Kauwae Raro.

Pōrangī

Pō—rangī: pō refers to the night sky and the variant shades of darkness while rangī refers to the sky or the upper regions and the variant shades of light associated with weather patterns and movements throughout the day which reflect periods of time. When joined in union the opposing differences of night and day are combined and the meaning is transformed to resemble the transient state that is characteristic of both the evening dusk and the dawn of a new day. These states are considered to be one of the most vulnerable times during human homeostasis due to the reorganisation of the mental and physical state as the shift occurs from either a restful sleep state to awakening or from an energised state to a relaxed and eventual sleep state. Karakia (prayer/incantations) are considered necessary during these times in order to assist in regulating the transition from the predisposing vulnerable condition to a state of equilibrium. The amalgamation of the contrasting and variant shades of darkness and light merge to form the nexus point of vulnerability and perplexity. If we continue with Māori rationalism, I would

suggest that the language used to describe various human traits and behaviours is evoked by observations and interactions with our immediate environment and their important elements. The inspiration reflected back to us through the onset of a new day and a new dawn is indicative of the many psychological transitional states experienced as pōrangī. For a Māori dictionary reference Williams (2000) referred to pōrangī as follows: “**1.** *Hurried.* **2.** *Headstrong, wrong-headed.* **3.** *Having the mind fully occupied, distracted.* **4.** *Beside oneself, out of one’s mind, mad.* **5.** *Wander.* **6.** *Seek.*” (p. 293)

Exploring relational concepts concerned with space, time, distance, interstices, and merged moments is celestial wisdom contained within Te Kauwae Runga providing an approach consistent with an endeavour that seeks meaning through unconscious and conscious states.

Wairangi

Like pōrangī, wairangi is also a concept that is concerned with the transient state of psychological and sensory perception informed once again by environmental forces of distance and space. As with pōrangī, wairangi has several meanings embedded within it.

With regard to wai—rangī, wai refers to the water elements while rangī sits within the domains of Ranginui (Sky-Father) and the light of day. At first glance wairangi could be mistaken to mean watersky however as we have seen with pōrangī the supposition is to be found in the union and the merging of the natural elements. Therefore wairangi speaks of the merged and undifferentiated psychological state consistent with what is seen by the naked eye as the distant space, more commonly known as the horizon. When we look towards the horizon it is difficult to know where each — water and sky — element begins and ends. It is only through a process of engagement with and a movement towards wairangi that we begin to see a differentiated state and what lies beyond the horizon. Perhaps you can envisage and experience this state as you engage with this dialogue, taking note of any stirrings within the unconscious state as you draw nearer to the horizon of consciousness.

Williams (2000) has provided three descriptions for wairangi of which the first two are relevant to this discussion. Wairangi is described as “**1.** *Beside oneself, excited, infatuated.* [and] **2.** *Foolish.*” (p. 476) The divergent states associated with wairangi intersect when we distance ourselves from the metaphorical horizon of consciousness, however it is made much more potent and vibrant when we interact with it and find enlightenment. From a Māori naturalistic observational perspective wairangi brings the existing relationship between Te Kauwae Runga and Te Kauwae Raro into connectedness where both celestial and terrestrial knowledge are bound. Wairangi is a condition shaped by our environment, fluid in nature and therefore requires a process of engagement in order to explore possibilities that will manifest and emerge.

Haurangi

Similarly and in this context haurangi like pōrangī is also transient in nature and both are connected to what is understood to be ārangī: unsettled or perturbed. As described

previously one of the many meanings of pōrangī relates to “mad” when used in the right context and for the purpose of this discussion we can discover the meanings embedded within haurangi.

In this instance, hau as in hau-rangi, provides a meaning associated with atmospheric conditions connected with rangi and may include those effects which reside in the domain of Ranginui such as breath, wind, moisture or dew. As we know the conditions are ever changing and include both life-giving elements such as air which gives us vitality of life. At a very basic level, therefore, haurangi is concerned with life and the continuously changing character of life itself as reflected back to us by the surrounding elements. In keeping with Williams (2000), three relevant interpretations are provided that include “1. *Mad, deluded.* 2. *Exasperated, furious* [and] 3. *Drunken.*” (p. 14) If we consider the third interpretation we have to also consider that alcohol was introduced to Māori society and Māori did not have a history of making and consuming alcohol prior to European contact (Ministry of Health, 2009) Therefore we can presuppose that initial observations made by Māori of Pākehā drunkenness would have been observed as bizarre and strange behaviour. To this I would like to add a fourth dimension which is relevant to this discussion.

Kahurangi

Kahu-rangi, in this instance, refers to a covering or what is visible on the surface, and, again, rangi is connected to both the celestial realm of Ranginui and terrestrial realm of Papatuanuku. Kahu is a Māori word that indicates and helps to describe a particular covering or surface for example kahu kiwi, a korowai (cape) covered in kiwi feathers. There are many ways in which “kahu” is utilised in the Māori language and following on from one of Willam’s (2000) examples “Te kahu o te rangi” (p. 84) is interpreted as the blue sky. If we are to be informed by mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) in terms of psychological perspectives then kahurangi references a particular conditioning in that what is presented on the outside serves to mask a deeper, more unsettling mental process which remains irresolute. It is therefore the task of the healer to assist in bringing stability to the conflicting ideas or ambivalence which vacillate between uncertainty and certainty. I am hoping that this is beginning to sound familiar to you and that you may be making connections with Freud’s ideas concerning the ego and its defense mechanisms. While it may appear that I am attempting to draw parallels, I am not. What I am suggesting is that, prior to European contact, our worldview was configured in a different way and greatly influenced by our natural environment. The mind or psychological functioning was not a process executed or delivered by neurons or brain activity, as we understand it today. It involved emotional understanding and awareness which was seated and centred deep within the puku (stomach) region an ideology which corresponds with Ancient Greek philosophy. Mātauranga Māori is not dissimilar to indigenous cultures worldwide when considering aspects of the psyche. Jung (1933) revealed his preparedness to view his European culture through the lens of primal cultures. On one of his many travels Jung recorded this encounter with a Pueblo Indian Chief, Ochwiay Bianco: “For the first time in my life, so it seemed to me, someone had drawn for me a picture of the real white

man.... This Indian had struck our vulnerable spot, unveiled a truth to which we are blind” (cited in Dunne, 2000, p. 67). In this, albeit brief discussion, I have attempted to convey and describe to you a dynamic Māori personality psychic constellation, based on pōrangī, wairangi, haurangi, and kahurangi. I would like to see a more in-depth discussion take place so that a richer understanding prevails between us and in the therapeutic space, and I look forward to making a further contribution to this discussion.

Now, however, I turn to the conference theme: “Home is Where we Start From”. Home is undeniably where we start from: a place where we can examine a landscape that embraces a distinctive form of psychotherapy practiced here in Aotearoa, one where Māori can contribute to our discussions, and one in which kaupapa Māori is respected as a valid and legitimate form of knowledge. I think we can all ask ourselves straightforward questions such as: How does my psychotherapy practice positively contribute to the people who live here in my home, your home, our home: the place we call Aotearoa New Zealand?

Family Violence in our Homes

I would like to turn your attention to an issue which is plaguing our landscape. Statistics taken from the National Collective of Independent Women’s Refuges (2011) show that 13,937 women and 11,014 children needed help from Women’s Refuge with a combined total of 24,951. In 2006 figures taken from the National Collective of Independent Women’s Refuges indicated that 42% of women, and a staggering 51% of children utilising their services were Māori. More recently figures indicate that thus far, between 2011-2012, women’s refuges have provided 83,994 safe beds for women and children who felt their home was an unsafe home to be in and that 40% of children were under the age of five years old. How is it that the refuge has become home for so many of our women and children and Māori whanau? This situation is unacceptable, and I hope that, as a group of health professionals, we can help turn this situation around. It would be easy to look at these figures and conclude that perhaps there is substance in the “Warrior Gene” theory about Māori men postulated by some genetic researchers. This explanation, however, is far too simplistic, and only serves to stereotype and marginalise Māori further. Epidemiologists counter such arguments and, according to Reid and Robson (2007),

This hypothesis of a hierarchy of different “races” has long been discredited... When unequal Māori outcomes are apparent, system bias is not considered. Rather the problem is said to lie with Māori through any mix of inferior genes, intellect, education, aptitude, ability, effort or luck. (pp. 27-28)

While it is my preference to avoid spouting statistics that indicate how we as Māori are disproportionately over-represented in comparison to non Māori in many of the health statistics, my reticence is by no means an indication of denial concerning these matters; it is, rather, driven by concern regarding the interpretations of such statistics made by non Māori. For example, Reid and Robson (2007) reported that public, media and political discourses illustrate that many non Māori still hold colonial views about Māori health

inequalities viewing these as a result of Māori deficiencies. According to Reid and Robson (2007) “These beliefs are reinforced by superficial and incomplete analyses of inequalities that ‘victim blame’ and do not question system responsiveness, stigma and bias towards Māori.” (p. 29) Likewise, unhelpful colonial and Eurocentric views which persist within our institutions and the psychotherapy profession, that reinforce disempowerment cannot foster transformation and enlightenment and vulnerable states such as pōrangi become maladaptive and not conducive to Māori health.

In terms of psychotherapy, difficulties associated with pōrangi, wairangi, haurangi and kahurangi will require the removal of a Eurocentric cultural lens in order to restore the depth of spiritual, emotional and psychological disempowerment experienced by Māori. Jung (1933) postulated that scientific thought is only one function of the human psyche which operates as a whole rather than apportioned allotted segments:

The psychotherapist must not allow his vision to be coloured by the glasses of pathology; he must never allow himself to forget that the ailing mind is a human mind, and that for all its ailments, it shares in the whole of the psychic life of man. The psychotherapist must even admit that the ego is ill for the very reason that it is cut off from the whole, and has lost its connection with mankind as well as with the spirit. (p. 141)

Healing our homes with Indigenous knowledge is about returning to our values and basic assumptions about the natural world and our part in it. Indeed there are times when we must pay attention to statistics and ask serious questions about the health determinants and societal influences which have created such inequalities and ill health. Women and children are often impacted by partner violence, suffering both long and short term effects including depression, suicidality, alcohol and drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety problems, physical injuries and trauma along with relational difficulties.

In New Zealand 90% of partner homicides are reportedly committed by men against their female partners or ex-partners (King & Turia, 2002). The Ministry of Social Development (2006b) found that the number of “women who had been abused or threatened with violence by a partner at some time during their adult life was markedly higher for Māori women (49 percent) than for European women (24 percent) and Pacific women (23 percent)” (p.107). As a population group Māori are more likely to be victims of violent crime and Māori women and Māori children are more likely to experience interpersonal violence within domestic situations compared with non Māori (Ministry of Social Development, 2006a).

The stark reality of these statistics confronts psychotherapists here in Aotearoa to think seriously about our responsibilities to clients (including to value and protect client well-being) and to the community (including to encourage social justice), responsibilities that are enshrined in our *Code of Ethics* (New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists [NZAP], 2008) and to recognise that our interventions and attempts to rectify this situation to date have been modest. As a population group Māori have a different health profile (Reid & Robson, 2007), and there is general consensus in the Māori community

that opportunities for healing reside within our own cultural practices. This is not to say that the way forward does not also involve psychotherapists who are not Māori. It will require Māori and non Māori who have been competently trained to work with Māori to effect change (Durie, 1997). In addition, we can see how our colonial past and contemporary influences are critical to the position in which we find ourselves and that our sense of “mana” (integrity) or dignity has been compromised by punitive approaches. For example, when discussing Māori child homicide and abuse, Taonui (2010) has reported on the systematic impact of colonisation and the resulting economic, political, social and cultural alienation and the subsequent intergenerational impoverishment experienced by Māori. Māori male violence against Māori women and children has been exacerbated by powerlessness and marginalisation. According to Wilkinson (2007):

Violence has always been one way in which men have tried to “defend their honour” and prevent loss of face. This explains why it occurs most frequently among those at the bottom of the social scale, is strongly related to income inequality, and tends to be triggered by situations in which people feel their dignity is threatened (p. 27).

It would seem that the colloquial use of pōrangi and haurangi as madness and drunkenness reflect more accurately the psychological consequences of oppression which have culminated in the over representation of poorer Māori health outcomes and the fracturing of Māori self-worth associated with whakamā (shame or embarrassment) (see Metge, 1995). The removal of love and care fosters fragmentation, despair, powerlessness, and violence and our structural institutions heavily influence societal outcomes. May (1976), who has corresponding views regarding structural systems, powerlessness, and dependency, suggested:

As we make people powerless, we promote their violence ... Deeds of violence in our society are performed largely by those trying to establish their self-esteem, to defend their self-image, and to demonstrate that they too are significant ... Violence occurs when a person cannot live out their need for power in normal ways (p. 23).

Empirical research and evidence-based practice have been progressing Western knowledge without engaging more readily with Indigenous psychologies (Allwood & Berry, 2006) thereby discounting our own philosophies. Dominant ideologies and the privileging of Western research epistemologies which negate socio-cultural realities propagate an environment of poor health and mistrust (Hall & Kohu-Morgan, 2011; Wilson & Neville, 2009). Indigenous communities worldwide tell a similar story of systemic marginalisation and intergenerational impoverishment which in turn creates a vulnerable population seeking among many things to recover and prosper into the future. While our population rates have recovered, health inequalities remain; and, although we are making economic, educational and health gains, many of these have come about through the insistence of Māori to ensure that initiatives are not set up to fail

Māori. Thus, contextualising approaches to therapy through a socio-cultural lens (Pere, 1991; Durie, 1998/1997; Morice, 2003; Hall, 2011; Hall, Morice & Wilson, 2012) is about creating culturally safe spaces which also serve to strengthen the wider psychotherapy community here in Aotearoa. Previously I used integrity as a translation for “mana”; it is, however, much more than this. Mana is a very dynamic relational concept with a far deeper meaning than integrity (see Marsden, 1975; Barlow, 1991; Mead, 2003). Māori require mana-enhancing experiences for healing to occur in our families at the micro and macro levels of society in Aotearoa New Zealand. Education and training are required if we are to foster “mana” as a core principle for healing that can be embraced by healers and therapeutic practitioners alike to relieve tension and distress.

For Māori, turangawaewae is about having a place to stand, a place to call home and, even more than this, a place where our identity develops and grows. Identity does not develop in isolation it develops communally (Hall & Kohu-Morgan, 2011; Tau, 2002) through important interactions with people, places, environments, where a sense of security is fostered along with wairua (spirituality) which provides the vital esoteric connection between the physical world and the metaphysical world, deeply enriched with whakapapa (genealogy). For Māori these relationships are integral and inseparable. To stress the importance of all these connections Eva Rickard reminded us that:

Whenua is land. It is also the placenta within the mother that feeds the child before birth. When the child is born, the whenua is treated with respect, dignity, and taken to a place in the earth and dedicated to Papatuanuku — the earth mother for the Māori people. There it will nurture the child because our food and our living comes from the earth. It says to the child that this is your piece of land — no matter where you wonder in the world I will be here.... This, I believe, is the Spiritual significance of land to Māori people. (quoted in Consedine and Consedine, 2001, p. 102)

Prior to European contact Māori enjoyed relatively good health in a society which was organised by kin-based structures which varied in size. The foundations of this structure were based on whakapapa and included whānau (extended family), the hapu (sub-tribe) and iwi (tribe) which was the largest of the kinship groups. A healthy whānau structure is intolerant to whānau violence and thus violence is a whānau issue. Like all societies Māori have conflicts, tensions, and a range of emotions that need to be understood and managed. Relationships within a whānau system require mechanisms which negotiate conflicts and hostilities. Appropriately, these are relational mechanisms designed to foster wellness. However, the violence to whānau, hapu and iwi through colonisation and, particularly through the loss of land is an issue not only for whānau, hapu and iwi, but also for non Māori as we — Māori and non Māori — all live with the consequences of those who were at “home” being in “refuge” and displaced in our own land. Violence in Māori communities and Māori homes is pervasive; as Atkinson (2002) stated: “The violence of colonisation has long-term compounding impacts” (p.72). Papatuanuku as the symbolic mother is about attachment, security and belonging. According to Durie (1997) “Loss of land had more than economic implications. Personal and tribal identities

were inextricably linked to Papatuanuku — the mother earth — and alienation from land carried with it severe psychological toll, quite apart from the loss of income and livelihood” (p. 33). We can no longer ignore the historical events, social conditions, past and present political agendas which continue to influence the situation affecting Māori women and Māori children who are more likely to experience interpersonal violence within domestic situations. Perry, Pollard, Blakeley, Baker & Vigilante (1995) have described the profound impact of childhood trauma, explaining the implications of neurodevelopment and how “states” become “traits”. For many, home is our safe haven, a place to seek protection, take shelter, a place to retreat to, return to and a place of safety. For some however, home is chaotic, fragmented and unsafe, dispelling any secure sense of connectedness one may have felt. I started this section of the paper by citing figures collected by the National Collective of Independent Women’s Refuges. Many of the Māori women and children I have worked with have needed to escape to Women’s refuges to find safety both for themselves and their children. We can be grateful for the great service and work provided by Women’s refuges. Nevertheless, it is very discouraging to listen to children talk about how Christmas was spent at the refuge as it was not safe for them to go home. Some of the children in these situations are very difficult to engage, even when the therapist is of the same ethnicity a shared cultural heritage appears to have little therapeutic value in these initial stages. Too often these children have learnt not to express thoughts, emotions or desires, as they are bereft of positive emotional exchanges and secure attachments as a consequence of physical violence and abuse. For these children, “home” is a fearful place to be as, for them, intimate relationships develop through insidious threats of violence and force — and, thus, “refuge” becomes “home”.

I am currently involved in research that privileges Kaupapa Māori Theory in an effort to reduce and eliminate whānau violence. This is an indigenous research paradigm that attempts to find solutions by Māori, with Māori, for Māori (Smith, 1999). The epistemology which informs and guides the research is founded on Māori tikanga (principles) and is uniquely situated here in Aotearoa. Research conducted on the basis of Kaupapa Māori Theory utilises Māori methods such as mana wahine. Pihama (2001) has argued that: “Mana Wahine theory is a theoretical framework that provides for a Kaupapa Māori analysis that focuses on issues that directly impact on Māori women” (p. 233). Māori continue to engage with mana wahine as both a research method and a theoretical positioning.

As Māori women we both celebrate our diversity while struggling to constantly manage the spaces between a dominant Western world and a Māori world. We recognise that Māori families and communities are now fixed within a Pākehā (European) ideology which is inextricably linked to British imperialism and colonialism (Smith, 1999). Māori are a group who share cultural ideals and behaviours peculiar to Māori alone and struggle to maintain these alongside a more dominant Pākehā-influenced society. The tensions — and spaces — between these interactions must be explored if we are to address the issue of violence in Māori whānau, hapu and iwi communities. The concept of “mana” is intrinsically linked to various psychological states such as one’s perception of self and sense of self-worth. Cultural pride or indignation influences one’s sense of self-efficacy and ability to participate and function within society. At our Conference last year, the

NZAP was honoured by the presence of Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, who agreed to be our keynote speaker and in whose wisdom we were able to delight. Ngahuia continues to be an advocate for women's issues and, in particular, the concerns of Māori women. According to Ngahuia

Mana Wahine Māori is about reclaiming and celebrating what we have been, and what we will become. It is not a re-action to males, and their violence against us; it is a pro-action, a determining of ourselves as Māori women, with authenticity and grace. (Te Awekotuku, 1991, p. 10)

Following on from Ngahuia, I am glad that I have had the opportunity to bring a Māori perspective here today so that, hopefully, the issues concerning family violence, domestic violence and whānau violence generate a greater response within the psychotherapy community. I have also had the opportunity to introduce a Māori analysis concerning various psychological states. In closing, I would like to reiterate the importance of engaging culturally safe imperatives such as a Kaupapa Māori Theory, an epistemology that provides a systematic and critical approach in answering our own questions which seek to transform and solve problems (Smith, 1999) of violence in our communities. Together we can connect to a Māori worldview where we can all develop enough collective "we-go" strength (Fay, 2010) which is distinct from an ideology that privileges individual ego strength in order to address a societal issue such as whānau violence. Home is, indeed where we start from — or where we should be safe to start from. I would like to leave you with these words from Emeritus Professor Ranginui Walker (1996) who, in describing the whareniui (large traditional house), has asserted that for Māori the house is:

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 tangihanga (funeral processes) and provided an integrative function ... the meeting house is the most potent symbol of Māori identity and cultural pride. (pp. 48-50)

Conclusion

This paper brings to our awareness traditional celestial and terrestrial indigenous knowledge concerning pōrangī, wairangi, haurangi, kahurangi and draws to our attention the need to resolve violence in our communities. Both Māori and non-Māori are required for this transformation to take place. Māori are not assisted by constant and negative portrayals of Māori pain and indignation resulting from a history we share. Nor are we defined by our colonising history, Māori want to be part of the solution and are actively

engaged in this pursuit utilising critical theory and Kaupapa Māori epistemology. Our relationships with the natural world are dynamic and greatly influence our socio-cultural norms and behaviours. The natural world is also the mediator of health, disharmony, and healing and water is a daily reminder of our absolute dependence on Ranginui and Papatuanuku.

Toitu he whenua, whatungarongaro he tangata — The land is permanent, it is people who disappear.

Nō reira, nga mihi tātou katoa — I conclude with warm greetings to us all.

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Acknowledgement

This article is a revised version of an invited keynote speech given on 11th February 2011 at the Annual Conference of the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists, held in Dunedin, 11th - 13th February, 2011.



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