



## The Future is behind us

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### Abstract

The future of education cannot be found without looking closely at the ways of the past – the ways of indigenous peoples such as Māori in New Zealand. The wisdom of our tupuna (ancestors) gives us all the direction needed to ensure the needs of our Tauira (students) are met in today's world. Me hoki whakamuri, kia ahu whakamua, ka neke, (In order to improve and move forward we must reflect back to what has been). What we teach is not as important as how we teach it and how we support both those who teach and those who learn.

Te Wānanga o Aotearoa is a tertiary education provider in Aotearoa New Zealand which facilitates whanau (extended family) transformation through education with over 30 000 adult Tauira (students) across New Zealand each year. We do this by listening to the words of our tupuna in whakatauki (proverbs), valuing the input of kaumatua (elders) and basing our everyday decisions on nga uara (values) of Aroha, te Whakapono, Nga ture and Kotahitanga. These are embodied in our daily practices and processes through the application of the lenses of Koha (contributions of consequence), Kaitiakitanga (responsible trusteeship), Ahurutanga (Safe places and spaces) and Mauri Ora (wellbeing).

As Student Support in this educational institution the support of our Tauira is our top priority and the removal of barriers to their learning is the aim of our day to day work. This presentation will illustrate how we follow the path of our ancestors to provide this holistic support for our people of the future.

Mā te kaihangā o te rangi me te whenua tātou e tauwhiro  
Koia te timatanga me te whakaotinga o nga mea katoa  
Korōria ki tōna ingoa tapu  
E whakamānawa atu ana ki a Kīngi Tuheitia  
Noho mai rā i te mana, te tapu me te wehi  
Paimārire  
E kore e pau ngā tangi ki te iwi kua huri  
Haere, whakangaro atu rā ki te moenga o te tini  
Moe mai rā  
E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā iwi puta noa  
Kia Ora tatou

Ko Taupiri te Maunga'  
Ko Waikato te Iwi  
Ko Waikato te Awa  
Ko Ngāti Koroki Kahukura te hapu  
Ko Pier Uruamo ahau  
Tēnā rā tatou katoa

I extend greetings  
From my Mountain to your Mountain  
From my River to your River  
From my Nation to your Nation  
From my People to your People  
Acknowledgements to you all

## Communication

Communication is vital and necessary for personal, professional, academic and social progress

Oral communication is a skill.

Choosing effective words, the tone of the voice, the speed at which one speaks is important. Language tone, pace of delivery, body language, eye contact, use of humor and the developing a relationship with the audience are key considerations, and a measure, of whether the message has been clearly conveyed and understood. Direct oral communication or face to face conversations can play a big role in both creating and solving problems

In former times, oratory was an important skill for any person who wanted to advance himself, increasing his knowledge and status. Young men were trained in the art of both delivering prepared speeches and impromptu speaking.

Leaders address their people before a battle – In the sports arena this can be the boost required to push the team toward victory for example in the dressing rooms at half time - The All blacks in the final of the 2011 Rugby World Cup Finals

Convincing words are crucial, stirring passion and fervor toward a successful outcome

Well known historical orators include Julius Caesar Abraham Lincoln in more recent times Martin Luther Indra Gandhi, Hillary Clinton and Margaret Thatcher, all competent speakers, able to motivate and stimulate the masses.

## Indigenous Māori

The indigenous people of Aotearoa - New Zealand, the Maori, descend from a profound oral tradition and were extremely skilled orators.

Māori Literature is extraordinarily rich with proverbs and sayings; treasures that enlighten Māori history and Māori lore. The Maori language is unique, spoken nowhere else in the world; it is part of a rich heritage and culture with an enormous body of "oral literature" that has survived for many generations. The narratives are full of wisdom with beauty in its poetry<sup>i</sup>

My ancestors regularly used whakatauki - proverbial sayings, to embellish their speeches, or enhance and further their cause to clarify their position in a succinct manner. Oral competencies increased, as did - prestige, self-esteem, standing and mana. Speeches are works of art, priceless oral art pieces sprinkled with Whakatauki -proverbial gems.

Whakatauki – proverbial sayings are underpinned by values, important ideas which offer guidance and direction proposing a way to behave, communicate and interact with others.

Whakatauki often spoke of relationships between individuals or groups, or landscapes and the elements within them; such as birds, rivers, rocks and mountains. Many of these elements are used as metaphors for human behaviours. Here are just two examples that speak of different human qualities.

*Te toka tūmoana,*

*Ka tū, ka tū, ka tū.*

*Ahakoā i āwhātia mai te rangi*

*Whakapākākātia i te whitinga o te rā,*

*Te toka tūmoana,*

*Ka tū, ka tū, ka tū.*

The rock stands in the sea,

Stands, stands, stands.

Although the weather may be stormy

And the rock may be roasted by the sun,

The rock stands in the sea,

Stands, stands, stands.

Being steadfast and strong when confronted by challenging times– just like the rock remains standing with gales and stormy weather, or when the heat and veracity of the sun beats down on the earth.<sup>ii</sup>.

*Kaua e mate wheke, mate ururoa*

Don't die like an octopus, die like a hammerhead shark

The Octopus is renowned for their lack of resistance when being captured, however a hammerhead shark will fight bitterly to the end, to the point that when you fillet it fresh, its meat quivers.

This whakatauki is commonly used to encourage someone not to give up, no matter how hard the struggle. Being steadfast and urging someone not to give up, were seen as important traits for a person to attain as valuable life skills.<sup>iii</sup>



### Te Wānanga o Aotearoa

Te Wānanga o Aotearoa is a tertiary education institution that provides programmes from certificate level through to degree level. It is one of the largest tertiary education providers in New Zealand, delivering to over 30, 000.00 students each year at more than 100 sites, throughout the country.

The organization is grounded in Māori values, and is committed to the revitalization of Māori cultural knowledge and works towards– whanau (extended family) transformation through education.

Our values are based on the following whakataukī – proverbial saying

*Kia kotahi te Kōhao o te Ngira e kuhuna ai te miro mā, te miro pango te miro whero. A muri kia mau ki te whakapono, kia mau ki ngā ture, kia mau ki te aroha”*

*There is but one eye of the needle through which must pass the white thread, the black thread and the red thread. Hold fast to faith, hold fast to the laws, hold fast to the love.*

*nā Pōtatau Te Wherowhero. C1850*

This whakataukī speaks of the beauty that can be gained when individual threads are woven together, and of strength gained through unity. This philosophy is at the core of our organisation’s origins. It represents the vision of providing quality education that is affordable and inclusive of all iwi (peoples) and ethnicities.

Our values of Te Aroha, Te Whakapono, Ngā Ture and Kotahitanga are embedded in and woven through our actions to achieve successful outcomes for our Tauira (students), as we believe - by achieving success for Tauira we achieve success as an organisation.

The institution defines the values as follows:<sup>iv</sup>

Value	Definition
Te Aroha	Having regard for one another and those for whom we are responsible and to whom we are accountable.
Te Whakapono	The basis of our beliefs and the confidence that what we are doing is right.
Ngā Ture	The knowledge that our actions are morally and ethically right and that we are acting in an honourable manner.
Kotahitanga	Unity amongst iwi and other ethnicities; standing as one

Te Aroha – caring. Being respectful, considerate, concerned with one another, students, work colleagues and stakeholders.

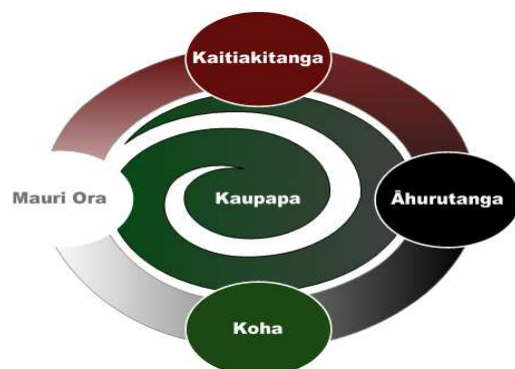
Te Whakapono – having faith, confidence and believing that what we are doing is right.

Ngā Ture – Being correct and honourable in what we say, think and do.

Kotahitanga – Together we will achieve, being inclusive.

Values characterise ideals to aspire to, though are of little worth and can become mere words, unless we understand what they mean and understand their significance. Values are much more meaningful when they are applied and we adapt them into our own practices.

The values in the whakatauki (proverb) are brought to life through the application of ngā Takepū from Kaupapa Wānanga. The four Takepū are applied principles – that inform and direct our behaviours, our ways of working, acting and being, which are used in our daily practices and processes. The Takepū encourage staff to work towards achieving balance within their work life and relationships, and contribute to the institutions endeavors towards (a state of mauri ora).<sup>v</sup>





The diagram acknowledges:

- Kaitiakitanga - the constant acknowledgement that participants (including Te Wānanga o Aotearoa as an institution) at any time and place are always engaged in relationships with others, their environments and the kaupapa.
- Āhurutanga – the constant acknowledgement that quality spaces must be claimed and maintained to enable activities to be taken in an ethical and meaningful way.
- Koha - the constant acknowledgement that valued contributions are to be given and received responsibly
- Mauri Ora - the constant acknowledgement that pursuit of well-being is at the core of all Te Wānanga o Aotearoa kaupapa and activities.

Kaitiaki – is to be a guardian, carer, and custodian – being responsible or holding trusteeship.<sup>vi</sup>

Ahurutanga – creating, developing safe places and spaces

Koha – the act of gifting, presenting something meaningful, donating or offering contributions of consequence.

Mauri Ora – promoting, encouraging and seeking wellbeing.

The application of nga Takepū requires one to be considerate, thoughtful and understanding with a genuine desire to see others do well.

When the principles are enacted it is seen as “mana enhancing” acts. The word Mana is a difficult term to define as it may have several different meanings dependant on the context used; here mana can be deemed to be honour, status, personal charisma or personal status. Thus by enacting nga Takepū we are honouring those we are interacting with, furthering and enriching their mana (their status). This is a reciprocal interaction, for as we enrich and further staff and students; relationships are built and strengthened, networks increase as we all benefit, and ultimately improve our world.

By choosing to operate according to the values we start a chain of events that is liberating, a ripple effect – both a positive and powerful transformation. This state change is part of the organisational goal of **whanau transformation through education** (whanau - immediate and extended family).<sup>vii</sup>

### Student Support

As Student Support in Te Wānanga o Aotearoa we assist our Students who may be facing some difficulty, advising them and standing beside them when they are in need of support.

We work in a number of areas including academic and learning support, pastoral care, disability support, as the removal of the barriers to learning is a priority. So how does Student Support – support students through the applied principals’ – Nga Takepu.

- Koha – our contributions, the services we offer are free to our students the service we offer are free - we will cover the costs for vision, hearing, learning assessments & counselling services, academic delivery – APA Referencing, time mgmt and workshops.
- Kaitiaki – is to be a guardian, carer, and custodian – being responsible or holding trusteeship - Ensuring students are informed about our services and following up with any enquiries, problem solving and networking.
- Ahurutanga – creating safe places and spaces, we have space – we provide comfortable places to meet and study (individual study & for study groups) – and resources to enable them to complete their tasks.
- Mauri Ora – promoting, encouraging and seeking wellbeing, energy, drive or motivation - we need to consider how my actions will contribute to the mauri ora of people places or things, environs, are the presentations contextualised and upbeat and uplifting.

We strive to communicate & behave in a respectful - mana enhancing manner – creating and allowing for open and clear communications.

If a student requires support we use a Holistic approach, where the students’ situation as a whole is considered. Their physical, psychological, spiritual and family well-being are essential elements that have a direct effect on the student’s ability to complete studies.

We use this Maori model applied in the NZ health sector ‘te whare tapa whā’ a four-sided house representing these four basic beliefs of life: Te Taha Hinengaro (psychological health), Te Taha Wairua (spiritual health), Te Taha Tinana (physical health) and Te Taha Whanau (family health). Should one of the four dimensions be missing or somehow damaged, a person may become ‘unbalanced’ and subsequently unwell.

As Student Support in Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, we help Students who may NOT BE coping for one reason or another, and offer advice and walk beside them and in a support role.





We use a holistic approach – considering the students well-being, coupled with Ngā Takepū (the applied principles) – a way to behave and act ensuring mana (uplifting-enhancing interactions). - we seek successful outcomes for the Tauira (students) These acts give respect to the students and staff - which are guided by the wisdom of our tupuna through the values illustrated in the whakatauki (proverbial sayings)

By choosing to operate according to the values we start a chain of events that is liberating, a ripple effect – both a positive and powerful transformation. This state change is part of the organisational goal of *whanau transformation through education* (whanau - immediate and extended family). We tie the past to the future.<sup>viii</sup>

## Conclusion

When we return to the past, we return to our ancestors, there we find extraordinary taonga (treasures), literature that is rich with proverbs and sayings; which light up history and lore. For Maori the literature also provides a record of tribal memory, that link the descendants with elements of their heritage. The Whakatauki (proverbs) are underpinned by values, important ideas which provide guidance and direction recommending a way to behave, communicate and interact.

Te Wānanga o Aotearoa is values based Tertiary Education provider that returned to the past to gather gems, from which the organizations philosophy is based upon. The Whakatauki (proverb – from the first Maori King) espouses four values Te Aroha, Te Whakapono, Ngā Ture and Kotahitanga. These are expressed through nga Takepū, (applied principles) and are embedded in and woven through our actions to achieve success for Tauira. The application of nga Takepū requires one to be considerate, thoughtful and understanding, for as nga Takepū (applied principles) are enacted the mana of staff, students and those that surround them is enhanced. Student Support aid students who may need some form of assistance. The priority is the removal of the barriers to student's learning. A holistic approach is used along with the application of Ngā Takepū seeking successful outcomes for the Tauira (students) through mana enhancing interactions. These acts respect the students and staff and those they are connected to – their whanau (family).

Te Wānanga o Aotearoa honours the wisdom of our tupuna by harnessing the whakatauki and the values contained within the proverbs. We are enacting (k)new Knowledge. This is critical for us as it provides an important connection to our past. The wisdom of our tupuna is what makes us different and unique; and it is the essence of who we are.

In a world that is increasingly influenced by values of the market place, private property, international trade and communication - proverbs provide a pathway forward for our students, our staff, our whanau and future generations.

He aha te mea nui o te Ao, he tangata, he tangata, he tangata. 'What is the most important thing in the world it is man,

**In order to have foresight you need hindsight.**

**Our future lies in the past**

**Me hoki whakamuri, kia ahu whakamua, ka neke,**

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(Clause 3.5.2)

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<sup>i</sup> Waitangi Tribunal. (1989) Te Reo Māori Claim

<sup>ii</sup> [http://tewehinui.com/index.php?s=item\\_details&item\\_id=377&news\\_id=25&m=story&news\\_id=25&](http://tewehinui.com/index.php?s=item_details&item_id=377&news_id=25&m=story&news_id=25&)

<sup>iii</sup> <http://www.maori.cl/Proverbs.htm>

<sup>iv</sup> <http://www.twoa.ac.nz/about-twoa>

<sup>v</sup> <http://www.twoa.ac.nz/about-twoa>

<sup>vi</sup> <http://www.twoa.ac.nz/about-twoa>

<sup>vii</sup> <http://www.twoa.ac.nz/about-twoa>

<sup>viii</sup> <http://www.twoa.ac.nz/about-twoa>