Exploring grief experiences of rangatahi offenders through the kōrero of Māori community leaders.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my brother Kane William Fletcher and Nanny Wikitoria Rapata Leatham who have passed on, and also for our rangatahi and future generations to come.

Rimu rimu tere tere   *Seaweed drifting, drifting*
E tere ra i te moana   *floating out to sea*
E ahu ana ki te ripo   *Flowing with the currents*
I raro ra e.   *the whirlpool below.*
Ka kati, ka puare   *It opens and closes*
Mo wairua e -   *for the spirit –*
Te huringa i Murimotu   *flowing around Murimotu*
Te huringa i Te Reinga   *around Reinga*
Te moana i kauria   *the seas swum*
Te wairua e -   *by the spirit –*
Ohau i waho ra   *Behold Ohau out yonder*
Te puke whakamutunga   *the last summit*
Haere whakangaro atu te wairua e. *Farewell o spirit.* [1]

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[1] A waiata of the pathway of spirits – te ara wairua – that includes Ohau and the waters of Murimotu near Te Reinga, where spirits of the dead leave the land of Aotearoa. In Kawharu, 2008, p. 122.

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Whakataka te hau ki te tonga

Kia mākinakina ki uta

Kia mātaratara ki tai

E hi ake ana te ātakura, he tio, he huka, he hauhu

Haumi e! Hui e! Tāiki e![2]

Ko Māmari me Kurahaupō ngā waka

Ko Ngā Pou e Rua, Maungatūroto me Maungapiko ngā maunga

Ko Ngāpuhi me Ngāti Kurī ngā iwi

Ko Ngāti Rangi me Ngāti Muri Kahara ngā hapū

Ko E Koro ki a Tutuki me Te Hiku o Te Ika ngā marae

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Ko Wattie Watling Te Haara tōku koro

Ko Wikitoria Rapata Leatham tōku kuia

Ko Tui Watling raua ko William Fletcher ōku mātua

Ko Nikki Lee Peapell (Fletcher) ahau.[3]

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To Dr Lily George, you have taught me to believe in myself, my dreams, our people, and strive for excellence in this world. Your patience, humour,

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[2] A prayer to bring focus to the project.

[3] An acknowledgement of the people and places I belong to.

intelligence and your enthusiasm and dedication to the wellbeing of our people has inspired me to persevere through this challenging yet rewarding voyage. You have provided me with the courage, the strength, and tools to unleash a previously unknown desire to further explore mātauranga Māori[4] (Māori knowledge), academia and the world at an international level to discover new opportunities and also contribute towards the development of our people.

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To Poppa Wattie: You always bring us together and I value your humour, your sharpness, your take on life, your wisdom and humility. You have been the

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[4] Māori terms will be explained by an English translation in parentheses on their first usage (with the exception of chapter headings which are self-explanatory). Thereafter, refer to Glossary. Macrons are used to indicate lengthening of vowel sounds for purposes of pronunciation, as per contemporary usage.

backbone of my journey and I treasure your presence in our lives. Mum, you give all your children such love and warmth and have taught us to hold our heads high. Thank you for your endless support with your mokopuna (grandchildren), and also juggling your work to help us. I am forever grateful. Dad, your love and dedication to us children and your mokopuna is immense and I thank you for always being there when we need. I thank Mike and Deb also for being there for us all. My beautiful sister Aroha, you have supported me through ups-and-downs and I thank you deeply. My little brother Tyson, you are so special, with your intuitive mind and caring nature, you mean the world to me.

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Te Waiohau Te Haara (TWT)	Agnes Daniels (AD)
Pearl Erstich (PE)	Kere Mahanga (KM)
Whare Hauwai (WH)	Martin Kaipo (MK)
Ross Smith (RS)	Ned Peita (NP)

From the bottom of my heart I thank you all deeply for sharing your time, experiences and knowledge and embellishing this project for the purpose of better understanding grief amongst offending and rangatahi (Māori youth). I value the connections with you all, which naturally extends beyond the parameters of this project. My hope is to represent as much of the beauty and richness of the kōrero (discussion, dialogue, conversation) you allowed me to hear to also inspire others with similar aspirations for our people. Thank you kindly for such an opportunity.

ABSTRACT

Māori youth (rangatahi) apprehension and recidivism rates are significantly higher in comparison to non-Māori, which impacts negatively on their health and well-being, as well as their whānau and wider communities. Unresolved grief is a possible factor which contributes to these high rates of offending, especially where troubled rangatahi do not have access to traditional grieving practices such as tangihanga (funeral rituals). This project seeks to establish a foundation for a larger project that gives voice to rangatahi offenders' experiences of grief. Toward this aim, the thesis interviewed Māori community leaders who have worked with youth offenders and their whānau in a variety of ways, who are also actively engaged in Te Ao Māori (the Māori world), and work amongst their communities. Their cultural competencies suggest they have had access to traditional grieving practices throughout their lives. A kaupapa Māori (Māori cultural ideologies) approach underpins this research project, using narrative inquiry to explore the kōrero of Māori community leaders. Focus lies with a particular interest in their personal experiences of grief; knowledge of traditional grieving rituals and practices; and their understanding and guidance for rangatahi offenders who may have limited access to traditional healing processes. The in-depth interviews were collected, and systematically analysed to produce texts of grief and hope.

Through interviewing Māori community leaders and acknowledging their role as facilitators of knowledge, a rich foundation was established to enable development of the subsequent project in a space of safe guidance. The leaders move back and forth from Te Ao Māori to Te Ao Hurihuri (the modern world) in a way that provides them with the resources required to be successful in their roles, and able to create positive development amongst our rangatahi and their whānau. By connecting past wisdoms with present circumstances, a forum can be created in which we can reflect on our current roles and relationships with rangatahi offenders. It may then be possible to help create a future where rangatahi offenders are nurtured and empowered to create positive futures for themselves.

PREFACE

Ridling (1994) defines grief as a natural response to loss of any kind, a process that shares universal and unique elements. A young person's emotional, intellectual, behavioural and developmental stage is important to how they process grief, and this is impacted on by their social location. To me, grief is a term which can be stretched, pulled, and twisted in a number of ways to represent the many different means in which a person behaves, feels, perceives, interacts, responds and displays their experiences of having lost somebody or something important to them.

My first loss was at the age of seven, having learned that my Nanny was in hospital and her body was beginning to weaken. My aunties and uncles arrived from overseas and other parts of the country to comfort one another and become one at a time of uncertainty; an inevitable part of life, however unexpected at this particular time. Everyday life slowed down, school and work routines for my family were paused. We all shared our affection with one another and spent all our energies and time at the hospital. I had been to tangihanga before, but this is my earliest memory of grief or for that matter, loss.

I had no control over the situation and just sat behind the adults watching and listening carefully. There were tears, but also laughter. Stories were shared and you could feel the aroha (unconditional love, compassion) in the room. This was my Nanny who took pictures of me on my first day at school, who took me to collect pipi (cockles) out at Shakespeare beach, who would come and pick me up for the weekends and have brand new Strawberry Shortcake colouring-in books and new felt tips, just for me. And here she was lying on the hospital bed unable to make eye contact with me, unable to embrace me. Her body was starting to go numb and she could not feel our touch but knew that we were all there. It was nearly her time to go.

She was talking in te reo Māori (Māori language) which I barely heard her do, so it was foreign to my ear, but comforting to my heart. She was telling her deceased father to wait for her. He was at the end of her bed with his rākau calling for her to go to him. My Nanny was the pōtiki (youngest child) of her whānau but had been whāngai (adopted, adoptee, feed) to an educated Pākehā (of European descent) whānau in Auckland, who also provided her the tools of mainstream education and the western world. Her father and whānau were here to greet her.

My aunty and uncle from Australia had not yet arrived, however, my Nanny was holding on to see them. She then told us they were here at the hospital walking down a hallway. Soon after they entered the room, my Nanny passed over to the spiritual world. We all knew she was with her parents and no longer in any physical pain. However, the pain and the hurt for all those left were evident. Where had my Nanny gone?

Decisions were to be made around where Nanny would be buried and her children pulled together to challenge other whanaunga[5] (relatives), asserting their voices, their desires and what they felt necessary and right for their mother, my Nanny.

The first night we spent at a local Auckland marae (Māori community facility), which I remember being situated at the top of this strange hill. I felt quite distant from my Nanny as many people from afar came and crowded around her coffin. Seeing my Nanny in a coffin at the end of the wharenui (meeting house) was unusual. I was frightened. I couldn't quite register at that time that she was no longer physically with us, to move and talk. I remember night falling and a light white veil being placed over her face as if she was asleep in her coffin. I slept on a mattress between my parents and could not allow my eyes to look towards the coffin. However, once I was able to finally fall asleep, I dreamt. I dreamt that my Nanny was trying to get up and talk to me. Although she was half-way across the marae she was extremely close to me. I was scared of all I

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[5] A common practice where branches of the whānau may argue for the deceased to be buried in their area, as a gesture of aroha and respect, and an indication of the mana of the deceased.

didn't know and I did not want her to be dead. She was trying to get my attention. Could nobody else see she was actually trying to wake up and that she was able to talk and move around? How did my Nanny know so many people?

This was my Nanny and we had a strong and unique bond. I am her second eldest mokopuna and the eldest in New Zealand. My mother was the pōtiki, so Nanny was a big part of our lives.

I then remember the long windy road trip back up north near Cape Reinga. A hard turn right, just past the last set of shops. I tried my hardest not to look down the long, steep cliffs, as we swerved around the narrow gravel roads reaching full turbulence. What was this place? There were no houses; there was greenery everywhere, farm animals, mountains and finally the marae, which sits by the ocean. Parengarenga Harbour - beautiful white sand, pearl-blue waters, a lonely marae, horses, gorse and gravel. This is where my Nanny was born and went to school. We were taking her home.

My Nanny is buried on the top of the hill overlooking this astounding harbour. The place is breath-taking. I know in my heart she is at peace and to this day is very much involved in our lives. She is looking after us all. I miss my Nanny every day, but I treasure my connection with her. She is with me all the time and I now feel connected to her, particularly at times of celebration, but also at times of need.

Grief is a lifetime journey and does not need to be an ongoing negative experience. However, this is different for everybody depending on cultural backgrounds, religious beliefs, age, gender and other indicators. I believe where there is aroha there will always be some form of grief or sadness. All these emotions can change in intensity, shape and form, depending on the other relationships and experiences in one's life. The experience of expressing and sharing my grief emotions with my whānau was natural and all I know. My whānau give each other strength and when one member is low or struggling to cope with their hurt or grief, the rest of the whānau draws their strength together to help that member at need. This has been my experience of grief throughout my life. Losing my Nanny physically created awareness of my

relationship with her spiritually. This in turn, I believe, has prepared me to manage and work through the other losses which later followed. I thank my younger brother, Kane William Fletcher, for giving me back what I had lost. His loss reaffirmed our whānau traditions and values bringing us closer together, triggering new understandings and aspirations of the world in which we live.

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WĀHANGA TUATAHI: FOUNDATIONS

*"From seeds sown in ancient times comes new growth to sustain new life – a growth that derives its sustenance from love; love for self, love for others, and for all that surrounds us."***[6]**

Introduction

Rangatahi offenders repeatedly present in Child Youth and Family services, or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Youth offending categories in Aotearoa/New Zealand (A/NZ)[7] have either remained stable or declined according to Ministry of Justice (2010) official records for 1992 to 2008. There is, however, an exception with violent offending which has increased to nearly 40%, raising serious concerns about the driving influences behind the shift (Ministry of Justice, 2010; Mooney, 2010). What is also of concern is that rangatahi are still over-represented in New Zealand youth crime; although Māori are only 15% of the general population, rangatahi make up 45% of police apprehensions. Furthermore, although these patterns are generally complex in nature rangatahi offenders are often stereotyped and viewed with prejudice, hindering society's ability to recognise the true nature and profile of such patterns (Mooney, 2010).

My recent work experiences involving both fields reveal a consistent theme or pattern of youth who emerge from troubled lifestyles and struggle to cope with the challenges and processes of government systems within our communities. As shown above, statistics in youth offending (and mental health) for Māori youth are alarming and represent this area of concern. Many theories consider the impact of colonisation and oppression upon Māori people, including rangatahi who have offended or continue to offend.

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[6] George, 2012, p. 45.
[7] Also written as 'Aotearoa', 'New Zealand' or NZ.

My interest therefore lies primarily in the area of youth offending, particularly with Māori. I would like to share my story, how I understand the young people I have worked with and will continue to work with, embracing the hope and passion of guiding them to address their individual needs, their hurt, tell their stories, so that they have the opportunity to discover both their inner and outer strength to realise their full potentials. In doing so, I am mindful of the stereotyping, the language employed to deal with 'rangatahi offenders' or those who meet criteria for conduct disorder or oppositional defiant disorder, commonly used in the New Zealand mental health system based on the *Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*: DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

What works for other young people internationally, may indeed work for our own people in Aotearoa (Nathan, 2009). However, we need to be continuously researching and exploring what works and what gaps exist in our own communities, hapū (sub-tribe) and iwi (tribe) if we are to be better equipped and effective in achieving positive outcomes for the future generations. We need to encourage our networks to utilise our own practical resources and start building on the programmes, wānanga (learning forums), activities and knowledge that already exist for our whānau and young people.

Durie (2009) is interested in hearing the voices of Māori communities or tribal authorities who are responding to Māori youth crime as to how they feel we can overcome the difficulties that lie with funding issues and sustaining effective programmes. He recommends the development of an independent agency which could assist Māori groups in developing their own programmes, but with wider government guidelines for the purpose of measuring and monitoring progress and success providing an evidential base to determine the continuation of funding.

One significant area of interest I have regarding our rangatahi who have offended, is the way in which they experience grief. This derives from the consistent pattern emerging amongst this group of youth I have had the

privilege to work with. I have noticed that there has usually been some form of bereavement, the experiences of the loss of somebody close to them amongst their friends or family, or having lost something of significance. Sometimes historical background information or disclosure from the youth indicates a significant loss, or cumulative losses. The reactions may be more detectable through a range of behaviours such as anger, suicidal thoughts, substance abuse, gang association, isolation from wider whānau, or retaliation against society and authorities. Consequently, the underlying grief or losses are either undetected or masked by externalised behaviours, resulting in therapeutic plans or restorative justice processes that may address surface needs rather than underlying issues.

Mooney (2010) highlights that youth offenders within the youth justice system are prone to experiencing emotional distress and high rates of psychosocial impairments, with over-representation in health, mental health and substance abuse problems strongly associated with recidivism which can significantly impede upon treatment plans if not considered. This includes bereavement issues and ensuring these factors are considered. We cannot automatically assume that grief therapy or grief work is the best line for treatment however, particularly for rangatahi who may have different experiences and drivers underlying their offending and ways of coping that differ to non-Maori. In order to address this area respectfully and with sensitivity to rangatahi, it seems appropriate to seek guidance from Māori community leaders to extend our knowledge and ensure that we are not contributing to any unnecessary distress or harm to rangatahi who have been touched with both grief and offending issues. The offending is problematic to society; however, those who are offending are still part of our society, and need to be treated with dignity, respect, and aroha.

Therefore, this research project was designed to develop a platform with Māori community leaders who hold the knowledge of traditional Māori grief processes and who have experience working with troubled rangatahi to bring into view solutions for addressing rangatahi offending. The overall aim of this project is to

raise awareness of the different aspects and understandings of grief for Māori and the importance of considering how this understanding is necessary when working amongst troubled rangatahi if we are to work towards narrowing the gaps and producing positive Māori youth development. Based on the assumption that every young person has their own strengths and deserves an opportunity to shift their lifestyles away from the offending, I believe the underlying needs of many troubled rangatahi are being disregarded in the current systems.

In our community there are often negative stereotypes or attitudes towards this particular cohort, which is unacceptable. This research then, also considers the importance of bringing this knowledge to troubled rangatahi themselves, in a safe and thoroughly prepared manner to listen to their personal experiences of grief, offending and their solutions towards working through these experiences in a way they feel works for them. We need to look to our Māori community leaders and start considering the remarkable work they provide to our rangatahi behind the scenes, and support them in sustaining and further developing their programmes.

Research Aims

The key aims of this study are:

1. To explore Māori community leaders' experiences of grief and traditional grieving practices through their personal encounters of bereavement and roles within their whānau, marae, hapū, iwi and communities.
2. To explore their experiences of working with rangatahi offenders and/or their whānau who have experienced grief.
3. To identify their solutions to improving understanding, engagement and interventions with rangatahi offenders who may also be dealing with grief issues.
4. To establish an experiential knowledge base to contribute to developing a framework to continue further research with rangatahi offenders who experience grief.

5. To disseminate this information locally and nationally, for the purpose of informing policy, planning and practice in the area of youth justice and mental health for Māori youth.

To address these aims, I firstly surveyed international and national literature on grief, youth offending, and the importance of Māori knowledge and Māori leaders in addressing these issues affecting our rangatahi. The two analysis chapters mine the rich kōrero of the Māori community leaders interviewed in order to firstly understand better their personal and cultural grief experiences, and then to explore their views of rangatahi offending and rangatahi development. As noted above, this current project seeks to provide a platform through the kōrero of the leaders, from which the missing voices of rangatahi can be heard. In the silencing of their grief, our rangatahi have displaced their pain into activities such as criminal and other behaviours that negate their positive development.

The research question therefore asks:

> ***How can Māori leaders inform and improve our engagement with and understanding of, the grief experiences and offending behaviours of our rangatahi?***

This project brings Māori community leaders to the centre of the research process, acknowledging and honouring their wisdom and other contributions to our society and culture.

Chapter Synopses

This introduction chapter, *Wāhanga Tuatahi,* outlines the project's aims and objectives, and rationale for researching rangatahi offenders' grief experiences through the kōrero of Māori community leaders. It provides context to the overall objective of better understanding rangatahi offenders experiences of grief in contemporary society. The project argues that before we enter research with rangatahi on grief and offending, we need to seek guidance from Māori community leaders working amongst these groups, to support us on the current

research journey, and prepare us for those to come in the future. In this way we may identify solutions for working more effectively and with better understandings of the diversity, uniqueness and untapped potential that exists amongst our rangatahi.

Chapter Two/Wāhanga Tuarua firstly reviews the wider literature which exists for Western perspectives of grief and youth offending. There are similarities to the experiences of Māori youth of A/NZ, for example, with issues of identity and displacement. Through the effects of colonisation, many rangatahi have become disconnected from their tribal roots, therefore lacking cultural knowledge and familiarity with cultural practices. Therefore also of importance in the literature review were New Zealand perspectives on rangatahi, youth offending, and grief. Grief is one visible area in which our rangatahi are subject to further displacement or disconnection from mātauranga Māori, and may not know traditional customs, such as tangihanga on the marae.

There is however, a noticeable gap in New Zealand research for the relationship between rangatahi offenders and co-existing or underlying grieving processes. Furthermore, grief or loss seems to be an area that mental health services and youth offending services do not consciously attribute in terms of interventions, and therefore better understanding could contribute to more effective interventions as well as reducing the high Māori youth offending rates.

The centrality and efficacy of mātauranga Māori is also discussed, and the roles of Māori community leaders or kaumātua[8]. To support the development of our youth, we as practitioners, community members, teachers, parents, sports coaches and so on can better realise the importance of our Māori community leaders in understanding our rangatahi and the connections (or lack thereof) to our traditional practices. A result could be better ways of engagement with

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[8] One of the Māori community leaders – TWT – established early on a preference to be called 'Māori community leaders' rather than 'kaumātua'. Others were in agreement, as an acknowledgement that not all leaders are kaumātua, and an indication of their humility: "The gentleness of humility is our cloak" (Brailsford, 2001, p. 8).

rangatahi to empower them to take control of their lives by making better decisions and move towards positive development.

Chapter Three/Wāhanga Tuatoru depicts the methodology employed for this research project. Given that the main contributors to this project were Māori community leaders, it was relevant that a kaupapa Māori approach to research be utilised. Engaging with Māori community leaders in the first instance, is itself a kaupapa Māori approach, as it recognises their centrality to Māori society, and honours the knowledge which they carry. A kaupapa Māori approach recognises also the privilege that I, a young Māori woman of Ngāpuhi and Ngāti Kuri descent, have been accorded. It is in relationship with the Māori community leaders, and the knowledge they impart, that the richness of the research outcomes emerge. A kaupapa Māori approach, therefore, also holds fast to ethical practices that maintain the safety of all participants, and most importantly, maintains the integrity of the knowledge.

As this project gathered stories from Māori community leaders, narrative inquiry seemed a logical choice of methodology to pair with kaupapa Māori. Narrative inquiry enlivens stories based on experience, and can be used in a range of ways to represent lived experience. It recognises cultural and social diversity and the different contexts which influence the way people represent their worlds to others, and can highlight transformations which occur when knowledge is shared between speaker and listener, writer and reader. Traditionally oral cultures, Māori are noted as storytellers, using stories to explain their perspectives of the world to current and future generations. There is therefore a harmony between kaupapa Māori research and narrative inquiry, which provided an appropriate context within which to analyse the kōrero of the Maori community leaders.

Chapter Four/Wāhanga Tuawhā is the first analysis chapter which presents the findings of the research. The eight Māori community leaders who participated in this project are introduced and their kōrero is organised into different themes representing a collaboration of their individual experiences, wisdoms, and perspectives on grief. These emerge from their understandings of a Māori

worldview, unique to their upbringings. The themes begin with personal grief experiences that are often also within the context of their roles. The leaders tell stories of traditional practices, some of which have been transformed in our contemporary world.

Their talk expands to loosely encompass the four dimensions of Te Whare Tapa Whā[9] (Durie, 1998) – the physical, intellectual/emotional, spiritual and whānau dimensions. Grief is explained as an experience that engages all the senses, including those beyond this world we see and touch. Religious influences come into play also, and those leaders who speak of them easily interweave those beliefs with Māori worldviews. They talk of laughter as well as tears, and how Māori use humour to strengthen relationships as well as release the emotions of grief. What emerges most strongly however, is the integral importance of grief as the expression of one of the pivotal human experiences. They also show what beauty Māori culture has to offer in its grieving and funeral practices, and how these can be of benefit to rangatahi who require assistance in this area.

Chapter Five/Wāhanga Tuarima is the second analysis chapter, and this focuses on rangatahi. While the entry into this project was 'rangatahi offenders and their experiences of grief', the Māori community leaders show that grief is a universal challenge affecting all our youth. The leaders sought to widen the scope of their lens, to show the value of our rangatahi, whether offenders or not. They considered that their mahi (work, activity) was geared around giving the rangatahi the knowledge and values necessary to create positive pathways into the future.

Rangatahi offending is an expression of the distress our rangatahi feel for a variety of reasons, and the Māori community leaders considered that empowering the rangatahi to be part of their own solutions was vital to the success of any venture. But they must also be nurtured within strong networks in order to achieve this, and therefore part of the solution must also be utilising

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[9] Although not explicitly used as a model of analysis, the elements of Te Whare Tapa Whā are easily recognisable within this current work, and therefore worth acknowledging the work of Professor Sir Mason Durie. Te Whare Tapa Whā is a well-known model used in a variety of ways.

all the necessary factors, including the leaders within our community. The leaders spoke often of the fundamental importance of connections and belonging for the rangatahi, as well as the wisdom inherent within mātauranga Māori. The rangatahi must be embedded within relationships and aroha which then provide opportunities for hope and positive development.

Chapter Six/Wāhanga Tuaono summarises the research project findings and presents recommendations for working with rangatahi offenders and rangatahi who present in mental health and/or youth justice services, and experiencing grief issues. This chapter re-engages with the research question and aims to tell the story of the research journey in returning to its purpose. Limitations and highlights of the project are also discussed. The recommendations raise awareness of the responsibility of working in collaboration with Māori community leaders and rangatahi themselves for the purpose of improving wellbeing for rangatahi and their whānau. They also suggest further research that opens wider the spaces within which Māori voices can be heard. Finally, I reiterate the beauty of our culture and the inherent wisdom within it, which the Māori community leaders elucidated in their kōrero.

Conclusion

This project argues that before we enter research with rangatahi offenders, we need to seek guidance from Māori community leaders who currently work at grass-roots level with our rangatahi, and have access to both mātauranga Māori and the realities in which our people have lived and continue to live. They are viewed as leaders amongst the community because they live and breathe Māori realities and currently work for the benefit of our people. They hold onto tikanga Māori (Māori customary values) and value the taonga (cultural treasures) our ancestors have passed down to us and use this knowledge to empower our people.

Rangatahi are unique individuals; however they also belong to whānau, hapū, iwi and communities, where our leaders have the skills, knowledge and patience to guide and understand our future leaders. They have overcome

colonisation and oppression, and continue to forge through the many barriers or challenges that arise, with their passion and connection to their whakapapa, their heritage, their heart for our culture. Nathan (2009) and Ware (2009) both advise that in order to interact or influence rangatahi, we need to first understand them and the world in which they live. Additionally, if we can value the importance of mātauranga Māori and the role of our Māori community leaders, and the ways in which culture can influence our wellbeing and health, then we are better positioned to interact and support rangatahi in exploring their experiences of grief underlying their offending. This can then offer further options for more promising and fulfilling lifestyles, away from crime and government systems.

WĀHANGA TUARUA: LITERATURE REVIEW

Ko te manu e kai ana i te miro, nōna te ngāhere. Ko te manu e kai ana i te mātauranga, nōna te ao – The bird that partakes of the miro berry reigns in the forest. The bird that partakes of the power of knowledge has access to the world.[10]

Introduction

In the previous chapter I argued for addressing the relationship between offending and experiences of grief through an understanding of the kōrero of Māori community leaders, privileging a specifically Māori epistemology for making sense of the research question. This chapter reviews the literature that informs the research and practice of psychology in mental health and justice systems for rangatahi offenders of New Zealand. I review the international perspectives on grief and on youth offending, and the link between these. I return to the relationships between Māori youth offending, mental health, followed by Te Ao Māori perspectives on grieving practices, both traditional and contemporary, the legitimacy of mātauranga Māori and the role of kaumātua or Māori community leaders for providing knowledge to Māori people, including rangatahi offenders.

International Perspectives on Grief

Many theories and models exist in international literature surrounding grief, mourning and bereavement. Cait (2011) discusses the works of Sigmund Freud, one of the first psychoanalysts who had a major influence on the development of psychology. He theorised grief could only be resolved through an individual retreating their energy from the lost object and reinvesting their energy in to a different object. Cait (2011) argues "He believed that as a person was

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[10] A well-known Māori whakataukī (proverbial saying).

convinced of the pleasures of being alive, these pleasures could surpass the satisfaction of attachment to the deceased" (p. 2). Later theorists such as Furmen (1984) and Volkan (1981) further posited that identifying with the deceased indicated unresolved grief and that successful mourning involved disengaging with the deceased, releasing past ties (cited in Cait, 2011).

Hendry's (2009) analysis of the grief literature cites Lindenmann's (1994) work on acute grief, linking this phenomenon with mental health issues, particularly depression and hostility. Bowlby (1980, cited in Hendry, 2009) introduced attachment theory to understanding grief arguing that grief is a response to some form of loss, loss of attachment or loss of a relationship, placing emphasis on the disruption of personality functioning as a consequence.

Worden developed the term 'tasks of mourning', indicating a process of mourning that needed to be worked through prior to the completion of grief (in Hendry, 2009). Such tasks involved accepting the truth of the loss, moving through the grief emotions, adjusting to everyday life without the deceased and reinvesting in a new life (Worden, in Hendry, 2009). Therefore, the process of mourning is necessary for positive health outcomes and that people require an opportunity to grieve so that balance can be restored are consistent themes throughout the literature (Hendry, 2009).

However, the processes of grief that depend on stages of progression bound by time, have been challenged by those who propose the nature of the grieving process is continuous and evolving (Cait, 2011). Dyregrov and Dyregrov (2008) argue that the assumptions within Western theories and stages of grief limit our understandings, and pathologise the experience of those who do not heal soon enough. The previous assumption towards gradual realisation of the loss and gradual detachment from the deceased is not supported by current research which suggests there are numerous ways in which to grieve, rather than being encouraged to gradually detach and accept the reality of the death, of more importance is assisting the bereaved to construct and uphold internal memories of their loved ones (Dyregrov & Dyregrov, 2008).

Murphey, Johnson and Lohan (2002) researched parents who had lost a child through death in their second decade of loss, and found that long-term duration grief existed, with particular relevance to significant dates, annual seasons or events (in Dyregrov & Dyregrov, 2008). Cohen and Mannarino (2004) also acknowledge the importance of the bereaved "being able to access the person in memory in a manner that is positive and beneficial to integrating the death in his or her total life experience" (p. 255).

Morgan (1995) has argued that the dominant construction of grief in Western culture privileges specific stages and is supported through policy and legislation that specifies appropriate leave and in mental health services, a time to have moved on. These normative expectations or processes around bereavement are also produced through an individual's cultural lens (Hayslip, 2003; Rosenblatt, 2001, in Cait, 2011). The expressions and manner in which an individual grieves, is reflective of their membership of culture, social community and religion (Kastenbaum, 1981; Ridling, 1994). More recently there have been multiple challenges to normative expectations of bereavement, suggesting that they are constructed through the cultural lens of our research and practice where Western understandings have become legitimated as "universal truth". Despite such recent challenges and the development of research and practice acknowledging the evolving cultural context in which grief reactions function, there still exists a focus on the negative symptomology of the bereaved rather than the necessary examination of the influences and diversity of culturally-specific grieving practices and adaptive coping strategies (Munro, 2002; Stearns & Knapp, 1996). This transmits to the research group, rangatahi offenders, placing value onto the evolving cultural context of grief, wider influences of society and youth development and shifts away from focusing upon the individual's negative symptoms of grief towards seeking the true nature of grief for rangatahi and Māori people.

Two themes that have been found to be consistent throughout the literature are the processes of transition and disruption (Ribbens-McCarthy, 2006). Adolescence is already a significant period of development and transformation, evident in much of the psychological literature (Balk, 1995; Christ, 2000;

Fleming & Adolph, 1986; Gordon, 1986; Rosen, 1991; Silverman, 2000) where adolescents negotiate both closeness and distance from their parents. To experience loss during this time "may hold distinct significance for their development of self" (Cait, 2011, p. 5). Crenshaw and Garbarino (2008) suggest that the presentation of cumulative disruptions with secure attachments for an adolescent can take the form of buried or unresolved grief; an underlying emotional force. And if this grief is avoided or unattended to, it can guide the adolescent towards a defiant lifestyle, accompanied by self-destructive or self-medicating behaviours (Crenshaw & Garbarino, 2008).

Briggs (2002) further adds that young people who experience losses throughout their childhood or adolescence, not only through bereavement but also the experiences of an absent figure, an unavailable, neglectful or abusive parent or caregiver, makes it an extremely difficult task for this group to maintain a sense of identity, integrity and continue to develop whilst enduring the grieving process. Briggs likens the adolescent transitional period to adulthood to that of a temporary outsider, where they are at an interface between their family and social worlds, able to move in and out of the two. The development of meaningful relationships facilitates their self-awareness, self-belief and a shift towards their competence in life. However, disruptions such as grief and loss could counteract such a transition, making it difficult for the young person to tolerate the intense emotions which go along with such experiences. The acting-out and delinquent behavior of the adolescent is an expression of resisting or is a way of offsetting the underlying pain (Briggs, 2002).

International Perspectives on Youth Offending and Mental Health

Offending behaviour differs to criminal behaviour in that it is less severe, consisting of one or two minor criminal offences as opposed to persistent and more severe offending behaviours (Liabo & Richardson, 2007). Such behaviours may include school truancy, absconding from home, cruelty to animals, and cruelty to peers at excessive levels, defiant provocative behaviours which do

not align with socially accepted understandings of normal childhood mischief or common youth rebellious behaviours (Liabo & Richardson, 2007). Liabo and Richardson discuss the offending behaviour of youth in the context of conduct disorder, which they explain usually involves behaviours which infringe age-appropriate social expectations. Kazdin (1995, in Liabo & Richardson) provides the different terms used to describe conduct disorder including antisocial behaviour, acting out, externalising behaviours, disruptive behaviours and conduct disorder.

Briggs (2008) argues that "psychiatry has colonized the notion of delinquency under the term 'conduct disorders'" (p. 114). There has been an increase of conduct disorders over time, and Briggs points out that 'conduct disorder' originally resulted from social circumstances such as poverty and exclusion, the resulting behaviours having been medicalised. Briggs also says that "treating delinquency as adolescent and therefore developmental behavior, in context, provides the capacity to link experiences and behavior as a psychosocial or mental health intervention." (p. 114).

The DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association, 2000) specifies that these particular behaviours have to have exhibited for a period of at least six months prior to a diagnosis of conduct disorder or oppositional defiant disorder, if the behaviours are of a lesser extent in nature and exclude extreme aggressive or anti-social acts (Liabo & Richardson, 2007). The DSM-IV also differentiates between early onset, determined by the exhibited symptoms prior to the age of 10 years, and late onset marked by an absence of symptoms being absent prior to 10 years of age (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

The aetiology of conduct disorders are complex as there are usually many different risk factors, and mechanisms on different levels for the young person. A large meta-analysis looking at family factors which correlate with conduct disorder identified four paradigms; neglect paradigm, conflict paradigm, defiant behaviours/attitudes paradigm and disruption paradigm (in Liabo & Richardson, 2007). Young people may have many of the risk factors associated with conduct disorder, but have protective factors too, also known as resilience.

Resilience suggests an ability to resist negative influences regardless of being raised in unfavourable circumstances. Liabo and Richardson argues that the most effective and promising interventions for young people include building resistance and helping them realise their potential rather than engaging in activities that will be harmful to themselves and their environment.

Risk factors have been identified as correlates of youth offending which range from demographic, economic, cultural, psychological, sociological, and educational bounds (Zampese, 2003). Antiss (2003) utilizes the work of Bonta (1996) to focus his research on the identification of criminogenic needs to formulate treatment. In this way, a criminogenic need is a characteristic of an offender that can be targeted and modified to reduce future offending.

A review of both the international and New Zealand literature on criminogenic factors suggests some agreement in terms of factors that contribute to criminogenic needs: these include few social ties, antisocial peers or companions, family problems, treatment barriers, poor problem solving and self-management skills, aggressiveness and anger, substance abuse, lack of positive cultural identity, overcrowding or transient living conditions (in Antiss, 2003). These factors are based within a general offender population rather than indigenous youth and may differ with the age of offenders (Lipsey & Dezron, 1998) especially where young people between the ages of 14 and 24 are responsible for 38% of crimes against other people, 35% of violent crime and 49% of property offences in New Zealand (Soboleva, Dazakova & Chong, 2006).

What is held in common across most studies is the assumption that the best intervention is directly on the offending behaviours, based on those that are features of conduct disorder. Cognitive and/or behaviour therapy approaches have been found to be effective across a range of programmes (Lipsey, Chapman & Landenberger, 2001; Redondo, Sanchez-Meca, & Garrido, 1999). The most successful programmes target the direct causes of offending behaviour rather than underlying causes (Antiss, 2003; Izzo & Ross, 1990; Kurtz, 2002; Redondo et. al., 1999). Direct causes range from the young

person's antisocial behaviours, attitude, lack of non-criminal role models, poor problem solving skills and any family issues.

Andrews and Bonta (2006) argue that estimating the incidence of mental health disorders amongst criminal offenders is difficult partly through a lack of clearly defined criteria between legal and mental health providers. Therefore, the two major social systems responsible for this group vary in their understandings of mental disorder. Andrews and Bonta point out that the most influential classification systems for mental disorders, the DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association, 2000), has provided a useful set of criteria for research on the incidence of mental disorder among criminal populations, internationally. Research has shown that up to 90% of offenders met criteria for a DSM-IV diagnosis. They found that Axis I diagnoses such as schizophrenia, and clinical syndromes were relatively infrequent. The most frequent diagnosis was Antisocial Personality Disorder with the criteria including a "minimum age of 18, history of a conduct disorder (e.g., truancy and uncontrollable at home), dishonesty, irresponsibility in social and work settings, law breaking and lack of remorse" (Andrews & Bonta, 2006, p. 422). These results are important to questions of youth offending given that a history of conduct disorder is a major risk factor.

Liabo and Richardson (2007) identify a considerable association between health and youth crime and point to the lack of mental health involvement in addressing the youth offending behaviours. Liabo and Richardson argue that research has demonstrated a link between conduct disorder with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or depressions in youth offending populations. Both Hagell (2002) and Department of Health (2004) highlight the high incidence of mental health illnesses in the youth offending population, citing evidence from a UK study that found that over 50% of remanded male youth and over 30% of sentenced male youth offenders met criteria for a mental health diagnosis.

Rutter, Giller and Hagell (1998) shows conduct disorders are the most prevailing mental health issue for adolescence, alongside increased rates in

suicidal behaviours, substance abuse, depressive disorders and antisocial disorders. A large meta-analysis which explored the correlation between family factors and conduct disorder identified four predictors for the development of such disorders; neglect, conflict, defiant behaviour/attitudes, and disruption (Liabo & Richardson, 2007). Finlay and Jones (2000) studied a small group of UK youth offenders who opted to participate in a bereavement programme and found that unresolved grief, increased participants risk of re-offending and their dependence on substances to deal with grief feelings and suicidality.

Manchester Youth Justice Trust (2001), in their work with youth offenders, argued for the need to explore earlier bereavement and experiences of loss. They argued that professionals, when addressing offending behaviour amongst adolescence, often overlook such events, The link between offending and grief was found to be 22% in the study by Liddle et al (2002) and was found to be a significant issue in research on the history of serious drug offenders (Allen et al., 2003). While such studies are inconsistent and differ in their methodological assumptions, especially in their focus on grief, they do indicate the need for further research (Lutzke et al., 1997).

Research that specifically addresses the implication of loss or disruption on a child's early life has found a correlation between a range of loss and 'delinquent behaviour'. According to Wadsworth (1979), bereavement has a long recognisable clinical history as a background feature of delinquent behaviour. Wadsworth found that a number of disruptions "of parent-child relationship[s] in early life, through parental death, divorce or separation, was associated with later delinquency, with unacceptable kinds of offences" (p. 115). However, offending behaviour was more likely to occur with disruption (separation and divorce). Wells and Rankin (1991) conducted a meta-analysis and found evidence for both divorce/separation and parental death as correlated with delinquency at similar levels. Farrington (1996) reviewed the youth offending research and while he found support for family disruption correlated with offending behaviour, he found parental death to be insignificant. An identified problem in the research is the focus of loss of a parent rather than a father or a

mother, and the loss of a father is more likely to produce risk (Ayers et al., 2003).

Hendry's (2009) narrative review on grief and offending indicates that limited research exists which specifically addresses grief experiences of an imprisoned individual or the impact of unresolved grief issues on reoffending. This is problematic for inmates who are already institutionally disempowered, adding a further complication for inmates grieving a death or loss in comparison to a person not imprisoned. Consequently, Hendry challenges those involved to identify grief and facilitate the normal grieving process and reducing the risk of disenfranchised or complicated grief. While international perspectives are important and can inform national developments, of great importance are national perspectives for those of Māori in particular.

Aotearoa/New Zealand Perspectives of Offending and Mental Health

Mooney (2010) strategically demonstrates the timeless reality and dogged perception our leaders can have towards antisocial youth behaviours, attributing youth problems as problems of youth, rather than society:

> "I see no hope for the future of our people if they are dependent on the frivolous youth of today, for certainly all youth are reckless beyond words…" (Heisoid – 8th Century BC);

> "This wasted potential is there for us all to see…rather than being the hope for our future these young people represent our future fears." (John Key - National Party leader and future Prime Minister of New Zealand, January, 2008). (p. 1)

The disproportionate representation of Māori in criminal justice statistics has been well documented in New Zealand with the disproportion depending on two explanations: there is an institutional bias within the legal system, and the effects of adverse psycho-social factors that form patterns of risk for criminal conduct. The key indicators are linked to international research with a focus on family context, individual developmental problems, education deficits and the emergence of developmental disorders, in particular conduct disorder, early onset antisocial behaviour and alcohol and other drug misuse (Department of

Corrections, 2007; Ministry of Justice, 2010). More specifically, Māori young people are more likely than other racial groups to be apprehended, prosecuted and receive severe outcomes such as orders for supervision either in the community or a youth justice residence, and be more exposed to the risk factors identified (Ministry of Justice, 2010). The current government focus to address the over-representation of Māori is a relationship between health, social support and education as an intervention to reduce disadvantage (risk). What this focus does not address is the ongoing institutional bias that affects poor outcomes.

While there has been a clear link between mental health and youth offending in New Zealand, services aimed toward adolescent offenders have remained somewhat distinct from mental health services (Carr, 2006).

Māori youth offending

The high rate of incarceration in New Zealand places it third in ranking in the OECD. International research shows that ethnic minorities and indigenous youth across most Western countries are over-represented in the criminal justices system (Mihaere, 2007). As at March 2011, Māori make up 51.2 % of the prison population (Department of Corrections, 2011). While these statistics may provide evidence that Māori incarceration rates are high, they do not pay attention to how these rates might be understood through the particular institutional history and effects of colonisation that inform our justice system. Jackson (1988) argues that this history of assimilation and cultural destruction have led to poor outcomes as the legal system gained social control over Māori. The results for Māori are the consequences of the cultural assumptions of Pākehā (Durie, 2009, p. 36). Both Jackson (1998) and Mihaere (2007) have argued that one of the effects of imposing a Pākehā criminal justice system is the crime generative environment, marked by predominantly Māori youth - perhaps as resistance.

The processes of the legal system reinforce the dominant culture's institutional power. It has been well documented that the apprehension of Māori by police is significantly higher for Māori compared to non-Māori, which is not accounted for by self-reported offending (Carr, 2006). For rangatahi offenders, Maxwell, Robertson, Kingi, Morris, and Cunningham (2004) also found evidence supporting the claim that this group are more likely to come to police attention for less serious offences than non-Māori and are more likely to be referred to youth courts rather than a family group conference. On average, Māori youth are three times more likely to be apprehended, prosecuted and convicted than non-Maori youth (Owen, 2001; Mihaere, 2007). This has detrimental effects to the young person as well as the wider groups in which they belong.

Since the introduction of the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act (1989) there has been some attempt to integrate both indigenous and western justice systems in response to the needs of Māori (Maxwell & Morris, 1991). The Act explicitly acknowledges cultural diversity and consensus amongst all those involved including the whole community was part of the process of restoration as opposed to individual retributive measures. Exploration of wider issues underlying offending behaviour with a focus on restoration and harmony necessarily accounts for social relationships. Such processes existed in resolution prior to colonisation in New Zealand and were known as 'tikanga o ngā hara', law of wrongdoing.

Tohunga (expert) or kaumātua would represent the victim and offender as well as their families when attempting to restore balance. The families would also take responsibility in addressing their young person's wrongdoing and encourage them to take accountability and develop a plan to redress the imbalance. Traditional practices were negatively affected, and excluded through the colonialism of the British Empire (Jackson, 1988; Pratt, 1991). Decisions affecting Māori in areas like social welfare and criminal justice were made by the dominant culture through their weapons, laws, and larger numbers, which have contributed to the weakening of traditional structures. Maxwell et al. (2004) found that a larger proportion of rangatahi offenders represented those who were marginalised from their local hapū, iwi or community, suggesting that

the community and sense of belonging plays a significant role. However, a follow up evaluation of the effectiveness of FGCs demonstrated the ongoing disadvantage for Māori youth in comparison to Pākehā in the FGC process. The attempt to translate indigenous justice processes in to government processes has been demonstrated to be unlikely to produce better outcomes for rangatahi in the context of the wider conflicting tensions evident in historical and current processes (Coombes & Te Hiwi, 2007; Maxwell et al., 2004; Morgan & Coombes, 2006). Borell (2005) argues that the process of negotiating understandings of specific positions and requirements within specific communities had demonstrated associated successes amongst youth in communities like South Auckland.

Despite similarities across offences, social background and risk factors, Māori youth remain more likely to appear before the court and receive harsher outcomes (Maxwell et al., 2004), which Tauri and Morris (1997) have argued is a problem or agreement between institutional outcome requirements and community knowledge, especially where institutional interests are most often measured through individual risk.

Research in communities where there is recognition of the over-representation of Māori in the community with regard to imprisonment, social welfare beneficiaries, CYFS clients, and mental health service users, seeks to understand the complexities of the experiences of our rangatahi. Those who are affected by the youth justice system, commonly have histories of sexual and physical abuse, ill health, dislocation of whānau and early mortality (Sanders & Munford, 2001). Borell (2005) identifies similar representations amongst South Auckland communities, acknowledging the high need for government assistance and interventions. These communities often generate media notoriety where their difference is represented as deficit, and supported by empirical research where measures of difference are drawn between Māori and non-Māori, repeatedly comprising difference through unjust and non-beneficial comparisons for Māori (Coombes & Te Hiwi, 2007; Irwin, 1994; Smith, 1995). Coombes and Te Hiwi (2007) argue that "deficit representations do not speak to the totality of our 'insider' experiences. They tell the experiences of communities, like ours,

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through foregrounding poverty, violence, crime and so on. Simultaneously, they reproduce unjust stereotypes, commonplaces, lived experiences and embodied effects" (p. 383).

Nathan (2009) argues that interventions based on criminogenic needs can work for rangatahi and their whānau. However, it is also necessary to understand cultural diversity and establish relationships with the local knowledge of the multiple histories that inform the context of the offending when addressing youth offenders' needs and developing effective pathways to wellness. Nathan suggests therefore that in order to understand rangatahi, you must know the world in which they live and is optimistic we can reduce rangatahi offending through drawing from the successful programmes currently available to addressing needs of Māori.

In a report produced by Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK) (2000) four culturally-specific factors that may increase risk of offending by rangatahi were identified; cultural identity, cultural tension, whānau dynamics, and whakawhanaungatanga (establishing and maintaining relationships). Despite a lack of empirical evidence measuring the accuracy of these risk factors, they are informed through the knowledge of the community. Māori members felt that agencies continued to rely on international research resulting in an imposition of external solutions that disempowered rangatahi and their communities. Mihaere (2007) argues that Māori cultural identity loss has a criminological relationship with the high incidence of Māori offending. Although there have been numerous attempts at promoting cultural identity in offender rehabilitation programmes, where rangatahi are understood as antisocial adolescents the relationship between cultural identity and offending does not take priority (Mihaere, 2007).

Singh and White (2000) argue there has been a lack of systematic evaluation on the effectiveness of standardised programmes to address the offending needs of indigenous people. They also identified that effective programmes for these groups were based on a holistic approach, which consisted of the involvement of people who were sensitive, considered as significant, such as family,

culturally appropriate and whom youth can connect to, alongside the incorporation of cultural resources. Effective programmes consisted of leaders who used positive affirmations, reinforcement, acceptance and who were viewed as holding mana in the community. They valued the importance of mātauranga Māori, histories and complex issues related to identity and taught rangatahi about traditional Māori values and how to apply them to modern society (Singh & White, 2000). Improving overall wellbeing and life skills were identified as preventative factors for criminal activity. Privileging tikanga (values), whanaungatanga, and tino rangatiratanga (autonomy) in the relationship with addressing the estrangement of youth and instilling a new sense of pride and belonging as being Māori were the most crucial features of the programme (Singh & White, 2000).

As Coombes and Te Hiwi (2007) have argued, it is an ethical obligation for psychologists in this field to respect, promote and encourage wellness in the community. This research seeks to understand the needs and aspirations of rangatahi through consultation and negotiation with Māori community leaders involved in community organisations and most importantly whānau, to begin this process. Poor cultural identity is one factor that is commonly understood as contributing to an over-representation of rangatahi in the area of youth crime (Department of Corrections, 2001, 2007, 2009, 2011; Department of Justice, 1994; McFarlene-Nathan, 1999; Mihaere, 2007) which predisposes rangatahi to offending behaviour. Cultural identity however is also connected to socio economic status, education, home ownership, poverty, unemployment and mental illness (Mihaere, 2007).

Cultural diversity is also necessary to understanding notions of Māori identity. Borell (2005) argues that approaching Māori identity through particular assumptions or criteria of a homogenous Māori culture can be problematic. This has the potential to further alienate rangatahi from their culture, as they negotiate their lives from a position that is already marginal. Borell argues that understanding diversity is necessary to give both volume and visibility to rangatahi and their experiences and understandings of their culture, their specific environments. And further, she states that in order to firmly resolve

and restore harmony, Māori need to take the initiative to resituate Māori identities within contemporary urban settings and start taking action. This requires a process of accepting and acknowledging that many Māori today are living non-traditional lifestyles in terms of their social and cultural connectedness, but nevertheless this should not be treated as a deficit in and of itself (McIntosh, cited in Lawson Te Aho & Liu, 2010).

Māori rangatahi mental health and offending

The relationship between youth offending and mental health issues is well documented. Curtis, Ronan, Heiblum and Harris (2002) show there has been an increase in patterns of antisocial youth behaviours in New Zealand and confusion exists as to which services are responsible for effective treatments. Furthermore, there is limited evidence for effective interventions to reduce Māori youth offending and the research that does exist focuses too much on short-term outcomes that are generally focused on justice outcomes. The Ministerial Taskforce Report on Youth Offending (2002) identified significant gaps in the availability of appropriate youth mental health services, particularly for alcohol and other drug misuse. The emergence of psychological disorders, in particular early onset antisocial behaviour, and high alcohol and other drug misuse are concerns of both the health and justice sector (Department of Corrections, 2007; Ministry of Justice, 2010). Curtis et al. (2002) argue that such trends are alarming and both mental health and youth justice systems need to work collaboratively to provide comprehensive integrated approaches to prevent further consequences to the youth and all those affected. They suggest a focus on accountability from agencies to provide effective treatments that are holistic in addressing the effects of adverse psycho-social factors that form patterns of risk for criminal conduct. The Ministry of Health (2007) has argued that the relationship between intergenerational deprivation that is compounded by imprisonment and further alienation from communities has failed to produce improved outcomes for Māori.

Oakley Browne, Wells and Scott (2006) reported on the Te Rau Hinengaro: The New Zealand Mental Health Survey that found the prevalence for Māori mental health disorders at 12.6% compared with 4% prevalence in other ethnic groups, again an over-representation in mental health statistics. It was also found that Māori were less likely to access mental health services (9.4%) compared with other ethnic groups (12.6%). Māori are less likely to access Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (Mental Health Commission, 2006; Ramage et al., 2005) and unless concerns about barriers to access and the effectiveness of service provision that is culturally appropriate are addressed, Māori will continue to embody a large percentage of health services (Oakley Browne et al., 2006). However these statistics also need to be understood through the effects of colonisation that produce them.

The impact of the ongoing processes of colonisation also informs the meaning of deficit in mental health. Green (1994) argues there was little evidence of poor mental health for Māori prior to the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi and this effect is well documented by indigenous researchers who support the arguments that colonisation has created many of the mental health disorders of Māori and other indigenous people. Loss of physical, cultural and spiritual resources coupled with marginalisation to the outskirts of New Zealand society and concurrent racism has helped create the over-representation of Māori with mental health issues today. Despite the resilience of Māori, the complexities of Māori mental health currently exceed the resources of a symptom-focused, pathological approach required to provide a holistic process that improves Māori health standards. As noted by Ihimaere (2007), "Whānau experience diverse realities and operate in a range of settings which must be recognised during policy, programme and service developmental processes" (p. 12). A deficit approach is treacherous in that it reinforces the issues of poverty, violence and events that become another negative stereotype for investigation by scientific inquiry. Psychology has been at the forefront of historically marginalising Māori and has caused more harm than benefits to Māori wellness (Campbell, 2005; Smith, 1999).

Research on Māori mental health has long recognised the relationship between the trauma of colonisation and cultural identity, and Ihimaere (2007) argues that a collaborative multidisciplinary approach across health, education, economic, cultural and social services is essential to successfully addressing rangatahi health disparities. Developing early interventions that form therapeutic relationships with whānau to develop resilience, strengths and potential and that account for the complex experiences and understanding of the lives of contemporary rangatahi, are an ongoing challenge (Borell, 2005; Hirini & Maxwell-Crawford, 2002). Hirini and Maxwell-Crawford (2002) consider further that this challenge includes ensuring this development draws from both mātauranga Māori and western knowledge so that our tamariki and their whānau have access to both.

Te Rau Matatini is a national organisation dedicated to developing the Māori mental health workforce. They developed a strategic plan called Whakapakiri Ake te Tipu (2005-2010) for the training of Māori child and adolescent mental health and addiction workers (Ihimaere, 2007). However, Ihimaere considers that service delivery gaps remain for tamariki, rangatahi and their whānau, and access to information about the relationship between mental health outcomes and addiction is an ongoing issue. Furthermore, part of the solutions must lie in the increased power and control Māori communities have over their own institutions, to provide more appropriate and better responsiveness to Māori needs. Green (1994) argues that good mental health for Māori requires a holistic process, incorporating the individual's body, mind, environment and spiritual state of being. Also, 'cultural distance', a term founded in the US resulting from a white therapist working with minority cultures, can hinder treatment effectiveness, leading to poor communication between clinicians and service users furthermore resulting in the misdiagnosis or ineffective outcomes for minority cultures, contributing to the overrepresentation of these groups in mental health statistics.

The Puāhou plan identified the need for a secure identity and the alignment of health services to coincide with Māori realities, which included access to effective primary health care, Māori health care, tamariki (children), taiohi

(adolescent), whānau and Māori-centred measures. It also recognised that the need for both clinical and cultural expertise alongside community autonomy and control over their own solutions (Ihimaere, 2007). The underlying assumptions the Puāhou plan and subsequent strategies such as the Whānau Ora Initiative (Taskforce for Whānau-Centred Initiatives, 2010) carry are that any approach must respect Māori values and beliefs, collaborate among sectors, and "link health with the broader arenas of cultural enhancement and socio-economic advancement" (Ihimaere, 2007, p. 15). He argues that the current evaluations are based on the ongoing development and implementation of outcome measures that involve active whānau participation and access to the resources that support secure identity and enhance whānau capacity. An example supplied by Ihimaere is that developed for the early intervention of conduct of oppositional type behaviours at kohanga reo (Māori pre-school) level. It included whānau empowerment through participation in the development and maintenance of kawa (protocols and practices) and rules as a practice of positive parenting skills, and shared the ownership and reinforcement of values with respect for the status of elders and their authority over meaning, and valued collaboration among community organisations.

The frameworks need to recognise the diversity of Māori realities and whānau arrangements. Valuing the vitality and necessity to embrace cultural markers of Māori identity, such as whakapapa, historical knowledge of the iwi, hapū and marae and te reo Māori, some researchers point out that these cultural markers may act as a barrier to accessing services (Borrell, 2005; Te Hiwi, 2008). They ask us to consider the impact of legitimating such markers and to understand that being Māori is both fluid and complex.

NZ and Māori Perspectives on Traditional and Contemporary Grief

Grief and colonisation

Te Whaaiti, McCarthy and Durie (1997) have argued there is little difference between grief and the effects of colonisation where both are understood as

being wounded in one's head, mind, body and spirit. The whakataukī, "Ta te wahine he whakawhānau mokopuna. Ta te tāne he karawhiu i te tewhatewha" represents the role of women to give birth and for men to provide and care for them (in Te Ati Hau, 1997). For Te Ati Hau, historically Māori men learned the skills of the tewhatewha (carved weapon) to protect their whānau and maintain their role as caregiver. The tewhatewha has changed through the generations; it may be a bus that they drive, or a shovel that they use to dig, reflecting that Māori men are still more likely today to be employed in manual jobs than have positions on the boards of international companies or a computer that they use to send internationally. The impact of colonisation upon our Māori men, has seen the loss the mana (prestige, integrity) of their wairua and mauri (life force) they require to embrace what they have inherited. One of Te Ati Hau's participants explained that in order to understand the dysfunction of our rangatahi, we need to fully understand the effects of four generations of urbanisation and the changing roles of both wāhine (women) and tāne (men). Whānau today are reacting to a lived history of imposed government policies and subsequent assimilation to the dominant culture. These reactions are a form of grief for disempowerment, and loss of culture, autonomy and self-esteem (Te Ati Hau, 1997).

In their research, Lawson-Te Aho and Liu (2010) also argue that grief for indigenous youth internationally is a lived experience of colonisation that has left a dark shadow on the contemporary lives of young people, and influences the risk factors in prevalence of suicide. The movement towards self-determination and directly confronting the unequal power relations in society to seek redress for particular issues of inequity in this case suicide is favoured as an effective way forward. Lawson-Te Aho and Liu argue that whakamomori (suicide, to withdraw) is a deep underlying sadness that comes from ongoing tribal suffering apart from death. This term has come to be used to represent suicidal behaviour, linking suicide with unresolved collective grief following that of cultural trauma (Lawson-Te Aho, 1998).

Youth accounts of grief

In the development of the resource for the workforce on the mental health issues that young people may face, Ridling (1994) defines grief as a natural reaction to any form of loss, and argues there are both universal and specific elements to the process of grief for young people in New Zealand. These elements are socially and culturally experienced in diverse ways and occur at the same time as emotional, intellectual and developmental change. These complexities are a context in which to understand the experiences of grief that present as self-destructive behaviours, preoccupation with suicide, anger outbursts, isolation, withdrawal or separation from wider family or social units. Sometimes the palpable grief reactions may be overlooked or mistaken for withdrawal, disengagement and/or offending behaviours masking underlying grief. Ridling identified complicated or disenfranchised grief as a particular form of grief for adolescents who experience their grief as less significant than those who may be closer to the deceased, when the loss is unexpected, traumatic or an unnatural or violent death. Processes of engaging young people in meaningful ways through their grief are suggested to enable a transformation of energy into meaningful ideas about the lost relationship. This research is interested in how this transformation can be informed through cultural specificity and diversity.

Munro (2002) sought to understand how adolescents construct their grief after experiencing the unexpected death of one of their peers. She found that it was a common experience among young people to respond to grief as an external behavioural reaction, rather than an internal emotion. The adolescents commonly drew on the concept of unemotionality to describe particular cultural and social contexts through which they experienced grief. Unemotionality was used to make sense of the silence about the disclosure of death or grief processes and how that silence might lead to the amplification of adverse reactions.

What each of these accounts of adolescent experiences of grief do is highlight that some adolescent responses following a grief event can be misinterpreted as

clinical symptoms, or problematic behaviour. It is necessary to understand the cultural and social contexts that inform their experiences.

Māori identity and grief

For Māori, the process of urbanisation has been associated with the drift away from traditional grieving practices where the focal point was the marae, to contemporary practices involving the deceased lying in urban homes and being buried in public, urban cemeteries (Edwards, McCreanor, Ormsby, Tuwhāngai, & Tipene-Leach, 2009). Māori who are denied or disconnected from their traditional customs or have limited access to Te Ao Māori, are more likely to experience negative well-being outcomes (in Te Ati Hau, 1997). Mauri tau (attainment of peace) is achieved through traditional practices such as karanga (welcome call) and apakura (lamenting dirge, expression of sorrow) facilitating the ability to openly express grief, drawing out the pain of the bereaved and encouraging them to tangi (weep, cry) (Edwards et al., 2009). In their analysis of Māori men's experiences of grief following the loss of a child through Sudden Infant Death, Edwards et al. argue that: "Tangihanga allows people to gather together with aroha, to tangi and to awhi (assist, embrace) and manaaki" (p. 134). Sharing the grief process collectively enables grief to be released in a safe manner: "Thus the person who has mauri tau can function and contribute fully as an individual and as a member of a collective, despite or even strengthened by their loss" (Edwards et al., 2009, p. 134).

Te Ati Hau (1997) argues that cultural identity is paramount for the overall wellbeing of our rangatahi, and with no or limited access to their culture, the process of reconnection to traditional settings or other specific ways to enhance cultural identity, mainstream knowledge and interventions are unable to meet their needs. Cultural practices are a natural healing process for Māori. They enable the expression of awhi and pamai (soothing touch), through which people can tangi, releasing negative emotions that may otherwise be internalised if not facilitated accordingly (in Te Ati Hau, 1997).

McLachlan (2007) also argues that western clinical approaches are unable to meet the needs of Māori and offers an integrated approach that makes sense of clinical issues through tikanga Māori guided by kaumātua. He argues we need to shift from a symptom-focused approach and move towards a broader perspective which encompasses whānau and the wider community for the purpose of providing sustainable and intergenerational outcomes. The whānau then acquires the tools or resources to manage and assist whānau members with the positive supports of those equipped and competent in moving alongside the whānau towards a prosperous future.

Nikora, Levy, Masters and Waitoki (2006) argue for pathways of Māori self-determination towards a collective Māori future within the field of psychology - creating psychologies through processes that both validate and sustain the unique cultural heritage that already exists. For example, where suicide is understood as a by-product of colonisation and as an oppressive set of experiences, it could be offset by privileging those processes where rangatahi are able to reclaim and form their cultural identity – to continue our story.

Alefaio (2008) also argues for creating psychologies that reflect the worldview of Pacifica peoples. She addresses the loss of innocent and excitable voices of Pacifica children through their immersion in mainstream education in New Zealand – an experience marked by overwhelming feelings of frustration grief and loss. She argues that "the uncovering of identity for our generation today and those to come, is to heed the 'voices' of our ancestors – 'the ties to the land' in which we come from cannot be underestimated. It is our safe passage forward" (p. 4).

While Borell (2005) raises the need to consider the diversity of Māori experiences, she argues that cultural markers such as tangihanga, connection to marae and te reo Māori are necessary to identity but doesn't reflect all expressions of being Māori. She cites Ramsden who wrote that: "How each of us expresses our Māoritanga is the product of a variety of experiences. None of us is today what our ancestors were, and our descendants will not be like us" (p.

3). Rangihau (1975) also understands the daunting experience of disconnection that rangatahi face. He recognised the shift for urban Māori in the 1970s toward connecting with their culture and the tensions between traditional and contemporary needs. He too, supports the need to recognise diversity so that rangatahi can live with a greater sense of assurance about who they are when moving around in the non-Māori world, when they can make sense of themselves through knowing their whakapapa and absorbing the feeling of being physically and spiritually located on the marae.

Edge and Nikora (2011) argue that research which specifically focuses on the diversity of cross-cultural expressions of grief is rare. They present the analysis of a case-study in which the experiences of an individual are framed inside a family configured by both Māori and Pākehā identities. While grief is an inevitable part of human existence, the vast diversity which exists between grief processes and reactions are profound (Edge & Nikora, 2011). They present an in-depth account of exploring how these identities influence the bereavement process. Edge and Nikora found cultural differences in language to make sense of the event and decision-making processes, and these are related to intercultural conflict, although there was eventual resolution. Their research is pivotal to helping understand the cultural specificities and complexities of an individual's grief processes.

To privilege Māori knowledge of grief processes is also a means to enlighten people so they do not treat the sacred customs of Māori lightly. Pā Henare Tate (cited in Barlow, 1991) envisaged respect for the sacred value and regard for the importance placed on social functions, such as tangihanga, for the well-being of Māori as a collective, and as individuals in this modern world.

The Multiple Layers and Meanings of Grief

Marsden (in Royal, 2003) reminds us "Māoritanga (Māori life and culture) is a thing of the heart rather than the head…the corporeal view that Māori hold about ultimate reality and meaning" (p. 34). This knowledge is attributed to the jurisdiction of the Ātua (Gods) of the pō (night) (such as Whiro, or Hine-nui-te-

pō) for those faced with death. He talks about propitiatory rites connected to the rituals for the deceased and enters deep kōrero regarding the specific rites providing knowledge about the customary practice of tapu (sacred, profound) and purification of tapu as a process of neutralisation. Some of these practices have travelled through to modern times, however, the fading of rituals have occurred over time for different reasons.

Best (1998) explored death in the context of mythical origin, where man descends from immortal personifications; Ranginui (Sky Father) and Papatūanuku (Earth Mother). The origins of decay amongst people were associated with the act of the Ātua Tāne seeking the female element. Best (1998) locates the origins of death within the stories of Maui and Hine-nui-te-pō, providing detailed descriptions to illustrate the wider contexts of death for Māori according to past customs, as well as acknowledging the influences of Christianity. He argued that it was these stories that provided the processes that enable Māori to meet death with a sense of tranquility, without fear, but also without cheerfulness. These stories are transmitted as knowledge down whakapapa lines.

Māori have long-established practices and traditions around grief and death[11], with relationships with ancestors and death being a normal everyday reality (Edwards et al., 2009; Marsden, in Royal, 2003). Māori sensitivities to loss have been heightened with the impact of colonisation and loss of lands, resources, and destruction of established social systems and processes (Durie, 2003; Edwards et al., 2009; Mead, 2003) thus increasing the significance of Māori grief rituals.

Rameka and Te Pania (1990) explain that grief is a collective experience shared amongst friends and family on the marae where everybody partakes in traditional rituals. They describe the ceremony of tuku (send, allow, to give), which involves using karakia (prayer, incantation) to free the spirit from the

[11] This thesis is not intended to provide in-depth information regarding Māori practices and traditions around death, but instead as they arise in relation to the kōrero of the Māori community leaders, and in reference to rangatahi and rangatahi offenders.

physical being and assist the wairua on its voyage to the spiritual world so that it does not remain in the physical world. This is followed by mourning, with the environment becoming tapu, including the immediate family to the deceased. The process of tangihanga has many facets that all serve a purpose in facilitating the sending off of the loved one to the spirit world, as well as ensuring those left behind are provided support and encouragement to adjust to their loss and inherit the necessary support required to continue functioning in the physical world.

Local pride also enters the tangihanga process with the expression of manaakitanga and obligations to the guests and the Ātua taking the form of kai (food). Marsden (in Royal, 2003) notes that while there have been modifications to these rites, for example where offerings were once directed at the Māori Ātua, they may now be directed to Jesus Christ, the integral aspects of tangihanga and their underlying principles remain. However, there are some changes, such as providing the hākiri (feast, entertainment) prior to the completion of the process to respect those who have travelled long distances, and these have the potential to bring insult to the values of others. Rangihau (1975) comments that changes have brought about an ignorance of cultural practices and these are creeping in to our marae and tangihanga. For example, the use of cameras whilst in the process of tangihanga for the sake of the public domain or for the user, disregards connections to the mauri of the whenua (land, placenta) and raises ethical concerns around the protection of our resources (Rangihau, 1975).

Edwards et al., (2009) describe how tangihanga has the ability to enable people to resist holding on to their grief, and allows for expressions of physical and emotional manifestations to expel in the form of hūpe and roimata (mucus and tears) so that the bereaved can re-enter and continue with their everyday life. Traditional rituals designed to ease the passage of the wairua to the next world (uhunga - lament) have given way over time to focus on the tangihanga itself and those who are affected by the loss. Despite these changes, the spiritual purpose of attaining mauri tau remains strong. Edwards et., al. (2005) found

that although some Māori men did not bury their infants at traditional urupa, but in closer proximity to their homes, they found ways to connect to their cultural inheritance by adapting traditional practices to an urban, modern setting.

Turoa (cited in Ati Hau, 1997) argues that Māori youth at risk need to be cared for by our people and returned to their cultural roots, as opposed to remaining in isolated or dysfunctional environments. And any burdens they face needs to be disseminated throughout wider whānau, hapū, iwi and communities so their needs can be addressed through a more traditional upbringing. In this way, taha wairua (the spiritual dimensions) beyond the physical death of an individual can be the focus of healing (Barlow, 1991). Acknowledging other healing practices such as mirimiri (massage, sooth), awhi (embrace and counselling), pamai and being reunited to the natural landscape, are some of the many forms of 'things Māori' which enhance and uplift the mauri of the person. Through these practices, negative emotions can expel in a culturally safe manner to enable healing.

However, given the complexities of an increasing diversity in Māori identity, we need also to understand how our rangatahi themselves negotiate their grief experiences in the context of their overall life story. Hendry (2009) argues that limited research exists specifically addressing the grief experiences of an imprisoned individual or the impact of unresolved grief issues on re-offending, however it is apparent that issues of identity and culture have a significant influence on the ability of imprisoned men to grieve.

To address these issues, Sharpe, McCarthy and Jessop (2006) argue for narrative approaches to explore how people make meaning in their life and how this meaning derives from or influenced by significant events capable of disruption. In this way, the phenomena of bereavement and grief may be understood in terms of critical moments within the narrative as a whole, including spiritual and existential curiosities (Exley & Letherby, 2001; Sharpe et al., 2006). Narrative analysis seeks to analyse, interpret and create a sense of meaning of a particular event (Neimeyer & Anderson, 2002).

Mātauranga Māori

> Mena e tūmanako ana koe ki te mōhio
>
> I te hā o te tangata
>
> Whaia te māramatanga o tōna ao
>
> If you wish to understand the person,
>
> Know the world in which they live. (Nathan, 2009, p. 67)

Mead (1997) describes mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) as being about "developing the creative powers of the mind...expanding horizons and reaching beyond the limitations of circumstance and adversity" (p. 51). He also refers to Te hōhonutanga o te mātauranga (depths of knowledge) as the seeking of knowledge that lies beneath the surface of reality, where the "learner therefore has to dive in and explore the areas of darkness...and by exploring come to understand." Te whānuitanga o te mātauranga recognizes the immense breadth of knowledge, those oblique journeys to the "unreachable horizons of knowledge" where the "journey is to seek more light, more understanding, and the most elusive of all educational goals, wisdom" (Mead, 1997, p. 51). Marsden (in Royal, 2003) also considers that "Wisdom is a thing of the heart. It has its own thought processes. It is there that knowledge is integrated for this is the centre of one's being" (p. 1).

Central to the Māori worldview is the belief that "knowledge has been developed from the past, exists in the present and contributes to the future" (Wenn, 2006, p. 31). George (2012) also expresses the beauty and reality of this worldview, in that we are part of the circle which is part of life, where we will one day return to Papatūanuku and also "provide nourishment for those that come after, now and in the future" (p. 44).

Marsden (in Royal, 2003) also places aronga (direction), tikanga and kaupapa (issue, agenda, purpose) at the heart of any discussion regarding mātauranga Māori, highlighting the diversity that exists amongst the differing realities of Māori communities, timing, experiences and realities. This includes differences amongst iwi and hapū and the ways in which Māori interact and create their worldviews, forming a base or foundation from which "which members of the

culture assent and from what stems their value system" (Marsden, in Royal, 2003, p. 31).

Over the past four decades in particular Māori have developed their own models of health and wellbeing utilising traditional knowledge and contemporary applications, such as the often used Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 1998) and Te Wheke (Pere, 1997). Another cultural model originally developed for counselling rangatahi is Tihei-wa Mauri ora, which bases assessment and measurement of subjective well-being on a continuum of Te Kore (Void, energy, potential being) leading into Ki te Ao-Marama (Bright Light of Day) and finally through to Tihei-wa Mauri Ora (There is life) (Piripi & Body, 2010).

TIHEI-WA MAURI ORA

Figure 1: Tihei-wa Mauri Ora (Source: Piripi & Body, 2010)

This visual resource opens up an opportunity for individuals and groups to reflect on their positioning in the world, the realisation that this is not set in concrete and that their shifting back and forth through different phases for different aspects of their life is normal. It also creates a time to educate or connect the individual to mātauranga Māori and the stories of the Ātua (Piripi & Body, 2010). Piripi and Body (2010) realised the rangatahi they were working with in Northland were not benefiting from the westernised models they were presenting, and through consulting with their local kaumātua were able to access the taonga and mātauranga Māori from our ancestors to develop an appropriate resource for the interest of rangatahi wellbeing.

Kaumātua (whānau elders) are a group of leaders who "achieved status and mana within a tribe through their demonstrated wisdom in dealing with familial

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and/or esoteric affairs, representing whānau at the hapū or iwi level" (George, 2011, p. 170) Te Rito (2006) attributes the continuation and survival of the iwi to the kaumātua who are proficient in reciting accurate whakapapa, culture and oral tradition. George also states that when a kaumātua dies, their mana is often evident in the way in which the people mourn their loss, and that the fullness of what knowledge and wisdom they have provided to their people is acknowledged through whaikōrero (ritual speech), waiata (song), haka (dance), himene (hymns) and many other forms within Te Ao Māori. She surmises that vigilance is a necessary attribute for kaumātua or Māori leaders who provide services to communities, for people holding the heritage of our ancestors but also interacting with the wider world to take advantage of the many opportunities available for the wellbeing and development of our people.

Kereopa (in Moon, 2003) explains that to be a kaumātua, you must first wade through life and the many facets of Te Ao Māori to begin to understand such things. It takes both knowledge and experience, and implementing all these things into practice to warrant status as a kaumātua. Kereopa also warns that some people may think they are kaumātua, but have not quite got there. He distinguishes Māori leadership as being about things you do, rather than things you have to do. It is about the way in which leaders deliver their natural talents and skills in Te Ao Māori and it is also about having a wide knowledge of all things that affect people.

Conclusion

In order to understand the offending of rangatahi in today's society, we have strategically ventured across the oceans to the outskirts of international territories for the purpose of broadening our horizons and exploring the diverse experiences of grief, mental health and offending interactions amongst other cultures and people. Engagement with the histories, trends and the movement of grief literature and different theories enabled the gathering knowledge relevant to our worldview of grief, and rangatahi offending. The literature confirmed that while there is some research relating to unresolved

grief in offenders, there is room for much more to be done. A requirement for acknowledgement of the importance of culture to grief processes was also noted. Additionally, strong correlations were shown between offending and mental health issues.

Some of the ways in which Māori practice rituals associated with grief and death are discussed from a Te Ao Māori perspective. An overview of the interaction between mātauranga Māori and our leaders is given, including the role kaumātua and other Māori community leaders play in assisting our people. They bridge the world of our ancestors and the present in order to provide cultural and spiritual sustenance for those who are too often lost and isolated today. Through this and other such knowledge we can further understand the ways in which rangatahi can also benefit from such knowledge.

WĀHANGA TUATORU: METHODOLOGY

Ma te whakatau, ka mōhio; ma te mōhio, ka mārama; ma te mārama, ka mātau;
ma te mātau, ka ora – By discussion comes understanding; by understanding
comes light; by light comes wisdom; and by wisdom comes wellbeing.[12]

Introduction

Indigenous peoples have often been exploited through mainstream research and dominant positivist empiricism in the field of psychology. Tuhiwai Smith (1999) explains the credibility problem many indigenous researchers face dates back to when research with indigenous people was negatively framed, quite often with non-indigenous researchers conducting research *on* indigenous peoples, with little recognition for indigenous rights or views regarding intellectual and cultural property rights. The claiming of spaces for the development of improved research relationships are emerging through the rise of indigenous movements and this can be seen in the recognition of culturally appropriate research practices. As noted by Tuhiwai Smith (1999):

> When indigenous peoples become the researchers and not merely the researched, the activity of research is transformed. Questions are framed differently, priorities are ranked differently, problems are defined differently, people participate on different terms. (p. 193)

The overall objective of this current research derives from my work with Māori people and the experiences of death within Māori whānau. Therefore, it is appropriate and natural that a methodology such as kaupapa Māori is employed. This chapter outlines primary elements of kaupapa Māori theory and methods which overarch this research project and have enabled me to navigate ethically and with cultural efficacy through the process of the research. Kaupapa Māori is then interwoven with narrative inquiry as a way to represent

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[12] A well-known Māori whakataukī.

the lived experiences of Māori community leaders. This interweaving was logical as narrative inquiry utilises narratives such as story and conversation, recognises the cultural and social context within which the leaders live and work, as well as the importance of the relationship between myself and the leaders and how that influences the narratives.

While this was a professional exercise for the benefit of a Master's thesis in psychology, it was also very much a personal journey. Marsden (in Royal, 2003) wrote that:

> As a person brought up within the culture, who has absorbed the values and attitudes of the Māori, my approach to Māori things is largely subjective. The charge of lacking objectivity does not concern me; the so-called objectivity some insist on is simply a form of arid abstraction, a model or a map. It is not the same thing as the taste of reality. (p. 2)

The 'taste of reality' within this project came largely from my interactions as a Māori woman with Māori community leaders who so graciously shared their knowledge with me. Utilising research methods such as kanohi-ki-te-kanohi in the interview process that draw from a Māori concept of reality ensured that all participants were comfortable with the process. It has been a huge learning journey for me, both in the methods of research as well as a cultural knowledge.

I am also aware of my own responsibilities to the relationships I engage in and I highly respect the relationships with those who have agreed to share their knowledge and experiences. These responsibilities towards our people as tangata whenua (people of the land, indigenous people) underpin this research project, and my involvement with our people and the diverse realities of whānau living and breathing Māori realities is my focus. For me, there is an active and ongoing involvement and learning within Te Ao Māori that will extend beyond the boundaries of this research project. However, for the purpose of this project I position myself as a Māori researcher and tauira (student), conducting Māori research with Māori for the benefit of Māori, particularly troubled rangatahi.

Methodologies

Kaupapa Māori research

Previous research has not always benefited Māori, resulting in feelings of distrust amongst those researched (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). In this research project, I was interested in the actualities of Māori community leaders' experiences of grief, as well as their experience of working with troubled rangatahi in relation to grief. Kaupapa Māori theory informed the methodology employed throughout this research as it is by Māori and for the benefit of Māori, guided by tikanga. Through employing traditional Māori concepts such as whanaungatanga, mana, and koha (gift, donation) helps ensure the cultural safety of participants throughout the research processes (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999).

Kaupapa Māori is a philosophical framework that validates a Māori worldview, and takes for granted the validity of Māori culture, knowledge and language (Durie, 1998; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999; Walker, 1990). This emerged in the 1970s as an attempt to counter the negative impact that non-Maori research has had on Māori in the past. Kaupapa Maori research then, is a way in which to reclaim tino rangatiratanga necessary to Maori development (Durie, 1998). Further, there is an expectation that research through this methodology contributes to the well-being of Māori and that the information produced is treated with respect and protected (Cram, 1997, cited in Jones, Crengle & McCreanor, 2006).

As such, kaupapa Māori philosophies guide Māori researchers' practice, with effective relationships amongst people and their environments demonstrating a researcher with good qualities. For example, Tuhiwai Smith (1999) lists some of these qualities as having respect for people (aroha ki te tangata); presenting yourself to people face-to-face (kanohi kitea); showing generosity towards others (manaaki ki te tangata); ensuring the dignity of participants (kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata); and remaining humble by not boasting of one's knowledge (kaua e māhaki). Different whakataukī are sometimes employed to indicate that a person is breaching such qualities; for example 'E kore te kumara e kōrero mo tona reka; The kumara does not talk about its own sweetness' is used as a caution regarding the need for humility. Infringements of these

qualities can rapidly disable relationships with people and be difficult to reinstate; moreover the depth of these different qualities are easily recognised by Māori, and therefore cannot be employed in a tokenistic manner.

Being Māori, this methodology feels natural and appropriate, and also aligns with my own personal values, beliefs and ongoing learning within Te Ao Māori. My own experiences and understandings, the guidance of my wairua, kaitiaki (guardians, custodians) and tūpuna (ancestors), influenced how I positioned myself within this research and interacted with the Māori community leaders throughout this research journey. Who I am as a researcher is not separated from who I am as a Māori woman who works with Māori within Māori communities. Moewaka Barnes (2005) highlights that kaupapa Māori research asserts the worldview of the researcher as being integral to the way in which methods and methodologies are constructed; denying the relationship could illustrate a lack of understanding of the importance of positioning the researcher in the research and deny the vitality of Māori (voices).

To minimise the risk of exploiting key participants, misunderstanding or misrepresenting the information they provide, high importance was placed on cultural consultation by my own whānau kaumātua, the selection of academic supervisors, and the support of wider networks who currently guide my personal and professional journey in the learning of te reo Māori and tikanga. While I have primary and ultimate responsibility for this project, the research processes, decisions and analysis have also been the responsibility of a collective group, particularly my academic supervisors. I also position myself as representing the voices of our Māori community leaders, as well as facilitating and shaping the way in these stories resonate in our ongoing battle to recover and retain our knowledge and other cultural treasures. This will allow us to define and take control of our own matters and positioning in a contemporary world.

Narrative Inquiry

As this research involved collecting the stories of Māori community leaders, it seemed relevant to use a methodology that complements and brings alive the stories that were gathered. According to Patterson (2008):

> Experience-centred narrative research falls under qualitative research methods useful for explorative studies, providing scope to collect detailed information from a small group of individuals about their experiences pertaining to a particular area or phenomena. (p. 24)

This project is certainly explorative in that it seeks to lay a foundation of understanding for the broader kaupapa of grief experiences of rangatahi offenders, by analysing the stories of Māori community leaders who have worked with them.

Narrative research is used in diverse ways depending on the question being asked and assumptions about how meaning is interpreted (Andrews, Sclater, Squire & Treacher, 2000; Denzin 2000; Riessman & Speedy, 2007). Some authors believe that narratives can be likened to stories (Gilbert, 2002) or can represent any text that produces logic or an integrated assertion coherent to one's lived experience (Polkinghorne, 1995). Narratives are ways through which people make meaning, and can be widely identified through media, interviews, texts, bibliographies, advertisements, art.

Elliot (2005) emphasises the importance of understanding the performance of the narratives, and that it is inherently social. Understanding the ways in which lived experience is embedded in particular cultural and social contexts enables shared meanings (Riessman & Speedy, 2007; Rosenwald, 1992). Narrative theory recognises that narratives are a way for humans to organise their actions (Crossley, 2003; Denzin, 2000, Elliot, 2005; Riessman, 2008; Sarbin, 1986). Storying experiences are have distinct markers, as this process is relative to their entire lives as well as day-to-day experiences, behaviours, and overall sense of self (Kirkman, 2002). Tappan (1991) further notes that an understanding of relationships with time are important to lived experience.

Narratives shape social representations and can be dialectal in the sense that the narratives do not only configure lived experiences, but the lived experiences also structure narratives (Murray, 2000). With lived experiences constantly changing, ongoing exploration into individuals' or communities experiences not only provide firm representations or constructions in cultural or social contexts, but also have the potential to make sense of the movement, transformation and forming of shared knowledge (Murray, 2000).

Squire (2008) argues that a focus on experiential narratives assumes that they are "sequential and meaningful...definitively human, 're-present' experience, reconstituting ...as well as expressing it [to] display transformation or change" (p. 42). What Squire argues is there is an uncertainty to narratives as they are formed through the present, and narratives are "jointly told between writer and reader, speaker and hearer" (2008, p. 44). This aligns with kaupapa Māori research with kaumātua, kuia or Māori community leaders who attain a significant level of mana as narrators as they both recognise and value relationship between the speaker and hearer, enhancing the vitality of meaning.

Narrative research re-interprets life events and seeks to reveal the essence of cumulative experience in the production and blossoming of meaning (Josselson & Lieblich, 2003). What a researcher may hear within that multi-layered meaning is the "story not yet told" (Squire, 2008, p. 45). This however, is only one representation of meaning – each story may be interpreted in a multitude of ways, and researchers "do not expect a single interpretation to emerge" (Squire, 2008, p. 50). What a researcher can do, therefore, is reflexively locate a particular interpretation within its historical social and cultural context (Squire, 2008).

An example of an historical context is the effect of colonisation and its impact on research and practice. Benham (2007) notes however, narrative methodology "recognises the value of indigenous knowledge and its connection with other forms of knowledge ... [and therefore] has a place in research and policy arenas" (p. 513). Indigenous knowledge usually incorporates both the physical and the non-physical (including spiritual) which has been excluded from colonising

methodologies (Benham, 2007). As noted by Marsden (in Royal, 2003), "The route to Māoritanga through abstract interpretation is a dead end. The way can only lie through a passionate, subjective approach. This is more likely to lead to a goal" (p. 2).

Narrative inquiry is necessary to understanding experience, as we interact with others in particular locations, and experiences are constantly moving. Experiences are both multidimensional and multidirectional, and move inward, outward, backward and forward (Clandinn & Connelly, 2000). From a Māori worldview, experiences cannot be represented as a single dimension. Time is understood as circular rather than linear, with any individual person being connected through time by whakapapa to a multitude of others in directions that go inward, outward, back and forth (George, 2010). Narratives or stories have the potential to provide that multi-dimensional reflection of lived reality, and "values the principles of whakawhanaungatanga (informal discussion, relationship building and maintenance) by emphasising commonality and sharing" (Te Hiwi & Coombes, 2007, p. 392). Māori are noted as storytellers. Walker (1992) outlined the significance of mythology as "the mirror-image of a culture" which reflects "the philosophy, ideals and norms of the people who adhere to them" (p. 170). Pre-colonisation, Māori belonged to oral cultures; stories (also known as pūrākau, kōrero tawhito and pakiwaitara) were the methods through which traditional knowledge was passed from generation to generation. Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach and Zibler (1998) state:

> Stories provided coherence and continuity to one's experience and have a central role in our communication with others…The story is one's identity, a story created, told, revised and retold throughout life. We know or discover ourselves, and reveal ourselves to others by the stories we tell. (Lieblich, Tuval-Maschiach & Zibler, 1998, pp. 6-7)

The narrative approach to inquiry therefore harmonises with kaupapa Māori research, honouring the mana of the informants and prioritising opportunities for their voices to be heard. Kaupapa Māori and narrative inquiry interweave effectively because it is the relationship between the researcher and participant

that determines the foundation upon which the narratives are given and received in a circular and dialogical process.

Methods

Consultation

For this research project, I initially decided to consult with my grandfather who has played a significant role throughout my lifetime. I decided to seek his wisdoms and wider experiences of grief as well as his views on rangatahi offenders and rangatahi in general. Our family was working through our own grief, having lost my younger brother and uncle in the space of three months. My role as a generic youth worker at that time, working with high risk youth offenders, as well as my involvement in a pilot alcohol and drug youth programme for youth offenders, triggered my curiosity towards understanding how these young people understand and manage their own experiences of grief and loss.

I started the ethics application with the intention of requesting the Northland District Health Board (NDHB) support this research project and the interviewing of rangatahi who had accessed the alcohol and drug youth offending programme at Te Roopu Kimiora (Child and Adolescent Mental Health service). This required a locality assessment and consultation with the Council of Elders (Kaunihera Kaumātua) at the NDHB.

My grandfather helped shape my ideas and curiosities, contributing information and providing cultural supports through linking me directly to other prominent whānau leaders, who were profound in the community and maintained knowledge in Te Ao Māori. This guided my curiosity and after much discussion and consultation with those involved in the research project it appeared clear that this project required expanding outwards to include the guidance and knowledge of our Māori community leaders, who can provide a basis for understanding grief from a Māori worldview. This shift coincided with modifications pertaining to the research aims.

I continued to take up the opportunity of meeting with the Kaunihera Kaumātua as this felt necessary, and in turn created a sense of direction and support within the organisation for the research intentions and any future support that might have been required. My manager and work colleague attended this hui with me where I explained the research project, my intentions and received expert advice regarding engagement and selection of potential participants in our community. The head of this Council was supportive and interested in any follow-up research targeting rangatahi offenders who may be users of the NDHB services. Further cultural consultation and guidance was accomplished through maintaining contact and continuously seeking advice from my grandfather and some of the participants themselves who I already had a connection with, and was able to build upon not only through this research project but other projects and mediums of interest in the community.

As noted, my focus for this project is rangatahi offenders, and I am mindful that this term carries a stereotypical, deficit meaning, that may position the young person in a negative light, which I realised during this process of connecting and explaining my project. The leaders brought the language back to 'rangatahi', which expressed their concern and aroha for all Māori youth, rather than just 'rangatahi offenders'. Taiohi and taitamariki (adolescent) are other terms used to identify this particular group, exhibiting regional or personal preference. These terms are used interchangeably throughout the thesis.

My assumption is that rangatahi who may not necessarily have access to traditional grieving processes and ways of grieving, may experience this phenomena differently to those who have been raised with access to cultural grieving practices such as tangihanga, incorporating tikanga and mātauranga Māori. This assumption is supported through the different wānanga and interactions with Māori community leaders I am privileged to be part of. My definition and understanding of a Māori community leader may be different to other researchers and community members; however, for the purpose of this research I have outlined the criteria for inclusion.

Māori community leaders as participants

Local knowledge and previously established networks and associates were utilised to recruit participants. This process is known, in some research methods, as the snowball effect, where current participants inform their networks about the research project and recommend further participants who meet the criteria until the sample size is obtained (Davidson &Tolich, 2003 in Perkins, 2009). However from a Māori perspective this can be seen as a process of whanaungatanga, that is, the development and maintenance of respectful relationships.

Kaumātua, kuia (female elders) and Māori community leaders were the sought participants who met the criteria of being subjectively competent in Te Ao Māori; have worked or currently work with rangatahi offenders and/or their whānau; and were willing to share their own personal experiences of grief.

My assumption was that due to participants' competency in Te Ao Māori, they would have had significant exposure and knowledge of traditional grieving processes and be at a stage in their life where they were competent, willing and safely able to share such personal information. They would also be able to articulate their experiences and observations of rangatahi offenders, and rangatahi offenders' grief experiences. Finally, they would be able to draw from their lived realities and knowledge to share past, present or future solutions or ideas towards working more effectively within the areas of grief and offending for this particular group of rangatahi in order to improve their overall wellbeing and development. Explicitly defining the criteria for the participants, particularly their competency in Te Ao Māori felt unusual to me and would not be a question I would normally propose to any person due to my own values and beliefs; however, it was accepted in this context. Eight Māori community leaders were recruited, six were male, two female. All but one (Ngai Tuhoe) are descendants of the iwi and rohe (region) of Te Tai Tokerau and Muriwhenua. All participants are influential in their roles in the community and my knowledge of their mahi, was the respect they held in the community.

Each participant was approached through a face-to-face meeting to discuss the purpose of the research, and on most of the occasions an information sheet (see Appendix 3) was provided. From this moment, potential participants genuinely began talking about the topic, engaging in whakawhanaungatanga and strengthening our relationship. Some of the participants preferred for me to summarise the information sheet for them in my own words rather than read it. I met their request and gave information sheet to read when they had time. This process was important as some of the participants were able to prepare questions before the interview. Such queries were around the ownership and dissemination of their shared information, and the logistics of the actual interview. Further questions about my long-term goals, and current contribution to our community were pursued by some of the participants. When these were addressed, informed consent to participate was achieved.

The aroha, awhi, and manaakitanga I received during this process was evident and strengthened my reasons for pursuing my interest in understanding psychological phenomena for Māori people in this manner. I felt a strong admiration for our leaders who were knowledgeable about Māoritanga and had grown up with older generations, our ancestors. The breadth of wisdom they allowed me to experience was overwhelming, and I often felt this was more of a personal journey in my development, increasing my already high regard for them. It became apparent that the information they did share with me during this encounter was only a small part of the many layers of stories and experiences they had to draw from. Their passions, confidence, and respect for people were profound, and sharing this kōrero was one route for promoting the validity of mātauranga Māori in this field. Yet their intentions were to provide a route for those who were seeking their assistance and for the overall wellbeing of our people, rather than debating our different perspectives in academia.

Whakawhanaungatanga/Interviews

The interviews were loosely organised around personal experiences and understandings of grief; experiences working with rangatahi offenders and

their whānau; and solutions for working with rangatahi offenders (a scenario was prepared to elicit a solution). In most of the interviews, there was no need for a scenario as the leaders guided and shaped the kōrero drawing from real life experiences. Interviews took the shape of natural conversation, with the occasional subtle prompts where necessary to ignite different areas of interest within the kōrero. The conversational style enabled a natural flow of kōrero and this would sometimes lead to me feeling inclined to respond by sharing commonalities with the participants' experiences with grief or working with rangatahi offenders. I was nevertheless able to maintain my position as the researcher, as well as that of a young Māori tauira and community member, keen and enthusiastic to absorb the facets of knowledge being presented before me.

There were two occasions where I decided it was inappropriate to ask the leaders for me to record the conversation. For example, it would have been inappropriate to record the interview with a leader when we had together attended a burial at a local cemetery prior to our interview at her home. I had entered her world and it would have changed the flow of kōrero had I introduced a foreign means of obtaining data. Oratory and verbal exchanges of information are privileged by Māori, and I felt it timely that I respected this mode of learning and challenged myself to trust my wairua and abilities to retain the essence of the kōrero.

Face-to-face interviewing (kanohi-ki-te-kanohi) was the primary method of data collection, generally lasting between 60-120 minutes. Face-to-face encounters are culturally appropriate when approaching a Māori leader to gather information. They need to know who you are, where you come from, your agenda and how this information is going to be beneficial to their people before they agree to share it with you. This type of engagement is important for Māori who are familiar with face-to-face interactions rather than phone or email contact. The latter is less meaningful and devalues the kōrero shared.

All interviews were guided by tikanga and the kawa of the leader who was being interviewed. I had a general process to guide my interviews, however I

would establish process with each leader before we commenced. All interviews were conducted by myself, generally opening each meeting with a prayer and greetings (mihimihi), followed by some informal discussion (whakawhanaungatanga). Acknowledgements to the Ātua, the deceased and the local area were made at this time. The interview moved into conversations that discussed the areas of interest that reflected, in a narrative way, the questions in the interview schedule.

The kōrero shared was astonishing and the process allowed me to engage, interact and respond to the stories being told. It would have felt unnatural if this aspect was abandoned in attempt to ask the questions directly and in order. The process enabled a respectful engagement in the relationship between the speaker and the hearer where my response, my thoughts and emotions, enhances the meaning of their discourse and hidden lessons.

I had planned to share kai at the end of each interview as I understood that this would whakanoa (make ordinary, remove tapu) the process. I also understood it would not be appropriate to eat kai throughout an interview that discussed issues around death. However, in a couple of the interviews the leader indicated that we share kai and informal kōrero prior to entering the interview process. In hindsight, this worked well as it lightened the kōrero, relaxed me, slowed the pace of the meeting and encouraged us to further develop our relationships, and ease into the interview. Sharing of kai is a common practice among Māori, creating a sense of whanaungatanga and decreases any power relations that may be operating. It is also a sign of manaakitanga, in which caring and sharing is taking place. Many marae visits are remembered by the manaaki and the kai that was provided to the manuhiri (visitors, guests), therefore this is another important reason for the researcher to arrive with some kai to share.

Karakia was of high importance in all the interviews and the power and purpose of karakia was made explicit by some of the participants. Interviews were conducted across a range of settings from places of work or learning to the home environment. The location and time was decided upon by the leaders, as they were all actively involved in their own work and communities and time

was scarce. In one occasion, I attended church with my family and the leader's family before travelling to his home for the interview. This was a powerful and spiritual experience and inspired me to attend our church services back home. Karakia is a part of the leaders' everyday realities, rather than a superficial add-on to a research process, and it has also been a big part of my life and beliefs, therefore this part of the interview was explicit and extremely important for many reasons.

My role as a researcher as well as a younger Māori woman and student in both psychology and mātauranga Māori, was considered when selecting my style of engagement. I attempted to actively and carefully listen (ata whakarongo), carefully look and observe (ata titiro), and exchange or elicit experiences or ideas (whakawhiti kōrero) when and where it was appropriate. The relationship between the leader and me respected the mana of the kaumātua to lead the narratives and decide on what was important to be said, and the stories to be told, for the benefit of the community.

A donation or offering (koha) was also integral to each interview, representing gratitude for each leader's time and sharing of such astute knowledge. These principles pertain to kaupapa Māori research and theory and are fundamental in everyday interactions and engagement amongst Māori.

Six of the eight interviews were recorded transcribed by me. This was a time-consuming and arduous task; however, this process was beneficial, and reinforced my engagement with the stories and assisted in informing the early stages of analysis, as I noticed particular themes. I then provided each participant with their written transcript through email, post or face-to-face visits, as had been negotiated, to allow the leaders to amend any parts of their stories or add any other information they felt necessary. I did find this process challenging with the limited time and geographical locations, and I felt face-to-face was more appropriate.

I wrote in a reflection diary after each interview to assist my process of analysis. Reflections consisted of free writing in order to express any thoughts or feelings I experienced as a result of each interview, as well as highlighting areas I may

not have understood. I noted non-verbal behaviours, communicative styles, emotions, content discussed and the way I found myself engaging with each participant and reacting to their kōrero. It felt natural to contrast interviews with one another, explore deeper meanings within the narratives and understand my own biases or emotions connected to the different areas. At times, I found my assumptions to be incorrect. For example, I assumed that all the leaders would have a structured model or set of solutions for rangatahi offenders. What I learned was that often their concerns were with all rangatahi and their whānau, and their kōrero challenged the role of professionals (including me as psychology student) in determining the outcomes of rangatahi offenders as a distinct or separate group.

I really admired the way in which the leaders taught me these lessons in an indirect yet respectful manner, displaying their personal characteristics such as humility, patience and confidence. My reflections often extended past the confines of the research objectives and into the diverse interactions amongst indigenous leaders and community members.

Narrative Inquiry - analysis

The framework for this analysis assumes that there are levels of representation to narrative inquiry. In this project, descriptive narrative representations are identified for constructing a Māori worldview of grief based on the narratives shared by participants, as well as those addressing rangatahi offenders' experiences of grief. This analysis derives from an orientation towards the experience-centred, cultural approach to the research as this best represents the research objectives of exploring the ways in which Māori people grieve (including rangatahi offenders), both traditionally and contemporarily, according to the kōrero and lived experiences of Māori community leaders who are dedicated to still engaging with our people at grass-roots levels.

This process of analysis therefore includes the previously mentioned concepts of time and relationships in narrative theory (Tappan, 1991).   Time is

continuous and in these particular narratives can transform back and forth, between the past, present and future reflecting a non-linear, circular movement. This level of analysis allows for wider definitions of grief that exist for Māori, the turning points in one's life, the inconsistencies and contradictions, evolving relationships with someone who is experiencing grief, and the relationships between grief and rangatahi offending. The process of analysis involved locating meaningful representations within the kōrero directly related to the aims of the research. This involved working collaboratively with other research team members to systematically identify and construct key representations that were organised to guide the reader along a journey of lived experiences.

The eight interviews were individually analysed thematically to locate particular ideas. This process identified places that engaged all senses, used metaphors, humour, unseen energies, and mythology. These themes were then reviewed and compared within, between and across the interviews themselves. The themes were then collated and placed against the relevant literature, internationally and nationally to ensure the formation and relevance of the themes were attended to, being mindful of how they transformed and revolved. This process was valuable as it "foregrounds the specifically narrative aspects of texts and meanings" (Squire, 2008, p. 34). While it was evident that these stories only gently touched on the many layers and depth of knowledge existent in a Māori world, they created space for drawing from these past and present experiences, and further developing innovative and effective ways to address identified issues and strategically implement solutions suggested by the leaders.

Ethical Considerations

Anonymity was discussed with participants in the cultural consultation phase and steps to maintain confidentiality were presented in the information sheet. This issue was discussed either prior to or before the interviews took place. Due to the prominent work these leaders are involved in, protecting the identity of a leader in this community would be difficult to achieve. For this reason I sought

and gained permission for the leaders to be named in the thesis[13]. I also reconfirmed this near the end of the writing phase. I asked two leaders if they would like to check the background information I provided, however, they indicated that they have handed the information over and that this part is now in my hands. I realised the depth and sensitivity of the information and I wanted to ensure that none of the leaders had changed their mind, and that I had their blessings.

One leader commented that she is old enough now to stand by what she has shared but pointed out that she did not want credit for the information shared, which may happen if she is named. She further explained that credit belongs to those before her who passed such information down. This represents one of the principles outlined earlier regarding the good qualities of kaupapa Māori practice; not flaunting knowledge, and having respect for other people. Agendas for ownership were important; however this was more for the interest of Māori as a collective rather than the individual and the protection of treasured knowledge.

This leads onto another ethical consideration, that of ownership of information. The majority of the leaders explicitly acknowledged the shared ownership of the information and defined themselves as passing this knowledge on to benefit those who were in a position to use this information carefully and with good intentions for the benefit for our people. One participant raised these concerns in the interview, outlining the controversy surrounding the sharing of information and the dissemination of this information to the University, which may not necessarily have the same agenda of protecting mātauranga Māori. This may be due to a history of research exploitation (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999), and emphasises the importance of the researcher treading carefully in the worldview of Te Ao Māori when that knowledge is being used within a mainstream university. This research re-presents the voices of our Māori community leaders, which in turn can resonate through Māori people to

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[13] The Māori community leaders are named in the Acknowledgements section, and their initials are used in the analysis chapters.

empower and uplift the mana of the local communities, hapū and iwi to address the identified issues and implement the proposed solutions. In the Foreword to Barlow's (1991) work, Pā Henare Tate comments that Barlow's work is to enlighten people so they do not treat sacred Māori customs lightly, and rather envisaged the higher regard placed on sacred functions, such as tangihanga. Storage of information is extremely important as the information retrieved is personal, and is of high value to both myself and the leaders, and therefore needs to be treated accordingly. All transcripts have been completed, filed and stored and protected with passwords by myself. Raw data has only been shared with those involved in the research process. All hard copies have been stored in a secure building and much care has been taken when handling or working with copies. All audio files of the interviews have also been stored in a specific database, also protected with a password. Finally, all audio and written transcripts have been offered to participants and sent through the post, email or through home visit unless participants declined the offer to receive these materials.

Dissemination

The dissemination of research results has been discussed amongst the research team. We all have a shared understanding that the information collected in the interviews primarily belongs to those key informants and their whānau or hapū, iwi and communities. The collaboration and analysis of this information is the heart of the project and with the consent of the informants will be presented primarily as a thesis submitted to Massey University, for the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology. The main interest is for the distribution of solutions and recommendations to other Māori community leaders, whānau, hapū, iwi, future researchers, health and social service providers, youth justice services and policy developers. The objective is for these people to better understand and be informed by the voices of local Māori community leaders' experiences and understandings of traditional and contemporary grief, rangatahi offenders and their whānau around grief issues, and possible solutions toward working more effectively with rangatahi. Findings can be presented in forums such as health

and academic conferences, in journal articles and other opportunities to bring benefit to rangatahi and te iwi Māori. The information will be distributed in a manner that strives to maintain and uphold the mana of this knowledge and with the guidance of kaumātua or kuia; protectors of our knowledge (Taitimu, 2006).

A dissemination hui (meeting, gathering) will be organised to offer key informants or interested parties an opportunity to discuss the findings of this project and any further areas which can be further explored or researched. The leaders will be provided with their own copy of the thesis, or access to an electronic copy, where appropriate. The hope is that the information presented in this thesis can inspire others who work in this area to access their local resources, particularly Māori community leaders and appreciate the value of exploring, listening and representing the voices of those being researched in a way that produces benefits for our people. I hope that young people accessing or who have had access to our mental health and youth justice services can contribute to their pathways to wellness and contribute to our evidence based treatments in which we look to when attempting to meet rangatahi needs.

Conclusion

While there was some fear attached to interviewing well-respected kaumātua and kuia, it was incredibly exciting and humbling. Through their stories, I was connected to their mamae and their experiences, and was like a sponge, just soaking up the knowledge they were imparting. They enabled reconnection to my own whānau leaders and community. One leader advised me to just let the kōrero wash over me as a waterfall of knowledge with the understanding that I won't capture it all, but that which is meant for me will contribute to my own journey of transformation and healing. This is a journey that is necessary for me to work effectively with our rangatahi. There is strength in this collective guidance that can pass through me to others. What they demonstrated for me was the true depths of the concept of aroha ki te tangata – love for the people.

The narrative framework utilised has enabled us to connect the individual narratives with the wider social and cultural narratives that exist. Psychological constructs of grief and the limitations of these narratives for these particular participants who express grief in relation to that of their social or cultural environments, have been captured through employing narrative inquiry in this primarily kaupapa Māori research project. In addition, narrative inquiry can assist in the assertion of indigenous forms of knowledge for psychological constructs for tangata whenua of Aotearoa. This methodology validated the informants' natural style of telling stories in an unstructured process that listened to their in-depth experiences and knowledge, rather than meet specific criteria that may not have been beneficial or empowering.

In this chapter, I have described how I have employed a kaupapa Māori approach as the underlying methodology that has governed this research project from the beginning. This has involved a comprehensive consultation process throughout the entire research process, alongside the development and maintenance of valued relationships with the research team, and the Māori community leaders I was privileged to have as participants. An overview of the methodological processes utilised such as whanaungatanga, tikanga, karakia, kanohi-ki-te-kanohi were outlined. The principles underlying kaupapa Māori research have informed the conduct of this research.

Kaupapa Māori methodology is a way for researchers in the field to rebuild previously exploited relationships and conduct research for the benefit of Māori people. Narrative inquiry was employed as an analytic tool that provides the space to validate the voices of participants and honour the stories told between teller and hearer, and with the aim of establishing shared meaning that is historically, culturally and socially specfic. The interview process, analysis and sharing of the findings and narrative themes have been outlined, discussing challenges, limitations and the intentions of this project. This chapter sets the scene for the following analysis chapters.

WĀHANGA TUAWHĀ - ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION PART ONE: EXPERIENCES OF GRIEF FROM A MĀORI WORLDVIEW

E kore au e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiātea – I will never be lost because I am a seed sown in Rangiātea.[14]

Introduction

This chapter will navigate throughout the multi-layered and fascinating stories of eight Māori community leaders who have allowed us brief entry into the outskirts of their experiences. The way in which this analysis is presented involves identifying separate primary themes and then sub-themes to capture and represent different narrative descriptions for the purpose of this project. These strands of grief will be woven together with the relevant literature and the process that has guided this research journey, that of kaupapa Māori. The themes pull together to ultimately create an in-depth representation of what a Māori worldview of grief may look like through the eyes of these Māori community leaders. However, these themes in no way encompass the complexities and inter-relatedness of grief from a Māori worldview, but assists us in presenting the leaders' collective stories in a way that can represent some of the underlying messages and positioning of such knowledge in the modern day world. This requires the reader to look beyond the spoken word and to hear and see underlying meanings or hidden messages within the stories and sharing of mātauranga Māori (Tauroa & Tauroa, 1986). My own positioning as not only a researcher but all the roles I carry blend with my experiences, views and perceptions of grief. I also acknowledge the different wānanga (places of

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[14] A well-known Māori whakataukī.

learning) or vehicles of te reo Māori and mātauranga that I have been part of, particularly mau rākau (Māori weaponry training). All of these wānanga with their influential Māori community leaders continue to provide guidance along this cultural, academic and personal journey, all inter-twined and continuously circling in the shaping and steering of this research. It is with this positioning that the reciprocal dialogue, the understanding of the different levels of analysis, the co-constructing of discourse, the threading of non-verbal language and unspoken energies occurs to create this narrative analysis.

Eight Māori community leaders were recruited for this project. All leaders are well known, respected and influential Māori community leaders actively involved in Māori communities, hapū and iwi, and offer a Māori perspective having lived and breathed Māori realities. This summarised background information provides context for situating the kōrero.

The first leader – TWT – is a Te Tai Tokerau Anglican priest of profound dignity, as well as an extended whānau member on my maternal side of the family. The second leader – AD – is a beautiful, intelligent wahine (woman) who highly values her community, whānau values and faith and holds many important roles. She continues to implement change in the many different areas she is involved with. The third leader – PE – is a wahine connected through whakapapa, who has lived in Te Tai Tokerau her entire life and is involved with tribal matters, as well as prison inmates and their whānau. Her wealth of knowledge particularly with regard to tikanga and grief within Te Ao Māori is evident. The fourth leader – KM – presents as a humble, softly spoken and knowledgeable male leader who also values religion, whānau, tikanga and applies his knowledge to those of whom he works. He has also worked with rangatahi offenders through Kaupapa Māori group programmes within the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (Te Roopu Kimiora), as well as recently implementing his own kaupapa Māori programme designed for those accessing mental health services.

The fifth leader – WH – is well known in the local community and amongst local rangatahi, where he provides healing services. He has also worked extensively

in prisons and has a wealth of life experience. The sixth leader – MK – is the founder and director of a local non-government organisation that provides services to wider communities, including rangatahi offenders. His life experiences as an ex-gang member and encounters of grief are also shared, offering in-depth insight into the world of many rangatahi who may be difficult to engage. The seventh leader – RS – is an active and strong member of the community working in the education setting and providing voluntary wānanga, noho marae (marae stay) and mau rākau training to our rangatahi and wider community. The eighth leader – NP – works in a range of positions and adds a unique flavour, innovation and wisdom to this project. His wide outreach and many layers of knowledge and skills are widely sought throughout many communities and yet he remains humble and grounded in nature. His professional role is as a cultural advisor in the area of health.

This brief description of each leader does not grant justice to the many strands and roles all these leaders uphold. However, the purpose is to illustrate the richness and wealth of kōrero this analysis conveys. Nevertheless, the leaders would be the first attribute their successes to a collective effort:

> E hara i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini - My achievements are not mine alone but through the strength of many.[15]

Grief is a sensitive issue and care is usually taken when talking about those who are deceased. I felt a meaningful connection to each participant beyond the focus of this project; therefore, it seemed comfortable and appropriate to be transparent in asking each leader about their own personal experiences and understandings of grief. This also acknowledged their authority to determine at which point of their life they were going to allow me entry. In some instances, I shared my first personal experience of losing my nanny as a child to demonstrate my true intentions, enrich our relationship, enabling a cascade of reminiscences. The diversity amongst the leaders' backgrounds was evident

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[15] An often used whakataukī.

illustrating the many forms in which grief was experienced and described. However, as TWT noted, grief is the great leveller:

> *And I think grief and handling grief eventually will come to the point for all of us and I have thought as a minister that that was the most levelling experience one can ever have to experience…many many times over.* (TWT)

Some leaders also spoke about grief in a wider sense before bringing it back to grief in relation to bereavement:

> *There are a lot of areas for grief and loss, bereavement, whatever you want to use has a lot of strands to it. The types of environments that create that issue of concern…and the community has a major role in playing that. There is probably a multiple; one is culture, culture brings different dynamics to dealing with grief. Community itself will bring its own dynamic to grief and loss.* (MK)

These understandings of grief are shared within a wider context of the realities or roles in which each member performs, whether as priest, healer, cultural advisor or mental health manager. Diversity is expected, although commonalties arise through their collective identity as Māori.

Personal Experiences of Grief

In the telling of the leaders' personal experiences of grief, we are taken on a journey through their reflections. The leaders set the time, space, and scene, captivating the listener. Beginning the story at the level of personal grieving experiences, enabled a natural navigation into Te Ao Māori and three sub-themes emerged – traditional grieving practices, physical senses of grief, and tūrangawaewae. The narratives are presented in a way that represent the inter-relatedness of different concepts or phenomena, regardless of their positioning in the past, present or future or the different realms, such as the spiritual or physical realm.

Traditional grieving practices

Barlow (1991) wrote that tangihanga "is one of the few surviving institutions in Māori culture" (p. 122), and it is one of the distinct cultural markers of the contemporary Māori world (Borell, 2005). There are many rituals and traditions of tangihanga and although contemporary practices have incorporated many modifications there are nevertheless strong connections back to Te Ao Kōhatu (the ancient world).

TWT spoke of the tension between the expectations of custom and his personal feelings as a son:

> *the expectation was that I would tell her [his mother] the time had come and you could go now [pass away]...and I couldn't do it....So could you imagine the emotion that I felt when I was asked to tell her when to go....That is...a Māori custom. Everybody had agreed that she could go and I couldn't do it I just felt that I didn't want her to go....She was my mother; she had cared for me when I was a child.* (TWT)

The concept of tapu was demonstrated throughout PE's narrative and the way in which she treated the sharing of traditional customary practices and knowledge in our discussion:

> *Greenery played an important role in traditional grieving rituals.* (PE)

Greenery is a plaited wreath constructed of leaves such as kawakawa that can be placed upon the head or held in the hand to signify mourning (Barlow, 1991). This is usually a practice carried out by older women, but in some tribes or sub-tribes they can be worn by men. PE also shared about the placing of greenery at the foot of the coffin. Barlow (1991) explained that this is an indication that the spirits are unable to take any physical remains to the next world. Whilst talking further about greenery however, PE's flow of kōrero became disrupted when she moved us away from the food we had previously shared (noa – free from tapu, ordinary) so that she could continue sharing this sacred (tapu) knowledge on a deeper level. This demonstrated the utmost respect and awareness she had in regard to treating this information correctly.

Another recognised role that had rituals of tapu connected to it was that of the grave-diggers. These were usually men of that marae trained for those roles, including knowledge of the whenua, which they prepared for the deceased. They were familiar with the sacredness of their task and the processes required for ensuring their spiritual safety. PE explains however:

> *Tapu was different back then; when there was a tangihanga the grave-diggers ate out of different dishes and these were washed in special parts of the creek or river. Today, there is a modernised tapu.* (PE)

Wailing is a customary practice of kuia to express the depths of grief. It sounds like a deep-rooted, wavering, and soulful cry in a powerful pitch and tone that captures you, places you in the presence of the grief and opens up the realm of wairua. RS commented on the changes to this practice however:

> *These days it is a physical thing, the wailing, whereas the old women…they see you coming through the door. They see you, your mother if she has gone, your grandmother and so on and that is the reason for that tangi, that length of tangi, coz they [the ancestors] are all coming back….But we don't do that anymore, coz all we see is 'by the way who was your mother and by the way I don't know your grandmother'.* (RS)

One aspect of the impact of urbanisation on traditional grieving practices is illustrated in the above observation of kuia struggling to connect faces with names in terms of whakapapa and tangihanga due to irregular contact. Other traditional concepts pertaining to grief were touched upon, such as kawa and tikanga:

> *How you experience language will change, emotion will change and those things all come from a kawa. Kawa and tikanga. And our kawa is created by the Gods and if people say 'oh how does that happen?' Then we just need to look at where the first karanga was done. It's not a human thing. It is the birds [who] call us in the morning, [and] then we are greeted by the sun.* (RS)

Best (1998) explores death in the context of mythical origin, where man descends from immortal personifications; Ranginui and Papatūanuku. The origins of decay amongst people were associated to the act of the Ātua, Tāne, in seeking the female element. Best (1998) also contextualised the origins of death

within the stories of Mauī and Hine-nui-te-pō, providing detailed descriptions to illustrate the wider contexts of death for Māori according to past customs. He also described how ancient Māori would meet death with a sense of tranquillity, without fear, but also without cheerfulness. These universal experiences were orally transmitted down the whakapapa lines.

WH talked about the two certainties of humanity; life and death. He explains that everything else derives from tikanga or kawa, which ultimately derives from the Ātua. It is in this wider manifestation that grief is expressed:

> *When we are born what complements is that we will die. And of course the modern world has taken us away from that and made dying a sad thing, an unhappy thing when we should all embrace death. Embrace death from Te Ao Māori…when we celebrate[d] death in the old days it was because you had honour to be passed on into the next world…and now we are saddened by it and someone's given it an English name and called it grief.* (WH)

What many of these quotations show is that whilst these leaders accept that our traditions have changed with time, they nevertheless express concern for the losses which have been incurred. During some of the interviews, I could feel their sadness as they spoke about such issues. RS expressed concern over the difficulties some people have today around letting go of the deceased:

> *In the old days, they would lift the tapu and allow the person to go. Everybody that was there at the tangi, everybody would understand that he is gone. The only remembrance that we would have of him is that he is up there in the urupa.* (RS)

RS talked further about tangihanga today and youth who decorate themselves with death. This entails the placing of photos of the deceased on tee-shirts or novelty items such as beer coolers. The whānau or friends may have good intentions of paying remembrance to their loved one but this is at the risk of breaching tapu:

> *If you hold them back, yeah they will just look for a mate aye. See with that suicide with my nephew, if you keep him earth bound he will look for him a mate. And sure enough, three months down the track his best mate committed suicide. Because he was wearing him [the deceased] on his tee-shirt and had him in the coffin, the picture…on his tee shirt.* (RS)

The importance of traditional practices, guided by tikanga and respecting those of the spiritual world is clearly illustrated. The psyche of the warrior was described by RS and can be used when distinguishing between our rangatahi who have learned traditional practices and those who have not:

> *Seeing grief before it happens, that is the psyche of the warrior to see those things whether it is grief, being aware of your environment....Really sharpening your ears and your listening skills, sharpening all your senses to a place where people won't believe you. Because I can hear things now before they happen...listening carefully, watching...sometimes you just need to sit and say nothing.* (RS)

This is supported by KM's kōrero around Te Ara Whaiti, which he has developed for his whānau, and his work in mental health to provide a structured kaupapa Māori pathway designed to educate whānau about Māoritanga:

> *Te Ara means a pathway... that pathway is straight and true but it is really narrow.* (KM)

Three of the steps of the Te Ara Whaiti pathway are:

> *Ata Titiro – you are starting to look for role models, mentors, examples. Who are they? Where are they? Are they in my whānau?*

> *Ata Whakarongo – then you start to listen, it is in invitation to an individual person to be given a glimpse in to their sacred potential, their tapu, and the necessary instruction of tikanga to release that potential.*

> *Rongo wairua – this is one of the most important parts. This is when you begin to listen with your own wairua....There is something inside you saying, encouraging you to listen to that wairua, rongo wairua. There is an expectation to begin learning how to listen with one's spirits beyond distraction and to experience a different type of learning that is beyond eyes and ears.* (KM)

Traditional upbringing and exposure to Māori traditions and worldviews also had a reassuring effect, such as believing and knowing there is life after death:

> *the way we were brought up on the marae...you hear the kōrero that this isn't the end. That there is life after death and then they go back and they*

will be meeting up with our tūpuna and all that sort of thing. So you hear that all your life and I guess...that was a reassuring thing for me. (AD)

These strong beliefs act as protective factors or a foundation for making sense of loss and bereavement and can also align with different religious beliefs to create a sense of hope and acceptance. AD spoke of her grief experiences around the loss of her son:

because of my religious beliefs...being a Mormon, there is life after death....Going through that whole eight months with him... and trying to get my head around that he is going to go, and just trying to accept it. And that real whakapono, that faith you know that we will be together again....I think if I didn't have those really strong beliefs, it would have been really hard for me to handle...losing him....But I guess it just gives me that hope that one day we will be together again as a family, and if you don't have that hope, I think it takes the meaning out of life. (AD)

Other Māori traditional practices play an important role for some in the grieving processes. Noho puku is one custom that involves fasting for a particular period of time, depending on the purpose. When our ancestors travelled long distances, fasting would assist them with their endurance. Fasting was also used to give the puku (stomach) a rest from working and sometimes rongoā (medicine, medicinal plant) or a stone would be placed in the mouth to prevent the individual from becoming hungry (Moon, 2003). Fasting for longer periods cleanses you physically to cleanse you spiritually, enabling your wairua to enter higher levels of existence. AD describes the way in which she used prayer and noho puku to work through her grieving process for her terminally ill son:

Spent a lot of time praying and fasting, noho puku, just everything focused on him and his wellness...it really takes you to another, another plane in your life, you know. It's a place where I strive to be back at...it was that real peaceful place to be, a place of aroha....You look at the world differently...[and] have more aroha for people. (AD)

This journey of absorbing such personal and sacred knowledge in the area of traditional grieving processes for these leaders was often overwhelming; however it was also inspiring and humbling. My empty bucket was filled to overflowing with taonga, which at times I felt I could not contain. So one

strategy I used to manage the depth of holding this knowledge was that of Rongo wairua – "learning how to listen with one's spirits beyond distraction and to experience a different type of learning that is beyond eyes and ears" (KM). This affirmed my belief in the value of this knowledge for our rangatahi in helping to ensure they reach their full potential.

Physical senses of grief

The physical senses of human experience emerge within the kōrero of personal experiences of grief, invigorating the many facets and forms in which grief manifests. The leaders touch upon the different senses within their stories; vision, sound, touch, taste or smell whilst taking me on their unique journey of memory that was an uplifting heart-felt entry to their event of grief. Visiting these moments through the physical senses nevertheless opened up other dimensions to this experience of grief.

TWT spoke about his intimate moments with his dying mother:

> *She just looked at me…you know that is one thing watching her doing the things…being in pain and it is another thing for her to just look at you and out stare you. And I had to look away, I just couldn't do it.* (TWT)

This description captures the strength of grief and the way in which a visual description can carry such intensity. The many other senses beyond the physical, despite being unspoken of here, were nonetheless intact. I felt the aroha (unconditional love) through this kōrero and hope other such moments are treasured and held close to the hearts of our people.

The visual images of the grieving practices shared by RS and AD demonstrate their familiarity with traditional grieving practices from being raised on the marae:

> *If you walk into a tangihanga you can see it all because it's vision.* (RS)

> *I can just vaguely remember being at the marae at the foot of the coffin there, and everyone around, and I was amongst all the greenery.* (AD)

Sound was also described in different aspects of tangihanga. Both RS and AD touch on their memories of tangihanga being of the distinct wailing of the older women:

> *You can hear it by the way the women are wailing; you can smell it.* (RS)

> *And just everybody wailing...everybody was upset and like crying. That was my first kind of experience of death and grief and how I remember that.* (AD)

The sound and power of the wailing from kuia was a significant part of tangihanga which has changed with time:

> *You don't hear that wailing anymore...that wailing the old way, like how our grandparents used to wail. And as kids you could pick out who was crying in the marae from just the sounds of the wails.* (AD)

By wailing the kuia shared their aroha and manaakitanga, and encouraged the expelling the emotions of grief from those present, contributing towards sending the deceased's wairua to the next realm. The acknowledgement of the infrequency of this type of wailing today was accompanied by a sense of sadness by the leaders in the recognition that this was another form of grief relating to the fading of such customs. The reasons for these customs fading are not made explicit, but this may be related to the idea that traditional rituals of tangihanga and uhunga were designed to ease the passage of the spirit to the next world. There has been a shift to a focus on the physical aspects of the tangihanga and those who are affected by the loss (Dansey, in Edwards, et. al., 2009).

RS spoke of another function of the wailing:

> *The women would really lift it...[with] that tangi [cry, crying], and then everybody would zoom in on them and the hair would stand up, and they wouldn't be worried about the smell [of the deceased] because the ears would come into play more than the nose. But these days we don't have it because embalming has come in to play...part of our traditional stuff, [with] the embalming, has gone.* (RS)

The sense of smell was also described by some of the leaders in relation to the other senses:

> *To this day the smell of the greenery and you know every time I smell it, it reminds me of that time.* (AD)

RS adds to the dimension of smell. Although there were different forms of embalming using our natural resources and rongoā in the past, RS draws us to the intensity of the smell of the natural decaying of the body. The wailing enticed the sense of sound and the other senses to distract from the distinct smell of the deceased:

> *You can smell it [the deceased]…purpose of the wailing for women [was to] take the focus from the smell to focus on the wailing.* (RS)

RS describes the importance of touch within the context of all the different senses, when describing the importance of going back to the origins of grief:

> *When looking at the origin of grief we have to go back to the Ātua, particularly Hine-nui-te-po but you have to bring Rongo in…Rongomatāne. Rongo is to hear those things, you hear those emotions, you feel them. Those are all rongo aye, they're vibrations. You can actually feel grief, hear it, smell it; all those senses coz that's what grief gives off.* (RS)

The sense of taste was not made explicit in these stories; however it was a common practice for those closest to the deceased to fast during the tangihanga due to their state of tapu, with the encouragement of expelling their grief through their roimata and hūpē (Dansey, 1992 in Edwards et. al., 2009). PE spoke about the staunchness of such principles in her younger years where they did not even question these traditional practices, but just naturally learned and were immersed in the right way of doing things.

It was apparent that PE and other Māori community leaders have lived through many changes to traditional practices, and did not have the same struggles such as alienation from or ignorance of such cultural practices, and their recognition of this loss is a marker for their own grief. This creates urgency for making such knowledge available to rangatahi so they may reconnect with their tūpuna and stand proud. Kereopa (in Moon, 2003) shares that in his iwi, many rangatahi have been introduced to the old ways such as the art of whaikōrero. He is confident that returning to the old ways that are tika (correct practice) is

happening, however, this is not the complete answer; using traditional practices in innovative ways may also be required in order to fit new environments.

Tūrangawaewae

Tūrangawaewae was another narrative theme that emerged from the leader's kōrero. Tauroa and Tauroa (1986) describe tūrangawaewae as the marae, "the standing place of the present generation and will be the standing place for the generations to come" (p. 19). They also state that Māori who have no marae have no tūrangawaewae, and therefore may have nowhere to belong. This is a common feature for urban Māori populations, although there are now several urban marae built to fill this gap (George, 2010). Moon (2003) posits it is important to uphold and maintain our tūrangawaewae so that Māori will always have something to connect to which can absorb grief and grant spiritual healing.

These Māori community leaders know where they belong in the world. Traditional grieving practices were part of a normal upbringing for some, which brought so much more; te reo Māori, waiata, whaikōrero, tikanga, mana tāngata (human authority), mana Ātua (authority of the Gods) and so on. They knew the land, the histories, the whakapapa, links to other hapū and iwi, the controversies that existed for Māori and their interactions with non-Māori and the Crown. They knew all those things that are lived realities and passed through whakapapa and being Māori:

> *I identify strongly with all those iwi. I currently live on our tūrangawaewae…which was passed down from father to son from father to son until it came down to me…in Pataua South, so [I've] been living there with my family for about 18 years.* (KM)

Tūrangawaewae can also consist of a spiritual as well as physical connection to the land. Kereopa (in Moon, 2003) states that "The most important thing about land, for Māori, is not that it is ancestral land, but that it is land – it is Papatūanuku (Mother Earth)" (p. 122). KM demonstrated his notion of tūrangawaewae, establishing his connection to the whenua and his whakapapa

and the many unspoken connections this entails. KM draws from this strong foundation as well as his belief in heavenly things like karakia, wānanga and things of rangi (the light) to re-educate whānau or our people who he works with in the area of mental health:

> *For me it has been helpful for me to know these things because now I have a base or a platform in which I can work from…and I say 'hey you are not pōrangi (distracted mind), you are mauri or Māori which is another wānanga in itself.* (KM)

A return to cultural roots has long been advocated as a way in which to help rangatahi as well as adults who have been isolated from positive kin networks (in Ati Hau, 1997). TWT shared the tensions surrounding building a marae in Ngawha prison in an attempt to create a sense of belonging for Māori inmates:

> *You shouldn't build a marae in here or a Māori focus unit because your focus should be where you come from, your marae, that is where you come from…prison is not your marae…they (offenders) do not belong, they are aliens, they are aliens, they do not belong…You're in Ngāti Rangi territory and this is what Ngāti Rangi are saying…they're (Department of Corrections) not listening.* (TWT)

TWT shows that the answer does not lie with simply building a marae within an offending facility. The meaning of marae is belonging and this knowledge seems to be disregarded. There is the marae on the outside that could be utilised and where manaaki and transitioning prior to offenders return home to their own marae and people could be an option.

NP shared an example where he worked closely with young Māori inmates and he was able to take them to the ngāhere (forest, bush) and teach them how to live off the land. One particular tāne also learned how to whaikōrero and NP encouraged their return to this individual's marae, back to his own people. It was here that NP used his expertise, cheekiness and innovation to lay down a wero (challenge). The tangata whenua (people of that marae) demonstrated their knowledge with numerous skilled speakers. The time came for their manuhiri, NP and this young male he had been working with, to reply to their

whaikōrero. NP allowed this young male to demonstrate his learning, followed by a few other tāne. Finally, NP stood and said very little, despite being extremely competent. What he did express, however, was extremely powerful and tactful for his purpose of the hui. He applauded the tangata whenua for their performance and skill, then introduced them to their whanaunga, the young tāne returning home. NP questioned why, with so much knowledge on offer, had one of their own been found with no support. This example speaks to the necessity of re-forging connections between many of our people and their tūrangawaewae.

Māori community leaders like MK noted that society consists of more than just cultural identity as understood through tūrangawaewae however, and there exists further implications for those who may not have access to their whakapapa:

> *We are now in a society where we are caught between two identities; urban and cultural identity...urban identity is part and parcel of colonisation, so those who have caused a wedge between wanting to know 'who I am' as a culture, and...we now have single parents where we have shut [out]...this young person's other side of their whakapapa.* (MK)

MK highlighted that not knowing how to grieve or feel the transition into the next world stems from not knowing who you are or where you come from:

> *So when you ask the question and they can't find that, then that sets the time [on] the clock, for 'who am I?' Does anybody care for me? Do I belong? So all these issues stem from the relationship of family members.* (MK)

MK's experience of grief and loss resulted in him finding his sense of belonging in the gangs and lifestyles that operated to protect him from the many layers of grief that he encountered. Although these fraternities are seen through a negative lens by society, these stereotypes prevent us from seeing the protective factors for those who are attracted to or raised in these environments. Gaining insight into how some people experience life differently and create a sense of belonging through gang affiliation is important to understanding how some have the strength to overcome these burdens and

stereotypes to exit this environment to better position themselves for creating different pathways:

> *In terms of my experience of grief and loss it was from the day I was born. My father died [when I was] four so I didn't experience that…I had an accident when I was young and I should have died. I was only five; I fell off a tower and smashed the back of my head. All we got out of that was a hiding, but I was in concussion most of the time. I didn't even go to hospital…we were subject to violence…our family was rife, it was entrenched…Yes different layers [of grief]; we never had time to heal, so we found mechanisms to protect us.* (MK)

KM expresses his aroha and respect in the way that he interacts with anybody accessing his services or requiring his support, and the way in which he demonstrates manaaki to colleagues. For example, he refers to people as whānau. This speaks volumes and helps narrow the gaps and power relations that exist. His expectation would be that those he is helping would in return help his whanaunga if required. This creates a sense of belonging that is not necessarily related to a physical place, and therefore adapts with the needs of the people.

TWT touched on the importance of location in our sharing of grief experiences, and commented on my own reflections on the scenery I took in as I journeyed to my grandmother's marae and urupa (burial ground):

> *I have always found situations like that…it is choosing the right time and right place to do that…it's part of your location…but you have to take your time, you can't rush. You're lucky you had to look at all the scenery as you went up [to the marae]. I think we think that words can do it but sometimes it is geography and the sea does a lot.* (TWT)

RS shared his belief about the whenua, Ātua and grief relating to the recent earthquakes in Christchurch (NZ):

> *I have a belief that the second coming is an awakening…a psychological awakening for people, coz the earth will tell us aye, that there is something wrong with the environment. They [the Ātua] will cause us a lot of grief…they will teach us grief…compassion because we can't do that on our own really….So the earth, our Atua Māori…when they talk about a second*

coming it is an awakening of the Gods...I'm talking about the Ātua and the environment...not talking about an entity, about Jesus. (RS)

These events sometimes remind people of the powers of the Ātua Māori and importance of being respectful and aware of wider influences that work in harmony with our environment and people. Tauroa and Tauroa (1986) wrote that:

> the acceptance of wairua provides an easy way of understanding the relationships of nature. There is a spiritual relationship between the trees and the birds. Yet the winds, the sun, and the rain affects the trees. So, then, people have a relationship with and a responsibility to the wind, the rain, the trees, the birds, the sun, each other, and a greater force beyond. (p. 154)

Te Taha Hinengaro

The word 'grief' raised different reactions amongst the leaders and there were difficulties in trying to define this English word in a Māori way, when the true complexities of grief were much larger than this term offered. At least three of the leaders made implicit their frustration, with one leader's body language becoming somewhat tense with facial expressions displaying his frustration in attempting to confine his understanding of grief:

> *Now we are looking at losing someone and calling it grief... I don't think that it's the appropriate word...Grief in my opinion is a word that mandates us, just locks us into something. If we look at the Māori word, it covers so much.* (WH)

WH dealt with this through expanding on the term and transferring it to a Māori context where they could relate it to other relations of grief. This expansion was expressed with a cascade of beautiful, free-flowing kōrero. Grief was expanded upon as an emotion or feeling and talked about in relation to the hinengaro (mind), wairua, aroha, and pukuriri (angry, hostility). Grief was also connected to the tinana (physical body) and its make-up.

KM also spoke about grief as being related to other emotions:

Ki ahau [for me] grief there are a whole lot of things related to grief...I'll share a couple, like mataku (frightened). When you are feeling frightened. There is also mamae...[pain, suffering]. Then you have feeling...mokemoke [lonely]....You get those feelings of loss, that ngaro (lost, hidden, forgotten); there is that loss there somewhere. Also...tangi-tangi [crying] is...appropriate....But also we've got to sometimes wonder why we tangi, what's happening there. Grief is also connected to taumaha[feeling heavy]. A lot of people feel heavy, they feel weighed down......grief is the same as feeling pouri[sad]. So...these are just some of the things that I know about grief. (KM)*

All of these emotions and feelings are spoken about through experience and MK also notes:

There are a lot of areas for grief and loss, bereavement, whatever you want to use; [it] has a lot of strands to it. (MK)

One emotion that continued to be prominent amongst the narratives was anger. MK spoke of a personal loss which brought with it anger:

In terms of part of the grief and experiences stuff is the anger, and I'll talk about anger in a different aspect of the loss because the anger is a learned behaviour you know for me, and the way that I've expressed [it]. And through anger is the frustration; all these little negative things lead to experiences that will eventually lead to loss or grief in one form or another. So all these stepping stones. Anger is a stepping stone, frustration is a stepping stone that will lead to a bigger [issue]. (MK)

MK further responded to my question of grief and loss as seeing it underlying the anger, and described how some compartmentalise their emotions:

Yeah it's silos, it's silos leading to a big tank, you know. That's in my mind that's how I put it. (MK)

The hinengaro is not compartmentalised, like the DSM-IV may be used to section out different silos or areas of emotions or clusters of emotions. As MK reflects on his own journey of grief, he uses different concepts and ways of illustrating this, which I can relate to. Through this sharing of stories I realise how difficult it is to transfer such strong emotions into words. My own experiences of grief resonate with his kōrero about anger and frustration leading to something bigger like stepping stones, to understand grief as a tank

of water that may have different components, yet cannot easily be separated into individual, measurable parts or silos.

Durie's (1998) well-known health model of Te Whare Tapa Whā requires mentioning here, as this has set the precedence for many Māori and non-Māori understanding that health is holistic and must incorporate the four dimensions/walls (tapa[16]) of a whare (house): taha tinana (physical well-being), taha wairua (spiritual well-being), taha whānau (family well-being) and taha hinengaro (intellectual/emotional well-being). Māori have long understood individual and collective wellbeing as comprising more than just the physical aspects that can be seen and measured. We must remain confident in aspects of a spiritual or a subjective nature, and understand the necessity of this to the heart of being Māori.

Embodied Grief

Embodied grief is described in terms of the physical manifestations within the tinana. The narratives negotiated meaning and common understanding of the grieving process during our discussions. We explored the place of grief, and the whanaunga (relationships) of grief such as anger, to illustrate where it does and does not belong, and any ramifications for grief travelling to areas in the body where it is not welcomed.

TWT spoke about grief in the context of the last breath when a person is in the process of dying:

> *If a person loses his breathing and he breathes out his last breath, expelling that was a really natural way of releasing emotion and it had nothing to do with giving up. It had something to do with expelling all the things that you had inside you, get rid of everything that you possibly had. And in the end…their last breath, that was the most powerful expression of expelling grief and giving up one's life, and that to me was the most powerful thing.* (TWT)

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[16] Both 'tapa' and 'taha' can be translated as 'wall' or 'edge'.

Expelling grief and releasing emotion through the process of passing over to the other world, are considered the most natural and powerful events of death to this leader in his role as an Anglican priest. These moments are precious and not commonly understood by the everyday person.

RS discusses grief in relation to tapu and explains that 'ta' can be likened to a blueprint in which every individual is born with, or inherits from their parents:

So grief…all those things are born in the cellular memory. (RS)

KM also expands on the concept of tapu and relates it to the importance of protecting our bodies:

But the word tapu, the great potential or sacred potential of our taitamariki, you and I have this sacred potential. In a sense tapu means sacred but it is incomplete… tapu also means forbidden because when we start using substances and stuff you know our body should forbid these things….We should be looking after our tinana, exercise, eating well, mirimiri, rongoā; we have the sacred potential. (KM)

The intensity and location of grief in the tinana was best described by one of the leaders who lost her son:

It's that kind of real deep ache in your puku you know when you lose someone that you really care about…I guess that the real puku grief I felt was when my own son died. (AD)

Describing the grief as being felt, heard and alive within different areas of the body represents the power and many forms through which grief takes place. MK gave a detailed account of embodied grief and the effect that this had:

The feeling when you feel loss to the maximum, that it is like something that is dear to you has been ripped out of your heart. Well you just go into a wall of yourself. Like when it happened aye I couldn't stay at home and I couldn't sleep I just got out…and well I was playing rugby at that time and I just run probably for a few hours…I couldn't sleep aye in the middle of the night because I couldn't think because that pain was too hard. But then you get a lot of fullas that go to the extreme and they think nah this is it, and on that time of hitting rock bottom it was actually helpful in a way. (MK)

MK made comment towards the end of the interview that he has not shared some of this kōrero with others before besides his close family, and I felt the rawness of MK emotion as he reminisced. I appreciated that even as a Māori community leader, and a male, that these accounts are still difficult and placed amongst many layers of embodied grief. MK had the strength and courage to overcome this interface in his life and share these moments.

WH provided knowledge around the embodied relations of grief such as aroha, which all operate to guide the individual in their life journey through the many ups and downs:

> *As we know aroha stays in a place that is called the aroaro, and the aroaro is just located around the sternum…So where grief comes from is two places; in the hinengaro and the heart. And the heart has two places, the bottom half and the top…the grief lives in the bottom half of the heart and of course the combination connecting with the hinengaro.* (WH)

WH reminded me that this knowledge and understanding derives from our ancestors, whether it be through waiata, mōteatea (chants), kōrero tawhito (historical Māori accounts), or hidden messages. It is our responsibility to learn about these taonga that have been handed down by our ancestors and better understand ourselves and one another. It is also important to be mindful of iwi variations and different conceptualisations of the phenomena of grief in relation to aroha.

WH also distinguished the differences between grief and trauma, which can sometimes be talked about as being the same thing, however:

> *You have grief and trauma which are similar but they live in different places. Trauma lives in the puku but it goes towards the bowel.* (WH)

WH works from a healing perspective drawing from energies beyond the physical. This kōrero shows that through understanding the manifestations and embodiment of grief through physical symptoms, this can provide access to what is beyond the skin and therefore, guide the healing process at a deeper level if ancestors provide access. This is where karakia is extremely important and respect for people, not just the individual that presents for WH, but all

those that accompany him or her. There is still a lot of room for establishing these kinds of services in our communities and engaging whānau or encouraging them to start shifting towards a healing space. Therefore, healers such as WH have an important and huge responsibility to be accountable and innovative in protecting such processes, but sharing their mahi so they can reach out to enable this shift forward.

Metaphors and Grief

The way in which grief experiences are constructed as metaphors and communicated within this collection of stories revealed a unique yet shared style of transforming complex notions or issues into a more simplistic form, thus teaching the listener to adopt other forms of learning and constructing knowledge. Whakataukī and Māori mythological stories play a significant role in Māoritanga in terms of carrying hidden messages or principles of life that can assist others who may encounter similar experiences. They can also be used to simplify or better explain a situation in a way that brings intangible, abstract constructs to life which people can connect to. The role of metaphors are embedded in a Māori way of being and existing, and can acknowledge our connection to wider influences such as whakapapa, dreams, and can be used as guidelines to create a more harmonious lifestyle. This requires looking beyond the superficial aspects within these kōrero, to better understand the leaders' experiences of grief and death:

> *It is understanding those things, those Māori proverbs, 'when one fern dies another fern fond is born or grows' or when 'one rangatira (chief) dies another one is born'. So you are not actually losing them because they're being born again, but what you want to know is, are they being born with the same traits as the one who has gone.* (RS)

This particular metaphor creates a sense of normality around the grieving process, in explaining that the death of a chief or somebody prominent is part of the cycle of life and that usually involves another child or future leader being born, with the fern metaphor connecting this process to Papatūanuku. Connecting the whenua, the environment to our human existence in a reciprocal

manner reaffirms the inter-relatedness of Māori people with the environment and wider, universal energies that are not visible to the eye. Another example is the relating of grief to Ātua such as Hine-nui-te-Pō:

> *Deep emotions of grief and can't get out of it, Hine-nui-te-Pō – they go into darkness.* (RS)

This particular analogy likens the process of grief to the infamous stories of Mauī who attempted to gain immortality for humanity through entering Hine-nui-te-Pō, but was defeated by the cry of the fantail, thereby resulting in death as a part of life. This analogy illustrates the darkness and the difficulty of returning from such an alluring place, due to entrapment by those spirits who have been denied a physical body, so will go out of their way to entice those who appear vulnerable (KM).

Another leader uses a simpler metaphor to illustrate her conceptualisation of how a troubled rangatahi may experience grief difficulties:

> *It's like a pressure cooker full of emotions and it's got to be released and they just don't know how to deal with it.* (AD)

TWT likens the experience of grief to a balloon as a way for us to understand this complex process:

> *I think that grief is like a balloon and you are waiting for it to burst…understanding of grief situations is very much like blowing up a balloon….Every situation that I've encountered you feel…your head starts to swell up and your lungs feel like they are filling up with emotions and all sorts of feelings that you have never experienced before. And it seems that you are either going to burst…in some of the things that happen like crying. And for a male that is difficult. I'm not sure whether that is a Māori thing or not but to openly weep is usually a sign of the expelling of the emotion that you have bottled up inside you.* (TWT)

TWT then goes further to connect my expression of the grief I felt for my Nanny to the grief of the person dying:

> *I felt an affinity for your expression of grief and the way in which it happened to you and you probably understand it is like…blowing a balloon up and it gets more and more intense the more it is blown up. And I*

> *suppose it is the same kind of thing that happens to the deceased person when they are struggling for air and it is expelled and there is no more breathing.* (TWT)

These metaphors represent so much, and link us to the reality of what this experience may look like to the deceased and furthermore, the world beyond the physical. AD describes her grief with her son as a surreal type of space similar to that of a vacuum, illustrating the moving and mix of continuous energies taking place, as well as her perception of those she was aware of around her:

> *It was really hard to plan for his death…you know you kind of get caught. It's kind of like this surreal world that you fall into and you stay in that space, and even at his death and for a little while after its almost like a vacuum. You're sitting in it and you have people around you that support you and awhi you, but for me…I guess when you get hurt that deep, deep hurt, you sort of protect yourself and you don't want to get emotionally attached with people.* (AD)

WH uses metaphors to talk about working with rangatahi who have experienced grief and who require support to understand and come to terms with their experiences:

> *Like when you grow fruit trees and or when you grow something in the garden; well if you grow it in winter it isn't going to grow. So it is the same with our people.* (WH)

This again illustrates how the environment is absorbed and applied to human existence to produce more effective outcomes. This touches upon the correct timing of implementing change or determining a healing process. MH provided an analogy for how he perceived his being in this world through his unique experiences in the gang environment. He shows how he made sense of the many layers of grief he had incurred, which offers insight into how others from similar environments may relate:

> *You will be able to relate a lot of that kōrero to your mahi especially for youth. My whole life has been that, a majority of gang members, their life will be like that… Yeah, you watch Blade the movie and talk about the vampires. Well I'm the vampire and a lot of people walk past and will not even know what my life is about, they will never know.* (MK)

Relating experiences of grief to other similar contemporary events such as American movies, can engage youth who are more receptive to other cultures beside their own. This demonstrates the skill of being able to adopt innovative ways and understand the worlds in which rangatahi may be living today and the way in which they create their identity, drawing from glamour and socially accepted norms amongst their own peers. This particular leader is also very good at using humour to enhance his story telling and relating to people.

Humour

Humour is a known strength within Te Ao Māori, and can be seen and heard in grieving rituals, including processes of tangihanga. It is a thread throughout storytelling and serves a functional purpose. Humour is a way of being; a way of interacting with one another; a familiar sense of humour is employed and apparent amongst all storytellers. Humour makes light of the conversation, it facilitates relationship building, and it is an acquired skill that could go wrong if not used appropriately and skilfully. Laughter is used as a therapeutic process which can reduce any emotional tension and restore the positive effects of grieving for whānau members and assist in helping them to return to everyday living (Rameka & Te Pania, 1990). AD shares precious moments immediately following the passing of her son – her daughter returning from Hamilton was unsure she was in the right place, considering the laughter she heard emanating from the house:

> *He was lying on our bed and we had all the whānau around and we were laughing and joking and crying.* (AD)

The power of humour to transform tears of grief to tears of laughter in a back and forth manner is evident and an aspect of this leader's memory of such a personal and deep experience. The strength of the wider whānau participation in this aspect represents their character and charisma to deal with such powerful forces in life. Laughter is powerful and creates a sense of connectedness and belonging. It can also help in times of difficulties. This can be

through the telling of comical anecdotes about the deceased or the oratory skills of the kaumātua, priest, or speaker across different settings.

Humour was also used throughout the process of exchanging stories, using jokes, laughter, and body language. It served as a means of lightening the seriousness of some of the discussion. In some interviews, it was also a cue to show that the story was about to take a different direction, or a serious issue required some transformation towards a more positive formation, or even that a moment of realisation had occurred. For example, MH spoke about how he transitioned away from the gang lifestyle and towards a more healing environment having been inspired by a friendship:

> *What made me transition was that process, I had to be around people of like-mind…in youth work. I kicked around a lot of ex-gang members, but I kicked around mates of mine that were religious and I had in my mind that religion was the fault…[MH told his Christian friend] that I would never kick it with Christians and he started laughing and said what's the difference? And I said you never told me anything about church, and he said why should I? And I clicked, you know I clicked and he still never talks about it.* (MK)

MK laughed as he shared this story, as if he was imitating the reaction of his friend he once was suspicious of. However, the purpose of humour and the laughter in this story demonstrates humility, overcoming a misperception and making light of a story that was both historical and meaningful to the present. Perhaps others can learn from this. He also shared his friend's use of laughter in dealing with conflict or people who attempt to trample over his mana:

> *His life is pure. It is the way he cares about others, communicates, laughs, doesn't take it to heart.…He's humble, those things that I would like to aspire to.…If I was to reach his āhua (form, appearance, characteristic) then I would be happy, I would be content.* (MH)

Laughter was part of every kōrero and interaction I had with each leader. These aspects of hinengaro such as embodied grief, the use of metaphors and humour contribute towards making such intense or accumulated emotions lighter, as well as enabling an easier way for making sense of complex emotions and communicating them accordingly. There is also the interaction between

hinengaro and wairua that is taking place on another level that can sometimes be misunderstood or unintentionally disregarded by those who are unfamiliar with this significant aspect of Māoritanga.

Wairua

Wairua can be thought of as spirituality and is the part of a person that is intangible and can continue on after death (Tauroa & Tauroa, 1986). Marsden (in Royal, 2003) states:

> The idea of manipulating the environment is based on the Māori view that there are three orders of reality, the physical or natural, the psychic and the spiritual. Whilst the natural realm is normally subject to physical laws, these can be affected, modified and even changed by the application of the higher laws of the psychic and spiritual. (p. 5)

Wairua or spirituality can be used to represent religion or psychic abilities. The positioning of grief within both a religious sense and a Māori worldview was apparent within the collective stories of the leaders. The principles underlying these differing systems or their integration were not explicit within these stories; however, the ways in which they made sense of the grief were evident. There were some experiences of conflicting situations between Christianity and Māoritanga and processes of overcoming these in a tactful manner were provided. The diversity of religious beliefs existing amongst the leaders reflects the diversity within Māori society as a whole, yet doesn't deny those factors which draw us together.

Tuning into or being aware of the power of wairua can confirm or encourage a more positive healing process. AD shared how she talked to her son overseas about the death of his younger brother, and the way in which wairua affected his physical reality:

> *He was crying and I was telling him off you know. You've got a purpose, you've been called to serve the mission, what are you crying for? We know where he [deceased brother] is going, we know what the plan is, it is okay…He asked what I was talking about coz I thought whānau…there would have told him…and I said oh [your brother] died…in fact his [AD's*

son overseas] whole wairua lifted. He said no he had called because his
mission president told him to call and speak to [his younger brother] and
be his testament and share a scripture with him. (AD)

The reassurance of the plan, the afterlife as taught in their particular faith is expressed here. AD then reflects on her personal wairua experiences:

To me it's like that whole different level wairua level that I think makes you
a better person. That whole thing was just a learning experience for me
and it's a place that I really strive hard to get back to…a real peaceful
place to be. A place of aroha. And for months after he died, you stay on that
plane and then as things settle down you…start getting back involved in
the world again. (AD)

Grief and Religion

Religious beliefs and faiths informed and strengthened the meaning-making and coping mechanisms used by the storytellers. Their understanding and certainty about the spiritual world was comforting to me, and created a strong sense of belief in creation and purpose of life. This faith and hope feeds my curiosity and pre-existing urge to connect this knowledge with those who are struggling with grief and everyday chaos, who have lost this way of being that has been passed down our bloodlines:

I guess…that was a reassuring thing for me, but also because of my
religious beliefs, as well being a Mormon, there is life after death.
And…going through that whole eight months with him…and trying to get
my head around that he is going to go, and just trying to accept it. And that
real whakapono (faith), that faith you know that we will be together
again. (AD)

KM also talks about different levels of life through his sharing of an ancient karakia, broadening the context in which every day grief is placed:

This is an old kōrero or an old karakia and in this karakia it talks about
the different levels of life and even different levels of life before we even
come here to this earth.…These things actually go back to the foundation
of time so it's quite a hohunu kōrero (meaningful narrative) and what
happens is i ngā kōrero ō mua (talk of days gone by). Before we came to

> *this mortal existence we lived in a pre-mortal existence and we were wairua.* (KM)

The connections of grief to religion and kōrero pertaining to our origins are shared through KM's explanation of Māori words and concepts within the karakia:

> *You have the word pōrangi; it means you have become ignorant to the things of rangi, the light, those things of the heavens…which are like karakia, wānanga. [It] is all about counselling and those sorts of things.* (KM)

This beautiful kupu (word) 'pōrangi' is explained in relation to heavenly things and faith, often misunderstood by those who misuse the word to represent people who behave in a bizarre or crazy manner. This leader is sharing his faith, his knowledge of Te Ao Māori, to spread the beauty and another way in which to conceptualise grief in our lives.

When unexpected or crucial events occur in one's life that trigger the grieving process, the role of faith can be the last resort for making sense of one's grief and adjusting to such an event. AD describes how sometimes things are just out of your control and for her this involved turning to her faith:

> *Nobody else can help, it is just totally out of your control. So for me it was turning to my father in heaven and that was the only person I could turn to for support.* (AD)

This brings us to the Creator and the purpose of life. RS highlights the importance of seeing ourselves as being born with a purpose rather than out of lust:

> *Purpose…didn't ask to be born, born out of lust, born out of love. You know there are many things, alcohol and drugs, changes the psyche of the person.* (RS)

RS offers solutions to assist this mind-set and to educate parents about the importance of providing children with a purpose or a place in life, and how to do so creatively, so that it becomes a practical and ordinary process:

We need to look at rites of passage, from when I'm born, even before that....Offering in our hospitals when our young girls are having their children, we offer them a prayer to bring that child into the world. You know you were saying to cut the cord and do those traditional things, is to offer them and say to them 'give your child purpose, give them a place to be', for them to know they are being welcomed into this world as opposed to just being born. (RS)

AD also talks about the purpose of life, stating:

You can't just live and then die; there's sort of no purpose. It doesn't make sense that you can come live your life and then die. (AD)

Religious beliefs and spiritual experiences are a reality of being Māori, and tuning into this aspect of grief assists in the making of meaning and working through bereavement. Reaffirming this certainty about the spiritual world is one way of comforting the person experiencing grief, and creates a promising and strong sense of belief in the purpose of life. This diversity of spirituality can nonetheless serve as a protective factor or coping strategy for grief experiences.

Grief and Ātua

The roles of Ātua in relation to grief are also another thread that was intertwined throughout several of the leader's stories. Stories of Tumatauenga, Rongo, Hine-nui-te-po and other Ātua provide us with a unique view into this holistic world where we are but part of a larger inter-connected existence. The many characteristics that we experience as human beings have been inherited from the Ātua. Characters such as Maui provide valuable insights when attempting to understand the grief of rangatahi who have flirted with the notion of death, and who exhibit symptoms of mischief behaviours similar to known characters in our pūrākau. Foreign systems of analysis and diagnosis may assist clinicians in categorising and providing evidence-based treatments for these identified and validated symptoms of illness or mental health, however, the conceptualisation of such things has often been mismatched from the outset. We can go back to what knowledge we already have and be guided by our own

systems, our own ways, as alternatives to current processes that may not be best suited for all. As one leader notes:

> *I'm born of Tāne, I'm born of Tawhirimatea, I'm born of Papatūanuku, so therefore I am a descendent...[there are] many aspects of grief within Te Ao Māori.* (RS)

RS then proceeds with the whakapapa of grief beginning with Tāne:

> *Origin of grief is from when Tāne the procreator created the first human, Hine-ahu-one, and breathed his mauri [into her]. He co-habited [with] her and begat Hinetitama. Hinetitama fled from Tāne to the underworld to become Hine-nui-te-pō...[when] she learned that Tāne [who became her husband] was also her father. So that is the origin of grief for women.* (RS)

These stories can be translated to our experiences of grief today amongst our people, including rangatahi, and different origins can be sought for both male and female. This leader also reiterates that this whakapapa derived from our Ātua is a continuation of life in this world:

> *I live through them (my boys) and through my whānau....This is not my knowledge it's his knowledge....It goes back to an origin.* (RS)

AD expressed gentle laughter when reflecting on the origin of grief and the purpose of such an experience:

> *That whole grief process was almost a way of humbling myself you know (laughter), dare I say it. It was almost his [God's] way of teaching me even though it was a hard way. But you know it was a lesson in itself about life and just caring about people more, so that was special.* (AD)

RS talks about the kawa of human behaviour being set by the Gods, therefore which can provide guidance when dealing with issues of grief or challenging behaviours:

> *He uri koe ngā Hinetitama waewae ana ngā karu titiro i ngā Ātua...that is the Kōrero Ātua (Word of God) for me. That is our kawa, our kawa is created in the Gods. Kawa for our behaviour. Like I said it sets...precedence for human behaviour but there had to be an origin...it originates from the Gods.* (RS)

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This leader gives an example of how you might apply the characteristics of different Ātua to assist a young person with their healing, using the example of a young woman who had been violated through some form of abuse:

> *You must say you are Hine-nui-te-po now, but Hine Marama will help you now, and give you that understanding or Hinengaro...The word 'ngaro' means hidden, lost, that which is concealed. So males, us, we need to know our Hinengaro. So for us our taha wāhine, our hidden female oracle, because we know too much of Tumatauenga [God of War] and he causes a lot of grief.* (RS)

Therefore, all of these emotions come from an origin and if you can understand and acknowledge their origin you will better understand human behaviours and ways of understanding grief.

KM talks about a pathway we are on in this world and warns us to be careful of the many forms Tumatauenga or other Ātua may present as and entice our people away from heavenly things:

> *So it says in that korero, when we are here on this path we need to be careful, watch out for the weapons of Tumatauenga....He doesn't want to see families being together because when families are together there is strength in family, there is healing, there is aroha...a whole lot of other things that are enriching and enlightening and good. So he is going to do all he can to fragment the whānau, he is going to lead them away.* (KM)

This leader continues to distinguish between the different names and meanings behind them for this particular Ātua, Tumatauenga:

> *Another name 'Tukarere' is to be angry to be aggressive. Sometimes we see this in our taitamariki's behaviour you see. 'Tu matarauwhiro', to be undecided or confused; we see these a lot, they are related to peer pressure, yeah we see this a lot.* (KM)

KM warns us of the underlying agendas and the availability of knowledge, of taonga that have been passed down the generations for our benefit and of future generations:

> *These are some just some of the titles he goes under. That's why I say it is important to know where these things come from because his ultimate*

goal is to destroy us, and these are in…ancient karakia that our tupuna have left for us so we can always be mindful and be alert. (KM)

KM further educated me throughout the interview, to add to my kete of knowledge for the benefit of understanding this in relation to those that I wish to assist and guide in my role. I felt and heard KM's passion for our people and the opposing yet loving way of discouraging behaviours or activities that will assist some of the Ātua in claiming tinana (physical bodies) as this is their greatest desire:

> *So they are going to entice you to do those things that look good and look glamorous, make you feel good, and so…our taitamariki are going to get pulled to those things, drawn to those things that look good until they become bound to those things. I've met a lot of whānau who have been involved in the gangs…and they got into it when they were really really young and…did a lot of stuff, did a lot of time for crime, and they were bound. They felt like they couldn't get out, they were bound.* (KM)

KM has already observed such patterns within his experience working with rangatahi and realisations that these behaviours derive from the foundation of time can change the whole approach:

> *We need to understand, especially Māori, we need to understand where all this come from it. Didn't just happen 5 or 10 minutes ago when our sons and daughters decided to have a joint. You know these things have been planned right from the foundation of time.* (KM)

Whānau

Loss of whānau and culture:

Loss or grief is understood here in a wider sense in that it is also about cultural identity, and identity within wider whānau, hapū and iwi:

> *Loss is about losing something you deem valid or important to you, and that could be from a cultural expression of belonging and cultural identity and relationships, to being aware of their culture.* (KM)

MK talks about grief at a society level, distinguishing between an urban and cultural identity for our youth:

We are now in a society when we are caught between two identities, urban and cultural identity...The issues [of grief] stem from the relationship of the family members....In dealing with these young people the question has been who am I, and this is part of the cultural aspect. One is not knowing how to grieve or feel the transition or the, how would I put it - the process of nurturing the loss into the next world or transition, a lot of people have not experienced [this]. (MK)

MK goes on further to talk about Māori youth he has worked with who have not had the benefit of being raised with Māori values and principles and adequate support systems to assist in dealing with grief:

They see it, they acknowledged it, but they haven't felt it [grief], and when they do feel it, it's sometimes more than they can handle or more than they can choose to handle. And coz there are no supports for them or no education around how that [grief] processes from a cultural perspective, then you are more likely to deal with someone who thinks that no-one is listening, like they do not have a place. (MK)

This draws back towards the role of the whānau and many Māori are in a reactive mode, reliant on government welfare, in victim mode and struggling to break through difficult realities. Māori scholars such as Durie (2003) and the Taskforce for Whānau-Centred Initiatives (2010) argue that strengthening the whānau and empowering them to find their own solutions, can create brighter futures for Māori. MK notes however, that the breakdown of traditional whānau and support systems creates another form of grief:

Society still creates grief and loss in some form of another and capitalism is a key...Institutionalism racism is another form, the way that it sustains deprivation for Māori. And that continues to bring upon grief and loss for Māori because they can't achieve. They've been made to think that they can't achieve...Pākehā have said that in the past, their beliefs that Māori are incapable of managing their lives. So we've been entrenched with another culture or ideology that has influenced the way that we think apart from our culture. So our whole environment[s] have been created by other influences that lead to or have contributed to grief and loss. (MK)

MK further discusses Māori people within gangs and opposes the consensus that suggests gangs are society's rejects, but rather shifts the attitude towards

the underlying reasons, one being grief and the search for a family to replace such a loss:

> *Gangs are an outcast of society, 1% of society's rejects as they have been called, but they have never looked into why they have had gangs. But it's not coz we are rejects; it's coz we have been in search of our families. You know, big difference…each of us have the right to have family and if our family can't provide it then we are in search of, what do you call it, adopted family.*

MK is an educated Māori community leader, who is often referred to by the media as an ex-gang leader and will probably have that label follow his every success. His firm statements about the harm society have caused him in his journey and others with similar backgrounds needs to be listened to. He has moved on from a reactive mode into the proactive phase. MK has the ability to walk his talk and place himself in the shoes of young people who may also be searching for a place. He knows first-hand the grief that can arise when solid whānau and cultural support is not available to individuals, and when whānau are not supported by the appropriate agencies:

> *The state have created laws to say we are unfit but they don't put in solutions to help. Their solution is confiscation, the uplifting of children once again is another form of confiscation so families are feeling disempowered from their role as parents but they don't put in any wrap-around services.*

> *They give a 'time out' for the young person….But the state don't actually put …wrap-around services or supports for the whānau when they [the young person] go back…Once again we set them up to fail. We as organisations set them up to fail with our good intentions once again, causing them frustration, causing them anger and the mind-set 'I don't belong here'….Whānau Ora is only just giving the opportunity for collectives to start working and thinking and communicating like hapū and iwi.* (MK)

The Māori community leaders interviewed either grew up with access to Te Ao Māori, or were able to reconnect later in life. They all know the importance of identity and belonging, and the negative effect this can have on our rangatahi who don't have positive notions of identity. It is into this understanding of loss

that our Māori community leaders, kaumātua and kuia can guide policies and service expectations, including processes that relate to grief.

Grieving processes for whānau

If whānau experience traditional grieving processes and other cultural knowledge, it is less likely that unresolved grief will contribute to dysfunction within those whānau. Our rangatahi can be guided through the inevitable and natural processes of death and grief from a foundation that rests within Te Ao Māori. If they can be facilitated through these uncomfortable times, and assisted in making sense of their loss by knowing their place in this world, then they are less likely to exhibit signs or symptoms that enable their capture in mental health or youth justice services.

The role and importance of whānau extends beyond the grieving process and into the next world where there is an expectation of reuniting, a reassuring aspect of this particular grieving process:

> *I hang on to that hope and that strong belief that we will be together again as a whānau, as a family.* (AD)

AD really noticed the impact of not having whānau present whilst grieving for her son away from home, and in a hospital setting:

> *It was just missing whānau, just not having whānau around you all the time and then coming home and just walking around in an empty space....The hardest thing for us both was...being away from whānau because you have to be down in hospital.* (AD)

The changing dynamics of the family also come into play. KM acknowledges that the whānau can nurture a child from infancy through providing sustenance and teaching good values, but there comes a stage where the young person is given the responsibility of making their own choices, which may not always be the best choices:

> *So sometimes we just grit our teeth and close our eyes and hope we don't get the phone call or a visit from the police.* (KM)

MK speaks of his experiences as a rangatahi and the difficulties that he faced whilst attempting to search for love in places other than his family:

> *In search of love we found more pain, in terms of our experiences. So love was found in different places but it didn't necessarily mean a nurturing love. So we found different environments to nurture us through periods of loneliness, periods of anger, periods of frustration. We blamed society for our mishaps but in most cases that could have been answered through our families but we didn't find that.* (MK)

Regardless of the acceptance and sense of belonging they found in the gang, they still faced major challenges:

> *We sought rebellion in other ways and the majority of the time in that lifestyle most of us were in suicide mode because we know, most of us knew, we accepted it. That death was part of [the] parcel of our lifestyle and most of us would put ourselves on the line when we went in to battle knowing we could have...[died] but we didn't. We put that aside coz we accepted that it was our culture, not as Māori culture, but as culture that cared for us, that nurtured us.* (MK)

Conclusion

These stories enrich our understandings when working with people who may have experienced difficult circumstances. From the experiences of the leaders who live and breathe different parts of Te Ao Māori, who competently work with mainstream services and privilege their cultural identity, my own ignorance of some of the deeper aspects of grief has been lessened. I can see how such knowledge can provide possible solutions on how to best approach our rangatahi, working toward reuniting them with cultural practices to facilitate their grieving processes. This knowledge can be used to inform current practices for engagement with rangatahi who fight in a variety of ways to find their places in the world.

The Māori community leaders highlighted the difficulties arising from the gap between understanding grief from Māori worldview, and moving through a world where grief is not well recognised. There are negative implications for rangatahi who have not been exposed and raised with traditional practices or

cultural values beneficial for the facilitation of grief. However, the Māori community leaders chose to focus on the strength and beauty of the ancestral knowledge, and how it can create positive change within our society for rangatahi and all our whānau. This knowledge and its application are not confined to rangatahi offenders, as initially proposed by this project, but all rangatahi. The knowledge we have gained access to through these stories provide us with an understanding of the complexities of grief to enable us to provide rangatahi with ways of understanding their own grief through a navigation of their cultural identity so they may flourish and achieve their purpose.

WĀHANGA TUARIMA – ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

PART TWO: AROHA KI NGĀ RANGATAHI

"Strength comes from knowing, from feeling, from expressing the love we nurture within. We hear the music, we dance the dance, and our souls rejoice."[17]

Introduction

Rangatahi offenders were the targeted group for this project; however the general consensus amongst the leaders was that all rangatahi and younger generations in one way or another are affected by what we have framed as grief. Positioning this kōrero in a wider space helps removes stigmatization or the pathologising of rangatahi who have specifically offended. This also values our rangatahi, and the vision of our leaders, in that they work beyond the present, envisaging and creating pathways for our next generation to follow. As noted by Ramsden (1993, in Borell, 2005), "Our work as today's version of Māori is the same as that of our tipuna: to continue our story, to strengthen it according to our times and to add the next chapter" (p. 3).

In the area of grief, a primary consideration is awareness of the potentially adverse effects grief can have on rangatahi. Rangatahi offending is positioned here as a manifestation of the trouble and distress some of our rangatahi are dealing with every day, regardless of the cause. It exists, and it is a problem, and it is not solely an individual problem that punitive measures or standard programmes can address. It is a problem that requires us - whānau, hapū, iwi, communities, government agencies, and individual – to embrace the historical and cultural processes for change and transformation.

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[17] George, 2012, p. 45.

This in no way justifies or legitimises the individual's offending behaviours; however, it shifts our positioning about how we understand that behaviour towards an inclusive, holistic and collaborative approach. In order to shift rangatahi along this path of wellness and success, there needs to be an acknowledgement of the autonomy and potential of rangatahi to belong to this process and be part of their own answers in addressing current difficulties. Our leaders bring so much knowledge, wisdom and experience and realise that in order to connect with our rangatahi, we need to include them and value not only their strengths, but also their differences and their needs. This chapter is not here to discuss causal, nor co-relational relationships, but rather explore the kōrero of Māori community leaders in the search for answers that already exist or function within a Māori culture, validating a Māori worldview.

Opportunities exist for forging stronger connections to our Māori communities and their leaders, whilst embracing rangatahi culture and their strengths of technology, music and dance, sporting involvement and other activities. Grief is one inevitable part of life, therefore a platform can be provided for rangatahi to access traditional grieving practices and understandings of Te Ao Māori within tikanga, kawa and so on, to assist them to build their knowledge and application of such principles to enhance overall wellbeing needs to be a focus of our work. It is apparent that Māori knowledge and ways of engaging with people and the world in general are still functioning within rural settings and in various ways are being adopted for urban settings. These aspects of Māoritanga and the traditional grieving practices which we have discussed in the previous chapter are essential for acknowledging when working with rangatahi in general, as well as rangatahi offenders. Of equal importance however, is exploration and understanding of the contemporary contexts within which Māori youth enact their lives.

This chapter will move through the different themes identified in the narratives of the leaders. These include the importance of cultural identity, connections, belonging and whānau, and the negative effects that can result when these are not present. The leaders also note that rangatahi have to be in a state of readiness, and have the correct time and space within which to accept the

mātauranga Māori imparted to them. This can require creating a sense of hope, a true belief in the potentials of rangatahi, and the space and willingness to explore and facilitate rangatahi dreams, providing self-efficacy and advocating for this shift.

Grief and Coping Strategies

Although we aim to view our rangatahi in a positive light and away from a deficit approach, it is still important to acknowledge our understanding of their full reality, including harmful coping strategies utilised by some. Our rangatahi are often in reactive mode, and vulnerable to the many readily available ways of numbing such emotions or hurts, including those of unresolved grief. The leaders could acknowledge these realities with an overriding sense of hope and faith however, and a sense of collective responsibility that we are all part of the solutions.

AD spoke of gender differences in the manifestations of grief for rangatahi offenders and connected them to the violence and anger that may be more easily expressed:

> *A lot of our young offenders...a lot of grief is displayed in anger. It comes in anger and the behaviour is a result of that underlying anger and I think it is about kids not being able to express how they are feeling really so they express it in other ways.* (AD)

In amongst the rangatahi offending programmes aimed at addressing rangatahi needs, there is evidence that many rangatahi have wanted programmes to be delivered by facilitators or people who have shared similar life experiences to them and which includes "Opportunities to (re) discover identity, whakapapa, reo, tikanga and history; alternative opportunities for schooling and education which are appropriate to their needs" (Owens, 2001, p. 186).

Owen (2001) also stated that rangatahi placed emphasis on the use of substances, together with the lack of places to entertain with other peers, were key factors leading to them being tied up in youth crime. These voices, these statements need to be considered when tailoring programmes or attempting to

work more effectively with rangatahi and find common ground or compromise. Borell (2005) also attributes the cohort of rangatahi she researched with as being "sophisticated and experienced negotiators of their identity…sophisticated in terms of the discursive and narrative tools employed to create positive identity markers while also reflecting a wider societal context of marginality"(p. 80).

Rangatahi offenders and rangatahi in general are often faced with societal racism through many different mechanisms such as the media, and the force of this racism constructs these issues as 'Māori' rather than a product of social dysfunction, further reinforcing the deficit approach to our rangatahi (Borell, 2005). Borell argues that despite these circumstances, the rangatahi she interviewed were proud to be Māori and connected to their local environment, constructing positive counter images of their collective belonging and identity as Māori youth. Therefore, with this in mind, it is our responsibility as Māori, as non-Māori, as practitioners and role models to our younger generations, to also rise above such social discourses and negative stereotypes of being Māori. If we listen to our leaders, our rangatahi and reach out or create opportunities that build upon their strengths, diverse realities and identities that exist within rangatahi identities and experiences of offending and grief.

The leaders also talked about different forms and shapes grief takes, which may be representative of more than one experience of grief. There is the loss of childhood, loss of culture and a sense of belonging; there could be the loss of freedom, of positive whānau values, and also of a two-parent family:

> *Those sorts of grief you know that sadness, that grief that there mum and dad had split up and their mum [is] in a new relationship with someone.* (AD)

This then brings new dynamics or frustrations for the young person, facing emotions of missing the loved person in their life and feeling guilty if they connect with another adult, such as a step-parent. Feeling embarrassed or less worthy if they are a male and furthermore less inclined to express their grief amongst their family, but also amongst their peers:

They can't express that with other boys, with their peers, maybe it lies in that macho thing and I think a lot of that grief stuff with young men comes out in anger. (AD)

When exploring grief through the death of a loved one, it is also important to explore the other losses or grieving processes that might be present for the young person. One leader expands on the sometimes limited view of grief to include loss of cultural identity. Whether rangatahi are aware of the wider issues or context in which their grief or wellbeing may lay, these factors all need to be considered when working alongside them:

Loss is about losing something you deem valid or important to you and that could be from a cultural expression of belonging and cultural identity and relationships to being aware of their culture. (MK)

Pou (in Ati Hau, 1997) asserts that cultural identity for rangatahi is essential for overall positive wellbeing. Singh and White (2000) also found that the most successful programmes for rangatahi offenders were ones that incorporated cultural knowledge and history but this also required effective delivery by a leader or role model who was seen to hold mana, and whom rangatahi felt they could connect with. Singh and White (2000) suggest that providing the overall wellbeing and life skills for rangatahi and the general Māori population would create a preventative factor for offending behaviours. KM also supported the value of cultural knowledge and recommended using this to identify appropriate solutions:

What is grief, and then to understand where it comes from, because I believe if we understand what it is and where it comes from then we will be able to identify what we can do to try and assist our taitamariki out there who are having troubles. (KM)

These ideas continue to link to the wellbeing of our people, and the firm belief that knowing where you come from and who you are in terms of whakapapa, strengthens cultural identity. These understandings are carried by these leaders and resonate across the different environments and encounters in which they engage.

Owen (2001) argues that if we are "to stem the tide of Māori youth offending, their messages about the need for interventions must be heard and acted upon" (p. 177). These aspects are also applicable for rangatahi who are struggling with grief emotions, therefore part of the solution lies in the wisdom and experiences of our Māori community leaders to provide our rangatahi with safe forums where they can express their grief appropriately and feel nurtured through whanaungatanga.

Part of the reality some of our rangatahi live with is the effects of being isolated from mātauranga Māori and strong, positive whānau or other role models. RS talked about some of the ways in which they think about death and grief:

> *For boys it is about that macho stuff, and how many notches can I get on my belt to show off to my friends. How many scars on my body can I get without dying, and even if I do die they will remember that.* (RS)

RS spoke also of rangatahi suicide and the realities for those who may not be familiar with Te Ao Māori and the difference between the living and the deceased:

> *So upon his suicide, not having understanding of Māori culture these boys took photos of him lying in the coffin, they got his name and slogans printed on tee-shirts. And I try to tell them that you have to let him go to let him go because if you hold him here he will be earth-bound.* (RS)

AD talked about her experiences of grief, noting the sometimes overwhelming expressions of intense anger and tangling of different emotions relating to grief:

> *I sort've learned from that experience, you know how kids just behave differently and how that whole grief stuff sort of affects them differently and strongly in anger, a lot of anger yeah.* (AD)

She spoke of one particular rangatahi she worked with:

> *It's that battle you know, they love their grandparents but it's that emotional battle they have, with sort of contradicting feelings you know. 'I love you but I'm angry at you', and not knowing how to deal with it. So he was getting hooked up into the gang scene and getting into trouble.* (AD)

AD's recall minimised the actual offences and behaviours of the rangatahi and focused on his emotional turmoil and harmful coping strategies. AD widens our

understanding of loss and grief beyond the death and outwards to represent a loss in a birth-right and rites of passage, that of childhood:

> *It was anger about that sort of stuff it was actually quite sad about it and in his own way that was a loss in his life. That whole childhood was a huge loss and he was angry about all that, all those experiences he had gone through.* (AD)

KM also understands the wider religious views and agendas of Ātua who are attempting to entice our people and draw them away from goodness and wellbeing:

> *…we can even talk about addictions because a lot of people when they start using this substance and that substance they find it difficult to let go because it…[is] sort of bound to them. He [Tumatauenga] has wrapped them up that strong that they are trapped.* (KM)

This kōrero reminds us that the lifestyles some of our rangatahi are living in "trapped lifestyles" (Durie, 2003) in the sense that they are sometimes bound to these lifestyles and ways of coping. Borell's (2005) qualitative research with rangatahi in South Auckland showed that some rangatahi would identify with gang colours representative of their familial or community connections, as well as connecting New Zealand gangs to those in America. Borell (2005) also noted however, that this can be a phase of adolescence in their communities, which the vast majority grew out of. A meaningful understanding of the behaviours connected through a Māori worldview of the relationship with Ātua is a strategy necessary to our competencies.

Whānau and the support system this entails were crucial to grief experiences for all the storytellers, as death and grieving was a collective experience of a whānau, rather than that of an individual. 'Whānau ora' is being promoted in our local community and throughout the country following the release of the Whānau Ora initiative in 2010. The Initiative argues that the primary responsibility of creating or transforming whānau from dysfunction to functional and healthy whānau lies with the whānau, while being sufficiently resourced and supported to achieve goals (Taskforce for Whānau-Centred Initiatives, 2010).

However, whānau who access resources through their wider hapū, iwi and/community organisations must be able to develop life principles and kawa that are aligned to their own aspirations and visions, rather than have those imposed upon them. The voices of these whānau, including those of tamariki and rangatahi, need to be listened to, and a safe space created in which these can be expressed. Resources and support can also come in the form of those leaders within communities who most understand the needs of those whānau. For example:

> *We need to look at rites of passage...offer them and say to them [parents] give your child purpose, give them a place to be for them to know they are being welcomed in to this world....In the old days they would have dedicated them to the Gods, the babies to particular Ātua but now we have to find other ways, solutions to say okay we hope that your baby is strong, well, that he is a good person.* (RS)

The parents are the primary caregivers for tamariki and rangatahi, but it may be the collective responsibility of wider whānau members or agencies working alongside them to support whānau so that these children have a strong foundation and purpose in life, increasing their likelihood of transitioning successfully through life experiences such as those of grief and bereavement.

The role of whānau was particularly crucial to MK in his journey of transitioning from the gang lifestyle:

> *Probably letting my guard down realising I need to. Acknowledging my mate [wife], she was there thick and thin and she had every right to say 'see ya later'. But for some reason she was the backbone of the recovery. It is like life itself, consistency is what brings somebody around. If there is a break in the chain, then that is the break that they will go through....The key is whānau.* (MK)

Opportunities Through Connections and Aroha

Jacob, Nikora and Ritchie's (2011) research found that parents "supported being open and honest when talking to their children about death and tangi" (p. 11). They utilised spiritual or religious belief systems to illuminate death, grief and what lies beyond. RS talked about the way in which he shares knowledge

and empowers rangatahi or his younger whānau members to address any grief issues that may be hindering progress forward:

> *And it's in that kōrero 'ko wheturangi koe.' That they've become stars in the sky…we are here on earth and you go 'oh there goes another star that must be nanna.' And it's just going through those things that help with grieving to say 'oh she is up there' or 'my bro is up there.'* (RS)

KM and I talked about the step of Ka Tumanako as also being a medium to promote, initiate or guide the healing process for those who experience grief:

> Nikki: *That is a healing process for some people too aye I guess, like if they have grievances, losses…they have to tune into themselves and if they have this they can identify, 'oh where am I at? Where am I going to go and how do I get to the next step?*

> KM: *Yeah I'm glad you can see that….*

> Nikki: *But you could also apply it to different areas, roles, like if you are a mother, father, a sibling, different areas, like mau rākau, ones at different levels, it is a vehicle I guess aye? Then you could come around because it could feed other hopes, desires, see benefits. It could have that affect and then for the younger ones you are setting a foundation. Ka Tauira, become an example.*

KM explained his model of Te Ara Whaiti to a degree where I could interact with the knowledge and apply it to different areas, and gauge where I was at in certain areas and the expectations of those who are near the top and are able to act as role models as leaders to rangatahi.

TWT observed the way in which some clinicians, particularly psychologists, have been too direct in their questioning and exploring of the worlds of rangatahi offenders, often getting answers they do not like. He shared his way of seeking opportunities for young people through valuing their inquiring minds:

> *It's a lot of cunning and hard work, and a lot of listening and a lot of agonising, as well…you win a few and lose a few as well…I find that young people have…there's an energy, they are exploring life in a really basic way, and….[they] are searching and if the search is intense, then you got some that is a good beginning but if they're a little bit laid back, than…it becomes difficult to help them, but a lot of them have inquiring sort of minds.* (TWT)

TWT worked with a young man who he described as "a real rascal but a good rascal" who had been in trouble with the law. One day TWT was going to church and this young man who was seriously unwell asked that he prayed for him. TWT asked him why he needed him to pray for him, saying:

> *That fulla [God] is standing next to you, you can talk to him. I don't need to talk to him.* (TWT)

When he returned from church he saw this young man grinning and said:

> *Oh you been talking to that fulla that you wanted me to talk to.* (TWT)

This type of humour and making light of a serious situation created an opportunity for the young man to open his mind to other ways of thinking and being, as well as realising his own power to do so. TWT also talked passionately about this young man's other whānau members who he has connected to and continues to look out for them. One of them found an old boat, which Ben suggested he finds some people to help him get it fit for taking out fishing. This project created further opportunities for this young man to meet others, learn new skills and provide kaimoana (seafood) to his family.

TWT shared his personal application of providing opportunities for another whānau member who had lost his father and was at risk of offending. TWT had a vehicle that needed some work, but made a deal with this rangatahi, saying that he could come and pick up the vehicle once he had completed his electrician's apprenticeship. This provides an example of how to work effectively with rangatahi and people in general. The importance lies in creating the connection, and being willing to commit to a continuous and rewarding journey of aroha.

RS utilises the inquisitive minds of young people to provide a practical example of how we can teach our tamariki before they become young adults and at more of a risk of entering troubled lifestyles and alienating themselves from their cultural roots. He reminds us that it is our role as parents and as practitioners, to nurture the development of rangatahi and tamariki and create opportunities

of learning from our environment and resources available to us that also forge connections to cultural meanings. It can be as simple as:

> *Go outside aye, and play in the soil and just talk about Papatūanuku; these are the foundations. What does she feel like? What does she smell like? What things grow in it, you know, all those things. Or Tāne, go and talk about Tāne, talk about the tree but look past the tree...[and ask] 'what do you think? Because you know it only started as a seed; I wonder how long it took that seed to grow that tall?'* (RS)

It is about encouraging them to think about our world, nature, and all those aspects of Te Ao Māori. RS also reminds us that we need to listen to our young men and then bring change through relating that to their own cultural stories:

> *Boys aye, because the love all that superhero stuff, they can relate to all that but if you start telling them about their own stories aye, and give them an opportunity.* (RS)

RS gave specific examples and details ways of creating wananga and opportunities for rangatahi to explore their taha tāne (male attributes) in a Māori framework, where they can draw on our own stories.

All of the leaders provided different ways of creating opportunities or finding ways to embrace troubled rangatahi and rangatahi in general. KM uses his understanding and knowledge of tapu (sacred potential) to connect with rangatahi:

> *I guess just to say, 'who are you?'...or to say 'hey I know you. I don't know you, but I know who you are. You have a sacred potential'.* KM

Ware's (2009) research with rangatahi confirms the relevance of tikanga Māori and āhuatanga to the realities of rangatahi, particularly the importance of whanaungatanga and building relationships, looking after these relationships through manaakitanga, and the application of tapu to guide appropriate and safe behaviours and identify risk or unsafe situations. One āhuatanga, Māia, represents potentiality and demonstrates the innate, sacred potential of the young person as well as areas that could be further developed. Although these are only a few of the many inter-related āhuatanga of Te Ao Māori, Ware (2009)

argues that these aspects can provide a foundation for a culturally appropriate approach for positive youth development.

MK suggests that we return back to kaupapa Māori and cultural practices to guide us in living healthier lifestyles and role modelling to rangatahi rather than "talking the walk, without walking the talk":

> *Finding those who live and breathe kaupapa Māori....We are talking about the concepts of kaupapa Māori, of being tika...retaining the mana, all those things you can put into Pākehā concept. But we as Māori have to walk this first...[If we are]to save ourselves we have to change ourselves first.* (MK)

MK speaks directly from experience and can identify those who are influential leaders and positive role models for working effectively with our rangatahi. He is honest about his past experiences:

> *I will never be able to change the grief and loss I have caused other, you know, so that lifestyle remains with you, will always remain with you. The work I do today will never change what I have done in my past, but at least I can try to make things better for the future and my whānau. It starts with me and it starts with my whānau.* (MK)

Now this kōrero serves both rangatahi and those working with rangatahi, in that in order to create opportunities for others, you need to understand your own self and whānau to be able to shift towards working with others effectively. This involves being honest, and for some rangatahi it may be reassuring, even comforting. to hear from the experiences of others who have walked similar lifestyles. MK stated further:

> *We accept our environments even if we don't like them. What it is, is that we have got to make the best of our environments in terms of whānau ora. We have to make our best...that's the way to make a slow transition to transformation...small pockets. It's not like saying I'm going to save the world.* (MK)

It is working with rangatahi in their environments and making their environments or situations a little easier. This leader also suggests that we need to identify the necessary tools for coping and providing them with consistency of care in terms of their environments.

TWT also widens our concept of the marae, and suggests that we can create our sense of belonging in this world through our language and the way in which we walk and interact in our world:

> *It is the concepts again, and translation of our reo (language) because the marae is here, so wherever I walk it is my marae...it is wherever you walk.* (TWT)

This belief that you don't necessarily need to access a marae to stand proud as Māori, could act as a catalyst for rangatahi who may be struggling with the way in which Māori cultural markers of identity have been created and focusing more upon what they are lacking (Borell, 2005). It is about standing proud and acknowledging that we are Māori whether we are fluent in te reo Māori, or active participants on our marae or not; this does not determine 'how Māori' we are. This therefore widens our understanding and acceptance of the broader identities that exist, and the many different resources that we could utilise to generate suitable and innovative opportunities tailored to the many diverse realities of rangatahi.

Positive development and the realisation of rangatahi as our future leaders is influenced by Māori community leaders, whānau, hapū, iwi and the wider youth population with its diversity. RS reminds us that life is about aroha and that the only things we can be certain of is life and death:

> *Everything is an illusion...the only real thing in life is aroha, is love for mankind and one another without any strings attached....There is only two things...life and death, and whatever is in the middle is okay. How you experience language will change emotion, will change [you] and those things all come from a kawa. Kawa and tikanga. And our kawa is created by the Gods.* (RS)

Barlow (1991) considered that:

> Aroha is a sacred power that emanates from the gods....Aroha in a person is an all-encompassing quality of goodness, expressed by love for people, land, birds, and animals, fish and all living things. A person who has aroha for another expresses genuine concern towards them, and acts with their welfare in mind, no matter what their state of health or wealth. It is the act of love that adds quality and meaning to life. (p. 8)

WH reminds us about the power of karakia:

> *When everybody participates in connecting to a higher being one is able to make their own connection and therefore link up to another place. (*WH)

WH also talked about rangatahi wanting and needing to help themselves before we can assist them. He talks about the planting of seeds, of mātauranga at the correct times in order for their potential to grow, which also requires nurturing:

> *When you grow fruit trees…or when you grow something in the garden…if you grow it in winter, it isn't going to grow; so it is the same with our people.*

Connections to our tūpuna are what give our people strength and identity as representations of their ancestors. Therefore, the answers are available and applicable when working with rangatahi:

> *Ka Tuhono: connection, interconnecting. You have learned so much, now you feel good, rely on what you know. It is good, it is what you know, it has benefits, it is interdependence. Th[is] is what are tūpuna left for us.* (KM)

This is another step of the model that KM shared in his kōrero[18] which included the importance of cultural identity and interconnectedness as a model of empowerment:

> *Ka Tu Kai Ako. Once you know all of these [steps], then it is your responsibility to teach these it becomes your responsibility. Ka Tu Tahuhu. If you look at the wharenui, it is the real centre of the wharenui….[It is] the spine; the real name is Tahuhu o Rangi. They you become the guardian of that culture, when you get to that stage. I suppose the culture determines the wellbeing, the future of the people, [which] therefore requires everybody to become a guardian of a future of empowerment.* (KM)

This model is one way in which to present such in-depth and complex mātauranga and the intention is clear, in that the people matter, therefore their cultural identity in this world, with all its challenges. Therefore, once you learn this knowledge and start to learn about our beautiful culture and the

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[18] KM's model - Te Ara Whaiti – see Chapter 4 for further detail. The whole model is not contained in this thesis however.

importance of keeping it alive and encouraging other people to partake of this journey. KM spreads the responsibility of strengthening Māori wellbeing - in whatever form it may take - to the collective, to all Māori who are responsible for protecting our culture.

Hope and Rangatahi Offending

Tate (in Barlow, 1991) asserts that "our marae are being abandoned and the people are living in ignorance of the knowledge and customs of our people. Nevertheless, there is still hope. The mana of our people will not be completely lost; there will come a time when it will flourish again" (p. 5).

MK talked about those rangatahi offenders he has worked with and can relate to in the struggle to find hope or have faith because of the condition of their lives:

> *They've given up; their loss is that they have given up hope....all key factors when we are young and we have that much trauma we give up hope, faith. Lose faith you know, in who we are, we lose faith in our families, [we] lose faith in society, because in our mind we are just the proceeds of pain.* (MK)

MK's wisdom comes in part from his experiences of trauma and dysfunction, but also from engaging with a journey of hope in overcoming life circumstances to have faith that there was a better way of life available for him and his whānau. This enabled him to gain the skills necessary to support those who are facing similar realities and seeking new pathways.

AD recalled identifying a rangatahi in the youth justice court and being able to look beyond his behaviour:

> *I remember he was swearing in the court room like 'F you' and...I sat in the back of the court and I caught his eye. And for a moment there, there was a softening and you know you could see that he was hakamā (embarrassment, shame, sensitive)...because his head went straight down and I said to [name], oh yeah I'll take him....Because he had this bravado, being staunch, being the man in the courtroom, and yet when I saw his eye drop, it was that hakamā and I thought oh there is still some hope in that boy.* (AD)

AD was able to find innocence within his behaviour, and see that he was still a boy – "there was hope for this young fulla because he still had that softness". To recognise the hope showed an understanding of the concept of hakamā and recognising that it was an opening for transformation. She spoke about it being a lot harder if they have entered adulthood and are a lot more entrenched in their lifestyle.

KM talked about Ka Tumanako to refer to the process of identifying hope and its relation to patience and kindness:

> *Ka Tumanako - excitement and knowledge of one's potential with life results in a hope and desire that one's life will get better; you start to hope. That is an awesome word...what I found was that word 'ko', digging, when we talk about mana, a lot of people talk about staunchness and head of this or head of that, but when you look at the word ma it means to be patient to be kind, generous to be...all those things tumanako, those hidden desires, your hope.* (KM)

KM's commitment to ensuring he shares this knowledge with rangatahi and all people in general, but also troubled rangatahi and their possible parallel experiences of loss and grief:

> *I have passion for our taha wairua and I am grateful for the kōrero our tūpuna have handed down for us and it is just up to us to explore them, so yeah, I hope.* (KM)

This same leader worked closely with rangatahi offenders as part of an alcohol and drug group programme provided by a specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health and Alcohol and Drug service. His hope and belief in this particular group's misguided potential was evident in the work he carried out. KM connected with the rangatahi and demonstrated to them the power of tuning into their wairua, amidst the many distractions we all face on a daily basis.

There was one example where a young person began to have an awakening about a particular, sensitive issue. Whilst KM was connecting with this young boy, a spider dangled down from the roof, distracting the young boy from his newfound awareness. This disrupted the kōrero; however, KM was able to

share a local Māori proverb. He described this as being a tohu (sign) that we need to tune into to understand the hidden meanings. In this case, it was about clearing webs from heart and mind, as sometimes these can be traps. Although a spider web can have protective properties, in this case it could be viewed as enclosing and supporting the distractions (the spider) of 'trapped lifestyles' such as alcohol, drugs, and crime that potentially lead to destruction and death. This sharing of knowledge and believing in the potential of every young person in the group, created a sense of connectedness and belief in themselves. It set the scene to instil seeds of hope for those who were obviously associated with offending and harmful behaviours.

TWT spoke of life as a kind of natural prison:

> *We will experience our demise…we are imprisoned by the fact that the end will come one day.* (TWT)

On the contrary, incarceration is an unnatural prison which nevertheless cannot prevent us from believing in ourselves, and the power of hope:

> *In order to live we have to consider the fact that we cannot be imprisoned by bars or governments or corrections. Now if we take those that were in war in Japan, and so on and in South Africa, the hope of some people imprisoned for 27 years and ending up as the President of South Africa, it is unbelievable hope.* (TWT)

TWT highlights the perseverance of Nelson Mandela, who had little control over his incarceration, yet those who imprisoned him had little control over his mind and soul, as evidenced by his actions during and following incarceration. TWT states further:

> *Life does not come to an end when you are in prison, it still continues…and if you are in corrections in jail, life has not come to an end….It is a beginning. Life is always full of surprises, so the hope that is there [in jail] is as important as the hope outside.* (TWT)

Mātauranga Māori

The leaders demonstrated their depths of mātauranga Māori through their narratives and also in the way in which they left some threads untouched in this context. As an expression of humility, they attributed their knowledge to others who walked the path before them, and to the Ātua. They were easily able to identify and demonstrate the application of mātauranga in today's world. I admired the way many of them spoke about themselves and the individual rangatahi using language such as 'we' and 'they' and 'us' which acted to express the aroha and genuine passion for people in general, and our rangatahi in particular. This language indicates the collective and holistic approach utilised by these leaders, reflecting the ways in which they live and breathe their knowledge in order to nurture and encourage our people.

NP spoke about holding onto our tikanga, our Māori values and ways of practicing, but also learning the tools of the mainstream world, so we can be more effective. This resonates with the words of Sir Apirana Ngata: "Ko te ringa ki ngā rākau a te Pākehā hei ora mō tō tinana, ko tō ngākau ki ngā taonga ā ō tūpuna Māori"[19]. NP's knowledge of both Te Ao Māori and the health field is vast, and he is respectful of both, knowing the limits, advantages and disadvantages of both worlds. He explained that many Māori health professionals work from our hearts for aroha, but also have a professional awareness of our expectations and agendas, and the desired outcomes when working with whānau or rangatahi. He says the easiest and best way to develop and maintain these relationships is to be transparent and 'walk our talk'.

The overall sense I felt was that without our spiritual world we would not exist. We are a continuation of our tūpuna and although our challenges and battles may differ today, our expectation is still to protect our taonga, including our rangatahi. These leaders' thoughts and ideas were visions for future generations, as they danced around the different worlds; present, past and

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[19] Translated by Henare (2007) as "Your hands to the weapons [tools] of the Pākehā as an existence for your body. Your heart to the treasures of your ancestors" (p. 97).

future. Their agendas were for our rangatahi to navigate their way through our world and in turn, lead the future generations.

The leaders had different ways in engaging rangatahi with mātauranga Māori but similar agendas for doing so. NP explained that once he shares his knowledge, it no longer belongs only to him, it is also for that person. This was his response when I sought informed consent and permission to use his name. He did not need to know all the detail, except to know I was using this information for the purpose of helping others. Kereopa (in Moon, 2003) also believed that it is important to spread the knowledge and explains to people once he shows them how to do something, that this knowledge then belongs to the both of them.

RS shares his knowledge and experiences in many ways, such as wānanga, mau rākau and also through understanding the right seasons or times to feed knowledge to those who may benefit. For example, he uses Matariki as a time not only to know what seeds to plant, but he also realises the importance of planting seeds of knowledge to contribute to positive Māori development:

> *Matariki is a time to take knowledge. What you hope is that those that were on earth have passed that knowledge down to the next generation so that they can know that they have done their job - they have passed that knowledge down.* (RS)

His hope is that in return, people will apply and practices their knowledge for their own wellbeing and that of their whānau, but also to be shared and modelled to those around them and the future generations.

KM encourages us to trust the resources that our ancestors have left us, to familiarise ourselves with them so we can open our minds and our understanding of the wider world and make sense of our belonging and roles within the world. He shares another aspect of tapu:

> *In a sense tapu means sacred, but it is incomplete....Tapu also means forbidden because when we start using substances and stuff you know, our body should forbid these things....We should be looking after our tinana, exercise, eating well, mirimiri, rongoā....When we start to explore these things of our taha Māori there are some beautiful things there.* (KM)

I really felt this kōrero and it resonates with how I understand the other leaders sharing their kōrero for the purpose of this research, but also for other reasons. The purpose is at least threefold: in that it can serve to inform non-Māori to work more effectively with Māori youth; assist our roles as parents within my own whānau and with our children, and as Māori we can draw from all this passion and encouragement to sustain our own practice and beliefs in working with our rangatahi. This kōrero reassures me that the passion, resilience and determination I feel from them is something that will remain, something that can assist in keeping us grounded and always willing to reflect and adjust to suit the needs of our young people within this evolving world. This is our responsibility, as well as theirs. If we can teach our tamariki and rangatahi about their belonging in this world, and encourage them to pursue this path and realise their potentials, this may act as a protective factor and minimise the destructive behaviours and substances or treatment that their tinana and hinengaro are being exposed to.

Mātauranga Māori can also be used to expand our existing knowledge bases. RS advises exploring new or hidden meanings that may be useful:

> *You start to just…see those things, and you start to develop them for yourself. Well that's all I think anyway, what our knowledge is all about. It can't stay in the past, you understand the origin but it can't stay there coz then we have to develop it.* (RS)

RS talks about the developmental phases for tama (young boy) to tamatāne (young man) and their cognitive uptake of the mātauranga. The way in which this mātauranga is passed on understood and held is the responsibility of the parents, caregivers, and Māori community leaders:

> *He (young person) is starting to develop…this knowledge base…so he is starting to form all of that. But it is the carvers that he is coming in contact with, if we look at it from a Māori worldview. Who do I want carving my child? What I mean by carving is shaping and forming them.* (RS)

RS goes a little deeper to demonstrate how this can be applied to our rangatahi in the depths of their roles:

Yeah it is the ultimate, aye, it is about my tāne [in relationship] to waiora (living waters, health), and my wahine and [her relationship]...bring beautiful...whenua or beautiful trees....If you are bringing a girl into the world she brings her whenua too, so looking at those things. (RS)

RS is innovative in how he stories his knowledge, and acknowledges the 'carvers' who shaped him, taking responsibility for passing it on for the benefit of others. However, he does warn that we need patience:

It is going to take a long time because we have to break something in these kids' heads first and that is a [negative] belief in themselves. Whether it is education or their cycle they have been living in...we have to break all of those first. (RS)

RS recommends seeking the origins and underlying causes of human behaviour in order to find solutions, while ensuring we do not attack the young person in the process:

It's not meant to attack the person but attack the problem because we know where it comes from. There is an origin; understand the origin, then find solutions...around those origins. (RS)

Much of this mātauranga Māori shared by the leaders can be used to improve our professional practice as well as uplift our rangatahi.

Connections and Relationships

Creating a connection is paramount in building relationships. Finding a way in which an opportunity can arise to be part of a young person's journey in a positive manner, walking alongside them rather than for or against them, will increase the likelihood of rangatahi giving you permission to offer them your support. Connections can be established in many ways and these leaders are experts at connecting to not only the young person, but their whānau and wider networks, their physical and spiritual worlds. This is initially achieved through whakapapa and whanaungatanga.

The leaders are also able to identify and determine whether the message has truly been received by the young person and have an art for capturing their

audiences, through their ability to adjust the process to meet the diversity of rangatahi they may work with and remain committed to. This requires being honest and transparent, and skilled in the processes of making connections. The relationship needs negotiating and boundaries, and the young person needs to be respected, creating a relationship for change. It is the adult who is attempting to connect who needs to monitor their modes of engagement and any potential risks of safety to themselves or the young person.

AD shared her story of becoming a temporary caregiver for a rangatahi through the youth court. She remembers his staunch attitude towards the authorities. She was able to see beyond his behaviours and saw there was hope for his wellbeing, and knew that there was nobody else left to provide this young boy with a family environment and care for him. She recalled a time when he was included in a family activity:

> *Yeah, he actually enjoyed it because you would like catch him out smiling, you know, you would sort of catch him, see his eyes…he actually enjoyed it, having that sort of family stuff….Yep, if they can find that connection…just trying to connect with someone and no matter what or where they go in life, they still remember that connection.* (AD)

For this leader, this connection was not only a connection to that individual for that particular point of time. She could rely on her knowledge and experience to look for signs that could inform her potential to connect with him:

> *He was all puffed up and 'talking the man' and swearing and carrying on, but you know, I wasn't intimidated at all because I knew he knew that we had that brief eye contact and it was enough for him to know that I didn't really buy into all the puffed up stuff.* (AD)

Agnes goes further to share her beliefs about our roles as professionals when we connect with young people:

> *If you see them on the road, keep that connection going, it's not about you and your role as a psychologist at work, that role. They don't connect to you as a nurse or a psychologist, they connect to you as a person…it is not disconnect at 5 'o' clock…it is usually a lifetime thing and they will always remember those things. Remember when you [were] a young child, you remember those connections.* (AD)

KM spoke of the importance of imparting knowledge with wairua:

What I've found useful...is to go through this kōrero with them...give them insight...and a lot of times I've shared this kōrero with those who have no fluency in te reo....What does teach them and help[s] them to understand these things is the wairua, the wairua from these kōrero. It doesn't matter what language, what colour, if you can give this kōrero with wairua...it's always going to be there. (KM)

Sometimes rangatahi may not necessarily relay what messages they have received; therefore it may not appear that a connection has been established:

A lot of the times our taitamariki...they can't express themselves in that way. Then we get some that say um they felt it, I felt what you said...straight away you know it's the wairua...it is the message worth listening to. (KM)

TWT highlights the importance of human stories and narratives as a way for people to connect to one another and points out the implications of dehumanisation when technology is used in inappropriate ways. He raises the potential of technology for harm when we see the technology rather than the rangatahi before us:

We are not looking at the human being, we are looking at a device that takes the place of humanity. And we can destroy people...seeing them from afar you know...whether they are innocent or not...humanity has been negated. (TWT)

This kōrero functions at a wider level to look at the way in which youth are communicating with one another and reminds us that we need to find ways to continue to ensure face-to-face encounters as forms of connection still hold their value and should not be replaced by technology. TWT connects this back to grieving practices, tangihanga and kawe mate (unveiling, memorial service), and highlights the importance of connecting:

Those are very human parts of what makes us who we are....face-to-face encounter, and I like the expression that we should 'pursue being rather than pursue non-being'....So grieving is part of being, every emotion is part of being, every experience is part of being, every meeting of people is part of being. (TWT)

These wisdoms and depth of knowledge normalise the emotional aspects of grief, as well as the importance of engaging and interacting with other people. Jacob, Nikora and Ritchie (2011) consider that "explaining and helping children understand the concept of death can significantly reduce fear, anxiety and other emotional or behavioural responses" (p. 3). The children's book *Old Huhu* (Mewburn, 2009) expresses a shift towards such considerations. It opens with – "Old Huhu flew to the moon and back. Then fell to the ground. Dead". This can be very shocking to those who tend to shy away from the realities of death as a part of life, and some would say this is inappropriate for children. However, the book carries on to detail Huhutu's (Huhu's tauira - student) search for the essence of Huhu, recognising that only a shell of his mentor fell to the ground. Huhutu's conclusion is that Old Huhu's wisdom and spirit continued on within him, with the advice of Pūrerehua and Pūngāwerewere that his spirit also lived all around them. These sentiments draw from mātauranga Māori, and would surely provide comfort for children dealing with grief and loss when delivered in a sensitive manner.

The wider realities of society and identity were incorporated into discussions about rangatahi and the roles and relationships of their whānau and their place in this world confirmed through whakapapa:

> *So when you ask the question and they can't find that, then that sets the time, the clock, for who am I? Does anybody care for me? Do I belong? So all these issues stem from the relationship of the family members.* (MK)

The implications of rangatahi not knowing their role in this world and their relationships to others through whakapapa in relation to grief is that they sometimes may not have knowledge about grieving processes and this may disrupt their potential to understand a wider notion of their personal experiences or hurt:

> *The cultural aspect...is not knowing how to grieve or feel the transition, or...how would I put it...the process of nurturing loss in to the next world or transition.* (MK)

Another reality for some rangatahi is their relationship with stepparents or the blending of families. This links back to trying to find a connection with the

additional layers of underlying emotions that may be present after moving through a loss of parent or hopes of parental reconciliation:

> *When the mother hooked up with this new partner...he had trouble trying to make a connection with this young fulla....He went out of his way to get a birthday cake for his birthday and make it a special day for him...There was still this relationship-building stuff, it was pretty new for him....* (AD)

There are so many other factors that impact on the role and relationships of rangatahi which we need to understand and acknowledge. One of the advantages of leaders was that they could network with other community members to assist them with the raising of rangatahi or tamariki. One leader shares how she called on her local (Mormon) bishop:

> *I met with our bishop...who happens to be our nephew, but I said 'boy, you better go see him as he is going off the track'.* (AD)

This highlights the collective responsibility and harmonising of roles within the community for the wellbeing for the young person. This leader acknowledged that the bishop was also a whānau member, but these roles are complementary in a community context, placing the young person's needs and interests as a priority and shared responsibility. Another dynamic was highlighted by a leader, that of whāngai or adoption. The young person is likely to experience questions of belonging as they learn about who they are, and if there have been difficulties with how the transitioning of whāngai occurred, there may also be experiences of loss (Perkins, 2009). AD shared her involvement with a young boy to highlight the importance of emotional connection and some barriers that may prevent development for the young person:

> *His whāngai mum is having a lot of trouble with him now. It's that whole thing aye, it's that anger stuff, that unresolved stuff, that whole lot of connection and whānau....He had never had that emotional connection with her.* (AD)

AD then recalls how she and her whānau took this into account and demonstrates the benefits of taking the time and effort to partially compensate for such a tragic loss:

Because his dad was called [died] in an accident when he was young, and he loves hearing about his dad…[who] was whānau out home….When we talk about his dad, you can see him listen, so you know, you tell him all the stories because you know it makes him happy….Just trying to find the right person he can connect with to open up about all that stuff. (AD)

It is not the sole responsibility of health professionals or the justice department to help promote wellbeing or rehabilitative mechanisms for our rangatahi. Instead it requires a collaboration of people to make the effort to connect and create relationships with these rangatahi or find the right people that may fit this role, particularly if the whānau are not as accessible and suitable. Mentoring and practical activities can sometimes be more than or just as effective as therapeutic alliances based on formal or structured sessions:

I mean it's not about medication or formal therapy as such and that's what I really love about the strengths model. It is finding something to connect with the kid through something they enjoy doing or something they are good at or something they would like to be good at…yeah trying to do a CBT [cognitive behaviour therapy] session with him, it just doesn't work….We have these activities [like mentoring, fishing, art] that kids can get hooked in to and they build a relationship with you. (AD)

This leader also touches upon the roles of education and other fields, advising that we need to be more innovative in order to develop our rangatahi:

We have so many of our kids that are just kicked out of school, Māori kids kicked out of school and I totally swear that if they [teachers] find something, never mind the math and English, find something they like and then incorporate that as a learning tool, use that as…the waka [vehicle] to learn…it's about finding peoples strengths, community strengths, individual strengths. (AD)

Another community leader speaks openly about what rangatahi are capable of and the importance of role models and those working with rangatahi to 'walk their talk' or practice what they preach. This also needs to be consistent with advocates' personal lives, otherwise there is the potential to risk damaging or trampling on the relationship with the young person:

They can tell when a person is full of shit…[these] kids have a natural mechanism to identify those things….I have an understanding of what it is

like for some organisations and people to talk the kōrero, and it is hollow and for me it is frustrating coz I know what it is like to be a liar and you can't tell a lie to a liar....But kids read it and they will also take it to heart and that is what they are thinking...this is what their world is like...and whether they will take it on or they will be disheartened. (MK)

MK's reflections on his own journey helped me to reflect on my own journey and the changes I have had to make, choices both good and bad, and how it took a major loss to create the space and strength to address such personal issues. Such shared wisdoms ensure I can be part of the journey in assisting our people to also reflect on their being in this world, their roles, and their relationship with people and the wider environment.

Time, Space, and Readiness for Change

Time and space of connections and establishing relationships are another area that was identified amongst the kōrero. Sometimes rigid timeframes or spaces for implementing structured programmes, assessments or therapy, despite validity and good intentions, does not always align with a kaupapa Māori approach and fit the needs of our rangatahi. A worldview that acknowledges the importance of the unspoken and unseen energies in this area of work with rangatahi can set the scene for a natural and meaningful relationship to form along with the potential for better outcomes. Our rangatahi can be reassured by our leaders that these values and principles are part of who we are as Māori, which can assist them through the many encounters of grief and hardship they may face. Creating space or finding space throughout the grieving process or for rangatahi who are facing trouble can change the whole experience for a person. TWT shared his own personal experiences of grief, connecting to my own personal experiences and how we were both influenced by the space and environment which was available to us:

You're lucky you had to look at all the scenery as you went up. I think that words can do it but sometimes it is geography and the sea does a lot. So sometimes space gives you...and driving at night gives you the time to think....It is choosing the right time and right place to do that...it's part of your location I think, but you have to take your time, you can't rush. (TWT)

I could understand this notion and also shared that being around whānau at the tangihanga and on the marae for five days of collective grieving, enabled us to manage intense emotions that arose. Kereopa (in Moon, 2003) talked about the ngahere as being a place for processing such thoughts and explained that the trees all have a mauri likened to the hair on an individual's body, which is tapu, and describes it as cushioning the wairua. He believes that the trees in the ngahere also act as cushioning to and create a space for troubles to be worked through and for mauri to settle.

With regard to his Te Ara Whaiti model, KM shows that these understandings of grief are available in our communities for rangatahi which can provide them with the skills and knowledge to overcome such difficulties and also to sustain the benefits that result. It is not until rangatahi are aware of this knowledge, and have the right support to implement such practices in their life can they be empowered towards achieving their full, sacred potential.

The correct time and space can create a readiness to change, with the change occurring not only from within the young person but also from their networks and supports surrounding them, if it is to be truly sustainable. If the young person is not motivated or ready to start contemplating change, then some groundwork is required to ensure that all barriers are identified and addressed innovatively. The potential benefits have to be known to rangatahi and sometimes their situation may need to deteriorate further before they realise they are ready to start making some changes.

If our rangatahi see role models of integrity, knowledge and mana amongst their leaders, then they too will be more willing to learn such knowledge to apply to their lives. They can also continue to pass down our traditions, values and customs for the purpose of keeping our people strong and overcoming the many battles we have faced and continue to face. Our Māori community leaders have the skills and resources to provide our young people with such knowledge and proficiency. KM shares that when working with rangatahi who are struggling with their pathways, it is important to know when they are ready, but also to know the realities some may be faced with:

Yep there is going to come a time for one reason or another, they want to get out or break those cycles, which is really, really choice. However, they know it is going to be really, really hard when they have been with a family who have been using [drugs] or there is violence….this is one of my experiences, it can be done. (KM)

KM also talked about the stage called 'Oho ake' where there is an awakening or a realisation that something needs to change and that the individual has the power and ability to create this change. He identified the notion of discipline and focus, in that the young person needs to be aware of the many distractions and realise that these are deterrents from a pathway of full potential. NP also talked about how he prepares the young person for their journey ahead, and teaches them any identified tools they may be lacking. For example, he shared a story about a rangatahi who was weary of people in general and did not consider himself as being good at anything, becoming rather isolated in terms of meaningful relationships with others. Ned identified barriers that would cause this person to not trust him also, and push away any support people. NP found a common interest in carving and asked this young person to assist him. After some time, this young person was carving and trading with other people, and had developed the confidence to interact with others and therefore, begin to trust people again. He was even able to travel to other towns through the networks he made, which was not something he would have previously been comfortable with.

Ned downplayed his role in this shift, and focused me on the potential and underlying talents that this young person was able to find and grow. These stories help me to see that mana, the confidence the true meaning of 'aroha ki ngā tangata' which our leaders carry out on a daily basis. This may be part of NP's job, but I sense that his job is just another medium for sharing his many talents and assisting those who cross his path both in and out of his role at the hospital. He had a way of bringing out the best in me also, making me laugh, think, reflect, and absorb, and appreciate people and relationships more. With this last interview, I gained more insight and confidence to continue to venture out into unknown territories and explore the many depths of knowledge.

All the leaders were able to meet and connect with others to offer their kōrero, demonstrate their humble approaches to life, and help instil self-efficacy and self-belief in others. These kōrero plant the seed for development, for making better choices, to become more confident in themselves and role models for those around them:

> *Ka Mahi. That's when you start to apply your hopes from that awakening, the application. And then what happens after a long time…you finally want to do some study and then you have your exam, and then, Ka Puta Ngā Hua; Fruits of your labour. And it doesn't stop, all of that work…a lot of good things happen to you. Then it is wellbeing, basis of your wellbeing. You are in a good position now you can do things, provide for your family, things start to Ka Tu Ora, then Ka Tu Tauira…you start to become a role model.* (KM)

Conclusion

The leaders spoke about the importance of providing mātauranga Māori to our rangatahi, to our future generations, to enhance their wellbeing and in the hope that they too will become stronger in their pathways and asserting their mana and accumulated knowledge to achieve successes. While the reality of the pathways for rangatahi may include many obstacles or distractions to deter the young person from gaining confidence and autonomy, there is great importance in finding connections with our rangatahi rather than considering them to be beyond hope.

 This is where the parents, whānau, and other influential people can help shape their pathways through years of manaakitanga and aroha. Preparation and strategic thinking can help provide a better platform for rangatahi. Whānau is the primary source or place to create, grow and sustain young peoples' sense of belonging, but there must be networks and collaborations cemented in place to support the efforts of whānau. They can create their own ways of doing things, and create a sense of belonging for their own whānau members, developing their futures, so they do not require state dependency and be confused about where they belong and their role within their whānau and community.

Leaders such as PE have lived their whole lives as part of their communities. PE demonstrated this through her familiarity with her environment, the local affairs and her genuine passion and ties to this area. She spoke passionately about local rangatahi setting up their own youth groups, triggered by the boredom and limited social events available in the area. From these forum, many new and innovate ideas have been created and fostered. This carries excitement for PE who can see beyond the present and in to the future for her mokopuna. This is what all the leaders saw and work towards; ensuring the continuation of our culture and knowledge, and people who are vibrant, healthy, and sure of their place of belonging in this world.

WĀHANGA TUAONO: REALISING POTENTIAL

"Death is not the end, it is only the beginning"[20]

Introduction

This project has explored the stories of eight Māori community leaders to raise awareness to the many facets and understandings of grief from a Māori worldview. This importance of prioritising such knowledge is realised and shaped to inform and improve our engagement when working to understand the grief experiences of rangatahi offenders through adolescent mental health, youth offending or in our communities. A kaupapa Māori approach underlies this research, and eases the navigation through traditional grieving practices which although are a common reality of a Māori world, require sensitivity and caution to ensure the mere presence and discussion of the spiritual world does not invite or attract repercussions (Nikora et. al, 2010). This has been achieved through the immense collaboration of supervision, cultural support and guidance and the utmost respect for the power and sacredness of such knowledge. It is therefore important that we treat these stories with respect and understand that the sharing of sensitive information is not a straightforward process and that much of this knowledge is valid in Te Ao Māori and unique to each leader and their experiences.

The purpose of attempting to explore the different threads of grief for rangatahi offenders is to acknowledge that there are other options beyond criminal lifestyles and that it is our responsibility in our roles as community members, professionals, family members, and leaders to work effectively with troubled rangatahi. We need to working collaboratively with our Māori community leaders and develop ways to prioritise the role of culture in assisting our future leaders. This chapter will revisit the aims of the research in the context of the

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[20] Te Waiohau Te Haara, pers. comm. January 2012.

literature and analysis, then discuss both limitations and highlights of this project and finally, provide recommendations.

Research Aims

The first aim was to explore Māori community leaders' experiences of grief and traditional grieving practices through their personal encounters of bereavement and roles within their whānau, marae, hapū, iwi and communities. This set the scene for the depth of knowledge I was wishing to pursue and the importance of respectful relationships. In hindsight, I realise the depth we embarked upon also involved processes of care to protect the well-being of ourselves and the relationships of knowledge sharing.. This was achieved through karakia (prayers), cultural supervision, mau rākau, wānanga and treating each step with care, caution and with support. We were able to view glimpses of Te Ao Māori and learn of the energies and existence beyond our physical being. We were able to travel back to traditional practices of grief, such as tangihanga, through the leaders natural abilities to tell stories, and naturally touch upon the four dimensions of Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 1998), the physical dimension, the emotional dimension, the family dimension and the spiritual dimension. Leaders also talked about the evolving nature of grief with time but also the ability to be innovative, proactive and still hold fast to important parts of being Māori. Moving through these aspects of grief provided us with a view those who are connected to their culture have access to, when faced with situations of grief. The way in which Māori grieved in a collective manner and all with different roles and responsibilities facilitated those who were closest to the deceased, and assisted them back to everyday functioning.

The second aim was to explore the leaders' experiences of working with rangatahi offenders and or their whānau who have experienced grief. All of the eight leaders, whether through their roles at work or within the community were able to recall troubled rangatahi who were touched by some form of grief. Their perspectives and understandings of the reasons for the individual struggling with life were connected back to wider influences in relation to Te Ao

Māori but also within the histories of New Zealand - the lived effects of colonisation and current systems of mainstream society. The overall consensus amongst leaders was to use innovative ways to integrate traditional knowledge with contemporary circumstances to assist rangatahi offenders and their whānau. Mātauranga Māori was a vehicle for interacting with the world and informing everyday practice or work with any troubled rangatahi, which at times, would encompass or touch upon their historical or current experiences of grief. Grief was spoken about in diverse ways. There was no urgency or pressure to solve this complex issue of rangatahi offending, but rather a natural tendency to focus upon building meaningful relationships and providing skills or resources the leaders felt necessary at that time. Rangatahi were not viewed as individual clients but rather within the wider systems of; whānau, hapū, iwi, community, descendants of Ātua, descendants of ancestors and future leaders with potential. If there was a breakdown in the immediate support system, it was a given that other members of the wider systems assisted in the disciplining and raising of the individual. Some of the leaders demonstrate the ways in which they live and operate in this way.

The third aim was to identify community leaders' solutions to improve and understand engagement and interventions with rangatahi offenders who may be dealing with grief issues. I was naïve in assuming that the solutions were straightforward and universal in addressing such complex issues. What I learned was that the issue of disconnection was not specific to rangatahi offenders but rather rangatahi and whānau in general who may not have been raised knowing their culture or with access to their whakapapa. The reconnecting of rangatahi offenders back to their culture in conjunction with many other skills tailored to suit diverse lived experiences is one way in which we can better assist rangatahi who may be faced with grief alongside their offending behaviours or consequences.

Other political issues and injustices were spoken of under the discourse of grief and rangatahi offending, and these were important to the purpose of this study. At times it was overwhelming and disheartening to hear of the battles lost for Māori, such as land, and te reo Māori, and specific to this research, the changing

dynamics and practices of tangihanga and the grieving experiences of our people. There is an overall consensus that many of our people no longer have easy access or choose to access to Te Ao Māori for a range of reasons. It is the responsibility of communities and government that we understand these issues and bring Te Ao Māori to the solution. That means we need to begin with ourselves and our families and reconnect to what is not lost, that which makes us Māori. We need to come from a more holistic approach and incorporate the knowledge of solutions offered by experienced leaders. In addition, leaders are aware of the current affairs of our communities, the dynamics of whanaungatanga and the diversity among the general youth culture. as they negotiate the mainstream requirements with creative ways of making connections and influencing change Most importantly, they demonstrate how to live as Māori today and retain important values such as, whanaungatanga (networking, building relationships), manaakitanga (being hospitable), aroha ki te tangata (affection and love for people) and tino rangatiratanga (self-determination). These values and the understanding of grief through a Māori lens can inform and improve our own engagement and interactions with troubled rangatahi in terms of their grieving.

The fourth aim was to establish an experiential knowledge base to contribute to developing a framework to continue further research with rangatahi offenders who experience grief. The knowledge with experiences discussed in this thesis is priceless and gives us a glimpse of the secure and meaningful world from which Māori descend.. This platform equips us with key areas which we can further explore and understand, for example, the ways rangatahi experience grief and the death of someone close to them; a significant loss in their life resulting in grief; their understanding of the relationship between grief experiences and offending; the role of technology and social networks in relation to their grief; their connection with mātauranga Māori and cultural identity and the role of these towards both offending and bereavement experiences. The framing of further research could be similar to this project, through employing a similar methodology, honouring the voices of rangatahi themselves and creating a forum to share their stories and find meaningful

solutions. This could also be beneficial to other rangatahi who can relate to such journeys, as well as assist youth workers in developing better relationships and interventions for addressing offending rates and providing more appropriate support. I also recommend that we work towards developing a framework based on both Māori community leaders and rangatahi offenders research, so that we are informed by their voices and can adequately assess the effectiveness of such interventions in the hope to improve the availability of effective approaches in New Zealand and assist in addressing rangatahi offending. The shape in which this takes will be determined by further research with those who are at the heart of this issue, our future leaders, rangatahi.

The fifth aim was to disseminate this information locally and nationally, for the purpose of informing policy, planning and practice in the area of youth justice and mental health for Māori youth. This can be achieved through local and national conferences or opportunities that arise. I also plan to present findings to our local mental health service and circulate this project to the local youth justice service to raise awareness and discuss different aspects of this research project, particularly our current thinking and attitudes towards the issue of rangatahi offending. My hope is that more attention can be attributed to underlying grief experiences or issues for troubled rangatahi and that this area be seen as an opportunity to connect individuals to their own positive cultural resources or Māori community leaders if viable.

I also hope that mātauranga Māori and the importance of culture and the appropriate facilitation of grief experiences for rangatahi offenders is prioritised and recognised in both government and non-government agencies working with rangatahi. It may be that we need further research to build our evidential based practice and prevent rangatahi from developing mental illnesses or further criminal profiles. This can be achieved through continuing to work positively and strategically with our rangatahi, but also building strong alliances with those who are able to measure and document our progress and successes, and sustain funding in order to provide other vehicles or opportunities of rangatahi and their whānau to reconnect with their cultural identity and a meaningful, positive lifestyle. We need to reflect on our own

biases and frustrations and surround ourselves with positive, optimistic people who can see past the behaviours and poor choices of some of our rangatahi, and realise their potential and the importance of hope and love in working towards narrowing the gaps and producing positive Māori youth development.

In answer to the research question - *How can Māori leaders inform and improve our engagement with and understanding of, the grief experiences and offending behaviours of our rangatahi?* - this research project has provided a rich, platform of information to add to our kete (basket) of knowledge for the purpose of assisting and equipping our rangatahi. The positive development through the wellbeing of rangatahi is paramount and contributes towards a healthy, fruitful society. Returning to positive human interactions and whakawhanaungatanga enables us to model leadership skills whilst also connecting with our people to ensure we are working collaboratively. These recommendations are made explicit in the discourses of grief by our skilled, Māori community leaders and encourage us to learn who we are, where we come from and discover ways in which we can utilise our past to connect to our present and continue to navigate through the many more challenges that lie ahead.

Through focusing on the many inevitable facets of grief, we have learned that within Te Ao Māori, there are many whanaunga and shades of grief; pouritanga, mamae, loneliness, isolation, displacement and the solutions for addressing the needs of our rangatahi across mental health and justice sectors lies in understand the meaning of these processes for well-being.

Through exploring traditional grieving practices and relating them to some of the grieving practices amongst our rangatahi, it was evident that many rangatahi and their whānau could benefit from being informed about cultural practices, and safety through tikanga that could assist them with working through and coping with grief, connecting them to what has worked for years amongst our people. Leaders have the ability to adapt with technologies, modern times and use Māori cultural values, such as manaakitanga, aroha ki ngā tangata (compassion for people), awhi, ako (to teach), to connect with

rangatahi and provide them with opportunities to show them a different way of living, to teach them to be proud of who they are and where they come from, to identify any riri (anger) or mamae (grief, loss) they may be struggling to come to terms with. They share that burden with them, to absorb it amongst the wider collective of another roopu, another whānau, and other vehicle of support. Role modelling is really important and empowering the young person to take control of oneself and start making better choices that lead to good outcomes.

We have explored my curiosity for making sense of rangatahi presenting to mental health and justice services by understanding their experiences of grief through this process of talking with Māori community leaders who are competent in Te Ao Māori and working amongst our people in today's modern society. Their wisdoms, experiences, and knowledge about the relationship of grief to rangatahi issues, such as offending, have provided us with a platform of knowledge to assist us in our practice. To work effectively in these fields we need to reflect on our interactions, our roles, our interventions and modes of engagement and continue the process of further educating ourselves and those in our society to work more effectively in understanding our rangatahi.

Limitations

It is important to acknowledge and discuss some of the limitations of this research. Due to the research being of a qualitative design, and for the purpose of a Master of Arts thesis, the sample size is relatively small, therefore findings cannot be generalised to the wider Māori population. It was also difficult to refrain from interviewing additional leaders. Many potential participants were recommended through the relationships I developed through the process and unfortunately with time restraints and limited research parameters, I did not have the capacity to expand the research sample size. Another limitation of this project is the information shared does not capture the entirety of the processes of death and grief from a Māori worldview. Specific offending categories or detail were not explored in this project, nor was there an extensive examination

of demographic information. Nevertheless, the knowledge gathered from these wise leaders enables us to dive within the waters of our reality and produce this knowledge for our rangatahi.

Conclusion

The information and stories leaders have shared with us confirms my belief in the importance of strong, influential Māori community leaders. Knowledge is derived through experience and exposure to the beautiful world of Te Ao Māori. And if we are prepared to open our eyes, our ears, our minds and our hearts to the many exquisite beauties in life (Personal Com. TWT, 2012) then we too can reap the benefits and share these gems in the positions of privilege we have in our relationships with troubled rangatahi. What we have also learned, is that these strengths and characteristics of our leaders are inherited by our people, because they are survivors of their lines of genealogy and continue to stand in this world. In the process of navigating this research project, I too have not only been informed, but also experienced the benefits of connecting to our culture and I have learned to enjoy the journey rather than focus on the destination. Through this research journey, I realise that the leaders' messages resonate through to my role as not only a researcher, but a practitioner, a mother, a partner, a friend, a sister, a daughter and so on. My hope is that this can touch the reader beyond their role as a professional or academic and extend to their other roles and interactions in society. The highlight of this research has been learning how the engagement with our culture can engage with the diversity of experiences of rangatahi offenders today, but also for rangatahi in general and the many issues they work through on a daily basis. Bringing meaningful understandings of grief to the solution is a positive way toward addressing the intensity of the hurt or pain related to the loss. Grief is inevitable and part of human existence and at the same time is a lived experience for troubled rangatahi, and understanding the multiple players to that grief story is one way to contribute towards creating positive pathways forward.

The following excerpt I located at a place I often found inspiring; the Whangarei Library. It was during my last weeks of my thesis that I was aware of the writings behind me written on the wall, and I wondered whether these words were trickling through me, informing me of our histories, the wider world and the beauty of our culture, our leaders, our rangatahi, the beauty of people and the power of enlightenment:

Enlightenment
Born at the beginning of time
With the emergence of light
From darkness

So too
The resonance of sound
Emanates from thought
Rippling through time and space
Leaping
Generations, localities, cultures
Captured
At points of contact
Frozen incomplete
In evolutionary pathways
Diversifying
With each manifestation

Phenomenon of nature
Provoke
Wind, water, cold, heart-formed patterning
Reverberate
In the mind
Echoing
Proliferating
Into word, song, dance
Painted
Carved
Assembled
Woven.

With each destruction or loss
Opportunities
For the ingenuity of mankind
Abound
"Our kept imaginings take us everywhere"

Toi Maihi (n.d.) (Source: Whangarei Public Library)

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Glossary

Āhua/Āhuatanga	Form, appearance, characteristic,
Aotearoa	New Zealand (Land of the long white cloud)
Apakura	Lament
Aroha	Unconditional love, compassion, affection, sympathy
Aroha ki ngā rangatahi	Love, compassion for Māori youth
Aroha ki te tangata	Love, compassion for people
Aronga	Direction
Āta	Carefully, clearly, deliberately
Ātua	God, Creator, Lord
Awhi	Assist, embrace
Awa	River
Haka	Māori dance
Hākiri	Feast, entertainment
Hapū	Sub-tribe
Hīmene	Hymns
Hine-nui-te-pō	Goddess of night and death
Hine Titama	Goddess of the dawn
Hohonu kōrero	Conversation, narrative of deep meaning
Hui	Meeting, gathering
Hūpē	Mucus, runny
I ngā kōrero o mua	In days gone by, past talk
Iwi	Tribe

Kai	Food, to eat
Kaimoana	Seafood, food from the ocean
Kaitiaki	Custodian, caregiver, guardian
Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi	Face-to-face discussion, knowledge connection
Kapahaka	Māori culture, performing arts group
Karakia	Prayer, incantation, to pray
Karanga	Call, welcome, summon
Kawe mate	Taking of the spirit of the deceased
Kaumātua	Elders, Māori leaders (male or female)
Kaupapa	Medium, issue, agenda, reason, purpose
Kaupapa Māori	Cultural ideology based on Māori values and principles
Kawa	Protocol, etiquette
Kete	Basket
Koha	Gift, respect, regard, donation
Kōhanga Reo	Māori total immersion preschool unit
Kōrero	Speak, talk, discuss, dialogue, conversation
Kōrero Ātua	Word of God
Kōrero Tawhito	Historical Māori accounts
Kuia	Female elder
Kupu	Word
Mahi	Work
Mamae	Feel pain or distress of body or mind
Mana	Prestige, integrity, authority, influence
Mana Ātua	Authority of the Gods
Mana tangata	Human authority, indigenous rights

Mana whenua	Trusteeship of land, indigenous rights of land
Manaakitanga/Manaaki	Hospitality
Manuhiri	Visitor, guest
Māori	Ordinary, normal, native, belonging to New Zealand
Māoritanga	Māori culture, a way of Māori life and view of the world.
Marae	A Māori meeting house, Māori communal facility, enclosed space in front of house
Mataku	Frightened, fearful
Matariki	Māori new year, Pleiades cluster of stars
Mātauranga	Knowledge, education
Mātauranga Māori	Knowledge derived from Māori world, continuum of Māori knowledge, traditions and principles.
Maunga	Mountain
Mauī	Great hero of Polynesian mythology
Mau Rakau	Māori art based on Māori weapons, traditional weaponry
Mauri	Life principle, life force, entity
Mauri tau	Attainment of peace, life force, entity
Mihi	Welcome, greeting
Mihimihi	Greetings
Mirimiri	Massage, soothe
Moana	Ocean, sea
Mokemoke	Lonely, solitary
Mokopuna	Grandchildren, descendant
Mōteatea	Chants

Ngāhere	Forest, bush
Ngāpuhi	Tribe located in north of New Zealand
Ngaro	Forgotten, lost, hidden
Ngāti Kurī	Tribe located in north of New Zealand
Noa	Free from tapu, ordinary
Noho puku	Fasting, silence, inscrutable
Pākehā	Foreign, person of predominantly European descent
Pakiwaitara	Fiction, legend, folklore
Pamai	Touch
Papatūanuku	Mother Earth, land
Pipi	Cockle
Pō	Night
Pōrangi	Having the mind fully occupied, distracted
Pōtiki	Youngest child
Pouri	Dark, sorrowful, sad
Pouritanga	Sadness, darkness, grief
Puku	Stomach
Pukuriri	Angry, hostility
Purerehua	Butterfly
Pungawerewere	Spider
Pūrākau	Narratives, stories
Rākau	Wooden stick, weapon
Rangatahi	Youth, adolescent (fishing net)
Rangatira	Chief
Rangi	Light, day
Ranginui	Sky-Father
Reo	Language
Rohe	Region, area
Roimata	Tears

Rongoā	Māori medicine
Rongo/Rongomatāne	God of Peace and cultivated food
Taha/tapa	Side, dimension, margin
Taha hinengaro	Emotional wellbeing
Taha tāne	Male side
Taha tinana	Physical wellbeing
Taha wāhine	Female side
Taha wairua	Spiritual wellbeing
Taha whānau	Family wellbeing
Taiohi/Taitamariki	Adolescent
Tamariki	Children
Tāne	Male
Tāne-mahuta	A Māori god
Tangata whenua	People of the land, indigenous people
Tangi	Weep, cry
Tangi tangi	Grizzle, sulk
Tangihanga	Grieving ritual for deceased, funeral ritual
Taonga	Treasure, prized possession
Taumaha	Heavy, demanding
Tapu	Sacred potential, sacred, restricted
Tauira	Student
Te Ao	The world
Te Ao Kohatu	The ancient world
Te Ao Hurihuri	The changing world, modern world
Te Ao Māori	The Māori world
Te Kore	Void, energy, potential being
Te Pō	Night, the deep night
'Te Rau Hinengaro'	'The many minds' mental health research study.
Te Reo Māori	The Māori language

Tewhatewha	Carved weapon from bone or wood and shaped like an axe
Te Whare Tapa Whā	Māori model of health by Professor Durie (1998)
Te Wheke	Māori octopus model of health by Rose Pere (1991)
Tihei-wa-mauri ora	Māori counselling model of well-being by Body & Piripi (2010).
Tika	Correct way of doing things.
Tikanga	Ethics, values, correct way of doing something
Tikanga o ngā hara	Law of wrongdoing
Tikanga Māori	Customary values
Tinana	Body
Tino rangatiratanga	Autonomy
Titiro	Look
Tohu	Sign
Tohunga	Expert
Tuku	Send, allow to give.
Tupuna/Tūpuna/Tīpuna	Ancestor/s
Tūrangawaewae	Place of standing, home ground
Uhungā	Cry over, lament
Uri	Race, group of people, decedent
Urupā	Burial ground
Wāhanga tuatahi	Chapter one
Wāhanga tuarua	Chapter two
Wāhanga tuatoru	Chapter three
Wāhanga tuawhā	Chapter four
Wāhanga tuarima	Chapter five
Wāhanga tuaono	Chapter six

Wahine	Women
Waiata	Song
Waiora	Living waters, health
Wairua	Spirit, psyche
Wairuatanga	Spirituality
Waka ama	Māori sport, outrigger canoe
Wānanga	Learn, theorise, forum of learning
Wero	Challenge
Whaikōrero	Speech
Whakama/hakama	Sensitive, embarrassed, shy
Whakamomori	Suicide, withdraw
Whakanoa	Remove tapu, make ordinary
Whakapapa	Genealogy, Family tree, Kinship
Whakarongo/hakarongo	Listen
Whakataukī	Proverbial saying
Whānau	Family, unit, kinship group, gang
Whanaunga	Relation, relative, allied
Whanaungatanga	Relationship building
Whakawhanaungatanga	Establishing & maintaining family-like relationships
Whakapono	Faith, belief
Whāngai	To bring up, raise, adopt, parent/foster child
Whare	House, home, accommodation
Wharenui	Meeting house
Whenua	Land, placenta
Whiro	The God of Evil

Appendix 2: Approval Letter for low risk ethics notification

MASSEY UNIVERSITY

14 April 2011

Nikki Peapell
64 Cairnfield Road
Otangarei
WHANGAREI 0112

Dear Nikki

Re: **Exploring Grief Experiences of Rangatahi Offenders through the Kōrero of Māori Community Leaders**

Thank you for your Low Risk Notification which was received on 12 April 2011.

Your project has been recorded on the Low Risk Database which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committees.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis that it is safe to proceed without approval by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5249, e-mail humanethics@massey.ac.nz".

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to provide a full application to one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

J. O'Neill

John G O'Neill (Professor)
**Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and
Director (Research Ethics)**

cc   Dr Leigh Coombes   Dr Lily George
      School of Psychology   Office of AVC (Māori and Pasifika)
      PN320   **Albany (AL283)**

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Appendix 3: Information Sheet

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGA TANGATA

Information Sheet

Exploring grief experiences of rangatahi offenders

through the kōrero of Māori community leaders.

The Researcher

Ko Māmari te waka
Ko Ngā Pou e Rua me Maungaturoto ngā maunga
Ko Ngāpuhi te iwi
Ko Ngāti Rangi te hapū
Ko E koro ki a tutuki te marae
Ko Heta Te Haara te rangatira
Ko Nikki Peapell taku ingoa

My name is Nikki Peapell and I am a part-time student at the Albany Campus of Massey University and I am in the last year of my Master of Arts degree in Psychology. I am undertaking this research project for my Master of Arts thesis, which is being supervised by Dr Leigh Coombes and Dr Lily George both from Massey University. I am also interested in this particular research due to my ongoing work experiences, passion and interest in working with rangatahi in youth justice and my personal journey of grief and loss.

The research project

This research aims to explore the experiences of grief for Māori youth offenders through interviewing Māori community leaders who;

- have worked with rangatahi offenders and/or their whānau;
- who are competent in Te Ao Māori
- actively involved with their marae, hapū, iwi or community
- and are comfortable and willing to share their own experiences/encounters of grief.

This project aims to gain an in-depth understanding around rangatahi offenders' experience of grief through Māori community leaders' narratives (stories) to identify possible solutions for improving Māori youth development in the youth justice and mental health services.

You are invited to take part in an interview with myself that will take approximately one to two hours. It would be appreciated if the interview could be audio taped, however this will be your decision. The interview will require you to be able to talk about your experiences of grief, traditional grieving practices and your experiences working with rangatahi offenders and/or their whānau who have experienced grief. There will be an example of a scenario in which I will ask for your advice. Due to your status and role in the community it may be difficult to achieve anonymity. Therefore I seek your permission to name you openly in the thesis document however, if you do not want this, I will do my best to ensure anonymity.

1

After the interview, the audio tape will be transcribed by myself and it will then be returned to you to see what information you are comfortable with contributing towards the analysis. At the end of the thesis project you will have the option of having the audio tapes returned to you or erased. Some brief excerpts from the transcript of your interview may be used as quotations in my thesis and subsequent publications, and these will also be discussed with you prior to any publications. The analysis process will take place with the guidance of my two supervisors, as well as my clinical cultural supervisor. Common themes amongst the different interviews will be identified in the analysis and discussion sections of the project.

Your rights
You have the right to decline to participate in this study. If you do agree to take part you have the right to:
- Decline to answer any questions or talk about any issues
- Withdraw from the study up to six weeks after the interview
- Ask any questions about the research at any time during the participation in the study
- Provide information on the understanding that the information will be used only for this research and publications arising from this research.
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded
- To ask for the audio tape to be turned off at any time during the interview
- To have access to all of your data and to add, delete, discuss, alter, or withdraw any of the information up until six weeks after the interview.

If you are willing to take part in this research, please contact me to discuss any questions or clarify any issues you have and to arrange a suitable time, place and venue for the interview.

You can contact either my supervisors or myself if you have any questions or concerns pertaining to this research project.

Mauri ora,

Nikki Peapell

Contact Information
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2

Appendix 4: Participant consent form

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGA TANGATA

Exploring grief experiences of rangatahi offenders through the kōrero of Māori community leaders.

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I wish/do not wish to have my recorded interview returned to me.

I wish/do not wish to receive a copy of my transcript.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: .... Date: ....

Full Name - printed ....