

Weaving Indigenous Tangata Whenua and Western counselling theory and practice in Aotearoa New Zealand

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Whariki –

A metaphor for

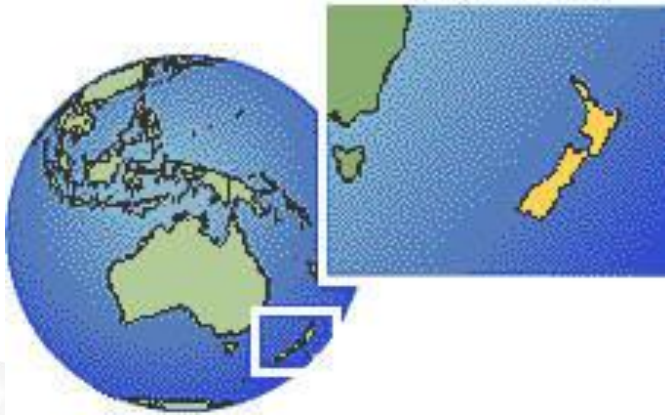
the patterns

we create in

our emerging

relationships

Aotearoa NZ today



Our Vision

- Counselling in Aotearoa New Zealand is not just a repackaging of Western theories but an in-depth exploration of the cultural co-construction that is a result of the lived colonial experience of Western (Pākehā) and Māori relationships

Research:

Project Title:

- Counselling theory and Practice Frameworks for Aotearoa New Zealand

Questions

- Knowledge of Western theories at beginning of the course
- Knowledge of Māori knowledge and models
- Emerging counselling theory and practice at the end of the year
- Influences that shaped your emerging practice

Students' entry knowledge of counselling theory

- No knowledge
- Some knowledge of western practice but not Māori
- Knowledge of some western models but not realising they were western derived theory and practice
- Some knowledge of Māori theory but within education context and not counselling

Background of Students in relation to Western theory – from research (2011)

- “At the beginning of the year I had no idea about any of the counselling theories. I was a clean slate”.
- “Nothing at all”
- “Experience of being in counselling myself in western society = talking therapy. As a child sand-tray & puppets. In terms of theorists & theories behind this experience of counselling I had none”.

Western cont.

- “I’m a bit fuzzy on what ‘western’ means – is it Freud....I had encountered CBT & REBT through telephone counselling training workshops, and some client centred listening and responding skills”

Western theory cont.

- “I had minimal knowledge of western theories as they pertain to counselling through personal counselling experience I had been introduced to CBT. This was not helpful for me so I was interested in other worldviews/theories”.

Background of Students in relation to Indigenous Theory – from research (2011)

- “I knew about Te Whare Tapa Wha from a previous educational endeavour, but I didn’t know it was so universal, I thought it was a teaching model”.
- “Nothing at all”.

Background of Students in relation to Indigenous Theory – from research (2011)

- “I had knowledge of Rose Pere’s Te Wheke through helping a friend with her early childhood students. Thought it could be applied to counselling but not a Māori counselling theory otherwise no knowledge”.

Indigenous cont.

- “None that I can think of – although the models parallel theories I have been exposed to in some ways, the languaging was different, there were also new ideas. It was a relief to have some things I value acknowledge – e.g. holistic approaches sit comfortably with me – Te Whare Tapa Wha is a holistic type model”.

Themes from the research in terms of weaving an Aotearoa NZ practice

- Confidence in knowledge of Western Theories
- Preferred theories
- Limited discussion on Māori Theories
- Teaching learning process
- Self awareness

Confidence in knowledge of Western Theories

- Confidence in knowledge of theories linked to the number of weeks dedicated to those theories e.g. CBT and Narrative were mentioned more than others
- Preferred theories also linked into the number of weeks dedicated
- *‘I lean towards using narrative....CBT while still trying to pertain to a cultural model’*

Limited discussion on Māori theories

- This linked back to time allocation of teaching the two theories
- The newness of these theories and their cultural content needed more time allocation
- *‘Poutama presented by 2 different tutors good to see differing interpretations of the model’*

Teaching learning process

- Passion and knowledge of the tutors
- Positive teacher / student interaction
- In-class counselling practise sessions
- Self reflection of own work on DVD
- Class reflection of own work and other classmates

Self Awareness

- Being aware of self in the context of the counselling relationship and process
- Beginning the naming of worldviews, their place and the place of others
- *‘The realisation of differences between people’*

Where to from here?

- Time allocation for each theory
- Threading across all three years
- Threading across the whole Degree throughout all modules

Our challenge

- How do we (tutors) help students of all world views come to a professional practice and identity for working in Aotearoa New Zealand which incorporates a weaving of western and indigenous theories and knowledges?

How might “we continue to allow our differences shape our uniqueness and our new togetherness”?

(Crocket, 2004, cited in Te Wiata, 2006)



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Student comment

- *“I have learnt that not all Māori will involve the whole whānau in their life and not every Pākehā will feel / need a sense of individuality – not all Pākehā have strong western ways of thinking only”*