



Collaborative and indigenous mental health therapy: Tataihono - stories of Māori health and psychiatry

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Book Title: Collaborative and Indigenous Mental Health Therapy Tataihono - Stories of Māori Health and Psychiatry **Authors:** Wiremu Niania, Allister Bush, and David Epston **Year of Publication:** 2017 **Publisher:** Routledge (Taylor & Francis Group) **Number of Pages:** 180 **ISBN:** 978-1-138-23020-9

Mihimihi

He hōnore
He korōria
He maungārongo ki runga i te whenua
He whakaaro pai ki ngā tāngata katoa
Pai māriri
Peace and calmness throughout the land and goodwill to all men.

Tataihono the spiritual binding together that gives strength and unity. A fitting term to highlight an ongoing commitment and efforts between Māori and non-Māori in their encounter between psychiatry and Māori healing.

Collaborative and Indigenous Mental Health Therapy: Tataihono - Stories of Māori Health and Psychiatry is a best practice example of mental health practitioners moving beyond their individual and respective specialities to establish an integrated model of care for an indigenous people.

Role modelled by Māori healer Wiremu Niania and child, adolescent psychiatrist Allister Bush with mentoring support of David Epston, an honorary clinical lecturer, University of Melbourne. It is in the value of relationships, the ability to be open, honest and to work out misunderstandings, and to give mana to each other is where the real lessons are in this book. The respect of Wiremu and Allister, for each other's worldview, skill, knowledge and in their commitment to each other to work collaboratively to find the very best solutions for Māori presenting with mental health problems.

Wiremu and Allister worked side by side at Te Whare Marie, a Māori mental health unit in Wellington, New Zealand. Through an active process of collaboration, they created a model of care, *a way of being*, that bridged Māori and non-Māori elements, for Māori clients and their families who sought mental health treatment.

The ethnographic narrative methodology utilised in this book provides a co-narrative approach between Māori and non-Māori. An exchange of first person accounts, with real life insights, learnings and outcomes from this bicultural and biprofessional partnership. The strength in this method lies in the corroboration of evidence by Shannon, George, Ayra, Caleb, Moana, Tere, Tangi (clients) and their *whānau* (families) in their recovery journeys with Wiremu and Allister.

This has the potential to bring about additional forms of enquiry in what it will take to develop a mental health workforce that practises with accountability to each other for knowledge, strengths and leadership especially so for an indigenous population. In addition to an integrated and holistic model of care and practice(s) for indigenous groups that is supported by bicultural reflexive - narrative processes to practice amongst practitioners.

Since the 1980s, with the establishment of Māori mental health units, there has been real change in developing *Kaupapa* Māori mental health services and Māori centred models of practice but more is needed to improve the mental health system in regard to accommodating more than just a single approach to treatment.

Spiritual issues that manifest amongst Māori seeking mental health treatment have not always been well addressed, and Māori are succumbed by the medical model. On the other hand, perhaps addressing the *wairua* (spirit) of Māori shouldn't occur in mental health services where systemic barriers and professional turf issues tend to inhibit the potential for the *wairua* to be recognised. Thus, neglecting Māori and spiritually informed perspectives regarding their needs and overall wellbeing.

For this situation to change, there is the need for a transformation of mental health services, where professionals are willing to trust in Māori healers alike Wiremu Niania, and Māori models of care to be supported by clinicians alike Allister Bush who together actively give mana to each other's strengths and acknowledge that working side by side in mental health services, it is possible to find the best approach for Māori.

At first the book reminded me of Reverend Māori Marsden's *Mental Health – A Case of Reform*

(Marsden, 2003). Reverend Marsden, also a Māori healer, shared his first person account through *karakia* (prayer) and *tikanga* (customary processes). He helped connect *wairua ki te wairua* (spirit to spirit), to restore Māori to health, so as to bring order to the *hinengaro* (mind) and *wairua* (soul). Reverend Marsden like Wiremu Niania highlighted the realm of the *wairua* and how it plays a significant part of any approach that should be taken in account at all times in regard to the healing of and with Māori.

Collaborative and Indigenous Mental Health Therapy: Tataihono - Stories of Māori Health and Psychiatry, brings great hope for Māori mental health in New Zealand, especially if mental health practitioners take on board the learnings of this text. The book is a significant contribution to literature and will be pertinent in developing a mental health workforce especially in regard to the uneasy tension of western science and indigenous knowledge. Even so, it reemphasises the importance of Māori traditional healing practices being incorporated into health settings with the aim of bringing balance between the *wairua* (spirit), *hinengaro* (mind), *whānau* (family), and *tinana* (body). Whilst appreciating that the relationship between Māori and *ngā hoā haere* (non-Māori colleagues and friends) genuinely working side by side, will be needed to balance the dynamics implicit in Māori and non-Māori relationships because of the history between us and the continual challenges experienced by Māori in mental health services.

References

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Glossary

<i>Hinengaro</i>	Mind, mental
<i>Hoa</i>	Friend
<i>Karakia</i>	Prayer(s)

<i>Kaupapa Māori</i>	A way of being where Māori is the norm - the affirmation and legitimisation of being Māori
<i>Mana</i>	Spiritual authority, respect, pride
<i>Ngā hoa haere</i>	Non-Māori colleagues and friends
<i>Tataihono</i>	Binding together
<i>Tikanga</i>	Customary processes
<i>Tinana</i>	Body, physical
<i>Wairua</i>	Spiritual, spirit, soul
<i>Whānau</i>	Family

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