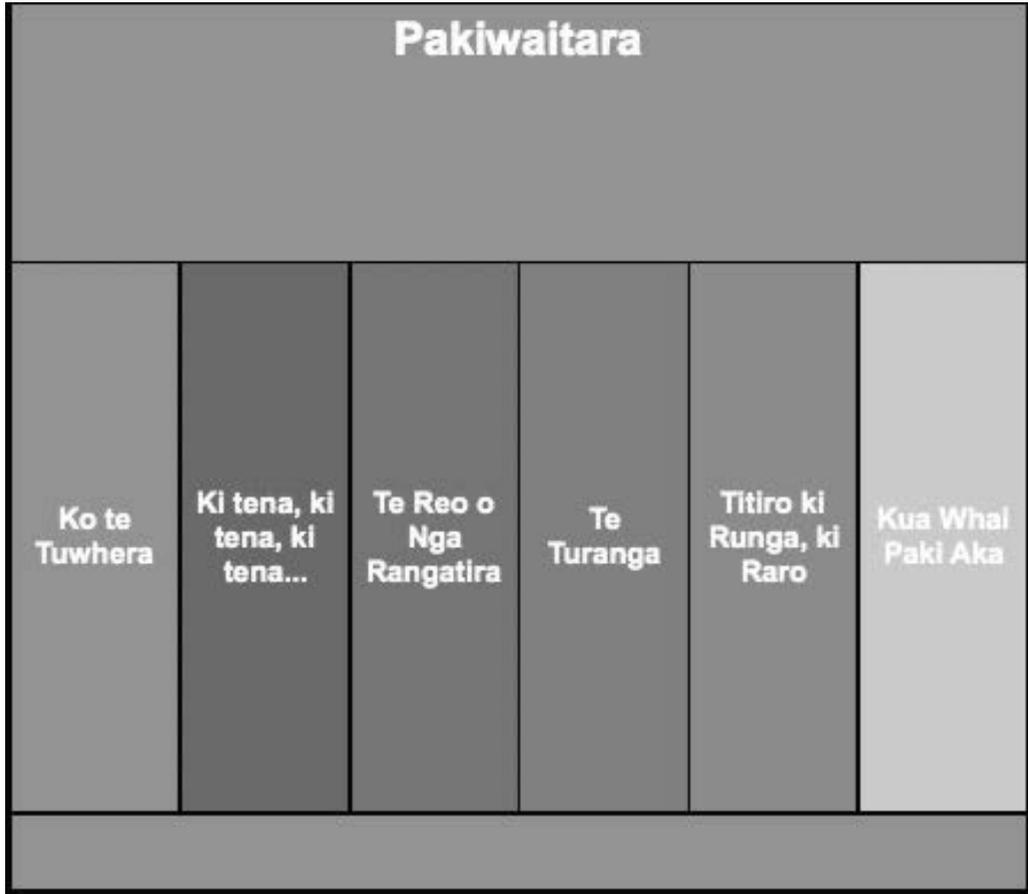


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# Pakiwaitara - social work sense for supervision

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## Introduction

*Pakiwaitara* (Elkington, 2001) came about as a gap identified in social service delivery between western, middle class, dominant culture and the healing of *Māori whānau* in crisis. While education has responded to this gap by offering bicultural training, ensuring more Māori components within degree programmes, etc, social services statistics are still high for Māori and indigenous peoples. It has helped to shift the definition of cultural supervision to inside the definition of specialised professional supervision (Elkington, 2014), but now continued invisibility of values and beliefs, particularly that of *Tauīwi*, exasperate the problem. The challenge must still be asserted so that same-culture practitioners are strengthened in same-culture social work practice (eg, by Māori, for Māori), and to avoid when possible, or otherwise by choice, white dominant-culture practice, for all-and-every-culture social work practice (eg, by Pakeha, for everyone).

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## Whānau supervision that is cultural and professional

In terms of who can give social work supervision, qualifications must be reviewed to ensure they reflect the cultural values and beliefs of all the parties involved (Eruera, 2005; Tapiata-Walsh & Webster, 2004; Eketone, 2012).

For example, Kaumātua (elders) play an important role in the personal and professional life of a Māori practitioner who reflects Māori values and beliefs in practice. Kaumātua have obtained knowledge through experience about life, about death, about the universe and many of the transitions in life that make up the development of a human being. If social work is about achieving well-being in our journey of development as human beings, then how might the role of Kaumātua, as supervisors of practitioners working with people on this human journey, be more effectively recognised? How might we value the spiritual nature of this wholistic approach to supervision also? The implications of valuing Kaumātua supervision might also enable value for whānau tautoko (Ruwhiu, 2004) achieved by spending time with Whānau, (family), a Hoa Rangatira (spouse), Tamariki (children) and Mokopuna (grandchildren) – all similar activities that magnify well-being for the personal and professional life of a Māori social worker.

### Who might be the real supervisors?

*Pakiwaitara* becomes effective for practitioners in developing practice during supervision, and might be similarly effective for whānau in developing well-being during social work practice. So does that mean whānau might be just as effective in supervising their social workers?

From a practitioner view, instead of from the view of the framework, how whānau with whom we work transform crisis into well-being might be a measure for the effectiveness of our social work practice. How practitioners work through similar dilemmas of ethics in supervision, and transform dilemmas of crisis into well-being might also be a measure for the effectiveness of the supervision. So who might better supervise the supervisors? Currently, we supervise ourselves. But at no point are supervisors accountable to whānau, as are practitioners. It might 'make sense' then, that a process producing positive outcomes working with whānau will produce similar outcomes and results for practitioners. That way, theoretically speaking, practitioners might already be indirectly accountable to whānau through the process of supervision and, simply put, our whānau clients become whānau supervisors of our practice development.

*Pakiwaitaira*, is the result of the qualified, professional supervision I have received over the years from Kaumātua like Iranui Haig (nee Clarke, Ngāti Porou), Tuti Aranui (Ngāti Maniapoto), Kahu Katene (Ngāti Toa), Hana Tukukino (Ngāti Porou), John Aspinall (Ngāti Porou). We, as members of Te Whariki Tautoko Incorporated Society enjoy Whānaungatanga, Manaakitanga and Kaitiakitanga from the great leadership of rangatira like Dr Catherine Love (Taranaki), Dr Taima Moeke-Pickering (Ngāti Pukeko, Ngāti Porou) Matewawe Pouwhare (Ngāi Tuhoe), Trevor Wilson (Ngāti Kūia) and many others. Such supervision, alongside Whānau Tautoko: Kaupapa Māori Supervision (Elkington, 2014) has significantly reduced my burnout rate and I remain as passionate and energetic about social work as when I began in the profession as an educator and practitioner.

There are six tenets to *Pakiwaitara* of which kupu Māori have been used to help explain the

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concepts. The model is based on principles of Narrative Therapy (Monk, Winslade, Crocket & Epston, 1997), hence the name *Pakiwaitara* to represent the narrative approach. Social Constructionism (Burr, 1995) provides sound philosophy in which the narrative approach is safely embedded and which will be outlined briefly. Tikanga Māori serves the same philosophical purpose for *Pakiwaitara* and is tabled for our visual understanding of the alignment of Tikanga Māori to Social Constructionism. Since *Pakiwaitara* introduction in the Masters dissertation (Elkington, 2001) and initially for practice in counselling, the principles are applied here to social work and to supervision as another type of social work. *Pakiwaitara* was edited in 2007, shortened to PAKI in 2013, now receiving a well overdue make-over in 2017.

## **Pakiwaitara: Stories of people in social work**

Pakiwaitara centres on the metaphor of a book. It works from six notions, which are based in Tikanga Māori (Mead, 2003; Pere, 1991; Whatahoro, 1913). The main assumption of the model appreciates that whānau and practitioners use stories to make sense for themselves of their life and supervision experiences, and use these stories to negotiate meanings of understandings with others.

1. '*Ko te Tuwhera*' – Open Book. This tenet emphasises a practitioner's use of transparency in their work. Much like an 'open book', a social worker or supervisor makes visible their working agendas. Assumptions, intentions and purposes of social work and supervision are clear, to avoid hidden meanings or misunderstandings about the seriousness of the work that needs to be done regarding presenting issues that are problematic for the whānau or supervisee. There is a demystifying of the social work and supervision relationship, which makes for 'tuwheratanga' or a more open and honest dialogue.
  - a) We are here to serve a process built around the value of stories. What is your story?
  - b) Regarding our situation, what might be the problematic story causing most concern for your practice?
  - c) What might be the solution story most appropriate?
  
2. '*Ki tena, ki tena, ki tena o marae*' – Literature Search. This tenet acknowledges the 'library' of ways in which people express themselves. Indigenous people have preserved stories over many years and generations through legends, music, dance and art works. Expressions need to be validated for meaning in whatever medium it is presented within the respectful relationship. And with that, sometimes, so too must the environment in which we work adapt from a conventional appointment room at the agency, we know of today. Like a book, people's expressions of their lives occur 'chapter by chapter', 'verse by verse', unfolding the 'plot' as it is told, sung or danced. Like series and volumes of periodicals in the library, future 'editions' of people's preferred stories are co-authored in the social work or supervision process. Whānau and practitioners become 'editors' of their own pasts as problem stories are named, reframed, amended and altered to include understanding, strength and power. Hence, '*Ki tena, ki tena, ki tena*' is an anti-realist idea that embraces diversity as reality is acknowledged by various definitions of reality as they occur at 'that house, and that house and that house'.
  - a) Whether right or wrong, what beliefs might base the problem story facing your practice today?
  - b) How does that belief serve as a barrier to practice? What might be the opposite belief required to progress the practice?

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3. *'Te Reo o nga Rangatira'* – Significance of Language. This tenet speaks to the notion of words used and refers to how they are being used and in what language. 'Reo Rangatira' refers to a first language, a chief language, and/or our main or preferred language. Because problems and solutions exist in cultural discourse, using the cultural language that belongs increases authenticity of the social work/supervision process, thereby increasing effectiveness. This can be said for processes facilitated by supervisors from the same culture as the supervisee. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, where Māori and English are recognised languages of our country, there is little excuse for most people who claim to be from New Zealand to not be bilingual in both Māori and English languages. However, this may not be the case for other different culture supervisors. Then perhaps the suggestion is to just use English, so that the effort does not unintentionally disempower and/or be condescending by sounding 'try-hard'. A different-culture supervisor might best use basic language, like greetings. At least until the numbers of those involved in supervision increases so Māori for Māori, Pasifika for Pasifika, indigenous for indigenous, same culture for same culture becomes a more available option.
- Kia ora, ko wai matou? Ko wai koutou? Ko wai tatou. Ma te wairua, kua mahia tatou te mahi.
  - Malo e lelei. What brings you here?
  - Talofa lava. Let's acknowledge the difficulties. Where shall we start?
4. *'Te Turanga'* – Discourses. This tenet uses conversation techniques to deconstruct and map origins of influences for length, width and breadth. People receiving social work and/or supervision are often called into subjective positions of powerlessness as they are defined by a problem. So to scrutinise, examine and challenge a deconstructed form of a problem being confronted, calls whānau and practitioners into a different position of power. Agency invites space and opportunity for decisions to be made about how to reconstruct or 'co-author' a preferred story. *'Te Turanga'* is an appropriate concept to explain positioning here because the role in the transformation of one's own life becomes clear in the reconstruction of a story based on interventions of empowerment and liberation.
- Often how we view the problem and preferred stories in our lives determines positions of power or powerlessness. What takes your power or confidence from asserting your agency or authority about what you know well in practice?
  - What needs to happen in order to regain that confidence? With whom might you need to have this conversation in order to discuss a repositioning?
5. *'Titiro ki runga, ki raro'* – Between the Lines. This tenet refers to the checking of the words or stories that are not being told. More often there are lived experiences not mentioned, not considered important by the whānau or practitioner to share – for whatever reason. It might be the social worker's role, or supervisor's, to seek out these stories because they often hold important information that exists outside the problem story, and which assists in the building up of a preferred story. The focus becomes then to develop, thicken, flesh out and give strong voice to these experiences for this reason, otherwise neglected and ignored. *'Titiro ki runga, ki raro'* (Koro Hohapeta McGarvey, personal communication, 2011) refers to looking above and below, in all of its various forms, and then asking about the many possibilities, similarly neglected and ignored, that might be available to the resolve the situation.
- The honesty and depth of sharing is important. I sense there might still be more

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information, between the lines, that is not being said. What else might be contributing to the problem?

- b) Sometimes information you think may not be important to the solution, for whatever reason, actually can be a major factor. What else might contribute to the options?
6. 'Kua whai paki aka' – Binding. When we think of how a book might be bound, the strength of the binding may determine the longevity of the book. Binding links the pages or contents of the book to its cover. For example, glue might be sufficient to bind a book if the covers are paperback. Wire spirals might be more suited for hard cover books. Binding information shared by whānau regarding their solution stories are represented by the back cover of a book. Pathways, progress and achievements emanating from the problem stories, may be represented by the contents page. We might consider the following as a useful analogy to use in effecting closure of the social work or supervision relationship.

For example, 'Aka' in '*Kua whai paki aka*' refers to a vine rooted in the ground. From a seed or from the shoots it sprouts, the vine becomes a stem from which branches form and leaves grow and multiply. Flowers might emerge, cultivating an abundance of fruit. The harvest of fruit might represent the outcomes that are positive for the family, as a result of sealing together the process of achieving such outcomes to maintain a certain level of success, and thereby affecting a positive social work or supervision engagement. Success builds upon success and speaks into existence new meanings of whānau self-definition. A functioning whānau without, for example, domestic violence, not otherwise believed by the whānau, to be possible, and to which they are always on high alert, of being worn down by the old definition, is important to cement. Hence the binding concept helps to represent long-lasting change for wellness.

- a) Having designed some steps towards achieving whānau goals of change, how might those changes be maintained and strengthened?
- b) Who are key people in the whānau that can assist to sustain the changes, especially during times of weakness?

## Where East might meet West

Invisibility of western, dominant cultural values is unacceptable and can be counteracted simply by transparency and visibility. Like 'racelessness' and colour blindness, invisibility is often used to mask the perpetuation of racial hierarchies, which maintain ideologies of superiority (Power, 2006). Such power tactics allow dominant culture to remain unaccountable to a system of values if they are invisible. 'White privilege' presents within relationships and is often separated from the history and dynamics of economic oppression, and is underpinned by a deep sense of entitlement to define and appropriate images of the 'other' (Rothenberg, 2002). Reclaiming space and being heard occurs in forums like this journal. The table below asserts one example of how visibility of two cultures might counteract the racelessness and colour blindness spoken about.

Tikanga Māori meets Social Constructionism, in the promotion of bi-culturalism, or in promotion of parallel development, or in the promotion of reconciliation itself, as expressed by the word *Taukumekume* (Pohatu, 2008). The Māori names for each principle have been offered by *Kuia Hinekahukura Arangui* (Ngāti Maniapoto), *e te whaea, nga mihi*.

Table one. Tikanga Māori meets Social Constructionism.

Tikanga Māori	Social Constructionism (Burr, 1995).
<p>Tuku Wairua Kawa is unique and different and there is no one essential kawa for all. Essences do exist as they are activated by social interaction.</p>	<p>Anti-essentialism There are no essences inside people or things (p. 5) as we are part of a social world and products of social process.</p>
<p>Whanau-Hapu-Iwi Māori are individuals whose knowledge is localised and respected for their uniqueness.</p>	<p>Anti-realism Knowledge is not a direct perception of reality (p. 6) ... our grasp on the world is only partial because of the many potential ways of looking at the world ... reflecting vested interests.</p>
<p>Kawa Tangi, powhiri, tono and karakia are crucial processes of protocols for development of knowledge</p>	<p>A Focus on Processes Knowledge is explained in terms of the dynamics of social interaction (p. 9) and seen as something people do together.</p>
<p>Whanaungatanga Cultural interactions within social practices of kapa haka, whakapapa, hui, wananga and whanaungatanga are crucial in naming and constructing identity.</p>	<p>A Focus on Interaction and Social Practices Social constructionism is described by social practices (sociology) engaged in by individuals (psychology) and their interactions with each other (p. 9).</p>
<p>Reo Rangatira Te reo māori provides a pre-condition to organizing whakaaro in the development of constructing Māori identity by those who share the same language.</p>	<p>Language as a Pre-condition of Thought Thoughts are expressed as people are provided forums by the language they use (p. 8) to describe them, after which concepts are categorised by those who share similar thoughts as language is developed or reinforced.</p>
<p>Orokohanga Te reo māori is a form of social action as it is used and which holds us to the obligations of culture.</p>	<p>Language as a Form of Social Action When people talk to each other, the world gets constructed (p. 8) ... language has practical consequences, restrictions and obligations.</p>

Very few, if any, western frameworks are able to align so closely with Tikanga Māori in the same way as Social Constructionism. The bridge it serves between the cultures thwarts any attempts to dichotomise the relationship as oppositional extremes – another tactic of dominance which aims to separate one culture from another and appoint one culture as superior over the other.

The article does not suggest that as a country we are able, or even willing, to implement the bicultural arrangement aligned here. But certainly to consider a caucus arrangement to examine own values in privacy, re-evaluate the situation and negotiate a relationship built on participation, protection and partnership as exemplified by Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Much like a domestic relationship that takes time out to separate and work on themselves as individuals, space is important for husband and wife to negotiate reconciliation at a time that is right and under conditions as mutually agreed upon. So must Māori and Pakeha, Tangata Whenua and Tauwiwi do the same to reconcile a relationship that has been somewhat battered by the experience of a dishonoured Treaty.

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Caucus has been needed and implemented by Te Whariki Tautoko Incorporated Society to recover and heal from the experience of dishonourable social service delivery and supervision. Caucus has been further utilised as a space for re-construction of a story that negotiates together how social service delivery and supervision might be honoured going forward.

## Conclusion

*Pakiwaitara* has been a learning experiment of three things. Firstly, to offer a social work process as it aligns to supervision – basically, the process is the same. Some questions have been designed to show possibilities for the application of *Pakiwaitara*. Secondly, to point out the unacceptability of racelessness of values and beliefs in practice, and bridge tensions between Tikanga Māori and western theory by promoting visibility and openness of both systems. Tenets of Tikanga Māori have been named as: Tuku Wairua; Whānau, Hapu, Iwi; Kawa; Whānauanga; Reo Rangatira and Orokohanga. Social Constructionism was explained through its main concepts of anti-essentialism, anti-realism, focus on processes, interaction of social practices and language as social action. Thirdly, *Pakiwaitara* considers whānau, with whom we work, as possible supervisors of all supervisors. Nga mihi enei ki Te Whariki Tautoko Incorporated Society, ki te whānau BASW kei Manukau Institute of Technology, ki te Tangata Whenua Voices Forum Aotearoa /New Zealand. Ka huri ki te whare. Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena tatou katoa.

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