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**Bicultural Responsiveness in Aotearoa New Zealand:
an immigrant counsellor's perspective.**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education
Massey University College of Education
Te Kupenga o te Mātauranga
Aotearoa New Zealand**

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2011

Abstract

This thesis examines my response, as an immigrant counsellor, counsellor educator, and member of a counsellors' professional association, to the call by Māori for counsellors to honour and respect the indigenous culture and Te Tiriti O Waitangi, by developing bicultural responsiveness.

Applying an autoethnographic critical research methodology I chart the shifts in my epistemology, ontology, and axiology, over the duration of this research. In this way I observe my own struggles to change my 'ways of being', by blending my academic, poetic and journal writing. Central to the dissertation are three articles published during the course of my doctoral research, which analyse the (re)formation of a counsellors' professional association as a biculturally responsive organisation; the task of finding 'common spaces' that privilege cross-cultural ethics; and the use of Noho Marae in the (re)education of counsellors.

The research produced a shift in the researcher's view of himself from being Pākehā to Tauīwi, and this change altered his perception of biculturalism and the Treaty of Waitangi. The autoethnographic research method was most suited to the task of in-depth personal analysis; and there emerged a view that the struggle to adopt counselling practices that are biculturally responsive, though difficult to achieve and prone to recidivism and regression, develops alongside the shift in an individual's worldview and cultural identity. Non-Māori of all cultures need to collaborate with Māori, and in a three stage sequence, acknowledge our mistakes, make amends, and become wiser in the process. This thesis argues that, among other initiatives, the proposal by the counsellors' association for bicultural consultation to become mandatory will assist with this development of bicultural responsiveness through increased opportunities for interaction and dialogue. This will create ways of deconstructing dualism and advantaging holistic views of health by reintegrating all aspects of well being; as envisioned by the concept of Hauora.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to my friends and family who have forgone much of my focus and energy in order to facilitate the long and arduous task of completing this large project. In particular to my wife Janet, whose unwavering support has made the project achievable and yet at a cost to herself.

I would also like to acknowledge those who gave their time to consult with me on this research. Although I can claim this dissertation to be my own work I could not have completed such a task without partnership with others. The valued guidance provided by my bicultural consultants has had a pronounced impact on what I have written, experienced, and done. In particular, I want to thank Hinekahukura Aranui, Kahuwaero Katene, Pani Kenrick, Henare Green and my Māori ‘therapist’, for their aroha, manaakitanga and wisdom. I owe them a debt of gratitude and I gift them this narrative. My hope is that I will have contributed my ‘hands to the wheel’ of biculturalism as my part of the ‘deal’ which is implied in Te Tiriti O Waitangi.

My gratefulness is also extended to my supervision team who has engaged with this work with such gusto and infectious enthusiasm. This team, comprising Marg Gilling, Chris Cunningham, Jeannie Wright and Pi’ikea Clark, was established with its own diametrically opposed cultural formations including ethnicity, race, and gender. They engaged with the task of this research in respectful and endearing ways. This commitment to ‘walking the talk’ has bolstered my own and I am indebted.

My thanks also to the ‘Five Go Researching’ doctoral studies support group, for their encouragement and manaakitanga. We provided each other havens in difficult times.

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