Mihi

Ngā ara o Whakaora Ngā huarahi o Tūmanako

The sharing of personal recovery stories has the extraordinary ability of providing hope, inspiration and examples of sheer determination when we most need it.

Indigenous Insights II provides a selection of stories which shares some of the struggles and achievements amongst six people who were willing to courageously share their own kōrero or the kōrero of their whānau member to provide hope to others.

It is in the kōrero and by their example, these stories will reach out to people who have struggled, and to practitioners at the frontline who are supporting whānau in recovery, that there is always hope, potential and inspiration in a person’s life amidst life’s challenges.

The reader will find that self- belief, faith, companionship and fulfilment are some of the most memorable in a person’s journey of recovery and discovery, highlighted by powerful messages of acceptance, love, and resilience.

We humbly thank the narrators of the stories, especially the whānau who gave consent and voice to Edward Hammond, Jamaine Skipper and Viriaere James Takoko who have left this world. In honour of them we end in memoriam with the ode of the 28th Māori Battalion and will continue to remember them.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They will grow old — we will remember them.

Maria Baker
Workforce Innovation Manager
Te Rau Matatini
Piri Pono Mai

**Viriaere James Takoko (Jay)**
Ngāti Porou
3.12-1962 – 29.7.2106

Taken before his time, we share James’s story, his philosophy and the tools that helped in his recovery. A father, a healer, an artist – one who pursued knowledge for growth and wellbeing.

James is Ngāti Porou and was one of 13 children, raised in Gisborne. His memories of growing up were filled with drinking, violence, and sexual abuse. At school he loved learning and was very clever but did not complete his schooling. He did a stint in the army and while there he had a back injury. This set him back physically and mentally.

In his late 20’s he married, separated then met another woman in his 30’s and had two children to her. It was when his babies were young that he decided to go to rehabilitation. He went to Hamner Springs and was part of the taha Māori programme. On his return to Gisborne, for the next ten years he lived his life in recovery and was part of the local Tairāwhiti recovery whānau.

James had a strong sense of who he was as a Māori male and chose a whānau recovery pathway for his healing and journey to wellbeing. He loved being part of the recovery whānau, he spent hours talking and sharing with other whānau in recovery and enjoyed whānau activities – at the beach, fun times with the kids, sharing stories and learning and growing together. He did the kaupapa Māori counselling course at C.I.T in Wellington with Paraire Huata and became absorbed in Māori models of practice, wellbeing and recovery. For many years he worked in roles as a facilitator, a healer, a musician and an educator. He loved the travel, the hui, the many opportunities to share with people his knowing, his insights and his hopes for the future.

When he chose to resume his use of drugs, over time his relationship fell apart and he slipped into depression and had anxiety attacks. He moved away from his partner and children to try and start a new life on his own. He moved back home to the East Coast and struggled with being away from the ones he loved and felt alone.

**His philosophy**
James held strong to the belief of connectedness to the universe and this belief helped him in those ‘alone and lonely times’.

*I am part of the universe and the universe is part of me*

He knew that if he didn’t have the resources within he had to connect to others for support. He also had a strong connectedness to his atua and he sought comfort and peace in his presence...

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee, how great thou art!*

The greatest thing that has always served me is karakia, when I’m good or bad I do karakia. Karakia keeps me humble. It’s that part of me which acknowledges – yeah I’m never alone, I’m never going to be alone.
James used an assorted mix of tools on his recovery journey. He used whatever tool or model was appropriate for the moment and had a deep knowing about what worked and didn’t work for him.

The following outlines some of the helpful strategies he used in his recovery. The tool or strategy is briefly explained and then James’s words are used to describe his experience.

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<tr>
<th>Tool/Concept/Model</th>
<th>James’s experience, in his words</th>
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<tr>
<td>For things to change, first I must change</td>
<td>I remember when I was in seclusion and I felt that I had been stripped of pretty much my whole humanity knowing that I was confined to just me. From that, I learnt, I can either rely on others or I can rely on myself, and that became for me incredibly empowering. There’s an old saying - once you’ve finally hit the bottom there’s really no way to go but upwards. I became totally alone, even though the drugs that they gave me in seclusion, I became aware that it was up to me. That gave me an independency. While I may not have been in control of anything at that moment, I am in control … and sooner or later it depends on my motivation to change.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whānau support comes and goes</td>
<td>I’ve just gone through an amount of stress with my own family, that the majority of them are no longer talking to me and the dilemma is that whānau is one of my greatest pou in my life. So where does one go to when one hasn’t got good family ties? For me, I ended up going to the greater whānau, which was kinship/friendship ties and I met some friends who are really good for me. What may happen is some of your family may not want to do what you want to do. You’ve got to become okay and realise - gee I might never see my sister/brother again. For me, knowing that I can still love my brothers and sisters without ever physically having them around - I’m okay with that now. I wasn’t before but I’ve grown internally to be able to say the world is okay as long as I’m okay. Sometimes knowing that the world will carry on allows me to say - don’t worry.</td>
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<td>Reconnect with whenua for wellbeing</td>
<td>I was very lucky I did a little bit of gardening. I always felt that for males especially, going back to Papatūānuku and working the land can give you peace, understanding and solace. I didn’t realise that I would physically change (weight loss). I realised some people don’t like doing exercise which was my case especially, I got bad knees, but doing something, anything changed something inside of me for the better and once I realised that I just started doing things. I became more in-tune with the universe and the universe reciprocated by giving back to me. Doing the work in the garden allowed me to see that when you’re pulling those weeds every single day, your garden becomes clean and weed free. I knew that if I keep doing gardens I’m probably going to get better because nothing but goodness seems to come out when I garden. For me, sometimes I have to step out of my thinking and think nothing and just do something, and doing something gives me calmness.</td>
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PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope)

A planning tool that individuals and whānau can use for helping them find a direction.

www.pathplanningtool.co.nz

PATH gave me the framework to connect all the dots together to create a rich picture of my dreams and aspirations, the things I want to achieve and what I need to do to get there. It’s a simple way of seeing all the relationships very clearly between how I get from where I am to where I want to be.

PATH enables me to see that through a simple process - you’re doing it on paper and then it becomes a matter of free choice - shall I, shan’t I and that’s what I like about PATH, is when you say ‘yes I shall,’ you can see for yourself quite clearly - okay these are the necessary ingredients that need the effort, this is what I need to do. You can determine not only your life, but your future. I like to see long-term futures and then concrete things I need to do … to put all of those into a very simple process that you just need to walk through.

James passed away on 29 July 2016. Yoshimi and Jon Brett (TetraMap International) had these words to say to him: Thank you for sharing your gifts of song, artistry, heart and humour with us.

A Tribute to Three Great Men

A tribute from the whānau of three tāne Māori who were part of the Tairāwhiti recovery whānau in the 1990’s and all passed in the last year 2015-2016:

Edward Hammond
Rongomaiwahine

Jamaine Skipper (Jah)
Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga
Rongowhakaata
1.3.1983 – 17.8.2015

Viriaere James Takoko (Jay)
Ngāti Porou

The whānau of each of the three men were asked to provide five words that captured their qualities and recovery journey. These words were then woven together in this graphic produced by Ngatoia Skipper-Whaanga, a sister of Jamaine.
The Manaia depicts **Protection** – all three loved their whānau and did their utmost to protect them. The kaitiaki part of them was fearlessly proud of being a father and although the addiction pathway hampered their relationships, they all maintained a love for their children above all else.

They were all **Wairua** driven in that they sought guidance and connection, reaching for the sky to a higher power, be that Atua Māori, God, or some other higher power.

Collectively their **Aroha** for others, for kaupapa and for whānau was unconditional. At times they could express this so well, and at other times it was a silent act of kindness that demonstrated this gift.

James and Jamaine were both **Musical**, being composers and musicians, they created music that inspired and touched others. Their music was a gift and a vehicle for their own healing and the healing of others. The treble clef in the manaia represents how music was a form of protection for their inner soul.

The manaia is also a symbol of **Leadership** and all three men had their own particular style of leadership where they led others in their own unique way, often done on the quiet.

All three loved an **Adventure** in distinct ways – from climbing and traversing the whenua, to thinking outside the square, to taking risks and taking the long or hard road often venturing to the tip of the mountain, where others wouldn’t go.

The trees represent **Whānau** standing together, standing strong. All supported the notion of Manaaki Whānau, ensuring that our whānau are taken care of and looked after. The roots of the trees firmly grounded in the woven tapestry of the **Whenua**.

Harakeke is a **Rongoā**, the raranga represents the many lives these men touched: James with his healing hands, Edward the constant provider and **Kaitiaki** of the **Moana**, and Jamaine’s ability to speak TRUTH to **Hauora**.

The healing waters coming down from the mountain and out to the sea. Each one of these fine men were **Authentic** in their own way. With their three hearts (koru) at the base of the mountain, they leave a legacy for future generations, with the bright sun to keep their memory warm in our hearts.

Moe mai rā - e ngā rangatira – Bless You All!
Journey from the darkness to the light
Kotiti is 57 years of age, the second eldest in a family of 12 from the Kaipara. Her memories of childhood years are filled with darkness, violence, sexual abuse, alcohol and sadness. Kotiti recalls as she was growing up, kōrero from others about who her father was...

As I was growing up there were little hints that something was not right. I know within myself but I haven’t confirmed it that my grandfather is my father.

There were constant parties with endless alcohol and violence that surrounded Kotiti as she was growing up and being a girl, her mother always warned her to keep herself covered. Kotiti started smoking cigarettes at 12 years of age, drinking at 13 and would constantly run away from home, check out the neighbours homes, take what she could and lie to others about it. After some time, Kotiti’s mother went to court with Kotiti and she became a state ward and spent time in a number of girls homes. Kotiti felt abandoned by her mother and kept running away from these girls’ homes and eventually went home to be with her mother and the violence was still there.

There was a lot of darkness while I was growing up, Mum’s side of the family were very horrible to one another. There was a lot of power and control, especially with Mum being the youngest of 14, she was beautiful, outspoken and straight up – she would get a hiding for it and never backed down. They were very violent to one another and jealous of my mother.

At the age of 14, Kotiti got sick and nearly died. She suffered, physically, mentally and spiritually. For six months she had hakihaki (scabs) all over her body, doctors’ medicines didn’t do anything.

Doctors gave me medicines and nothing would work. Mum had to find faith healers as she thought there was something else (mākutu) going on. Rongoā and karakia healed me.

Kotiti left home at 18 and spent time roaming the streets in South Auckland, going from place to place. She was introduced to buddah sticks and the drug world. She had relationships with men but did not like it and turned to women. Her first lesbian relationship of six years was violent, filled with drugs and alcohol. She escaped to the north where the drugs were pure where she met a woman and was in a relationship with her for 16 years. This was a relationship where drugs and alcohol were still used excessively and the violence continued. Her partner had two small children and Kotiti became the one who looked after the children. When her partner fell in love with her niece she was devastated.

Moving on from violence
One day she decided ‘no more’ and left her partner and went to a Women’s Refuge where there were boundaries and rules. Kotiti felt at peace, there was a positive wairua there. Despite having left the woman who beat her constantly, she still loved her and struggled to move on. At 41 years of age Kotiti met a woman who was kind, calm and loved her. This woman was strong in who she was and where she was from. Kotiti realised that she had spent many years not wanting to be Māori but this woman was proud to be Māori and she had friends who were too.

It was something about who she was – a tūturu Māori woman, and her friends were like that too...I thought to myself - I won’t be able to pretend anymore. After decades of lies and wearing so many faces, living in shame, guilt and pouri I felt so much goodness.
Kotiti recalls how over time, she was able to be herself and feel good about being a woman. There were no power and control issues, no violence and Kotiti feels she went from a dark world to the world of light.

I looked at her as a real tūturu Māori wahine, she was different because of her wairua, her presence and who she is. Connecting with her and her circle of friends changed everything – the hinengaro went from a dark world to a world of light.

This new relationship took some time to adjust to after what she had been through and over time Kotiti grew confidence, found herself work she was able to do well, saved money to buy herself a unit to live in and slowly reconnected with her whānau who she had shut out for many years. She felt secure.

This new relationship changed me. It was who she (her partner) was with – all these other wahine who were a different group of Māori women. They were women who were proud to be Māori and they worked with women and whānau in the area of family violence and were involved in Māori kaupapa. I thought... I won’t be able to pretend and I can’t lie with these wahine.

This relationship helped Kotiti to move from a place of shame, guilt, lies and sadness (pouri) to some goodness...this was different and she didn’t quite know how to enjoy these new thoughts and feelings.

I learned... I can be me! I can be a wahine and feel good about being a wahine and know that I can be OK to go where ever I need to go. This was a new experience.

The following 14 years were filled with new experiences, going places, to hui, travelling around Aotearoa where Kotiti learned much about the value of being Māori and being a Māori woman. The relationship flowed well, they enjoyed happy times, despite having differences. Kotiti and her partner worked hard and also enjoyed socialising together – drugs and alcohol use remained constant throughout the relationship although there were not the same impacts as with Kotiti’s previous relationships.

Relationship break-up leads to depression
Kotiti was 55 years of age when her partner decided she wanted to move on and this was a huge blow for Kotiti, although she admits she had seen it coming. She was devastated and fell into a state of depression for a two-year period which involved isolating herself, she stopped eating, could barely go out the door to work and couldn’t wait to come home – drugs remained her friend. She could no longer do the alcohol as much, as it made her unable to cope at work. She hated people asking questions and then made a decision to seek help.

One day I looked at myself in the mirror and said to myself, this is not good. I needed to be pono (true) to myself and to get help. It was draining and I had had enough. I was talking to myself, I could hear voices and I was feeling like shit in my heart, I got tired and I was sick of lying to myself and others.

A dual approach to therapy
The doctor suggested counselling and therapy and asked Kotiti whether she wanted a Māori or a European approach. Kotiti said she wanted both. She had a feeling that she would benefit from two approaches and wanted to see what each had to offer. For the past six months Kotiti has had two counselling sessions a week, one with a European counsellor and another with a Māori mental health service where in each session she has two people, a Clinical Therapist and a kaiāwhina.
Kotiti says she has got great understanding from the counselling sessions where questions are asked of her which have helped her to reflect on her life experience and to gain understanding. She also appreciated that the Counsellor had life experience that made her understand her situation.

Kotiti found the Māori approach very familiar and comfortable. She was greeted warmly by people who were from the same area as her and this felt good for Kotiti. She recalls when she first went into the service they did a pōwhiri for her and she was invited to bring someone along to support her.

I took my sister with me - she was honoured I had asked her to support me. When they introduced themselves to us and their kaupapa I realised the two kuia and kaumātua and nurse were all from home. We had karakia, they sung waiata and we had a kai. I felt good with them. A week later I began my appointments. I bought out a lot of stuff from my childhood – sexual abuse, incest, my identity.

Kotiti liked the fact that the two people she saw on a weekly basis shared their personal experiences with her and were quite different. One was very gentle, kind and caring and the other was firm and direct with her. She knew she had to be pono. Kotiti also believes that these sessions helped her reconcile her Māori world. Every session began and ended with karakia and Kotiti was supported to gently explore what was going on in her ngākau (heart) and hinengaro (mind).

I hated being a wahine Māori and I didn’t want to be in a Māori world because of my child to adult journey. I wanted to make personal changes to better myself in my ngākau and hinengaro.

The regular, consistent attendance at these sessions over a period of six months has helped Kotiti on her healing journey. She was supported to get a plan together, to talk to her employers to let them know what was happening and to ask them not to expect too much from her. She also got support from some close friends who she ‘allowed in’ to spend time and be with her.

**A bright future is coming**

Kotiti is now 58 years of age and has come a long, long way from that pouri past. She recognises her beauty and now has a light heart and a clear mind. Kotiti feels protected on her journey. She knows she is not alone and is guided by four key values that she believes will take her into the next chapter of her life......and help her make good decisions about her future. She wants that this story may help others to take their own journey through healing to wellness and joy.

Beauty – I can feel the beauty in my ngākau.
Pono – I will continue to be true to myself.
Freedom – I am letting everything go!
Mana – I have Inner Strength!

Ki te whei ao – ki te ao mārama - Tihewa Mauri Ora!
Rapua Te Hinengaro Tangata Toa Seek the Mind of a Warrior

Tui Taurua
Ngāti Kawa, Ngāti Rehia, Ngāti Rahiri, Ngāpuhi nui tonu

We share Tui’s journey in her words and then outline the framework she has created: Rapua Te Hinengaro Tangata Toa – Seek the Mind of a Warrior. A key statement in The Blueprint (1996) “To live in the presence of my mental illness daily” resounded with Tui to help motivate change for herself, other tangata whaiora, their whānau and those who work with them.

Life’s Journey

It was at the age of three years my world challenged me
Being alone and hated was the environment I knew
I was bullied most days of my childhood
Alone in my bed I would cry quietly,
No-one believed me, in any which way
I grew up in fear and unhappiness too
I had no protection I lived on the edge

My youngest baby is thirty-five today
His birth experience was a second caesarean
Different from my first born, I was ready this time
I being awake I welcomed my son
To the breast I placed him, suckling began
Very contented I felt, my son and me

My mental illness came back so very strong
My behaviour erratic and all wrong
Decisions I made unsafe most were
Today we know it’s recognised as ‘Post Natal Depression’

Is this where my mental illness began?
I believe it was environmental too
Little was known when my sons were born
Psychiatric admissions a minimum of twice
Turmoil and crisis an everyday occurrence
Not just for days, but for decades beginning in early 1977

By my own hand, at risk I did live
Life was an effort alone in the darkness
Numerous attempts, awakening at ‘Emergency’
The blackness was all that I could see
Counting five minutes at a time, was all I could bear
Unhappiness was the cloaked aura I carried everywhere
However, I ask, what changed my destiny?
My employment in Mental Health it began in 1995
What did I find important learning to live in the presence of my Mental Illness
I found my voice, a voice in the past silenced with fear and intimidation
I allowed myself to be endlessly bullied
I was told I deserved it, I also told I deserved unhappiness to live with loneliness and sadness too

The years passed, fifty-eight I am this year;
My journey it’s hard to believe
Breathing I still am
Thoughts I’ve changed from negative to positive
People I surround myself with, are uplifting in their love
My life is full of pleasure but my anxiety hasn’t changed
I continue to self-nurture and take care

Life is now wonderful and full of pleasure too
I live in a place where my nanny and I as child followed true
It’s wonderful to be home, where my tupuna walked
The sea looks amazing and the sea is still warm
My tupuna have walked the paths of this place
I’m safe now, living where I belong

Tui Taurua, August 2013
Moving On – Creating a Framework

Rapua Te Hinengaro Tangata Toa – Seek the mind of the warrior is a framework Tui has created to battle her mental illness.

I perceived that my mental illness was a battle and I needed to be a warrior and become strategic in finding my future.


The framework is about increasing the ability to live well in the presence of one’s mental illness. It incorporates Te Whare Tapawha (Mason Durie, 1996) and the concepts and practices of:

• Aroha - love, confidence and choices
• Manaakitanga – comfort
• Tautoko – support
• Whakahauaraungaingatanga – relationships
• Tangihanga – grief, letting go, new growth
• Hākari – celebrate each achievement.

This framework acknowledges tangata whaiora, whānau have a right to control their own wellbeing. The framework supports and encourages people to:

• Identify and live your tikanga
• Seek and develop your wairua
• Identify inner and external influences
• Take self responsibility
• To be strong – kia kaha
• Accept who you are
• Don’t give up, take it one moment at a time
• Remember we live with the consequence of our decisions and actions.

The objectives are:

• Breaking the silence
  - Address issues of stigma and discrimination
• Workforce Development
  - Whakahauaraungaingatanga
• Training – Reconnection
  - Identification and implementation of Māori models of practice.

Tui is willingly to share her expertise with others. If you would like further information please contact her on email tui.taurua@gmail.com or phone (020) 4063 0219.

Desire knowledge and seek understanding of who you are and from whence you came
From this you will heal the body, activate the mind and calm the soul
You are a seed sown from the ancestral homeland of Rangiātea
You will never be lost!
**E kore au e ngaro**

**Wi Te Tau Huata**  
Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairoa, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Heretaunga

Wi is a father, a grandfather, a musician and performing artist. He is the pōtiki (youngest) of nine children. He shares his journey of recovery which consists of different models. Wi composed ‘E kore au e ngaro he kākano’ which he has shared with many in the mental health and addiction sector.

**Introduction**

A question posed by Rev. Eru Potaka-Dewes was “Are you a human being having a spiritual experience, or are you a spiritual being having a human experience?”. This question inspired Wi’s perspective and perception.

*Widens your horizons to be able to grow in this world ... one is to actually look at their whole make up, their DNA, what makes yourself tick and it was through the use of the Māori models that I was able to actually find myself, be happy with myself and hopefully spread that happiness to others.*

**E kore au e ngaro he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiātea**  
*I wil never be lost, the seed which was sown from Rangiātea*

Knowing who you are and where you are from is crucial in recovery.

*Just knowing who you are and being proud of your tupuna – you’re the face of your tupuna and acknowledging them, helps your life to become who you are – you didn’t just happen to be here, you come from a long line of whakapapa which is precious, we can whakapapa to the Creator.*

Wi utilises the Archetypal Roles (warrior, teacher, healer, visionary) to gain insight and understanding of himself.

*Acknowledge each part of your make up, DNA, what makes you tick ... the healer, teacher, warrior, visionary and knowing you are able to tap into each of those.*

**Ka pū te ruha ka hao te rangatahi**  
*As an old net withers... another is remade*

The use of tuakana/tēina as a whānau has been a natural process throughout Wi’s growing up which continues to play a key role today.

Looking up to your elders for guidance, direction and support, for alot of those ways that are passed down from our tupuna and having a father and mother who allowed us to grow through our lives.

*Each member has a role within the whānau whether it be guiding, directing the family, speaking on the pae, working in the kitchen, karanga, whaikōrero, karakia.*
Ehara taku toa i toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini
My strength is not that of a single warrior but that of many

When you are unwell, whānau are important to help get you through.

  Just keep loving that person, you don’t have to love the illness, try and keep loving the person.

Te Whare Tapawha and Pāharakeke are models Wi uses to identify issues so that he can deal with them.

  Helping me to identify issues ... they were so complex I needed to actually pull them out ... before I could deal with them. I had to work out which parts, stages of my life with the Pāharakeke where I was in the whānau/tinana and how was my life map.

Oti rawa oti rawa tana whakaoranga
it is fulfilled - his salvation

The journey of recovery builds character and strength.

  I think going through trials helps you to build character and strength, life wasn’t always made to be easy and some have it better than others, you can’t help others unless you can help yourself to be a better person.

There are many who help you along the way.

  Watching my brothers work - that’s always been inspirtional for me, just seeing how they’re very good with people in their own different field, what they do, how they go about it, I just think I’ll have that little bit out of that one, that little bit out of that one and put it together.

Remember who you are and where you are going.

  You are the face of your tupuna, you’re the living flesh of all your ancestors, they see this world through your eyes, honour them if you can. The whānau - it’s always the first seed ... keep your whānau strong!
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