

Whānau Ora and Wellbeing

It is right that our thoughts turn to Ōtākou, to the people of Ngāi Tahu and Ngāti Mamoe, as we mourn the passing of a remarkable statesman, a tribal legend, a leader among men.

The world today remembers Tahu Pōtiki, a writer of history, a scholar of mātauranga, who indeed has shared precious insights into the nature of wellbeing from a Māori worldview:

Through numerous published books, articles, manuscripts and papers; through contributions on no less than five district health boards; as a board member of NZ Council for educational research; a deputy chair of Māori Television; a director on the Institute of Environmental research; a representative for Ōtākou; a former Chief executive of Ngāi Tahu; this man has played a noble role in shaping our nation's view of ourselves.

And so it is only fitting today, to share one of his many writings, to focus our thinking on the meaning of wellbeing, as he saw it;

“Everything from weather events, the stars, planets and clouds, fish, birds, trees and flowers, stones and volcanic events, wellbeing, life, illness and death can be explained as a result of the creation narrative interlinking all of these components in a web of whakapapa”.

Tātou tātou e; all of us connected, now remember you e Tahu, as you make your journey to the place where the wind calls your name.

E te rangatira, e te reo o ngā tupuna, e te kaiārahi o ngā uri whakatipu: takoto mai, takoto mai, takoto mai rā! Hōea rā

	<p>tō waka ki Hawaiki nui, Hawaiki roa, Hawaiki pāmaomao, moe mai rā.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>On 25th September 1951, chairing the inaugural conference of the Māori Women’s Welfare League, Rumatiki Wright, of Pipiriki, incited Māori women to march:</p> <p><i>“May they, like the famed Maori Battalion, march also, to honour and glory, on the humble home-front! May they build up Racial Prestige and respect, from the humble home to the pah maraes, not only for our brown New Zealanders but also for white as well. Then ‘Tatou Tatou’ (we of one house) will indeed be a reality in this land of ours”</i></p> <p>The league’s motto, Tatou Tatou, was ‘held high as the ‘torch of light’; ‘we are all in this together’.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>At around the same time a chaplain of the 28th Māori Battalion, Canon Wiremu Te Tau Huata, wrote Tutira Mai Ngā iwi : a song of unity, with the refrain of "tātou tātou e" ("all of us, all of us").</p> <p>Two organisations - the league and the 28th Māori Battalion – joined together by a call for unity – but distinguished also by different purposes, different audiences.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Welfare, in those times, was defined by the League as “efforts to make life worth living for others”.</p> <p>Close to seventy years later, it is interesting that we return to this phrase <i>Tatou tatou e!</i> to discuss the value of</p>

	<p>relationships in building wellbeing; to share together our common unity on making life worth living.</p> <p>In Te Waipounamu, we have the unique privilege of the nine iwi who came together to form Te Putahitanga o Te Waipounamu: literally the convergence of multiple rivers, in the best interests of whānau. While iwi-inspired and led, our focus is unequivocally that wellbeing is best achieved when whānau are empowered as a whole.</p>
5	<p>It is a limited liability partnership with the nine iwi represented as equal shareholders in Te Taumata; and a General Partner Limited Board chaired by Tā Mark Solomon.</p>
6	<p>The nine iwi – and visionaries – like our next speaker, Sacha McMeeking – wanted to build a Commissioning Agency for the South informed by the knowledge that change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. They believed inherently that our whanau are who we’ve been waiting for. This was not about more of the same. It’s about grabbing the chance to be brave; to build a life of purpose.</p>
7	<p>In many ways Whānau Ora set the stage for a view that if we want a nation that feels hopeful, then we have to speak in hopeful terms. We have to model what we want.</p> <p>We don’t need just one leader; one source of inspiration. What we need is collective hope to keep believing, keep protecting, keep marching, keep building.</p> <p>And maybe what we need most is what Aunty Carol wants: to listen deeply, to cultivate curiosity, to move off the dance floor and to create space.</p>

8	<p>My focus today is around unpacking the terms – terms like Whānau-centred, well-being, Enabling Good Lives, Whānau Ora, Living Standards: and to ask the question: has Whānau Ora really been boosted by a focus on wellbeing the way that the headlines would make us think?</p>
9	<p>I want to do this by sharing along the way a glimpse into some of the 200+ whānau based entities that are living the Whānau Ora way in Te Waipounamu.</p> <p>And to bring to your view, the wonder; the sacrifice and the dedication of our 58 Whānau Ora Navigators who support whānau every day in turning their lives around. Navigators like Juliana of Whakatū Marae in Nelson; recognizing whānau as the architects of their own grand plan.</p>
10	<p>My basic premise is that while any of us can sing tātou tātou e, many of us muffle the part in the waiata where we sing “kia tapatahi; kia kotahi ra” – which is literally the key line: to stand as one, shoulder to shoulder.</p> <p>We haven’t learnt or listened well enough; so we are silent or pretending we know the words, in order to get along.</p> <p>We can sing it correctly; or we can listen deeply and enjoy someone else sing it while we appreciate their talents – we don’t all have to be the same.</p> <p>In this year’s Wellbeing Budget, which Newshub characterized as full of knotty contradictions, we need to ask the question “who is benefitting from the models, the frameworks, and the policy designs?”</p> <p>Riria Te Kanawa raised the question that the test will be if the budget proposal become immersed in community settings over prolonged periods or instead is stuck in the consultation, co-design approach where communities are</p>

	<p>asked to contribute after the thinking has been done in Wellington”.</p> <p>What is the relationship between intent and implementation?</p> <p>Whose wellbeing is being improved?</p>
11	<p>Firstly we need to work our way through the myriad of meanings written across policy definitions. Wellbeing :Measures of wellbeing include life satisfaction, finances, health, housing, human rights, and relationships.</p> <p>Lee and Sarah Mason with their whānau have formed Kumuhore Kanuka in Blenheim. This is a whānau initiative that they are three years into creating a eco-system of opportunities from honey, bee keeping, manuka, kanuka, medicinale and sustainable products.</p> <p>Is their wellbeing what Government seeks to support?</p>
12	<p>Then we have the much acclaimed Living Standards: growing our human, social, natural and financial capitals to together represent New Zealand's economic capital. What is missing throughout this framework is the importance of culture: a factor that permeates through many of our initiatives such as Healthy Day at the Pa (with our taua at Rehua Marae) – or the mirimiri that Te Aomihia does with the shearers in Milton, as part of her enterprise to support whānau through the healing hands of culture.</p>
13	<p>We have whānau centred : placing the needs and aspirations of the whānau at the core of all you do; this is Ripeka Hook, one of our Navigators from Maata Waka ki te Tau ihu; healing the hurt with rongoā and relationships of respect.</p>
14	<p>Enabling Good Lives : supporting disabled people with greater choice and control over their lives. Photo features Koha Kai: an initiative pioneered by Janice Lee in</p>

	<p>Invercargill – creating opportunities for young people with disabilities to create an income, work to a budget, establish corporate catering and understand the value of a nutritious diet.</p> <p>Wellbeing Murihiku styles.</p>
15	<p>Some of the rangatahi of Te Ara Whakatipu – a hīkoi that recognises that engagement with Te Ao Tūroa (the natural world) enriches connection to place and self. The cultural framework adds a strong platform to connect with iwi and an enhance a sense of Ngāi Tahutanga. The exquisite beauty of Whakatipu Waitai/ The Hollyford Valley; the leadership and support of both Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio and Ōraka-Aparima; enable our rangatahi leaders to walk their ancestral trails – a 21km journey as a virtual metaphor of the life journey they deserve to enjoy.</p> <p>They are creating their own solutions; with or without permission from policy-makers.</p>
16	<p>Whānau Ora brings together all of these frameworks into one.</p> <p>In this photo, we have the three Puha sisters of Motueka, who have created ipu whenua – literally a vessel to store the placenta after birth – while at the same time encouraging new parents and whānau to value the whakapapa connections. Putting into practice the philosophy Tahu Pōtiki spoke of – a whole of life, from conception to eternity.</p>
17	<p>Whānau Ora reminds us we need to be involved in our children’s lives not just when its convenient or easy and not just when they’re doing well but when its difficult and thankless and they’re struggling. The critical thing is retaining a relationship – just as at Ōnuku Marae, Matua Pere recruited and inspired the mokopuna to learn the art</p>

	of mahinga kai, to fish for flounder, to dry and smoke the tuna.
18	Whānau Ora encourages us to engage with people who not only look different but who hold different views. It's often easy to surround ourselves with the people who agree with you. In these photos we see photos of Tyla Harrison-Hunt; the crossover coach who plays midnight basketball with kids on the street and to find out if they have a home to go to. There's Jade Temepara – recently featured on Māori TV with Kākano Café – walking alongside of whānau to discover joy and purpose through the craft of gardening. The maara kai – building gardens in the community – has become an effective way of addressing fear, violence, loneliness, despression.
19	A just democracy demands that we look inside the reality of people who are different that us so we can understand their point of view. At Corsorphine hub in Dunedin, a low income community on the hill, whānau come together to create their own solutions to ongoing financial, health, transport and housing challenges. The have created a community garden, toy bank for their kids, looking out for each other.
20	We believe that government exists to serve the people and not the other way around. That means we must focus on the flaxroots, because that's where democratic legitimacy comes from. And essential to the solutions and strategies that work with whānau, are the powerful transformative power of culture. As in Omaka Pa in Blenheim – where the babies learn their pepeha at Pa Kids; the tamariki attend their own kura, Pa Wānanga; the adults go to Toa Fit; and the aunties create an income stream called Manaaki.
21	Tatau tatau e; working together; all of us; starts with whānau in the driving seat.
22	The difference achieved by Whanau Ora is being seen and felt – whether that be in welfare reform
23	Or in the call for a more humane prison system

24	A justice system which strengthens whānau rather than harms
25	Understanding that healing and good health comes not just from abstract theories of co-design and expert advice, but from those who inhabit our villages and our verges; who can communicate and navigate a way back to a new reality.
26	<p>We don't all have to sing in unison. Recently members of He Paiaka Totara, a collective of Māori psychologists, opposed the proposal of the psychology workforce to create a new role : a psychological wellbeing practitioner. They rejected the role because they believed it was fundamentally flawed to establish a position when the cultural competency of the workforce was in question. They concluded.</p> <p><i>“What is proposed by PWP workforce is already happening in the Whānau Ora practitioner workforce. Whānau Ora is best positioned to engage and build relationships with whānau. Relationships are fundamental to the success of Whānau Ora: relationships which are deliberately founded on cultural connection, community membership and investment in community success, not crisis.</i></p>
27	<p>Despite this – and regardless of the impact being measured day by day in the lives and homes of whānau – the Wellbeing Budget this year appeared to prioritise the hopes and aspirations of Lambton Quay more than it did whānau in Te Waipounamu.</p> <p>All of these recommendations and reviews that I have danced over, appeared to welcome the difference being achieved by working directly with whānau, but a staggering reluctance across the Votes to back it up with tangible resources that can support whānau to support themselves.</p>
28	Just like the Māori Battalion before us, or the Māori women's welfare league inciting their women to march;

	<p>transformation occurs when there is a realization that we can all achieve wellbeing, albeit through different routes.</p> <p>We tell our whānau, don't ever scale back your dreams. And don't ever set limits on what you can achieve. One day, others will see what you have achieved. Nobody can control your destiny for you.</p> <p>We hope that in the complexity of a suite of projects of co-design, there is sufficient humility and wisdom, to understand that change can and does happen outside of Wellington.</p>
29	<p>Sometimes we might have to play – to experiment with a new filter – before we can see a different way. The world my mokopuna inhabits will be vastly different to the one I grew up in – it is my responsibility to learn new ways, to be brave with difference, if I am to serve her well.</p>
30	<p>Our pathway to Whānau Ora is in understanding while we have a broad set of pou – the seven Whānau Ora outcomes as our inspiration – the way in which whānau achieve these goals is as varied as it is the same.</p>
31	<p>The nine iwi challenged us not to replicate the status quo – but we know also that the status quo can not remain unchanged. Our research has enabled us to challenge the Living Standards Framework that it can never resonate with New Zealanders unless cultural capabilities are drawn upon to define wellbeing in our land.</p>
32	<p>In turn, in trusting innovation, and taking a risk on whānau, whānau have taught us about the factors that enable them to be self-determining; to free themselves from reliance on the state or on providers and programmes; to stand in their own sunlight and create a future for their mokopuna.</p> <p>Let whanau do what they are best to do – and support them in that – rather than dreaming up pre-determined programmes or getting them to align their aspirations with</p>

	<p>the KPI of government departments seeking to design new outputs to sit within their own workforce.</p> <p>Let Navigators navigate – and not try to turn community health workers into something they’re not intended to – or to create new roles like psychological wellbeing practitioner when we could place trust in the Whānau Ora approach to do what is needed.</p>
33	<p>In the over 850 applications that we have received since we came into being on 26 July 2014, we can now see clearly through the lens of whānau; that investing in their capability and capacity; entering into authentic and respectful relationships; has not only succeeded in their efforts to make life worth living for others”.</p>
34	<p>But ultimately it has provided whānau with a space to paddle their own waka, to sit shoulder to shoulder, to be united in our universal goal for wellbeing, “kia tapatahi; kia kotahi rā, tātou tātou eh.</p>
35	END



