

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLE

Moana Nui: The establishment of a research group for the psychological therapies in Aotearoa New Zealand

Keith Tudor,^{*1}  Maria Haenga-Collins (Ngāti Porou, Te Aitanga a Māhaki, Ngāi Tahu, Pākehā),¹  Julia Ioane,²  and Elizabeth Day¹ 

¹Auckland University of Technology, Aotearoa New Zealand

²Massey University, Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand

ABSTRACT

This article reports and reflects on a unique initiative in psychotherapy research: the establishment of a research group that is led by a concern and commitment to respond to an indigenous agenda in health and, more specifically, the psychological therapies. The article discusses the vision of the group, and its initial work, set against the background of the politics of research, doing so firstly by the authors introducing ourselves and our positionality. The group refers to Māori, the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand, as tangata Whenua (people of the land) and Pasific people (Pasifika) as tangata Moana (people of the sea [the Pacific Ocean]); and, drawing on our commitment to honouring *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* (*The Treaty of Waitangi*) and guided by *Te Ara Tika* (the right path) with regard to ethics, discuss our focus on research that serves underserved populations.

KEYWORDS: psychotherapy research; Aotearoa New Zealand; positionality; kaupapa (purpose)

KARAKIA TĪMATANGA

Mauri oho

Mauri Tū

Mauri ora ki a tātou

Haumi e! Hui e! Tāiki e!

Awaken the spirit

Engage the spirit

The spirit of life amongst us

Be united in purpose!

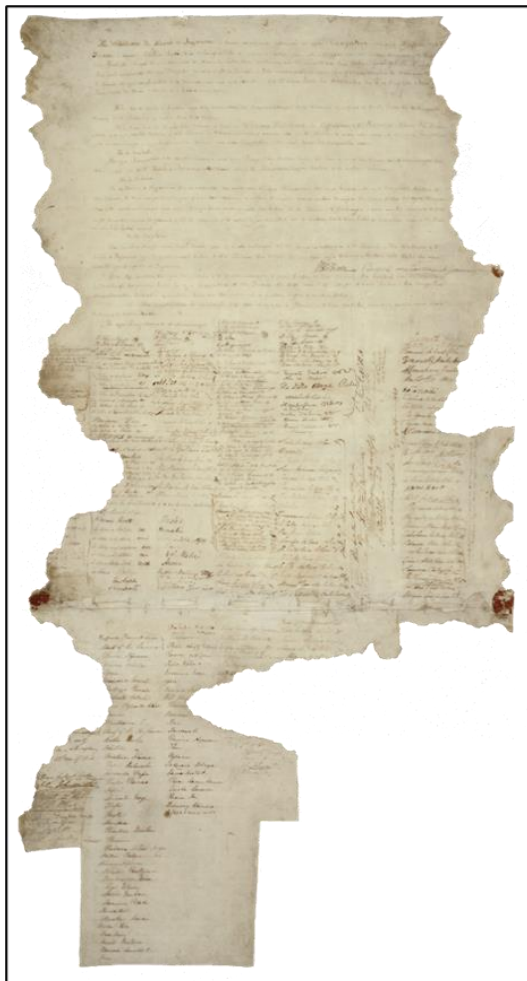
*Contact details: keith.tudor@aut.ac.nz

WHAKAWHANAUNGATANGA—INTRODUCTIONS AND CONNECTIONS

In Māori culture, and increasingly within Aotearoa New Zealand culture more broadly, it is common to begin, and close, events and meetings—and, in this case, an article—with karakia (blessing[s]) and whakawhanaungatanga (the process of making introductions and connection). Following Alcott's (1988) work, it is an example of what is now being referred to as positionality, especially in and with regard to research.

Whakawhanaungatanga always takes place in a context, which, for people living and working in Aotearoa New Zealand, is *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* 1840, a treaty, signed on 6th February 1840 between rangatira (Māori chiefs) and representatives of the British Crown (Figure 1). *Te Tiriti* is often referred to as the founding document of the Aotearoa New Zealand nation (Waitangi Tribunal, 2026), to which we refer.

Figure 1. *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* (1840)



Note: Image in the public domain.

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takatini | My strength is not that of an individual but that of the collective—Maria

In the family I was born into our mother is Māori (Ngāti Porou, Te Aitanga a Māhaki, and Ngāi Tahu) and our father is Pākehā (non-Māori) of Irish descent. I have four brothers. In the family I was adopted into, both my parents are Pākehā and I have two Pākehā brothers and a sister, and one brother whose parents migrated to Aotearoa New Zealand from China. Although I was separated from my birth family and te ao Māori (the Māori world) for much of my childhood, I only ever remember identifying—and being identified as Māori. I also remember the many ways I was taught, directly and indirectly, that being Māori was to be ‘less than’.

Caught between not believing this narrative and yet also having internalised it, I came to understand the importance of telling our own stories, in our own ways—with aroha (care and compassion), respect and integrity, and with an understanding of our own strengths and resilience. In High School I was part of a group of Māori and Pasifika students who, with the support from Pākehā allies, formed Tao Tahi—a political theatre group voicing our experiences of institutional racism and social injustices. At this time, I started more formally on my journey to learn te reo Māori (the Māori language) and joined a group of Indigenous women who were becoming increasingly politicised, questioning Eurocentric ideologies and critiquing the processes and impacts of colonisation.

Due in part to my upbringing between, and within, vastly different cultural, familial, and religious worlds I was always curious, always observing, always searching for belonging, always trying to understand ‘the other’, as a way to more fully understand myself.

As a mother of four, I began studying at university. After graduating with a Bachelor of Social Work, I worked in a specialist mental health team with young people experiencing first episode psychosis. Māori clients were over-represented and often presented with more acute symptoms and/or comorbidities. Being a mother and working with our tāngata whaiora (people seeking wellness) reminds me of a whakatauaikī (saying/proverb):

Hutia te rito o te harakeke, kei hea rā te
kōmako e kō?

Kī mai ki ahau, he aha te mea nui o te ao?

Māku e kī atu, he tangata, he tangata, he
tangata hei!

(Meri Ngāroto [Te Aupōuri])

If you pluck out the heart of the flax
bush, where will the bellbird sing?

If you ask me, what is the greatest thing
in the world?

I will tell you, It is the people, it is the
people, it is the people!

Moana Nui is a group of close colleagues committed to serving ‘the people’ through research in the psychological therapies, especially alongside those people and communities who are often underserved. We are dedicated to working in a Tiriti-led and mana-enhancing way (enhancing a person’s authority/standing), not only externally and in our research projects, but with each other. The personal is political and the political is personal as we navigate both our different and shared histories. We are intrinsically connected through, and

to, this whenua (land) by Te Moana Nui a Kiwa | the Great Ocean of Kiwa. In this space and time we learn to trust, to honour, to speak truth to power, and to hold each other with aroha as we work together—holding space for each other, challenging each other, and growing together in service to our communities.

Mahia i runga i te rangimārie me te ngākau māhaki | With a peaceful mind and respectful heart, we will always get the best results.

E le tu fa'amauga se tagata | No one stands alone, no one succeeds alone—Julia

Born and raised in Aotearoa New Zealand as a first-generation Samoan did not deter my parents from reminding me of the importance to maintain my connection and identity to Samoa, my motherland. I was fortunate to be raised bilingual where Samoan was spoken in the family home and other personal environments; and English was the language you spoke outside of these circles. As a child, adolescent, and teenager, I often resented my parents for, what I thought, was pressure to maintain my Samoan language and practices. In my teenage worldly and knowledgeable worldview, I was confident that my Samoan-ness was not going to help me in my life, nor would it help others.

While growing up with my parents and sisters, I was fortunate to return to Samoa. At that time, my grandmother was still alive, and my mother and her siblings would take turns to care for her in Samoa—alongside other siblings who lived in Samoa. I remember the confusion growing up about whether you were Samoan enough in Samoa, and then Palagi (non-Samoan) enough to live in Aotearoa New Zealand. Of course, experiences of racism and discrimination were part of growing up. Yet, when I reflect and look back, we didn't call it racism; rather, it was just something that happened to you: part of life. I observed it happening to my parents, family members, and siblings, and just moved on. I was too busy trying to belong and get educated to worry about such things!

As tangata Moana (a person of Oceania), my relationship with tangata Whenua (people of the land, i.e., Māori) has been one of respect, reciprocity, and aroha/aloha (love). Our relationship predates *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, and thus provides us with a unique relationship that is bound by ancestral links and similar histories of colonisation. We have continued to stand together with our tuākana (elder brothers and sisters) throughout our life course to support each other through both adversities and celebrations.

My training as a clinical psychologist has afforded me the opportunity to be in spaces where my Pasifika community are less represented. I acknowledge the beauty of our Pasifika people in many ways, such as our community and collective identity, whilst respecting our diversity; our faith and spirituality in Atua(s) (God[s]); and our commitment to care for one another including our mother islands. At the same time, I am well aware of our over-representation in health and justice statistics; and the significant socioeconomic deprivation that many of our Pasifika communities still experience.

I have learnt throughout my training and my lived experiences the importance of inclusion. To truly honour humanity, we must cherish our identities, and value the identity of others. To do that, we must learn from one another, and we must give fair and just spaces so that we are all included. This is the purpose of this team. We aim to be inclusive, and to demonstrate the diversity of psychotherapy and other therapies in our work and in our practices. We know the impact of the overdose of Eurocentric worldviews in the psychological therapies and we aim to shift this throughout our work. We have done this from the start of our work together by starting with us in terms of who we are and the way in which we are a team, and the way we do our work.

An old(er) oak in new soil—Keith

I was born and bred in The Midlands of England to liberal parents with liberal values of faith, freedom, free-thinking, and internationalism. My father was working-class and the first in his family to go to university. Unusually for their time, both my parents spoke second languages (German and French).

I have strong associations with certain geographical locations in the UK, including Helvellyn in the Lake District, the river Don in Yorkshire, both of which appear in my pepeha (a particular recitation of connections to land and ancestors) (see Tudor, 2025, in press), and also the Midland Oak in Warwickshire. This particular oak tree is said to mark the centre of England, and is a certain source of pride to people born and/or living in Leamington Spa, where it stands. However, as a wood, oak was used to build the ships that sailed the seas and carry the forces that colonised much of the world. I distinctly remember at Junior School, which was just a few miles from the Midland Oak, learning the song *Hearts of Oak* (Garrick & Boyce, 1760):

Come, cheer up, my lads, 'tis to glory we steer,
To add something new to this wonderful year;
To honour we call you, as freemen not slaves,
For who are so free as the sons of the waves?

Chorus

Heart of oak are our ships,
Jolly Tars are our men,
We always are ready: Steady, boys, Steady!
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

The 'wonderful year' referenced in the first verse of this song was the so-called Annus Mirabilis of 1759, during which British forces were victorious in several significant battles: the Battle of Minden on 1 August 1759; the Battle of Lagos on 19 August 1759; the Battle of the Plains of Abraham (outside Quebec City) on 13 September 1759; and the Battle of Quiberon

Bay on 20 November 1759. These British ‘victories’ were followed a few months later by the Battle of Wandiwash in India on 22 January 1760. So, while oak is associated with strength, stability, longevity, and endurance, it also carries connotations of fighting, war, and conquest, military honour and glory, and, by implication, colonisation. Thus, it also stands—at least for me—as a symbol of something that is central but (or and), as such, also needs critiquing, deconstructing, and, thereby, decentralising.

This sense of decentring is a useful way to think about the fact that I as tau iwi (the new tribe) in this country am a second, third—I am the third son in my family—or, by now, part of an eighth generation of settlers in Aotearoa New Zealand. I and other settlers are here by virtue of the history of this land, including relationships forged prior to the 19th century (Common Era), not least those between tangata Whenua and tangata Moana (as Julia notes); also in the context of *Te Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Niu Tirenī* (*The Declaration of the Independence of New Zealand*) (1835); and of the social contract represented by *Te Titiri o Waitangi* (1840). In this context, I think it is only courteous to find and know my place as a settler as well as a citizen (see Tudor, 2025) in a new land; and to honour those who were here first, in this context, my tuāhine (elder sisters of a brother), Maria and Julia, as well as those with whom I work professionally and politically, in this context, my tuahine and settler sister, Elizabeth.

Meeting people at the edge—Elizabeth

The experience of meeting people at the edges of our different horizons is a strong early memory of mine. Born in England, I was raised in Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and England. My earliest experiences were therefore shaped by quite different cultures, requiring adaptation to new landscapes, animal and birdlife, people, languages, social norms, food. The dislocation of these experiences has brought me both losses and insights. Perhaps it sensitised me somewhat to others’ experiences of dislocation and de-centredness. The presumption of a ‘right’ culture was never supportable.

This developmental landscape has also propelled me to find home, somewhere, somehow. Because my feeling of home could not be grounded in (physical) place, this has been a spiritual journey for me. It has led to the radical, experiential realisation that home is consciousness. From this, home, wairua (spirit), aroha, kaitiaki (hospitality), and whanaungatanga (connection) resonate with me as the deepest experiences of being.

Since arriving in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2015 I have learnt that my participation in the life of this country is shaped by my role as tangata Tiriti (a person of the Treaty [of Waitangi]). Given my own history of moving locations, and all that goes with that, I am grateful for the painful and powerful work tangata Whenua have done that clarifies roles and relationships in this land at this time. This hard-won clarity supports the work of seeing, acknowledging, and redressing the enduring impacts of colonisation, and establishing mana-enhancing relationships and other conditions for flourishing equity.

As tangata Tiriti I understand that I have responsibilities as a practitioner and researcher of psychotherapy, and as an educator of psychotherapists, around engaging with te ao Māori. Further, my training in psychotherapy sits on a foundation of undergraduate and postgraduate study in critical and cultural theory, including queer theory and feminisms. As a consequence of this training, and my lived experience as a queer woman, I cannot engage one form of social critique without including the interrelated others. So, I bring an intersectional engagement to discourses of equity and social justice.

The concept of ‘leaning in’ has been having a moment in Eurocentred discourses. Although I have ambivalence about its application in some contexts, I do see the possibilities of bringing an orientation to *leaning in*—getting involved, whether or not one feels ready—alongside orientations to *standing upright* and to *standing back*, according to time, place, and relational context.

Sharing perspectives from a place of honesty and authenticity is a political act. So, I *stand upright* in my cultivation of consciousness, of ethics, and of respectful relationship. I *stand back* as a relatively new participant in the cultural life of Aotearoa, in relation to those with prior claims; and occasionally I *lean in* to that participation in contexts such as this, in our Moana Nui rōpū (group). Here the risks and uncertainties of engaging in cross-cultural partnerships, from my Euro-Asian and Euro-Australian conditioning, are more important than the short-term security of non-engagement. The willingness to meet at the edges of our different horizons represents the hau ora (health and wellbeing) of any culture.

RESEARCH IS POLITICAL

Just as ‘the personal is political’, a phrase attributed to Hanish (1969/1970), so, too, research is political, not least, as Rodgers and Tudor (2017) point out, regarding ‘the question of what constitutes evidence and who decides this’ (p. 1). There are, of course, many aspects to the politics of research, including: what questions are asked and by whom; who and what is researched, and where; who funds the research; who conducts the research; and what research, methods, and methodologies are prioritised, privileged, and published (see Shaw & Tudor, 2024). In this part of the article, Julia expands this perspective.

Research can be political—if you are not of a Eurocentric worldview. For decades, research continues to be grounded in Western theory and philosophy, including its axiology (ethics), epistemology (theories of knowledge), and methodology (philosophy of method). Fortunately, change is happening in research that is well overdue, including the reclaiming of Indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) which, according to Thaman (2006), refer to ‘specific systems of values, knowledge, understandings, and practices developed and accumulated over millennia, by a group of human beings in a particular region, which may be unique to that group or region’ (p. 176). Indigenous people (including my own) continue to draw on

these IKS from many years ago to inform, guide, and lead our research journeys. This is the lens by which I (Julia) explore, address, undertake, and implement research in Aotearoa New Zealand—and beyond. Indeed, this lens has been sharpened by the significant literature on decolonising methodologies—see Tuhiwai Smith (2021), Archibald et al. (2022), and Bedigen et al. (2026).

Indigenous knowledge systems are vastly different from Western knowledge based on their contexts, substances, and methods (Thaman, 2006). Both knowledge systems are scrutinised with rigorous observation, experimentation, and validation—but within their own worldviews, not comparatively. Referring to some commentaries on these knowledge systems, Thaman (2006) suggests that:

Western scientists tend to perceive indigenous knowledge [IK] as a means of resolving development problems of developing communities, indigenous people themselves see IK as part of their overall culture and therefore important for their identities and consequently their survival as people. (p. 176)

In my worldview, I refer to IKS as Pasifika knowledge systems grounded within Pasifika worldviews. As the identity of Pasifika people is relational, in research, it is necessary to find clarity on how this is or may be implemented.

Relationality is seen to be central to Indigenous (Pasifika) research, because of our collective identity and belief that everything is interconnected (Saha et al., 2019). The identity of Pasifika people is relational, and it is our relationships that define who we are. It is expected that time is needed to create, nurture, and care for our relationships (Feetham et al., 2023; Ioane, 2017; Ponton, 2018). However, the challenge in research is that organisational policies and systems are often restrained by time, and so communities such as mine are forced to adhere to those constraints that inadvertently breach our ways of being (Whyte, 2013). Therefore, from the outset, whilst a relationship may exist, it is questionable as to whether it is balanced and just, given the power represented by the restraints of time and costs. The only way to overcome this is to amend systems and policies to allow for multiple sources of knowledge (Feetham et al., 2023).

When I am engaged in any research, I tend to overlook my professional identity, by drawing on my personal identity to connect to participants authentically. This is relationality: a mutually reciprocal relationship (Ioane, 2023). To extend this further, the essence of relational accountability is a term that resonates with me when I think about Pasifika research. Pasifika research should meet the following criteria: (a) it is research identified by Pasifika as being of value to them; (b) it is led or co-led by Pasifika; (c) it recognises Pasifika research methodology and practices; and (d) there is a focus on ensuring all relationships in the research are honoured authentically within Pasifika worldview(s).

As an example of drawing on my Pasifika knowledge systems, and specifically a Pasifika methodology, I am drawn to a definition of Indigenous methodology that resonates with me by Wilson (2001):

To me an Indigenous methodology means talking about relational accountability. As a researcher you are answering to all your relations when you are doing research. You are not answering questions of validity or reliability or making judgements of better or worse. Instead you should be fulfilling your relationships with the world around you. So your methodology has to ask different questions: rather than asking about validity or reliability, you are asking how am I fulfilling my role in this relationship? What are my obligations in this relationship? The axiology or morals need to be an integral part of the methodology so that when I am gaining knowledge, I am not just gaining in some abstract pursuit; I am gaining knowledge, in order to fulfil my end of the research relationship. This becomes my methodology, an Indigenous methodology, by looking at relational accountability or being accountable to all my relations. (p. 175)

Wilson's definition reminded me of the instinctive process I undertake in my qualitative research. It is my relationship with participants that lead me to reflect on my obligations and accountability to them (e.g., Ioane, 2023). It is in my relationship with participants that hold me accountable to the gift of their knowledge that they are sharing with me. To reciprocate, *meaalofa* (gift) is fundamental to taking care of relationship. There are often tasks and responsibilities that may be asked of me during our research relationship, e.g., information about housing; a reference for a participant's child's school. These matters are examples I have experienced; and, given my identity, it is important that I acknowledge and respond appropriately. This was—and is—my relational accountability to my participants.

MOANA NUI

In this third and last part of the article, we present our vision for the Moana Nui Research group; our kaupapa (in this sense, our process, specifically with regard to ethical and political decision-making); and our work in terms of projects we have completed and in which we are currently engaged, following which we conclude with some thoughts about the future.

Our vision

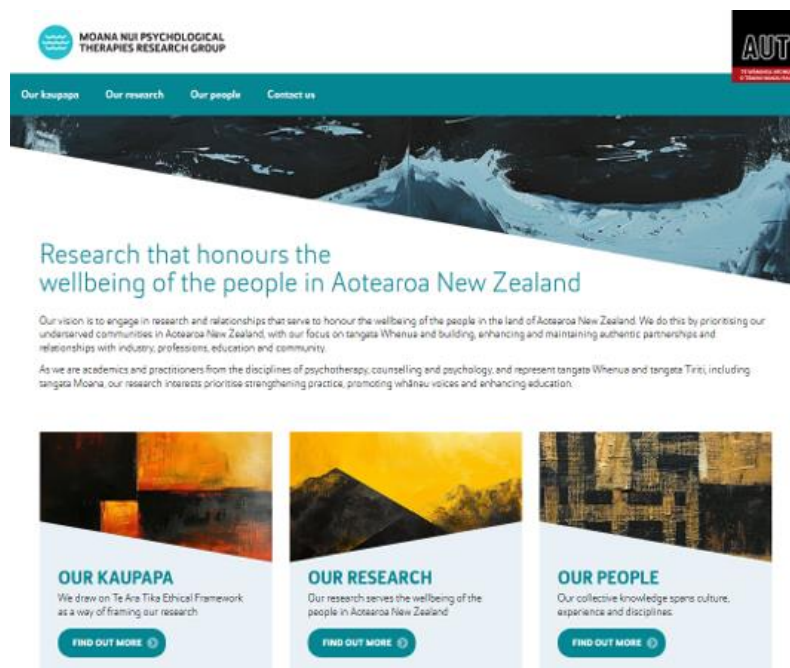
As outlined on our website (Figure 2), our vision is:

to engage in research and relationships that serve to honour the wellbeing of the people in the land of Aotearoa New Zealand. We do this by prioritising communities in Aotearoa New Zealand that although resilient and highly organised, are also underserved by public and private health systems, with our focus on *tangata Whenua*. We aim to build, enhance and maintain authentic partnerships and relationships with industry, professions, education and community. (Moana Nui, 2026b, para. 1)

While we do focus on underserved communities, we are careful in our language as we seek to enhance people's mana (internal authority), rather than use deficit language and discourse. We add:

As we are academics and practitioners from the disciplines of psychotherapy, counselling and psychology, and represent tangata Whenua and tangata Tiriti, including tangata Moana, our research interests prioritise strengthening practice, promoting whānau (extended family) voices and enhancing education. (Moana Nui, 2026b, para. 2)

Figure 2. Moana Nui Website



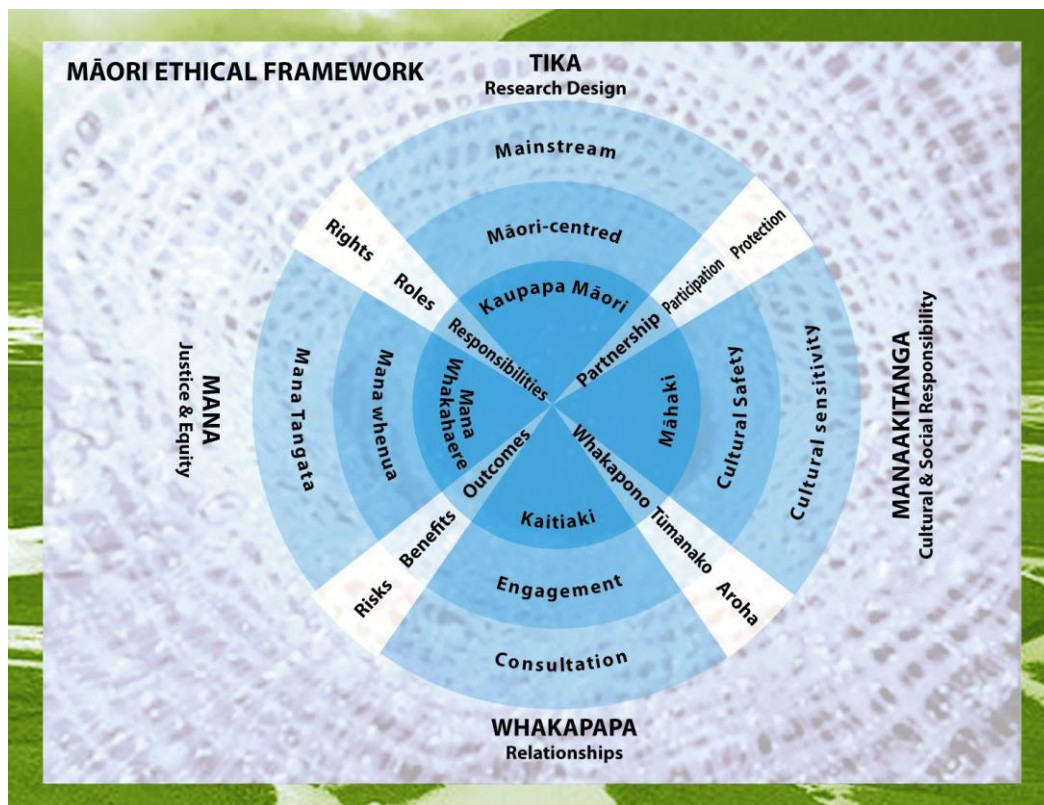
Our kaupapa

As stated on our website: 'While we recognise that most research conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand aims to benefit all New Zealanders, ultimately, we are committed to supporting Māori-centred research which advances hauora Māori—which, in turn, benefits all New Zealanders.' (Moana Nui, 2026a, para. 1); see also Tudor and Haenga-Collins (2026).

So, as a way of framing and prioritising our research, especially with regard to relationships, our cultural and social responsibilities, justice and equity, and research design, we have three priorities, i.e., strengthening practice, promoting whānau voices, and enhancing education; and all our research is considered through the lens of *Te Ara Tika Ethical Framework* (Hudson et al., 2010) (Figure 3). This framework provides a comprehensive model for ethical research in Aotearoa New Zealand, ranging from: mainstream research, which, even if it doesn't involve Māori, should still demonstrate cultural sensitivity and involve

consultation; through Māori-centred research, which, as its name suggests, is grounded in Māori values, concerns, and research methodologies; to kaupapa Māori research, which is ‘by Māori, for Māori’.

Figure 3. Māori Ethical Framework (Hudson et al., 2010)



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Combining this with our vision of prioritising underserved communities and of maintaining authentic partnerships and relationships, while also holding the realpolitik of needing to produce research outputs in valid consideration of funding received, we assess each project in terms of: the specific underserved community; the current status of the project; and outcomes, including our community relationships, for two example of which, see Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Te Ara Tika Framework Assessment Applied to Researching Group Psychotherapy

Project	Assessment
Title: Whakamātūtū—The Depression Recovery Service, Wellington	
Description: A collaborative research project looking at the post-treatment effectiveness of the service which offers group psychotherapy	
Principal Investigator: Associate Professor Tula Brannelly	

Co-Investigator (from Moana Nui): Professor Keith Tudor	
Underserved communities	Depression affects underserved communities disproportionately, and so we will be seeking to address this in any research we plan and undertake, thereby strengthening practice. Whakamātūtū has a strong commitment to bicultural engagement, so any research we undertake for/with them is informed by this
Current status	A small-scale research project has been funded; participants have been interviewed; the evaluation has been completed; and a report has been submitted to the funders
Outcomes	
Research outputs	1. A report (to be submitted) 2. One or two peer-reviewed articles (in preparation for publication in 2027)
Community relationships	The research team has strong relationships with the team at Whakamātūtū

Table 2. *Te Ara Tika Framework Assessment Applied to Researching Online Psychological Therapies*

Project	Assessment
Title: Online psychological therapies Description: Evaluating the impact of the change to online psychological therapies in the context of and post COVID-19 Investigators: various	
Underserved communities	The advent of a shift to online therapies (as a result of the coronavirus pandemic) raised the question of the accessibility of such services to previously underserved communities. Our initial research focused on scoping the impact of this change, though more from the point of view of professionals (see research outputs cited below)
Current status	We are currently designing a research project prior to applying for funding, a project that will focus on all three of our priorities, i.e., strengthening practice, promoting whānau voices, and enhancing education
Outcomes	
Research outputs	13 publications: Classen et al. (2021), Day and Thomas-Anttila (2021a, 2021b), Embleton Tudor et al. (2021), Ioane et al. (2021a, 2021b), O'Neill et al. (2021), Price-Robertson et al. (2020), Rodgers et al. (2021, 2022), Tudor et al. (2021), Tudor and Murphy (2021), Tudor and Price-Robertson (2021)
Community relationships	In undertaking this work, we built relationships especially with colleagues in professional communities overseas in Australia, and in the UK

Our work

To date, we have completed six projects:

1. **Walking the talk** (2020–2021), an investigation of the relationship between exercise and psychotherapy, inspired by a Master’s dissertation (Harrison, 2018), which led to a peer-reviewed article (Harrison & Tudor, 2020). Although this project was completed, a group of us are currently looking at further work in the area of sedentarism amongst psychological therapists (Tudor et al., 2026).
2. **Better Blokes: Services for men who have been sexually abused** (2022), a project that produced a report for the Better Blokes peer support service (<https://betterblokes.org.nz/>) based on a literature review and making therapeutic recommendations for the service (Tudor & Sutherland, 2022). A further output from this work has been submitted for publication (Tudor & Embleton Tudor, 2026).
3. **Health Futures: The regulation of health professions** (2021–2023), a project that focused on reconceptualising undergraduate degree programmes which prepare students to apply to register to practise as health professionals in Aotearoa New Zealand, of which Keith was a part, a collaboration that led to three published peer-reviewed articles (Shaw & Tudor, 2021, 2022, 2023).
4. **Videoconference-based therapy** (2020–2024), research that comprised an integrative literature review drawing together contemporary perspectives on the outcomes and affordances of videoconference-based therapy (Classen et al., 2021), a project which inspired a number of other publications in this area (see Table 2).
5. **Ecotherapy** (2000–2025), a broader and mainly theoretical project that advances this approach or development in the psychological therapies—see Clare and Tudor (2023), Tudor (2023), Key and Tudor (2023), Neville and Tudor (2024), and Tamahou and Tudor (in press).
6. **Whakamātūtū** (The Depression Recovery Service Wellington) (2025–2026), an evaluation of the acceptability and effectiveness of the service for tangata whaiora (clients funded by New Zealand’s Accident Compensation Corporation, in which Keith was a Co-Investigator, contributing to the proposal, reviewing the transcripts for all participants, and providing the analysis of the group psychotherapy aspect of the service; see Brannelly et al., 2026).

Our current areas of research and research projects encompass:

- **Bicultural and cross-cultural therapy**—Researching and writing about the intersection of culture and therapeutic practice.
- **Child play therapy works**—Evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of child-centred play therapy in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- **Decolonising psychotherapy**—Comparing te ao Māori understandings of oranga (health) and the philosophical underpinnings of relational psychotherapies.

- **Dental anxiety**—Researching the effectiveness of non-pharmacological treatments or therapies that address and alleviate dental anxiety and phobia.
- **Indigenous psychologies**—Reviewing Indigenous perspectives in psychology and cross-cultural engagement in psychotherapy and counselling.
- **Pasifika offending**—Researching offending amongst Pasifika in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- **Pasifika research practices**—Publishing on conducting research with Pasifika communities—practices and protocols to be authentically serving Pasifika.
- **Pasifika worldviews**—Looking at Pasifika worldviews alongside the world of psychology, psychotherapy, and counselling.
- **Qualitative research approaches for psychotherapy and allied disciplines**—Editing and publishing a series of books on different approaches to qualitative research methodologies and methods for psychotherapy.
- **Racism and systemic oppression**—Researching and publishing on how psychological therapists and therapies are racist, oppressive, and, therefore, problematic.
- Engagement with *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*—Researching and publishing on how psychological therapists and health professionals engage or do not engage with *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*.
- **The Village Rōpū**—Researching and writing up a case study of the first solely Māori/Moana Nui practice and reflexivity group in the counselling programme at Auckland University of Technology.

The future

As we look to the future, our commitment remains steadfast: to engage in research that is relational, reflexive, and responsive to the needs and aspirations of tangata Whenua and underserved communities. We continue to challenge deficit-based narratives and uphold mana-enhancing practices that honour the lived realities of those we work alongside. Guided by *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, Te Ara Tika framework, and our shared values of whakapapa, manaakitanga, mana, and tika, alongside pono and aroha (for understandings of which, see Figure 3), we envision a research landscape in which Indigenous and community-led knowledge is not only recognised but prioritised.

It remains a challenge to stay grounded in our kaupapa as we navigate institutional constraints and political influences, i.e., changes to funding criteria. As we move forward, we consider that any lasting change to the way in which we view, interpret, and conduct research must start at ‘home’. For research, it is our university and research groups, centres, and institutes. What and how we teach our future generations will continue to impact on outcomes for our Indigenous and underserved communities. We must ask ourselves:

- ‘To what extent are Indigenous knowledge systems taught and implemented in research?’

- ‘To what extent do we actively seek out Indigenous consultation, leadership, and collaboration when conducting research in Aotearoa New Zealand—regardless of whether the research is specifically about tangata Whenua or not?’
- ‘To what extent do we ask our Pasifika communities what they want to know before we conduct research with their communities?’ (see Tudor, in press)
- To what extent do we expect all our students to have some understanding of Indigenous research methodology and practices?

We must start to explore our own relational accountability firstly with tangata Whenua as we honour *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, our tangata Moana to ensure research is fair, just, and equitable; and that we are inclusive in all of our research practice.

In Moana Nui, we hold space for each other and for those we serve as we learn, unlearn, and reimagine together. Our work is not just about producing outputs; it is about building relationships, transforming systems, and amplifying voices that have too often been silenced.

KARAKIA WHAKAMUTUNGA

Kia tau te aroha	May love
Me te atawhai	and kindness
I runga i a tātou katoa	be with us all
I te mutunga o tō tātou hui	at the end of our meeting
I ngā wā katoa.	and for all time.

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES



Elizabeth Day is an associate professor in the Department of Psychotherapy & Counselling at Auckland University of Technology. She held the role of Head of Department from 2020 to 2023. She served as a Board Director of the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA) from 2012 to 2014, and was a past chair and member of the PACFA Research Committee, and editorial board member of the *Psychotherapy and Counselling Journal of Australia (PACJA)* from 2012 to 2023. Elizabeth was honoured with lifetime membership of PACFA in

2025 for her leadership and service to the profession in Australia. She supervises students in PhD, DHSc, and Master's research, and has published in the areas of field theory, mindfulness, gender and sexuality, identity and violence, ethics, human experiences of social Artificial Intelligence, the use of outcomes measures, Grounded Theory, telepsychotherapy, and professional practice. She spent many years in Melbourne studying and teaching at the University of Melbourne, Monash University, and ACAP University College. Elizabeth moved to Aotearoa in 2015 where, alongside her academic role, she has established a yoga and meditation studio with her wife, Willa. She teaches meditation at her studio in Kihikihi, as well as online, and internationally (Australia, India, USA), and runs a private practice in integrative psychotherapy. In 2026 she is taking leave of absence from all commitments to undertake a year of meditation retreat. Email: elizabeth.day@aut.ac.nz



Maria Haenga-Collins (Ngāti Porou, Te Aitanga a Māhaki, Ngāi Tahu, Pākehā) is a lecturer and researcher at Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau | Auckland University of Technology. She teaches within the Psychotherapy & Counselling Department and has a background in social work, Māori-centred research, and Indigenous histories. As an adopted person, her work has particularly focused on Māori experiences of whāngai and adoption, most recently in *A Question of Adoption: Closed Stranger Adoption in New Zealand 1944–1974 and Adoption, State Care, Donor Conception and Surrogacy 1975–2022* (Bridget Williams Books, 2023). Maria's other research areas encompass such topics as colonisation, testimony, counselling/counsellor education, and Māori models of health and healing.



Folasaitu Julia Ioane (Fasito'outa, Leauva'a) was born and raised in Aotearoa New Zealand with strong connections to her motherland, Samoa. Her formative years were partly spent in Samoa, and she has spent time working in Samoa as a consultant psychologist for the justice system. Her matai (chief) title is from her paternal village, Fasito'outa. Julia continues to serve her community as an academic—a professor in clinical and Pacific psychology at Massey University—and prioritising justice-related research; and a clinical psychologist (Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia) in child and youth justice. She also sits on several national and local board and advisory groups primarily in areas relating to children and youth in care and justice systems.



Keith Tudor is a qualified social worker and psychotherapist, and professor of psychotherapy at Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand. He is a past editor and co-editor of *Psychotherapy and Politics International* (2012–2022), and the author of a number of critical publications in and on psychotherapy, including *Conscience and Critic* (Routledge, 2017), *Psychotherapy: A Critical Examination* (PCCS Books, 2018), *Transactional Analysis Proper—and Improper: Selected and New Papers* (Routledge, 2025), and *The Cultural Therapist* (Routledge, 2026). He is the recipient of the 2025 Eric Berne Memorial Award, given by the International Transactional Analysis Association, 'For revitalising and advancing the critical and social edge of transactional analysis and critiquing TA from within and without'.