

Growing Bicultural Understanding and Practice

Video and Text ebook

In Aotearoa New Zealand

Anaru Kapa
(c) 2022

Nga mihinui ki a koutou.

Ko Tawhitirahi, Pirongia, Taupiri oku maunga
Ko Awapoka, Waipa, Waikato oku awa
Ko Potahi, Te Kopua, Turangawaewae oku marae
No Te Aupouri, Maniapoto, Tainui ahau.
Ko Anaru Kapa taku ingoa.



It is a privilege and honor to be able to present some of my thoughts and learnings as a resource for educators to equip and enable them to better meet the needs of young Maaori and tauwi (people of other nations) learners. Within this piece of work I will use my personal life journey as a living whakapapa in a genealogical sense to share the Te Ao Maaori teaching concepts in practice and how they relate to teachers in the classroom and school environment today.

Principles, Philosophies and Practice

We can start with understanding of the philosophies and principles that connect Maaori and the 21st century teacher today. In Maaori we have concepts that recognize the philosophies and principles that underpin practice, this is known as the Kauae Runga. The aspect that deals with practice of those philosophies and principles is known as Kauae Raro. These two concepts in the time of Maaori were expressed in the context of iwi hapu and whanau. We will explore these concepts in relation to understanding Maaori in the educational environment or context. These two concepts hold a special place in grasping the ability to practice authentically in a Bicultural manner.

As mentioned the Kauae Runga deals with the philosophes and principles underpinning practice and Kauae Raro the practice or out workings of the principles and philosophes with children and in learning environments. These two terms derive their understandings from the jaw. You might wonder why the jaw, well it starts from the ancient story of Maui and his story of when he fished up Aotearoa/ New Zealand. You might recollect that he used his grandmother's jawbone as a fishhook that fished up Aotearoa. When you look at the map of New Zealand the North Island looks like a fish in the South Island looks like a waka/ canoe. The North Island is known as Te Ika a Maui and the South Island is Te waka a Maui/ Maui's canoe. Stewart island is Rakiura and it is the anchor of the waka. It is also said that Maui stood on the Peninsula at Kaikoura where he hauled up his prized catch Te Ika a Maui/ the North Island.



Te Kauae Runga - Philosophies, Principles and Practice



Te Kauae Raro – The Practice of the Principles

Let us explore the kauae/ jaw as a metaphor for principles and practice and their relationship.

Some simple questions.

- Question: Which jaw moves the top or bottom?
- So, what does the upper jaw do? Does it move?
It does not move. It remains constant, firm, a standard to help guide the lower jaw.
For Māori this exemplifies, principles that guide action.
The bottom moves.
- What is the purpose of the jaw's movements? It is to crush, make palatable the food we place in our mouths. So, is it not fair to say, the lower jaw does the work.

So, it is Māori understanding, the lower jaw, kauae raro refers to the practice, the doing of the work.

From the jaw as simple as it is Maaori were able to identify that which was always standard, the principles and philosophies of practice and that which was to be practiced in the time before colonization of Aotearoa. Maaori learning principles were based on these two simple understandings of the jaw. Let us explore what happened for the child before colonization. The child at the time before colonization was known as He Kaakano, a seed with unreleased potential, unknown potential yet to be released into the world. I will share from my own personal story of my tupuna Te Kapa who is 5 generations before myself and was born in 1786.