

Te whakaterere i ngā awa e rua (navigating the two rivers): A heuristic investigation of Māori identity as a student psychotherapist.

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## Abstract

This dissertation addresses the question “what is the experience of a Māori student psychotherapist’s identity?” The study suggests that Māori students in psychotherapy education/training and academia face the challenge of carrying multiple identities in becoming a psychotherapist.

This dissertation uses heuristic research based on phenomenology and humanism, including a literature review, to highlight the unique challenges Māori face in becoming psychotherapists. Learning a western discipline at predominantly western institutions – and, specifically an academic institution, Māori face adhering to certain health models, concepts and approaches that may contradict their cultural customs and values. This heuristic research represents the journey of a final master’s year student as he grapples with what makes a Māori psychotherapist. The author explores the information and experience taken in from western psychotherapy, applying these through a Māori lens and sorting what concepts fit well in light of institutional and cultural expectations. The author also draws from whānau support who provide(d) cultural stories and beliefs that have been passed down through generations to develop and convey the research findings. The literature review supports the challenges Māori student psychotherapists face in establishing their own identity as therapists.

The end result is a challenge for Māori students to learn how to become a hybrid therapist, finding their feet in multiple value systems that may contradict one another. The study is a narrative of one Māori student who learns to hold two worlds to become a new form of psychotherapist that applies hybrid approaches as a hybrid therapist.

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## Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or another institution of higher learning.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

James Hill

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## Introduction

### **Ngapuhi**

Ko Whakarara te maunga  
Ko Ngātokimatawhaorua te waka  
Ko Ngapuhi te iwi  
Ko Te Tāpui te hapu  
Ko Hill toku whanau  
Ko Hemi toku papa  
Ko Beryl toku mama

### **Whakatōhea**

Ko Tarakeha te maunga  
Ko Opepe te awa  
Ko Whakatōhea te iwi  
Ko Nga Mātaatua te waka  
Ko Opape te marae  
Ko Muriwai te whare tipuna  
Ko Ngai Tamahaua te hapū

Ko James toku ingoa

This dissertation addresses the question “What is the experience of a Māori student psychotherapist’s identity?”.

The methodologies used are phenomenology and humanism with the principal method Heuristic Research Method. This includes a literature review to further support the methodology and method under which this work is undertaken.

The hybrid therapist is at the centre of this work. Woodard (2008) suggests psychological issues for Māori stem from an objectified and divided self. As a Māori student of psychotherapy, I have learnt primarily from westernised theory, with a few articles on Māori theory on psychotherapy. Jenkins (2015) states that white people control main institutions and are able to claim the social and cultural mainstream, with white understandings and practices becoming a normative. Grennell-Hawke (2014) describes object relations messages from external sources become internalised as the subjective experience and parts of the individual. The experience of influences from a dominant power can build, influence, and create the identity of the engaged individual. My own experience is the struggle of finding balance between westernised and indigenous teaching that honours both parties.

My research question was inspired by a session with a client online. Towards the end of the session, my client was about to tear up and glanced at the small reflective camera showing their face. In that moment my client abruptly stopped their tears from beginning to fall. I was taken aback as to the effect that seeing one’s own reflection had on the client. I then began to reflect on the effect this reflection had on me as a therapist. I imagined a therapeutic room

with a reflective mirror behind the client showing my every reaction back to me. Barzillây (1999) draws from Jacques Lacan's mirror phase; with how unified body image and preliminary understanding of symbolic representation are shown upon seeing one's reflection. As my development as a therapist took form, I found myself wondering about what was presented in therapy for myself and toward my client.

Reflecting upon one's identity, I am reminded of the ancient tale of Narcissus. Leiriope, Narcissus' mother asks the blind seer Teiresias if Narcissus will live into a ripe old age, to which the seer states "yes, if he does not come to know himself" or "provided that he never knows himself" depending on the translation (Hamilton, 1993). This warning resonated with my research journey, discovering more about my identity as I grew as a therapist as I grew in conjunction with supervision and learning. With each discovery of my personal identity in education and training, I ponder the impact on my personal identity.

This pondering and subsequent reflections in the context of my heuristic self-enquiry forms the basis of this dissertation which covers development of Māori therapist identity, Māori identity development in tertiary education and reflections on identity. This dissertation includes diary entries (in bold, italicised text) as they were written, without correction for grammar or punctuation. I will highlight the experience of the hybrid therapist as I experience a dualistic identity drawn from western and indigenous teachings in both theory and research process.



## Chapter 1 Methodology

This study focuses on the six phases experienced with the Heuristic research model, developed by Clark Moustakas (1990). I decided not to include kaupapa māori research methodology in this dissertation. This was decided due to few Māori in psychotherapy to support me during this research journey and to allow space in this research to reflect on and discuss the influence western psychotherapy has had on my academic journey. I offer some translations and interpretations from Māori cultural understandings throughout this study.

Sultan (2018) describes theory as playing a primary role to help us identify our personal assumptions, our connections between them and our topic of enquiry and it is critical to acknowledging our ethical conduct. Sultan describes social constructivism, with the following table:

**Table 1**

### *Philosophical Assumptions and Social Constructivism*

Philosophical Assumptions	Social Constructivism
Ontological (nature of being and reality)	Multiple realities that are subjectively and socially constructed
Epistemological (knowledge acquisition)	Exploratory, inductive approaches which focus on understanding meanings and essential natures of things
Axiological (role of beliefs and values)	Reflexive research with subjective values, beliefs, attitudes, biases, and intuition that are made explicit
Methodological (research approach)	Phenomenology, ethnography, case study, grounded theory, narrative research, heuristic inquiry etc; intersubjective and interactive, experiential; process orientated
Rhetorical (manuscript)	First-person subjective accounts: words, photos, artwork, journal entries, memos, etc.

Social constructivism accommodates the space necessary to explore the vast meanings and understandings from Māori culture. Sultan (2018) states that the importance of the central question is inspired and informed by the chosen theory. The research question has an

interactive relationship considering what is offered through academic learning and what is absorbed by personal experience, both informing and guiding the research space. This study will work within principles of phenomenology, an emphasis of experiential and lived experience of the development of identity, humanism and, the use of narrative to provide a sense of direction and meaning from the way life develops during the research (Vernon, 2010). These multiple approaches work in conjunction with the development of my identity as a Māori therapist which incorporates theory and principles drawn from experiences of both western and indigenous teachings. Lincoln & Guba (2013) state, the human mind finds dualisms congenial and a commonality in western thought: soma/psyche, body/soul, good/evil etc. This dualism suggests to search for the “excluded middle” (“sometimes true, “true only if...”), allowing a different logic to emerge and resonate with Māori concepts that explore broad meanings and multiple angles of perspectives. Social constructivism allows for information to be shown in metaphors for something that comes to mind but cannot be expressed with precision. What I may know is a construction and subject to continuous change, as available information and sophistication improves. This concept also ties in with my growing knowledge of Māori language, practices, and ideas during the research journey.

### **Phenomenology**

Moustakas’ heuristic research is one of five phenomenological designs and methodologies. (The others are ethnography, narrative, grounded theory, and case study). Drawing from Kant, Moustakas states that all knowledge and experience is connected to phenomena; things in consciousness that appear in the surrounding world. There is a unity between us as knowers, and the things or objects that we come to know and depend upon (Moustakas, 1994). Brentano & Crane (2015) states that with mental reference, if someone thinks of something, the one thinking must exist while the object of his thinking does not need to. The only thing that is required for mental reference is the person thinking. This relationship of knowledge and experience with the object I relate to Māori concepts of relationship. Manaakitanga acknowledges that all things originate from Atua (divine entity) and are intrinsically connected to spiritual power (Morice, 2020). Manaakitanga is mana in action and in relation to phenomenology, it is a natural fit in my research drawn from Pākehā and Māori teachings. My aim is to respect both cultural modalities as I move through the research journey.

Heidegger & Dahlstrom (2005) define phenomenology from the Greek idea that the voice that brings meaning and phenomenon, translated from the notion “to show itself” or “bring to

the light of day”. This expression of phenomenon seeks to understand how something is encountered. The use of language is the being, becoming, of the human being himself. This research will highlight the growth of my identity as a psychotherapist through understanding western and Māori terms used in my therapeutic practice. Chemero & Kaufer (2015) describe Husserl’s phenomenology as “descriptive psychology”. Through careful and elaborate description of our experience, we reveal essential features that may have been overlooked. In Māori culture, aspects of our experience are found in relationship connections with objects, people, places, and planes of existence. Husserl defines phenomenology as wanting to explain the meaning of our experiences. All experiences bear some meaning in consciousness that moves like an uninterrupted stream that shifts and vacillates between manifold objects and attitudes. This research uses the metaphor of the multiple awa (stream or river) that the researcher travels, navigating dual concepts of Pākehā and Māori psychotherapeutic ideals to create the therapist’s identity. Kleinburg-Levin (2021) notes with phenomenology from Heidegger, the past is retrieved not only for what was but what might have been and will be, called “memory in the future”. Drawing on possibilities of the past that were left behind in order to influence what is coming as the future. By reflecting on details that may have been missed, this can change our understanding into future thought on research, theory, and practice.

Manen (2014) defines the concept of phenomenology as lived meanings, meaning of meanings, and originary sources of meaning. Stating, phenomenology could become more accessible for practitioners and researchers when that person does not possess a strong philosophical background. The challenge in this, I am aiming to expand, by suggesting that phenomenology can become more accessible when viewed through a Māori lens. Manen notes how to write is to reflect; to write is to research and in writing we may deepen and change ourselves in ways that we cannot predict. Throughout the research, I will share how the research question and focus changed, as the research developed over time. What began as a focus on identity as a Māori psychotherapist on a webcam format, became research on my experience of becoming a Māori psychotherapist in a westernised institution.

## **Humanism**

Johnson et al., (2005) draws from a Lockean model stating that the mind from the outset is a passive agent, receiving inputs from the environment. The Kantian model on the other hand states that the mind actively seeks, organises, and creates knowledge. Despite how contrasting both models may be, from my indigenous experience, the environment of

colonisation and urbanisation has a profound impact on the formulation of my identity as covered in later chapters. Johnson et al., notes that Rychlak sought to formulate humanism through applying Kantian theory under the rigorous examination of Lockean methods. In a similar vein my formulation of western psychotherapeutic teachings go through rigorous examination under Māori principles. Mertens & Gisberg (2009) recognise the oppression and political fabric of society that has ethical and methodological concerns for researchers. Drawing from critical race theory, it challenges the experience of white males as a normative standard and grounds its framework on the experience of people of colour. As an indigenous Māori, it became apparent to find a sense of grounding in the research journey as more westernised and distinctly white theories and methods of research process became the dominant teaching in my academic journey.

Humanism in relation to multiculturalism according to Schneider et al (2015)., is a counter to behaviouristic and psychoanalytic views by putting an emphasis on the individual and their capacities or growth. Schneider notes the issue for ethnic minorities has not been that they do not know how to achieve individual development as persons, but rather these opportunities to do so have been blocked. This research topic covers the difficulty I faced as a Māori psychotherapist trying to apply my own cultural experience and way of life to my identity as a practitioner.

Humanism in research according to Wertz (2001) is believing that knowledge of humans must reflect distinctive characteristics that separate humans from physical objects and other life forms. Wertz states that the most important role of qualitative analysis is drawn from personal experiences that are important to subjective meaning. Experiences such as love, beauty, religious faith, pain, ambition, fear, remembrances, and fantasies are best measured from personal document. Rowan (2016) suggests an openness to new ways of research in order to understand the dynamic ways human beings' work, with similarities and differences between new and old paradigms of research. This research seeks to achieve this through my experience of similarities and differences of learning two culturally different modalities that form my identity as a therapist. Wong (2012) highlights the human quest of finding personal meaning, how to structure it and how personal narrative can assist in this quest. The reader then has an ability to make comparisons, which is key to understanding the interpretation. McAdams et al., (2006) highlights the importance of research being a major aspect of identity for academics. The insights, scholarly pursuits, questions, ideas, and projects that animate their intellectual lives are worthy of systematic scrutiny. This research draws from my

experiences academically and in my personal life that ultimately define my identity as a therapist. The narrative style I employ in the phases of Heuristic research with phenomenology and humanism support this approach and create a roadmap for how I developed over my academic year.

### **Limitations of Heuristic Inquiry**

Sultan (2018) states that researchers may experience roadblocks as they try to define or refine their research question. We may taint our full exploration of experience with self-doubt, social conformity, and fear of failure. My religious faith with Māori spirituality challenges such a dilemma, a belief that the divine can guide me through these times of personal struggle as I research. Pargament et al., (2011) outlines five forms of religious methods for coping; finding meaning, differing goals, gaining control, gaining comfort and being closer to God. Incorporating manaakitanga and my relationship with Atua, there is a level of mana that supports managing personal doubts and fears. Tate (2010) states how the coming of the gospel message in Aotearoa sought not to nullify indigenous thought forms and forms of life but challenged them to extend themselves. This research also seeks my own Māori identity and extend that identity through what the westernised institution has to offer.

Sultan (2018) suggests that some readers and researchers may feel more perplexed after the reading experience. She states that the heuristic research process may reveal more differences than similarities for readers. These examples relate to my research, as I navigate two different approaches to identity from a Pākehā and Māori lens. By applying both teachings in this dissertation, I am confident the relationship with each lens can manifest universal meaning between the two while also respecting both as uniquely individual.

Sultan warns that research findings may not be easily generalisable due to an individual research partner and that the research findings may not result in any social action or change. This research seeks to primarily assist Māori students who like myself struggle to find understanding from a primarily western academic institution. This research seeks to use cultural practice that is understandable for Māori to understand the western phases of heuristic research. This in turn can assist non-Māori in understanding heuristic phases in a new way through an indigenous Māori lens.

## Chapter 2: Heuristic Method

“The process and interaction which occurs has often been seen by the subjects of such research as an extension of colonialism, albeit within the cloak of the social sciences in this particular case. Research has been used to sustain one group and disempower another. Māori, at least, are clear about the negative effects of this relationship and the role that research plays in maintaining the supremacy of one group, and the marginal nature of the other, while social scientists express a range of emotions and opinions on the issue” (Teariki et al., 1992).

My Māori upbringing relates to Moustakas’ (1994) idea that the life experience of the heuristic researcher is not merely to read or interpreted but is a comprehensive story that is portrayed as vivid, alive, accurate and meaningful through artistic endeavours of the researcher’s choice.

The self of the researcher is present throughout the process and, while understanding the phenomenon with increasing depth, the researcher also experiences growing self-awareness and self-knowledge (Moustakas, 1990).

I experienced what Moustakas describes as self-process and self-discoveries. With each phase I developed my personal identity, that translated to my work with online therapy. Moustakas’ six phases of Heuristic research method (HRM) are as follows:

1. Initial engagement
2. Immersion
3. Incubation
4. Illumination
5. Explication
6. Creative synthesis (Moustakas, 1990)

As I engaged with HRM, I became aware of the similarities between Moustakas’ phases as well as my own Māori approach. To engage with HRM is to identify with the focus of inquiry. Grennell-Hawke & Tudor highlight how psychotherapy students in research must attend personal therapy and supervision to raise awareness of issues raised in work with clients and in reflexivity. Despite the extra costs to meet the requirements of the course, I became aware of financial privilege a student must face to complete such a course and inequalities perpetuated by the requirements. Different philosophical thoughts and emotional

experiences were made aware in each phase. In my awareness I desired to find Pākehā understanding by translating from Māori understanding. From this I developed a heuristic hybrid with the following:

1. Initial engagement: Pōwhiri and Pepeha engagement
2. Immersion: Tapu awareness
3. Incubation: Tapu restrictions
4. Illumination: Tapu lifting and māramatanga
5. Explication: Hongi and koha
6. Creative synthesis: Kotahitanga, Whanaungatanga, Wairuatanga, Manaakitanga, Kaitiakitanga, Rangatiratanga, the collective hybrid and poroporaki

These elements of HRM I connect with rituals of marae protocol. Like the marae, my body represents a holy place that should be treated with care and consideration as I subject it to the HRM experience. I am in relationship spiritually with the divine, with objects and with whenua. To fully understand the personal meaning of each phase, I made personal Māori experiential associations that assisted in translating the feelings, thoughts, and actions of each phase.

### **Initial engagement: Pōwhiri and Pepeha engagement**

“The task of the initial engagement is to discover an intense interest, a passionate concern that calls out to the researcher, one that holds important social meanings, and personal, compelling implications. The initial engagement invites self-dialogue, an inner search to discover the topic and question” (Moustakas, 1990).

Pōwhiri is the welcoming ceremony in the marae process. Pepeha is a genealogical introduction given at the beginning of speeches during the pōwhiri process. Further details on Māori concepts for the heuristic phases will be discussed in chapter four.

My initial engagement with this research came from the curiosity I had when I saw myself reflected on a laptop camera in therapy. I noticed a face, an identity that changed depending on what context my feelings or thoughts were in that particular therapy session.

My original question was “what is the experience of a Māori psychotherapist’s identity on a webcam format?” The question considers Māori identity from within my own reflexivity and my perceived perceptions of clients in therapy.

Moustakas (1990) describes how in initial engagement, the researcher must go inward, for tacit awareness and knowledge, allowing intuition to run freely and make clear the context from which the question takes form and becomes significant. Frick (1990) issues a warning in trying to achieve the most effective heuristic journey. He notes that good heuristic research requires rigorous definition, careful collection of data with thorough and disciplined analysis. My academic experience shared in this dissertation derive from two cultures, Pākehā and Māori. It was important to approach both with tika (integrity) to achieve the best outcome. Tika means “to be right”, with tikanga Māori meaning to adhere to the correct way in doing something (Mead, 2016). I found myself wishing to do all phases with tika, being in consistent relationship with my physical, emotional, and spiritual communications.

### **Immersion: Tapu awareness**

“The immersion process enables the researcher to come to be on intimate terms with the question – to live it and grow in knowledge and understanding of it”. (Moustakas, 1990)

Tapu defined by Tate (2010) is in three related perspectives. The first is restricted or controlled access to other beings. Tapu is being in itself, and thirdly is being in relationship with beings to enhance, sustain, restore, and empower those in relationship.

The research question became apparent in sessions as a therapist. I could sense in therapy practice the learning and growth gained formed my identity as a therapist. In my journal entry I noted the following:

***23/03/2021: I cannot help but notice myself consistently looking at my reflection on camera, noticing the changes in the sunlight as my sessions move along late in the afternoon. I find myself checking whether my hair is out of place, whether how I feel is truly showing on my face? Or whether that face on the camera really is a true reflection of who I really am?***

My interactions with clients kept prompting thoughts and concepts surrounding my research. I recognised a similar experience to a gestalt form of awareness and reverie. Dreitzel states that each psychotherapy process starts either explicitly or implicitly with what is considered normal or disturbed. Each organism is embedded in an environment where exchanges of energy, material and information happen (Dreitzel, 2021). In therapy, relational interaction, the time of day, my mood at that time and whenua (land spiritual energy) were components that prompted me to reflect on my identity in sessions. I found myself making associations from what I was taught from Māori and Pākehā teachings. In reverie an analyst opens oneself



to provide a gestational space for otherwise inaccessible truths, varieties of emotion, love, hate murderous rage or aesthetic delight (Blue & Harrang, 2016). In session I wondered about my reflection toward my clients. Am I being influenced by a combination of factors? Is it happening in transference and countertransference between the client and me? I realised from questioning, that I had transitioned into this particular phase.

### **Incubation: Tapu restrictions**

“Incubation is the process in which the researcher retreats from the intense, concentrated focus on the question. Although the researcher is moving on a totally different path, detached from involvement with the question and removed from awareness of its nature and meanings, on another level expansion of knowledge is taking place.” (Moustakas, 1990)

Tate (2010) describes tapu restrictions or prohibitions that restrict tangata from other beings, including spiritual, objects and taonga (special possessions).

In this phase there were various experiences of paying attention to clues and answers surrounding my everyday experience. Answers became revealed when engaged in thing that attempted to stray away from research engagement. Moustakas states how incubation allows the inner workings of the tacit dimension and intuition to continue to clarify and extend understanding outside immediate awareness (Moustakas, 1990).

**13/06/2021: *I have spent a number of weekends now hanging out with my close friend. In our late-night outings, amongst the drinks, the singing, gossip, and opinion pieces, I find myself consistently ending the night feeling like I have found many answers to my indigenous identity and its place in my current experience. I could easily spend a whole night out with him, losing sense of where we are, as we engage in things far beyond even my own comprehension at times. I leave however feeling like my cup is full.***

I found distractions away from the pressures of my final master's year. I was seeing eleven clients a week, attending classes, experiential therapy, and personal therapy. I had multiple assignments to complete and a dissertation to apply for and write. I sought balance from my work and personal life, and I found this by attending bars and gigs with close friends of mine. At times I felt like I was straying away from what was important professionally. As I said my goodbyes after a night out and headed home, my reflections offered seeds to answers for my research. Moustakas states how the incubation process gives birth to new understandings or perspectives that reveal additional qualities of the phenomenon, or a vision of its unity

(Moustakas, 1990). In these moments of escape, I found my biggest revelations in merging my Māori experience to understand Pākehā teachings (see Chapter 5).

### **Illumination: Tapu lifting and māramatanga**

“The process of illumination is one that occurs naturally, when the researcher is open and receptive to tacit knowledge and intuition. The illumination as such is a breakthrough, into conscious awareness of qualities and a clustering of qualities into themes inherent in the question.” (Moustakas, 1990)

Tapu lifting refers to processes that can lift restrictions between tāngata and beings that allow space for engagement. Māramatanga refers to enlightenment, insight and meaning.

This phase felt like remembering a dream and making symbolic correlations that created understanding. Jung et al., states how a term or image is symbolic when it means more than it denotes or expresses, a wider unconscious aspect that can never fully be precisely defined or expressed (Jung et al., 2011). In illumination there can be corrections of distorted understandings or disclosure of hidden meanings (Moustakas, 1990).

**04/06/2021: *Tonight I found myself returning home after a night out with a friend I hadn't seen in years. I shared about my new career path, my want to become a registered psychotherapist. This friend of mine is deeply religious, and I shared about the experience of embracing and applying psychotherapy as feeling like a god at times. I felt empowered in my knowledge and understanding of others. I felt like I finally had purpose, like my calling from God has returned to me when at times I felt quite lost. In that moment I found myself doubting God's existence entirely, my mere tricks, bells and whistles being enough to fool enough of those who believed I had something to offer.***

For my Māori identity, building Māori terminology and vocabulary developed my image as a Māori therapist. In one session I noticed myself feeling uplifted, my mana shown in my confidence as I supported a client in their developing identity. I found the term for this approach as whakamanawa (to encourage another). Presenting this session in class without the term, my non-Māori cohort critiqued this approach, thinking it a move away from western practice and appearing overbearing to the client. Once I found the term whakamanawa from a Mason Durie article (Durie & Hermansson, 1990), this validated my approach in a follow up class presentation. From this experience came further illumination, a feeling that I needed to

defend my Māori based therapeutic approach. I experienced disappointment and a disdain for the westernised institution that felt oppressive. I felt like my approach was only validated because Mason Durie used whakamanawa as an associated term . I personally knew it was tika (right approach) because my client reciprocated to me that it was the right. However, I realised that I was born into Māori principles and that others may require further explanation to fully understand.

### **Explication: Hongi and koha**

“The purpose of the explication phase is to fully examine what has awakened in consciousness, in order to understand its various layers of meaning...The entire process of explication requires that researchers attend to their own awareness, feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and judgments as a prelude to the understanding that is derived from conversations and dialogues with others” (Moustakas, 1990).

Hongi is the greeting process for Māori by the pressing of noses, representing the sharing of the breath of life between one another. Koha is a donation made towards hosts as a thank you for their hospitality.

In this phase I was consistently going back to experiences and learnings that I had, to further extrapolate symbolic meaning and understanding from those experiences. Moustakas (1994) states how the heuristic researcher returns again and again to the data to check the depictions of the experience embrace the necessary and sufficient meanings.

***11/05/21: “Today I felt like I unearthed concepts that would be extremely useful for my dissertation. My supervisor shared concepts on Lacan’s divided subject, on the mirror phase and on the simultaneous double. As these terms gained meaning and as I made connections to my own use of these terms, I found myself going back and forth between the experience before the words and the new experience upon learning the terms. God is with me today.*”**

In this phase I experienced appraisal of significance, repeated checking and judging described by Moustakas. This experience coincided with my own doubts when facing westernised Pākehā teachings. Living and applying whakamanawa, whanaungatanga, wairuatanga and kotahitanga were natural processes in my life and therapeutic work. I found that Pākehā teachings on “good” therapeutic practice challenged my natural Māori approach. At times I felt like I had to pick a side and choosing my indigenous side first. However, I felt the

pressure of the Pākehā institutions, their seats of power and that my achievements were ultimately in their hands.

**Creative Synthesis: Poroporaki, Kotahitanga (unity), Whanaungatanga (kinship), Wairuatanga (spiritual energy), Manaakitanga (compassion), Kaitiakitanga (guardianship), Rangatiratanga (self-determination), the collective hybrid**

“The researcher in entering this process is thoroughly familiar with all the data in its major constituents, qualities, and themes and in the explication of the meanings and details of the experience as a whole...the researcher is challenged to put the components and core themes into a creative synthesis” (Moustakas, 1990).

Poroporaki refers to the final farewell meeting at the marae, a final culmination of all elements that took place at the meeting prior.

In this phase my cup felt full. I had much to say, surprised by how so much could be drawn from a tiny screen on my laptop. I contemplated in what way could I most accurately communicate my findings? I came to a crossroads as to whether I should serve my own discovery, to serve Māori or to serve the institution, all of which I resonated with.

**13/08/21: *“I had a discussion with another Māori researcher today about how my dissertation could serve psychotherapy. As I spoke, I began talking about the school’s move into health sciences and my personal goal of gaining funding to create my own practice. My dissertation I have found will have far important implications for therapists using online technology. I am torn between communicating my experiences accurately, finding relatability for other Māori students and communicating to government agencies who ultimately may fund my endeavours.”***

In this phase I was torn about how to communicate my findings. As a vocal performer, my first point of call is to present meaning through music. My most effective personal therapy experiences were when certain music made a connection with trauma I faced in the past. Bunt (2011) states the root of music therapy lies in the fact that music links with our innermost emotional, spiritual, and private selves, while also being a social experience. In Māori culture waiata (song) is integral to our practices. In my online therapy sessions, I found myself silent, speaking English primarily, displaying a small fraction of my true self to my clients. Beyond the screen I am a performer, whose emotions are best showcased in waiata. In silence I

wondered whether the formulation of my identity even mattered to the client and to what degree?

***07/08/2021: “I came to a realisation today that my client projects whatever image they have of me. I may be trying to figure out who I represent in session, yet in my silence and professionalism, I remain a mystery to my client. Perhaps in these sessions I am a mystery to myself?”***

It was a realisation that I made sense of the heuristic phases with Māori protocols at the marae. This I will present in reversal response in chapter 4.

## Chapter Three: Literature review

This literature review focuses on some of the processes and challenges for Māori when they engage in psychotherapy studies. This focuses on Māori identity in higher education, online therapy reflections and challenges for Māori when registering as a psychotherapist.

### **Māori identity in higher education**

Māori development involves distinct phases. Durie states these phases are the development on survival, the retention of an asset base and the avoidance of assimilation (Durie, 2003). These phases stress notions of economic self-sufficiency, social equity, cultural affirmation, and greater Māori autonomy. To become registered therapists, a level of tertiary qualifications is needed to practice under a particular title. Pākehā still hold the keys to registration in psychotherapy as I will discuss later in the chapter. Durie highlights judgments Māori face in institutions such as targeted equity schemes for Māori to graduate. Further, the idea that students should be admitted on academic merit alone and a non-Māori student with higher grades may forfeit a place for a Māori student to meet numbers (Durie, 2011). Collectivist mentalities and approaches and recognising the importance of diversity at institutions is crucial to accommodating Māori in academia. Durie (2003) highlights four main principles that can support Māori in tertiary education. The first is indigeneity, the recognition of indigenous peoples and their culture, their language and knowledge. The second is academic success, supporting towards completion of recognised qualification rather than making up numbers of enrolments. The third is participation, from students, to teachers, to management and government positions. This also includes full participation in indigenous society. The fourth is a futures orientation, focusing on long term visions for Māori achievement. Fitzsimons & Smith note how social identity is multifaceted. Throughout a person's life, people add discourses, acquire other identities, and gain memberships in other communities (Fitzsimmons & Smith, 2000). These identities can be influenced by supportive or oppressive forces. To counter colonisation, there must be re-engagement under Kaupapa Māori inclusiveness in tertiary institutions. Marie et al., states the link between tertiary challenge and disparities Māori face with links to measures of family socioeconomic status and cultural identification (Marie et al., 2008). The more support offered at tertiary institutions toward Māori, the higher the likelihood of achievement for Māori. Identity in its fullness is determined by the support offered to Māori and in my studies, a single Māori

lecturer and Māori campus support staff were still too few on options for growth. I had to seek support from whānau and friends.

### **Māori therapist identity using online therapy**

Markowitz (2020) notes, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and community lockdowns, the field of psychotherapy changed from primarily in-person to “virtual” remote teletherapy. Assessing strengths and weaknesses, he highlights notions of the therapists’ reach while remaining distanced. Distractions become more frequent from different settings and a restricted view of the camera can limit the therapist’s abilities. Weinberg & Rolnick (2020) state the face on camera with current technology appears larger, clearer, and sound quality has improved greatly. Indicating that regulation in communication through facial expressions and tone of voice becomes more prominent with online communication. Agar in Weinberg & Rolnick’s work states how in modern “selfie culture”, whenever we share a screen there is an emotional illusion that this will form connection, a partnership, closeness, and learning. Parsons (2007) describes how in the external setting, the therapeutic space is protected against assumptions, expectations, and judgements of ordinary reality. The client and therapist find freedom to be however they need to be which sets up a different reality for analytic understanding to emerge. These aspects of therapy mentioned are some of the challenges online therapists may face. For Māori therapists the issues mentioned are compounded with cultural difficulties that are experienced from online therapy. *The New Zealand Education Gazette* (2020) highlighted equity issues, noting that engagement for Māori relies on body language, kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) that diminishes their primary cultural mode of communication. Practice such as kanohi ki te kanohi are foundational to Māori students growing their knowledge and identity as therapists. Without this, further struggles are added to their difficult task of success in westernised academic institutions.

When it comes to healthcare for Māori, Pākehā forms of healthcare disadvantage Māori. Colonisation disrupted health systems that benefited Māori, while health systems became configured to serve Pākehā (Graham & Masters-Awatere, 2020). As Māori therapists working within a pākehā developed health system, how do we serve people of colour in a way that best resembles our identity? Davis draws from Wilson and Davis who pose the question of whether therapists are Māori occupational therapists or occupational therapists who are Māori? There is a consensus being Māori comes first, combining what is learnt with what is known as a Māori to make the work uniquely Māori (Davis, 2020; Wilson, 2010;

Davis, 2010). As a hybrid therapist, western teachings go through a Māori lens for understanding. Durie (2003) recognises mauri therapy, or bicultural therapy, that requires recognition of the wider world and culture as a force of change in interventions. Durie states how an emphasis on relationships reflects understanding, knowledge and awareness deriving from outside the individual. Health approaches that support a cultural focus with relationship links affect the success of therapeutic outcomes for Māori. This is reflective for Māori therapists, who supported by a strong relational foundation can achieve positive outcomes for clients. This however remains a challenge due to the lack of Māori available in psychotherapy academia.

### **Māori identity challenges in psychotherapeutic registration**

To become registered as a psychotherapist, a graduate has a choice to becoming registered. This means that new and existing psychotherapists adhere to a code of ethics offered by one organisation in Aotearoa New Zealand, The Psychotherapy Board of Aotearoa New Zealand. Coming from a lower socio-economic area such as South Auckland, the opportunity to officially register as a practicing psychotherapist is appealing to feel a sense of legitimising oneself upon graduation in psychotherapy. The Psychotherapy Board of Aotearoa New Zealand members must honour Te Tiriti O Waitangi, respecting the beliefs of tangata whenua and encouraging tangata whenua to participate in partnership with the organisation (pbanz.org.nz, 2021). A question arises about the alternative if the only registration available to the use of a psychotherapist title is available through one organisation? Partnership with ownership of professional title is reminiscent of early colonial ways of business transaction.

The Psychotherapist Board of Aotearoa New Zealand's (PBANZ) strategic plan includes Te Tiriti O Waitangi commitment to actively engage with Māori psychotherapists. The organisation plans to include more tangata whenua board members, lay members, and have board members participate in ongoing Te Ao Māori, tikanga and te reo (PBANZ, 2019). Tudor (2012) notes how an institutional act should not be used as a vehicle for a profession to gain recognition from the state, to enhance mana to the profession or gain funding from that use. There appears to be questions regarding the exploitation of Māori culture to personally gain as an organisation, going against Māori cultural practices and ultimately dismissing cultural identity in its fullness. Registered psychologist data from 2013 showed that only 6% of registered participants identified as Māori. As of 2015 only 12 identified as Māori by department of corrections, 1 by Ministry of Social Development, 0 in the New Zealand



Defence Force and 6.8% of 205 by Ministry of Education (Levy & Waitoki, 2015). These statistics show a low percentage of interest by Māori in the field of psychology and like psychotherapy, these organisations still fail at creating a growth regardless of what implementations are made by westernised organisations. It may suggest a need for a completely indigenous training programme to encourage more Māori in mental health studies.

Waka Oranga is an organisation in partnership with NZAP to address health concerns for tangata whenua through tino rangatiratanga (PBANZ, 2019). Armstrong states Waka Oranga is a reminder to NZAP about biculturalism, the impacts of colonisation and how to find a bridge between te o Māori and te ao Pākehā (Couch, 2021). All members of Waka Oranga are committed to developing greater professional and community consciousness concerning relational and traditional Māori concepts for healing (Hall et al., 2012). While a partnership, Waka Oranga still has its website under the NZAP banner. There are still Māori psychotherapists that choose to take the stance of not registering as psychotherapists and I wonder about the reasoning for the stance taken. According to Hall (Hall et al., 2012), Waka Oranga was born from a desire to have Māori identity recognised and valued, a resistance to take on board ideology that did not belong to Māori. Its purpose is to make psychotherapy meaningful to Māori by acknowledging the gifts psychotherapy and psychoanalysis offers to Māori culture without alienating the minority members of those industries (Morice et al., 2020). Regardless of stance, the importance of banding together for Māori as a collective is evident with the establishment of organisations such as Waka Oranga and the continual resistance to the powers Pākehā institutions hold.

## Chapter four: The two rivers of heuristic research, Māori and Pākehā

### **The Heuristic experience: The prisms of my experience**

This chapter illustrates my journey through heuristic research. This will show the personal experiences I faced as a Māori in undertaking heuristic research, that is, a Pākehā approach. I developed a method of applying Māori concepts of marae protocol to better relate to the themes addressed in the heuristic phases. The movement through phases at times were not in chronological order as presented in my journal entries. Each section will include reflections on these phases, theory that supports my reflections and difficulties that arose from each phase. With each heuristic phase, a part of the marae protocol provides relatedness for understanding. It is then reversed to show a new approach to the heuristic phase. This is the contribution I offer to heuristic research, offering an indigenous lens to those who engage in the study of heuristic research.

### **Initial engagement: Pōwhiri and Pepeha engagement**

I began research after the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. My earliest experience of therapy with clients was via webcam. The disruptions caused by lockdowns meant adjustments on the ability to see each other. Online therapy was a new experience, especially for those who, like me were only beginning as therapists. Stein (2006) described Jung's psychology journey as having no idea whether he was going to find treasure or fall over the edge of the world into outer space. I related to this feeling early in my master's study:

*14/03/2021: "Today I begin my journal entry: Reading Moustakas, the challenge to find ones-self, to do so artistically has inspired me to begin today. I am one who believes in a God who has destiny in mind, a servant for a higher order, beyond myself. How I find such accuracy in what makes that destiny fulfillable is the mystery. I am a being that seeks pleasure. I want to tie my destiny to joy, positive outcomes etc, yet there is a part of me that wants to acknowledge that my destiny may be one of suffering, of shit, so that perhaps that may inspire or reassure another who may suffer in some way as I do".*

As I reflect on my initial engagement with the research question, I notice the amount of faith I carried to complete this dissertation. At age 17 I became a Christian. On reflection I gravitated towards the most available religion in my community. At the University of Auckland, I completed a Bachelor of Theology that solidified my identity as a Christian. This

course developed my Christian identity, distancing myself from conservative Christian communities into a more liberal stance. To this day I remain non-denominational, influenced by my Theology course at Auckland University.

I found myself returning to initial engagement, investigating spiritual identities that were lost due to urbanisation. I eventually reclaimed knowledge of Māori spiritual entities that further developed my identity. Io as God the supreme being, Rangi and Papatūānuku as deities of the sky and earth and Tāne the deity of living things came into the forefront of my Māori spiritual understanding (Scranton, 2018). In therapy, I applied more of my Māori identity. Before sessions, I call to the Māori spiritual realm through karakia (Māori prayer). I also say a Christian prayer, acknowledging all spiritual identities that define who I am as a therapist. This generated a clash of spiritual identity. How can I resolve an otherwise monotheistic pākehā religion with the polytheism of Māori spiritualism? My theological training challenged this, with recognition of God in three parts as a trinity. Thomas Aquinas stated that it is impossible for humans to know God's essence, limited by our shortcomings as physical beings and language (Diller & Kasher, 2013). In my therapeutic practice I include both western and indigenous spiritualism. I am limited in my full understanding of the divine, however I am confident in its influence in the work I do. Spiritualism is important to my personal identity, and I am open to the prospect of clients who wish to include their own spiritual identity in the therapeutic space.

In personal supervision (in the course) I viewed myself in session, preparing for how I would communicate my religious beliefs in a way that is understood. Thoughts about whether my supervisor may be an atheist who thinks my religious identity is just a delusional defensive mechanism arose. As Freud describes, a hallucinatory psychosis trying to incorporate the processes of the oedipal complex once again with God the father (Freud & Durense, 2012). In my journal I recorded the following:

***20/05/2021: I feel challenged at the moment. I recognise myself as a therapist yet, retain this belief in a God that may simply be an illusion. I feel challenged in my own delusions I may wholeheartedly believe in. This perception of what is real and how an expert should behave in determining this realistic perspective is a matter of perspective.***

I had gone within the temple of the self to realise the hypocrite I am in assisting clients with defences I have in my own life. Moustakas (1990) describes initial engagement as permitting

intuition to run freely and elucidates the context from which the question takes form and significance. I questioned the hypocrisy of my identity in the face of client work. Gelso & Hayes (2013) describe countertransference as always there, however self-centred needs, issues and feelings about the self are put to the side as much as possible to enter in the client's world. While conducting a therapeutic session, I look upon my reflection and I feel the presence of my own countertransference entering the therapy. I wondered what prompted me to look upon myself in this way as a hypocrite. My identity was becoming formulated in part from my client's narrative, challenging the figure represented in therapy. When my client engages in awareness, I too looked at my own reflection in session. For Sills et al., (2012) awareness is about reclaiming aspects of ourselves which we have lost through disuse or repression. I returned to the research question multiple times to re-evaluate what my focus moved onto from its starting point.

My re-evaluated question became what does it mean to be a Māori psychotherapist? In initial engagement where intense interest and passionate concern calls out to the researcher (Moustakas, 1990), I found myself thinking about what I portray as a Māori from South Auckland. Ringer (2008) describes South Auckland, as a state of mind and is used as an imaginary vision of an urban wasteland in media. This image relates to my anxiety and inadequacies felt as an urbanised South Auckland Māori. I recorded the following:

***29/03/2021: I have a growing worry about the Māori spiritual realm and how heuristic study may make me susceptible to that spiritual world. For Māori, being afflicted by these bad spirits is not something taken lightly. What to white culture may simply be navigation of the unconscious, to Māori this is entering the spiritual realm. Proper adherence on this journey is paramount.***

I became aware and cautious about entering the Māori spiritual realm. Immersing multiple-times a week into the "unconscious" in therapy has risks. For Māori the unconscious may incorporate the spiritual realm. Living in Auckland city, I lost a full understanding of Māori spiritualism, feeling weary about what I may be facing spiritually. My minimal knowledge came from my former lecturer at The University of Auckland, Pa Henare Tate. The teaching he offered is a taonga (gift) to me, Māori faith seeking Māori understanding (Tate, 2010). I knew in order to safely navigate my research I would have to rely on teachings I received from the past and to rely on whānau and friends who have supported me through this journey.

I found myself focusing primarily on what my identity had become from the training institution at AUT. I chose to do away with a focus on identity drawn from webcam therapy and realised my initial engagement involved identity influenced from this course as a whole. I changed my question by editing out the webcam format element making it a more accurate aim for my research. I found myself returning to the initial engagement that developed into something else, the question of who am I as a Māori psychotherapist?

### **Pōwhiri and Pepeha engagement: Initial engagement**

Before I step onto the whenua (land) before the waharoa (gateway) of the marae (meeting house), I am preparing to enter the spiritual realm. I stand visible outside the waharoa as the kaikaranga (female welcomer) calls me to step forward towards the marae. She begins her waiata, a song that even though I don't understand fully, the notes and melody resonate with me from a place long ago. This song brings goosebumps as I begin making steps slowly towards the marae. She represents to me Hine-nui-te-pō, the receiver of spirits when they die. Like the motherly voice you hear coming into the world, she is the last as you leave it. The walk is to be taken slowly and with reverence. I understand I am stepping through the domain of Tūmatauega (god of war). The Tūmatauega sense of self is riled, affecting my own hinengaro (mind, conscience, thoughts). I reach the wharenui (front entrance) and know naturally to take my shoes off. I leave the dust of Tūmatauega to go with Rongomatāne (god of peace and cultivation). At the wharenui we bow and give respect to those in the afterlife. My feet are bare, getting in touch with the whenua (land as living entity) intimately. The next steps will lead into something deeper. I come through the door as a living being, next to the door is the matapihi (window), an entrance for those that have passed on. As I enter the marae in mauri tau (calm and relaxed). I take my seat at the front, there is an expansive space between myself and those in front of me. This divide is symbolic, an ominous feeling that this space will be integral to meeting one another in full force.

### **Immersion: Tapu awareness**

The second phase of heuristic research is immersion. Moustakas (1990) describes how the researcher lives the question in all facets of life, walking, sleeping and even dream states. This phase revealed itself to me in two ways, reverie, and dreams. During my research, I found that dreams I remembered increased. Below are some examples of dreams I recorded during my research:

***03/04/2021: I had a dream I was working for some company during the night shift. Seemed we were doing work for an entertainment industry. The building reminded me of an old squash club I attended, cold walls, dark areas etc. I realised one of the guys on my team was serial killer who broke into a room to steal files on me.***

***04/05/2021: I had a dream I was walking along a beautiful coastline with my partner to try and find this goose that was a rare sight in the area. We walked past many ugly looking birds (like shoebill birds). I ended up walking through a dense forest walkway. In a tight area I could see two big Kakapo walking away from me. I tried following these Kakapo and the light got increasingly darker until pitch black. I tried running in a random direction as the ominous darkness scared me.***

From personal therapy (required by the course) I attributed meaning to the amount of focus on my research. Once immersed in the research, dreams became memorable. Kraden (2006) recognises that what a dream means is beyond our capacity but can serve as targets for meaning laden projections. I had dreams of people chasing me, causing me to run or stand and fight. There were dreams of being alone, where I sought to obtain a specific object. Jung states (2006) how the dream is concerned with health and sickness, drawing on subliminal perceptions and produce things that are important to know. These dreams I understood as warnings about my experiences in research and academia. I understood loneliness in my journey, as the only male Māori student in the course. From my Christian identity, prophetic dreams are important to our spiritual lives. Pharaoh's dream in Genesis 41, with the help of the interpreter Joseph, was warned about both blessings and dangers that may come in real life. In therapy I noticed myself recollecting my dreams and interpreting them. My therapist as a guide, assisted in my interpretations. Jung states in order to work out the dream, it is best met in collaboration with the dreamer, as to not violate his respect unnecessarily (Jung & Hull, 2006). The best chance for interpretation came from collaboration between the therapist and me. In Māori culture working as a collective is vital to growth and survival.

Moustakas (1990) states virtually anything connected with the question becomes raw material for immersion. New theories that caught my attention in class seemed related to my research. Gestalt's idea on awareness, paying attention to a directed awareness that becomes absorbed into thoughts and feelings while putting other elements outside of that focus (Joyce & Sills, 2018) became an application I used in therapy with clients. Concepts of the outer zone, with contact functions such as seeing, hearing, speaking, tasting touching etc, brings a vibrancy to

therapeutic experience. It influences the middle zone, our thinking and emotions, fantasies and memories and the inner zone, our bodily functions etc. Certain theoretical terms appealed to me when presenting my practice in supervision. I recognised a wider vocabulary as I gained understanding of these theories in practice. I knew from this process I had become immersed in the research.

### **Tapu awareness: Immersion**

I sit in the marae, sensing these feelings of what happened leading into entry to the marae. As the kaikōrero (speakers) begin their speech I sit not fully understanding the words, but understand the wairua of the kōrero. I become aware of his body language as his hands and eyes direct me to places within and beyond my view. The entire inside space is tapu (sacred). Tate (2010) states that tapu has three related perspectives:

1. Tapu is restricted or controlled access to other beings – Atua (divine), tangata (people) and whenua (land)
2. Tapu is being or being-in-self
3. Tapu is being in relationships with primary being or with other beings, so the relationship is enhanced, sustainable, restorative and empowering in those relationships

As the kaikōrero speak on the purpose of the meeting, on acknowledging all aspects of relationship with land, ancestors, and people, I recognise the mana (inner strength) of the tuakana (senior) as he exhibits the mana of ancestors and spiritual members supporting his kōrero. I recognise Atua of the divine entities that are beyond my physical realm being made known physical as it encompasses me through the marae. I recognise the kaikōrero and his people as they sit in relationship with these divine entities. I recognise my own position as tapu, being a mystery to the other that seeks connection for potential freedom. The carvings that adorn the marae show images of the stories, legends and power that's represented beyond anything I could formulate. The photos on the wall are of whānau that have passed into the spiritual realm. The tangata whenua sit representing the culmination of these generations' past. I recognise the potential of what I have to offer, what further empowering things I can bring in return to what is being offered by the kaikōrero.

### **Incubation: Tapu restrictions**

The incubation phase involves the researcher no longer absorbed in the topic, and no longer focused on influences that may be attributed to the topic at hand (Moustakas, 1990). During

this phase I found myself trying to break away from the research, studies, clients, and the demands of the course. I felt consumed by the demands of the course and desperate to fully use my free time with friends and the nightlife.

*18/07/2021: I have found myself going out each weekend with my close friends to a local karaoke bar. It has been a good break away from the work and inner self exploration I have had to make week in, week out. There comes a time when I just want to put that feeling shit to the side and put my emotions into my first true passion...singing. There is something about singing, about music and performing that communicates what is within me far more than any words could say in therapy or in conversation. My nights will usually end early in the morning, talking for hours with my friends about people we know, about issues in our world. These philosophical talks about our Māori culture and racism has become a focal point as of late. I am glad I have a friend who is deeply moved towards finding his cultural identity once again, to address pains in struggles that I too am experiencing and making sense of the world around us. I am deeply grateful for these people in my life...to allow me space to be me, regardless at how rapidly that version of me changes each week.*

I was trying to get away from the demands of my studies and research, only to realise the incubation phase was happening. Moustakas (1990) states that incubation allows the inner workings of the tacit dimension and intuition to clarify and extend understandings outside immediate awareness. As a Christian, my immediate relation to the incubation phase is from stories of biblical prophets who went into the wilderness to meet with God. In Exodus chapter three Moses went to Horeb, the mountain of God. There he saw the burning bush, where God called to Moses. He replied, “Here I am”, to which God responded, “Do not come any closer, take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground”. Moses found his destiny, recognising his role towards freeing his people in Egypt. In the incubation phase my body contained learnt experiences and reflections. This contained information I saw as having a purpose, to be used for my people, for Māori. Jung (1969) spoke about a collective unconscious, a universal psyche that is connected to all individuals. In this place archetypes reside, the Imago Dei (God-image) in man, universal images that have existed for thousands of years. In Māori culture, we recognise the collective over the individual. The incubation phase felt like my understanding of Lacan’s “the thing”, a part of the unconscious that speaks of itself, a truth that speaks and since is the truth, it has no need to say the truth (Lacan &



Gallagher, 2002). Whether I felt I was moving away from research, dismissing it, or abusing it, I would eventually find its true purpose for me. That purpose manifested in my determination to become one of the few Māori men to complete this course in psychotherapy and to register as a therapist to serve our people in the community.

In this phase my cultural identity flourished. Amongst some of my closest friends and whānau, away from western psychotherapy and research, I would find what it meant for me to be a Māori therapist. When I read research from past Māori students, I found they had to be amongst their whenua and their people to find answers and experience the development of their identity in its fullness (Armstrong & Woodard, 2016) (Grennell, 2014) (Morice, 2003). Hokowhitu (2011) describes race as a dominant discourse that plays a powerful role in how indigenous communities are positioned in their own nations and communities. Once race is perceived as real, it gets unproblematically positioned as a valid means differentiating humanity by both mainstream and indigenous peoples alike. I had to get away from the western influences that influenced my therapeutic identity. They became a coloniser occupying the hole of my Māori experience that had been lost due to urbanisation and colonisation. I drew close to my whanau, my friends, and those who could give me a better understanding of my Māori identity. This became vital in my application of Māori psychotherapy to clients. My naturally ingrained values and beliefs were given meaning and a vocabulary that I could use in sessions. In those moments I recognised myself as uniquely Māori.

### **Tapu restrictions: Incubation**

What I have sensed and observed signifies protocols happening due to restrictions in my ability to participate in this sacred space. I sit still in my chair, taking in my lack of understanding, limited recognition of all spiritual aspects present and my role as a manuhiri (visitor) at this point. Tate (2010) describes tapu restrictions as prohibition. It restricts encounters of tangata (people) with tangata, with whenua and with Atua. It restricts access of tangata to objects and taonga (special objects). As I sit in the chair, I am silent in respect for the words being spoken. There is more to the river mentioned, to the mountain, to the whenua, hapu (community) and iwi (tribe). The people that sit across from me bring a whole nation with them, both in this world and the next. My only option is to remain seated, keep quiet and take in as much experience and understanding as possible until it is our time to speak. To whakanoa (act of violation) the protocol happening is to violate all relational connections being held within the marae, which ultimately violate my own being.

### **Illumination: Tapu lifting and Māramatanga (enlightenment)**

The illumination phase happens when the researcher is open and receptive to tacit knowledge and intuition. Tacit knowledge is a revelation, knowledge that's known far beyond what our language may be able to describe (Moustakas, 1990). I liken this experience to understanding Māori identity, formulated through participation and adherence to a shared belief system, knowledge of ancestry, geographical location and associated historical information (Paringatai, 2016). My gained experiences about my identity illuminated aspects buried within me. As Freud states, the analyst is often pictured as an excavator plumbing the sedimented depths of psyche (Tevebring & Wolfson, 2021). I became a self-analyst in heuristic research, unearthing my own identity as a Māori therapist. With each new terminology learnt, it became a mana enriching experience that would be applied in my therapeutic work.

*11/05/2021: As I watched my work on camera in my supervision session, I was offered various terms that sprang life into understanding the work I am doing with clients. I learnt about Lacan's the divided subject and the mirror phase. I learnt about the connection of technology and narcissism, about filters and how we are becoming more aware of how we present ourselves through applications and technology. It felt like every new term I gained made a connection to thoughts that were mulling within. It was like the terms were a gate key to releasing these realisations, to give me a voice amongst members of my faculty who seemed far beyond any level of intelligence that I could match. This day felt like a blessing for me, and I am grateful for what I learnt today.*

*25/06/2021: A few days ago, I learnt from a Mason Durie article, the concept of whakamanawa. It came to my knowledge a few days after doing a presentation on a client where I felt criticised for applying an intervention that was unrecognised and seemed threatening to my non-māori cohort. Watching myself on the camera, it felt like a strong presentation to me, showcasing something that is so normal to my culture. Supporting another person's mana, offering them uplifting realisations and working through these recognitions sets a foundation for clients to face their trauma. Instead, I was accused as being too overbearing, too involved and taking the space from my client. It was a difficult lesson to learn, that had me wondering if it was true? If I was too much for my client? Learning about the meaning of*

*whakamanawa set my mind at ease, knowing that what I offered the client was effective.*

The illumination phase was where vocabulary made meaning and the combination lifted my own mana about my therapeutic identity. Moustakas (1990) states that illumination opens the door to new awareness, a modification of an old understanding, synthesis of fragmented knowledge, or a new discovery that has been present for some time beyond immediate awareness. With the gaining of vocabulary my identity flourished with the application of each term in my therapeutic practice. Jazani's (2021) understanding of Lacan states that experiencing unexpected or unpleasant feelings will initially not make any attempt to figure out its meaning. They may appear as deceptive, in disguise, transformed or displaced but always signal toward something real and significant underneath. In therapy sessions, in class or in supervision, I would feel a sense of something within, a sensation that would have no vocabulary or understanding. With enough time to study and reflect, I would find the vocabulary to give new life and understanding. The Māori language strategy set out by the government in New Zealand states that Māori language is a taonga (a gift) that underpins Māori cultural development and identity (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2021). As my vocabulary grew in both psychotherapy studies and Māori language, my mana in expressing the knowledge and applying it in therapy grew. Revitalisation of my culture creates a new approach to psychotherapeutic practice. In the illumination phase I recognised the taonga I have to offer clients as an indigenous Māori practitioner.

### **Tapu lifting and māramatanga (enlightenment): Illumination**

It becomes our turn to speak, tū atu, tū mai, alternating speakers allowing a space for our group to respond to what is offered by the kaikōrero. We offer recognition of our purpose, our connections, and our gratitude for the welcome given. I thank the kaikaranga, kaikōrero and supporting members for opening a space for communication. I begin to share elements that make up my own identity. I draw from within my mountain Whakarara, a place as a child I climbed on holiday looking over the entire whenua and its sea. I draw Te Tapui, my own marae and hapū with its own rich history, where many tears were shed as we said goodbye to family passed on. I also acknowledge my grandmother's marae Ngai Tamahaua that carries its own memories. I identify my waka Ngā Toki Matawhaorua, a symbol of my ancestors who came upon the shores of Aotearoa many years ago from a land thousands of miles away. These were survivors and heroes to our people who cultivated their relationship with the whenua and its mysteries. I identify my iwi Whakatōhea and Ngāpuhi, two communities with

their own diverse culture, practices, and spiritualism. I identify my current residence of Manurewa, South Auckland, a place with its own diverse culture. I draw on my father with whom I share my name, James Hill. A man with his own history, facing adversity from colonisation and urbanisation to raise a family, own a home and become a success in his own right. I draw on my mother Beryl Hill who as a pākehā faced her own struggles moving to Auckland and supporting our family with values that kept our family dynamic stable and successful in a country that struggles to support young Māori children, even those of mixed ethnicity. I finally acknowledge my own identity, the culmination of all these elements, the current result of every contribution made towards my existence. This kōrero is a request for acknowledgement and respected for what I have to offer. A final speech is said by the kaikōrero, the protocols followed and all members of both the physical and spiritual realms are acknowledged. The tapu is lifted and with it we can enter into relationship with one another and all the elements that make our identity and existence.

### **Explication: Koha and Hongi**

In the explication phase, I tried to fully examine what had come into consciousness, to understand the various layers of meanings revealed (Moustakas, 1990). Meanings become unique and distinctive to experience, by attending to one's own awareness, feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and judgments that are drawn from conversations with others. This phase seemed to work in tandem with illumination, a train of thought, the mulling of feelings and how to process it further in personal meaning and understanding. Some of these processes were positive and challenging experiences as a Māori in psychotherapy studies.

*01/08/2021: I found something meaningful in my nights out with some of my close friends, that my research and questions perhaps would be better answered beyond simply what psychotherapy research has to offer. I've found talking through some of my ideas about our culture with my friends and whanau has uncovered so much more than most books on the topic. I spoke to my friend about doing therapy with Māori. My friend shared that when it came to wahine (women), the line between life and death is held within the womb. On the drive home I thought about how western colonisation and urbanisation has corrupted so much of our values that were once beacons of mana and wai for us. Mana has transferred into domestic violence, wairua has now been supplemented through alcohol and drugs and our collectivism has become gang culture.*

**13/08/2021:** *Last weekend I came back from a writer's retreat for Māori students. I went there to get a space for writing and to get some better cultural insight into my dissertation thesis. I found myself challenged as to how I would speak about our culture, whether I would initially write about blending westernised psychotherapy with indigenous practice. I became reactive at first, feeling guilty of muddying what makes our culture so precious, another form of colonisation being enacted on our culture. I decided to not include Kaupapa Māori Research and to simply keep it to heuristic research. There still remains my experience however, that indigenous culture and western culture makes me the person I am, especially as a therapist. I believe from this experience I will be more careful about how I will express the effect of both cultures without offending either. I find myself feeling isolated, asking whether to pick a camp. In choosing neither, do I risk putting myself at being judged by both? This is a difficult position to be in, yet it has made me recognise something I was missing...my identity as a South Auckland. This I feel is the true focus of my identity and the therapy I offer clients.*

In the explication phase focusing and indwelling takes focus as concentrated attention is given to discover nuances, textures, and constituents of phenomenon that become further elucidated through indwelling (Moustakas, 1990). Ecclesiastes 7:12 resonated with me stating, "Wisdom is a shelter, as money is a shelter, but the advantage of knowledge is this: Wisdom preserves those who have it". The more sides of the spectrum I noticed about my identity, the stronger it became. I felt a growing confidence in the face of westernised power, in the university institution and as a Māori therapist.

### **Koha and Hongi: Explication**

A koha (donation or gift) is usually offered, to acknowledge all that is said. Monetary, resource or active support towards the host is an important form of acknowledgment for their hospitality. Both tangata whenua and manuhiri finally stand from their space and engage with one another through hongis. Our noses touch, sharing the breath of life, the wairua of everything we carry in our identity with one another in mutual respect. We share in the responsibilities as part of the same ecosystem as a collective. Movement takes place at this point. We are invited to waiata tautoko (take a break) or invited to the whare kai (dining area). This space represents whakanoa (the full lifting of tapu). Kai (food) is offered to replenish our bodies, our souls and to solidify relationships with one another. At this point our interactions become informal. We have become familiar, and our ancestors have become

familiar to one another. There is a shared cultural experience of struggles, history, interaction, and connection that is special between one another. Adults interact through kōrero (dialogue) or waiata (song), children play outside, and all are in relationship in some form. Kotahitanga, whanaungatanga, wairuatanga, manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga are in full effect. These elements bind us together within tika (correct approaches), pono (truth) and aroha (love).

**Creative synthesis: Poroporaki, Kotahitanga, Whanaungatanga, Wairuatanga, Manaakitanga, Kaitiakitanga, and Rangatiratanga**

In creative synthesis the researcher becomes familiar with all data, constituents, qualities, and themes with meanings and details of the experience as a whole. Once this full understanding is revealed, the researcher puts the components and core themes into a creative synthesis (Moustakas, 1990). One of my final journal entries captures the inspiration gained from this phase:

*24/09/2021: Today I journeyed up Mount Victoria on a beautiful day in Wellington. As I climbed the mountain, I found myself thinking about Moses' journey up Mount Sinai to find God and receive the knowledge to bring the people of Israel. As I reached the peak, I became inspired to think about what I could give back to psychotherapy for the three years I was offered to journey on this path by the university. After having a kōrero with my supervisor, it felt right to come back to my initial notion of an artistic blending of heuristic research with the processes at a marae and the correlation between the personal temple drawn from my Christian beliefs with my newly recognised identity as an urban Māori therapist.*

I learnt to understand heuristic research by having the blueprint of reverence I give to visiting a marae. Hoskins & Jones (2017) state that Māori research and practices has emerged with the context of Māori rejuvenation, achieving the best outcomes for Māori across a range of endeavours, a Māori worldview. In search for an unblemished, purely Māori experience of the culture, I wondered where the space is for urbanised Māori to find their experience while maintaining their own history and identity. Borrell (2005) critiques what defines Māori is self-identification with measuring through cultural markers, a result of Māori genealogy but engagement and participation in a range of cultural activities that have their origin in pre-European society. This was a personal challenge I faced as to what degree my Māori identity

I gained. Gagne (2013) states being comfortable simply means being Māori, not always an elaborate discourse ideology but a set of everyday relationships and ways of doing things.

**Kotahitanga, Whanaungatanga, Wairuatanga, Manaakitanga, Kaitiakitanga, Rangatiratanga, and poroporaki: Creative synthesis**

As a collective we are rākau tōtara (strong in unison). Each member participates in the marae and its protocol. We contribute in various ways as each new person or group comes onto the marae. The protocols happen again, and we eventually share kai and space in cycles. There is a hybrid feel as our collective experiences and origins meld into a community that becomes one to contribute to the community's well-being. We share in waiata, singing ancestral songs that connect us to the wairua of our ancestors as we the living navigate the river of life. The buildings and whenua remain the same as the participants resemble faces of the past, continuing traditions yet adding a newer approach and flavour with each subsequent generation and new visitor. Poroporaki (final meeting) is a final farewell and laying down of experiences. We depart as the collective to one day return and become one again. The faces change in the physical, yet the spiritual remains to welcome its people once again.

## Chapter 5: Findings

### **The Hybrid Therapist**

The hybrid therapist I coin as representing the carrying of multiple personal identities in the therapeutic space when practicing with clients. In therapy I am influenced by my cultural experiences as a Māori, as a South Aucklander, while also carrying my western teaching in psychotherapy that has developed through my cultural lens. Bolatagici (2004) notes the idea of a hybrid identity when identities are mixed, it forms a third space that creates a new identity through the mix of representations. He presents the third space as a positive transgression that questions and challenges rigid racial categories and/or the relevancy of race as a category at all. Beck (2020) notes how archaeologists turned to hybridity for their interpretations of blending in the material culture of colonial encounters and entanglements. This research has been a metaphorical excavation of the self, uncovering the blending of teachings from Pākehā and Māori cultures that has created a hybrid therapist. The health models I have adopted in my practice are drawn from both schools of thought. The interventions I use are drawn from theories attributed to both cultures. Rocha & Webber (2018) use the term *mana tangataura* that refers to an individual or people standing with mana (pride) in two worlds. Mana is found in the ability to live in two or more values systems that may contradict one another. The difference however is in the application of westernised interventions being assimilated through a Māori lens and not vice versa. The reason for this is personal, due to the long history that Māori have suffered from colonisation by Pākehā society. I choose to assimilate Pākehā theory through a Māori lens because the outcomes are positive for me to assist clients. Some examples of this on identity I share below:

### **Persona**

Stevens (2015) describes Jung's idea of persona as the psyche containing many parts and centres of consciousness, one speaks of having a personality, but is made up of a cluster of subpersonalities. We are made from a diverse array of attitudes and orientations, that can come in opposition with one another. In an online therapy session, I find myself representing various personalities, some remaining behind the container model that seeks to hold the client's troubles without interruption (Delvey, 1985). I identify as Māori, I identify as a cis gender male, a son to my parents, I am a Christian. At times I feel the pressure of keeping some of those personas hidden to my client. The PBANZ code of ethics 1.1.9 highlights for therapists the recognition of whānau, hapū and iwi and a fostering of those links. The code



1.1.10 states that a therapist must be aware of their own personal values and beliefs and how these may affect the client to not put them at a disadvantage (PBANZ, 2011). I wonder about disclosing my identity as a Māori male therapist and its impact on some of my clients. In therapeutic work with Māori, it is near impossible to hide my ethnic identity as whanaungatanga is the primary principle which binds individuals to the wider group as a collective (Poutu Morice et al., 2020). Self-disclosure is a grey area that is difficult to navigate as a student Māori psychotherapist. It feels at times there are separate rules pertaining to therapy for both cultures, but little in how to administer them if you sit in both camps as a therapist. Stein describes persona as an actor's mask, the face we wear to meet the social world around us (Stein, 2006). To a pākehā the mask of the therapist is what is considered good therapeutic practice, however for Māori to represent the self fully to another is paramount in promoting whanaungatanga. As I become confident in my personal identity as a Māori therapist, my ability to self-disclose to Māori and non-Māori clients is becoming more part of my practice. Confidence in what designates "good practice" means confidence in standing up for cultural values, even if the predominant culture may suggest otherwise.

### **Narcissism in the modern age: Countering narcissism with the Māori concept of mana and identity**

In modern western society webcam social media applications have altered the perception of self and its presentation to others. For narcissism the child's fantasy devalues the importance and the power of the people in its close environment, while it inflates the value of its own person (Jacoby, 2017). This becomes a defence mechanism against frustrating or coercive figures. With the growth of information and communication technology, there is an increase of cyberbullying that seeks to insult and threaten another (Srivastava et al., 2013). The combination of narcissism and cyberbullying creates an unhealthy environment when dealing with online social media application that are regularly available on smartphones. Some sessions I have done were on smartphones. As I catch myself viewing my reflection and view clients who observe themselves in the reflective camera, there is a question about forms of narcissistic defences being acted out amongst each other. The use of filters with various applications such as Facebook and Instagram, create an ideal image of one-self and its effects come across through dialogue with clients, who talk frequently about their perception of self on camera. Beauty filters used on social media platforms affect perceptions people have on body image, while also comparing themselves to beauty images viewed on social media that are often filtered in ways to make the figure aesthetically appealing (Eshiet, 2020). I have

observed the effect online applications have on perceptions of beauty and how to manifests in the online therapeutic space for both clients and therapists, regardless of what application is used. Through a Māori experience, how can pride in one's self-image become something empowering rather than detrimental? For Māori this lies in identifying the individual as a vital component of a collective. In the use of pepeha (genealogy) our identity is comprised of landmarks, objects, family connections and location. Each of these elements have their own spiritual life force and identity that is met with reverence. Pride in one's identity is pride in all relational connections to what makes that identity. As a Māori therapist, understanding the various aspects that make up one's professional and personal identity can build confidence in the role being adopted by an indigenous clinician.

### **Contribution to the field of psychotherapy**

This dissertation will assist Māori students at a foundational level who are learning to translate western psychotherapeutic theory into something that is understandable through a cultural lens. The process of taking a western theory, finding an indigenous concept that may be relatable and using that to better understand the theory can function in two ways. It can give Māori students a footing to feel confident and more equally equipped at learning the westernised concept. In return, once understood, it offers western academia a new view on the western concept and expands its understanding for all. The metaphorical aspects of creating a more even footing in learning and understanding, receiving wisdom to offer our cultural wisdom in return and expanding the knowledge on a theory as a whole. Our collectivist way of life seeks to collaborate for the benefit as a whole and for Māori to have that opportunity at the foundational stage of learning is vital to boosting our chances of success in westernised academia. This dissertation can also offer non-Māori readers an opportunity to learn and expand their own understanding of our unique cultural perspective. This can assist in non-Māori being able to participate in the expansion of Māori academia further.

## Conclusion

The processes of the marae, a familiar experience from my past was the foundation to understanding my journey through heuristic research. A focus on the self requires a focus on the collective. My identity is made of a multitude of tangata (people), objects, places, and spiritual entities. Where heuristic research designed to flesh out my identity falls short, Māori practice fills the shortfalls. To understand my identity as a Māori psychotherapist, I must understand the entire journey. This begins from the heuristic phases, through to academic learning, to relationships both past and present. My therapeutic identity is made up of pākehā and Māori teachings, both offerings of wisdom a taonga that I carry in respect as individuals but now in relationship through my practice. Finally, I acknowledge the factors outside of psychotherapy that have a major influence on my identity: My whanau, my friends, my interests' hobbies, and home of South Auckland. I recognise my shortcomings, personal trauma and struggles I have yet to fully overcome. I recognise the loss of full understanding of my Māori identity due to colonisation and urbanisation. However, like the marae experience, I am supported by generations of people, values and traits that have been passed down through my genealogy. I am supported by waka (traditional canoe), by mountains, by buildings, objects, whenua (living earth) and all the divine entities of Māori and Pākehā origin. Regardless of the struggles I may face, whether faced at institutions, in society or through registration as a psychotherapist, I sit in my sessions viewing the small camera that reflects my face, and I am a Māori who offers a unique form of therapy regardless of the title.

Ko James toku ingoa.

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