

E ngaa mana, ngaa tapu, ngaa ihi kua tau mai i runga i te kaupapa o te ra, kei te mihi.

He mihi hoki kia koutou ngaa roopu i tono mai ki au ki te haere mai ki te whakawhiti korero i runga te kaupapa, he mihi tenei.

Ara ka tika te tuku mihi hoki kia koe Jeff mo ou korero hohonu i horohia e koe i tenei raa. Tena tatou katoa.

PEPEHA:

Ko Taranaki te Maunga

Ko Urinui te Awa

Ko Nga Tai O Rehua te Moana

Ko Tokomaru Te Waka

Ko Ngati Mutunga me Ngati Kahungunu ki Wairoa oku Iwi

Ko Kaitangata me Ngati Pahauwera oku Hapu

Ko Parehaereone Matuku raua ko Hamiora Wharematangi Raumati oku Tupuna

Ko Te Iringatapu raua ko Douglas Patrick Cooney oku Maatua

Ko Raumati te Whanau

Ko Ngaropi Cameron toku ingoa

I have opened with my **Pepeha** because it is a way our people have introduced themselves for generations. The essence of Pepeha links us to our Iwi & everything associated with Iwi → maunga, awa, puna, waka, marae, pu rakau, waiata, pao, tikanga, Tupuna connections, urupa and other sacred sites etc. the list is endless. Pepeha link us to each other and places us within a wider collective consciousness and sets of relationships. Identity and belonging.

Pepeha are an indicator of the wellbeing of whanau and individuals.

When Pepeha are recited you often hear responses “kia ora or tena koe” → these responses make us aware of a connection. Links are made on several levels **Tupuna, Spiritual and Tribal**. These links keep our relationships our collectively our language our knowledge alive.

They are also reminders that we are responsible for and to each other and also for everything we live alongside of on Papatuanuku, our Earth Mother.

Pepeha are an indicator of wellbeing and KNOWLEDGE about interconnections of whanau and Iwi relationships.

This **knowledge** has been passed down from our Tupuna and it is this knowledge that our colonisers sort to deny us. The systematic unrelenting attacks on our language and culture have been deliberate and they are acts of denying our identity as Tangatawhenua.

For Māori the suppression of our language and culture was **KEY** to the denial of Māori knowledge that **enabled healthy relationships**. And we are still witnessing the destruction of the **Māori world view** that has supported social cohesion and balance for a very long time. Therefore the struggle to retain our identity as Indigenous peoples – Tangatawhenua – is part of a wider struggle to decolonise.

I’m sure that no one here would deny that colonisation has violently forced ways of being upon our communities that changed our lives in ways that our Tupuna could **NEVER, NEVER EVER** have imagined.

In our context here within Aotearoa, Māori have been struggling for the past 200 years to find ways to maintain and promote these cultural protocols, practices and language that enable us to hold our place as Indigenous in our own lands.

The experience of whanau violence within our communities is a **symptom** of historical acts of genocide and ethnocide upon our peoples. Many people choose to deny, ignore, justify or forget these facts – just like some perpetrators. What operates at a macro level replicates itself on a micro level. State violence towards Māori is acted out in the whanau in the home.

(Pihama, L, Cameron, N)

Pepeha are an indicator of one's preparedness to accept responsibility and be accountable on all levels, Tupuna, Spiritual, and Tribal.

If we look at Pepeha as the **common denominator** what we are hearing in our programmes is: ko Deb's taku mama, ko 'Spot' taku papa, ko Nan taku kuia, I'm from Waitara. But you are not Te Atiawa where are your people from?

The denial of knowledge has been totally embraced and the colonisation process incredibly successful. **(Someone should really be congratulated here – a success story!)**

Many of the men and women when they first come to our programmes do not realise that something bigger, outside of them has been going on. They just think that they have had 'crap' lives and that they will continue to have 'crap' lives.

A few have some awareness but are unable to articulate or name what it is. *(I'm not going to comment on the education offered in this country although I have a lot to say about – I will stay focused on this kaupapa).*

In my opinion they are not able to name what it is primarily because they lack basic grounding knowledge like Pepeha which encourages exploration of Te Ao Māori and the **MYRIAD** of cultural constructs which support healthy relationships and **balance** in all things. For many there is a feeling of relief when understanding that there has always been something else operating.

Pepeha, karakia, haka and pao are used to aid the unlocking of Tupuna knowledge in men, women and children.

Kia uru mai aa hau ora, aa hau kaha, aa hau maia, ki runga, ki raro, ki roto, ki waho, rirerire hau PAIMARIRE. A karakia resurrected from the ashes of Parihaka, converted into a haka and used in both ways to access knowledge and release feelings. Remnants of Tupuna knowledge are there; it's just disguised and in some cases heavily sedated as well. In every session recap on haka and its cultural significance, practice and reciting pepeha which expand as the programme and attendance progresses.

Mate koe I te aroha, titiro ki Taranaki, hei purei kohu, ko matou kei raro ee. A pao composed by our kuia is used to access Tupuna knowledge and support reorientation of women back to their true role as leaders within Te Ao Māori. (Same story, remnants of Tupuna knowledge is present and in some totally traumatised and quite sedated as well.) The pao is recapped each session, practiced and pepeha recited.

I am going to show a few images that illustrate different values and aspects of cultural constructs that support Māori determinants of whanau wellbeing. They are also designed to dispel the illusion that we didn't have a written language and Kowhaiwhai patterns are woven into the images. A Te Ao Māori snap shot.

WHAKAPAPA: the Kowhaiwhai pattern used here to illustrate Whakapapa is MANGOPARE (Hammerhead shark) and it represents power and strength.

Whakapapa is a tool for engagement, setting behavioural boundaries and social responsibilities. It informs one about being part of a culture belonging to a place, and the continuum of life that includes kinship, history, obligations and reciprocity. Tupuna and mokopuna are always present in whakapapa.

Tupuna: **Tu** → upright, standing. **Puna** → pool of water.

Mokopuna: **Moko** → mark, marking. **Puna** → pool of water. Mokopuna – bearing the mark of the upright standing pool of water.

This concept alone indicates the sanctity of children. They are the embodiment of all past and future generations and as such to hurt, hit or abuse a child is to hurt, hit and abuse all past and future generations that link to that child.

Whakapapa underpins the essence of Maori identity.

WAIKUA: this pattern is TUHORO ATEA and depicts the spiritual connection between Ranginui and Papatuanuku.

As whakapapa is a tool for engagement Wairua is the first level on which one engages. Wairua is the core of Māori wellbeing.

MANA: this pattern is TUHORO KAOKAO and is a dimension of Wairua.

Mana represents the re-establishment and retention of self-respect. Mana is an expression of achievement, power and influence. All human beings are born with mana but only Māori have Mana Māori.

Personal and group relationships are mediated and guided by the high value placed upon mana. To violate the mana of the individual is to violate the mana of the whole whanau, including your own inherent mana.

Mana acts as a deterrent to violent behaviour by encouraging the creation of wellness behaviours as **Acts of Mana** → mana enhancing behaviour.

TAPU: this pattern KOKOROMATUA RAE; another dimension of Wairua.

Tapu emphasises the need to reclaim the divinity of children and sanctity of women. All human beings are born tapu (sacred) and there are several aspects to tapu. (Which I am not going to go into at this time)

Personal and group relationships are mediated and guided by the high value placed upon tapu. To violate the tapu of the individual is to violate one's own tapu. Pa Henare Tate describes violence as an addiction to the violation of tapu.

TIKANGA: this pattern is MAKĀURANGI; it describes the compassion and empathy expressed by Ranginui towards Papatuanuku at their forced separation.

Tikanga embraces correct and ethical behaviour and practice, also providing the 1st instant of accountability in relation to behaviour and attitude. Correct thought, correct attitude, correct behaviour, get it straight, be direct (don't waffle).

Tikanga is the **1st law of Aotearoa**; which has been usurped by successive settler governments and the criminal legal system. (*Mikaere, A*) Tikanga was supported by mana and tapu to maintain social order. The denigration of tikanga has resulted in unbalance in all things particularly on gender and whanau relationships. 'It falls on us to 'remake' gender balance as an act of decolonisation'. (*Pihama, L, Cameron, N*)

Balance is highly desirable because cultural survival requires balance and balance implies an absence of dominance and subservience. (*Mikaere, A*)

Balance supports a world view where all things in creation → ki runga above, ki raro below, ki roto within, ki waho outside of → are interconnected → the visible and the invisible.

Tikanga although not a cure is a medium by which order and balance can be restored. It provides behavioural boundaries and has transformative qualities that guide behaviour based on Māori values that lay out the way we should interact with each other. (*Kruger, T; et al*)

Tikanga, protocols and rituals are not just for practicing on the marae they can be reclaimed and used daily in our lives and homes. What we must continue to do in **Taranaki** is:

→ dispel the illusion that violence in Māori whanau is normal. (*Kruger, T; et al*) (*Because it is not – never was*)

→ dispel the illusion that we got into this situation on our own. (*Let's just start telling the truth*)

→ name it → it's called **Historical Trauma**.

→ address the behaviour, support whanau to reclaim and re-orientate back to tikanga o Taranaki and our philosophy of passive resistance and non-violence. (60 years before Gandhi, Te Whiti o Rongomai and Tohu Kakahi ensured our survival by embracing nonviolence.)

I want to end here by making it absolutely clear that our role in kaupapa Māori is to address historical trauma first and foremost with whanau Māori.

This is not to ignore early childhood trauma, drug and alcohol issues, child abuse and neglect or intimate partner violence with all the accompanying entitlement, blaming, justification and denial behaviours. These issues have to be dealt with but ultimately for sustainable change within whanau Māori historical trauma and re-orientation back to Te Ao Māori and our original instructions from Te Kaihanga (Creator) is imperative.

Learning ones Pepeha is a sensible starting point.

(True or False questions)

E kore e ngaro, e kore e wareware ngaa mahi ngaa kupu a Te Kaihanga ee

E kore e ngaro, e kore e wareware ngaa mahi ngaa kupu o ngaa Tupuna ee

The words and deeds of the Creator will never be truly lost or forgotten

Nor will the words and deeds of our Tupuna.

References:

Kruger, T., et al. *Transforming Whanau Violence – A Conceptual Framework. Second Māori Taskforce on Whanau Violence. 2nd Edition, Wellington, 2004*

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