

Chapter 18

A Ki U: A Facilitation Process for Well-Being

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ABSTRACT

Relationships are everything! We fall in and out of love, we enter and exit partnerships of business, employment, and sports. Cultural partnerships are founded in treaties for which bi-culturalism is sought, hindered, pondered, and/or resisted by relationships. This chapter seeks to explain the science of processing such relationships from one Maori woman's perspective as an educator and practitioner of counselling and social work. A quality process is a social construction of interactions underpinned by quality principles. While relationships contribute much to the success of a process, the process must also be practice "friendly." The test of an effective process like A Ki U is when it can be applied to a simple situation like a game of cards and still be effective in a complex situation, like relationships. Are most relationships not complex situations? This process for facilitation of well-being is called "A Ki U," so named because of the five steps represented by each vowel of the Maori alphabet: A, E, I, O, U. The steps are simple, and simplicity is profound.

INTRODUCTION

While most relationships pursue good intentions – not all relationships achieve positive well-being for all participants. In cases of abuse and exploitation of the innocent, victims and perpetrators suffer short and/or very long-term effects of ill-being. Emotional and spiritual upheaval, may leave the person feeling manipulated and alone, amongst other things. The acts and lies of the abuse itself are betrayals to the perceived power and control expected from committing the act. But perpetrator and victim are often unaware of the betrayal, and so a process is required for that awareness to be made apparent to bring about healing. Once individual awareness is achieved, the process intends that, where possible, victims and perpetrators are brought together, to effect closure and reconciliation of the relationship.

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A Ki U

This article describes the 5 steps of the A Ki U process to share how the science of relationships can be constructed for well-being for all, by any of us, but particularly by those of us in the field of social science in which we facilitate. This process can be implemented by you as a facilitator, counsellor/social worker, or you as either partner in a marriage or business. More importantly, victims can implement this process for personal healing, as can the perpetrator, for personal and community healing. I have been particularly interested in this process, as a bicultural specialist in how it might be effective for either partner in a treaty relationship as well.

The process was explored with some youth at Hamilton's Fraser High School, 2001, who were part of the successful Tu Tangata programme for at-risk students aged 15yrs to 17yrs. I then used the Tu Tangata programme alongside the Daluth Power and Control Wheels (Daluth, 1981) at the Hamilton Abuse Intervention Programme Project, in Hamilton, during the early 90's. Similar principles were applied alongside my work in 2001 as a Restorative Justice conference co-facilitator, with the (then) Department for Corrections, which is now the Ministry of Justice. Many graduates from various institutions of education, in which I have been teaching over the last 20 years, recognise this process called "A Ki U". At the beginning of my educating career in counselling, mono-culturalism ethno-centricism and western worldviews dominated education, and the lack of Maori -appropriate and competent frameworks went ignored and unrecognised. As Unit Standards were eliminated from the curriculum framework, 7925 provided some competency tasks that allowed a base for A Ki U to be advanced as an inclusive and competently appropriate framework, specifically in working with Maori. Why is developing frameworks specifically to meet Maori cultural needs important? Because Maori are those over-represented in social science statistics of ill-being, and for whom statistics continue to rise.

A Ki U is an example of best-practice in social work and counselling. It is a facilitation process for well-being and is described as follows.

"A" - **Whakawhanaungatanga** or rapport building for connection is the art and science of gaining trust. While respect is earned more easily than trust because a facilitator, parent or partner gains respect either by qualification, authority or credible history, whanaungatanga is also about Tika, Pono, Aroha. (Huata, 1995). These rules of engagement are based on Maori ethics of Tikanga which are Pono and are accountable to Kaumatua (the elders), to Te Taiao (the environment) and to Nga Atua (spiritual beings) in the attribute of Aroha (positive energy), as Kaitiaki o te Mauri o te Tangata (responsible stewards).

This step usually begins with words of welcome and an acknowledgement of the circumstances of the relationship. A Karakia might follow in some form of reverence for the source of all good things that are unexplainable by science. This might include a prayer, a thought, or comment of inspiration. Roles might then be explained in terms of becoming alliances against the issues where "the problem is the problem, not the person" (Monk et al, 1999). Transparency about the process might be a demonstration of Whakamana, or mana-enhancing practice, as detailed by Dr Leland Ruwhiu (2009) which seeks to

Table 1. A Ki U – A facilitation process for well-being

• "A" represents Whakawhanaungatanga or rapport building for trust connection.
• "E" represents Nga Putake or name the problem to externalise, name the opposite solution to internalise the resolve.
• "I" represents Whakawhitiwhiti Korero or exploring the impacts of the problem and the solutions.
• "O" represents Whanau Ora or action plan to detail who, what, where, how, when.
• "U" represents Whakatau or effecting closure for evaluation and next step expectations.

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