

NEGOTIATING SPACE FOR INDIGENOUS THEORISING IN PACIFIC MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS



LeVa
Pasifika within Te Pou

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FOREWORD

*“Ta ki liku, ta ki fanga.”
Adept on weather beaten coast or on sheltered bay.*

It is my pleasure to introduce this occasional paper on the “negotiated space”. Le Va is proud to have commissioned this work for the Pacific mental health and addictions sector. This occasional paper was not a task for the faint-hearted. So I sincerely thank Karlo Mila-Schaaf and Maui Hudson for their dedication, intellect and excellent work. This paper is a considerable contribution to the sector’s intellectual capital.

We as Pacific peoples are well known for our resilience and resourcefulness. We are well acquainted with the need to adapt to changing environments in order to survive. This innate ability is nicely summarised in the Tongan proverb *ta ki liku, ta ki fanga* – “adept on weather beaten coast or on sheltered bay”. This proverb refers to one who is adept in more than one (or many) settings. The occasional paper gives this notion a new meaning and context for the sector. It opens up new horizons and inspires a new hope for the challenges ahead of us.

Many of the core ideas and concepts presented in this paper are still a work in progress. In many ways, they are intended to inspire and even provoke further discussion and debate. This is the beauty of sharing ideas and even allowing them to collide. The resulting particles of thought will settle over time and will help to shape, refine and indeed define our journeys.

This paper should resonate with every Pacific person, from the ardent futurist to the hardened traditionalist. It will possibly appeal most to those who desire a way to negotiate both “liku” and *fanga*. There will always be a place for the wisdom that comes with years of training, knowledge and experience. There is nothing wrong with preferring the tried and true, the safety and security of the sheltered shore. Who can deny the natural appeal and safe allure of *liku* and its warm familiar waters? Equally, if you relish the unknown opportunities and hazards of the open seas beyond the weathered coast, then this paper should definitely whet your appetite.

Fa’afetai tele lava



DR MONIQUE FALEAFA
NATIONAL MANAGER
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OVERVIEW OF THE PAPER

This paper explores the concept of the “negotiated space” (Smith et al 2008) and applies it to Pacific mental health and addictions. The negotiated space is a relatively new conceptual idea that has been developed as a model for indigenous theorising.

In the first section of this paper, the negotiated space concept is introduced alongside the genealogy and standpoint of the paper. The Pacific mental health and addictions context is discussed and some key definitions and key tenets of the paper are provided.

In the second section, the processes involved in engaging the negotiated space are discussed. This includes deeper understandings of the ethnic-specific Pacific indigenous knowledge bases, reframing the relationship between the indigenous Pacific knowledge and that of western mental health and addictions knowledge. We then discuss the possibilities of expanding indigenous knowledge paradigms *purposely* facilitating border crossing (knowledge exchange), managing boundary expansion (knowledge growth) and mediating appropriation (knowledge protection). It is argued that expansion, innovation, change and exchange maintain the relevance, and therefore survival, of a cultural knowledge field.

Section three of the paper explores ‘patterns of possibility’, a wide range of possibilities engendered by the negotiated space. These outcomes are negotiated within the context of a relationship between knowledge traditions and are the product of connecting (seeing self in the other) and resisting (making dialogic choices) and negotiating union (dialectic synergies). A series of case studies are used to illuminate examples of each outcome. Section three discusses ‘connecting’ and ‘resisting’ and case studies for each strategy is provided. We advocate that the act of recognising ‘sameness’ in difference is valuable. We also advocate that the right to resist and uphold and respect indigenous knowledge traditions is of immense value.

Section four of the paper is dedicated solely to the ‘creative promise of the dialectic’. The ability to derive creative fusions using ideas sourced to more than one knowledge base - relevant to a specific context or purpose - is one of the most exciting aspects of the negotiated space model. Two case studies are provided, negotiating the place of spirit in a clinical setting and the Matalafi Matrix developed by Tupu at Waitemata District Health Board.

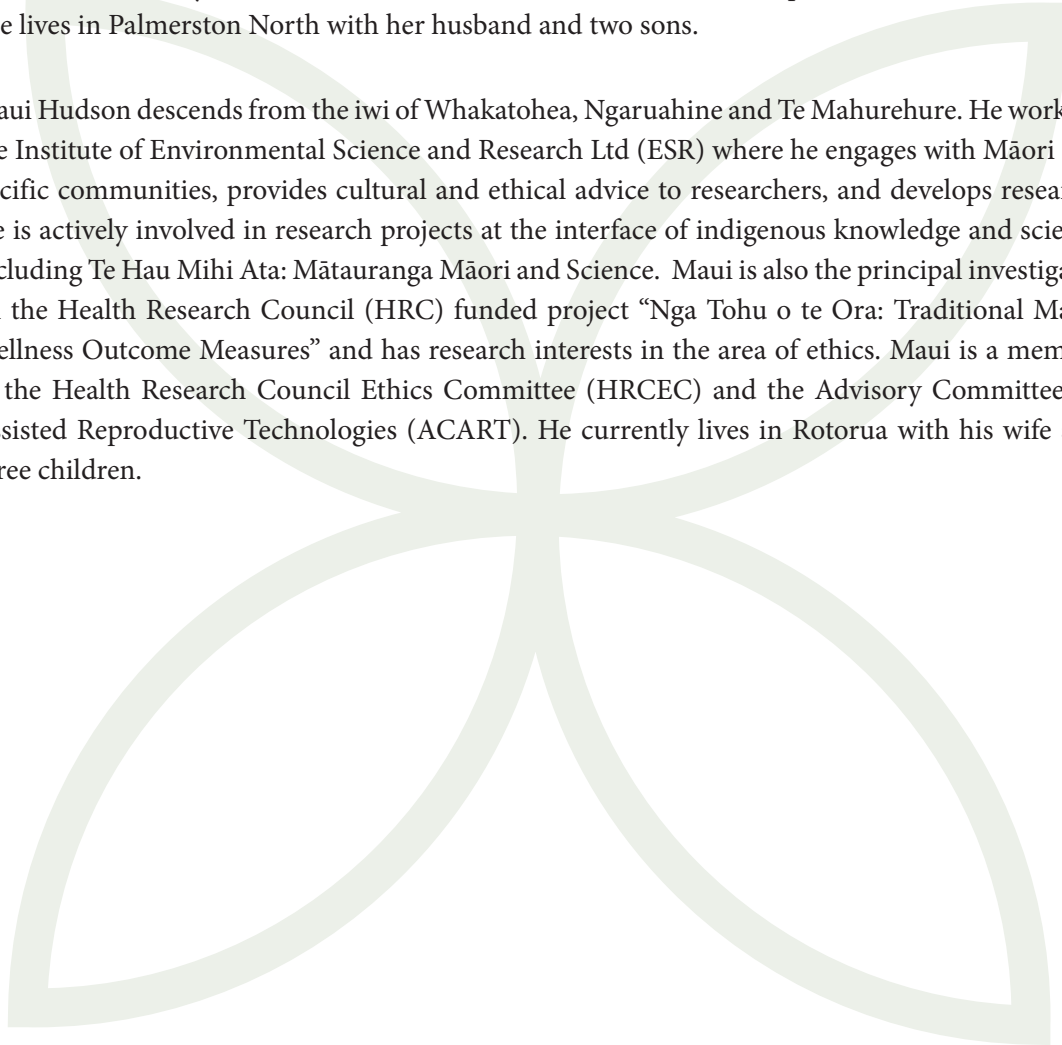
Finally, section five introduces the idea of negotiating internal space, that is the way that individuals negotiate and manage cultural choices that arise from having awareness and access to more than one culture or dealing with multiplicity.

It is concluded that the negotiated space provides a useful model for indigenous theorising. Notably, this model facilitates a range of outcomes or patterns of possibility. Ideally outcomes of the negotiated space ought to be applicable and responsive to complex Pacific realities, yet uphold and continue to engage with the rich knowledge legacies passed on to us by our ancestors.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Aotearoa, New Zealand, Karlo Mila-Schaaf is of Tongan and Pakeha descent. A PhD Candidate at Massey University, she is also a freelance consultant in the area of Pacific research and policy. From 2001-2004, Karlo was the Manager, Pacific Health Research, at the Health Research Council of New Zealand where she helped develop the HRC Pacific Guidelines on Health Research (2003). She is also a poet with two collections of poetry published by Huia: “Dream Fish Floating” (2005) and “A Well Written Body” (2008). Karlo has been contracted by UNESCO to write two reports on Pacific ethics and knowledge production and she is particularly interested in this area. Karlo is an advisory member for Le Va and sits on the Pacific Development Conversation Trust. She lives in Palmerston North with her husband and two sons.

Maui Hudson descends from the iwi of Whakatohea, Ngaruahine and Te Mahurehure. He works at the Institute of Environmental Science and Research Ltd (ESR) where he engages with Māori and Pacific communities, provides cultural and ethical advice to researchers, and develops research. He is actively involved in research projects at the interface of indigenous knowledge and science including Te Hau Mihi Ata: Mātauranga Māori and Science. Maui is also the principal investigator on the Health Research Council (HRC) funded project “Nga Tohu o te Ora: Traditional Maori Wellness Outcome Measures” and has research interests in the area of ethics. Maui is a member of the Health Research Council Ethics Committee (HRCEC) and the Advisory Committee on Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ACART). He currently lives in Rotorua with his wife and three children.



SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

*“Every minute we are alive, we are negotiating a space for ourselves in our world”
(Lopez 1999, p. 4).*

The concept of the “negotiated space” was initially developed to be applied to the [negotiated space] relationship between two very different knowledge paradigms: indigenous Maori knowledge (Matauranga Maori) and Western science (see Smith et al. 2008, Hudson, *In Press*). This is primarily a *conceptual* space – a junction of intersecting interests and negotiations in-between different ways of knowing and meaning making. Effectively, this is a negotiated space between epistemologies.

This occasional paper examines and expands on the conceptual model of the negotiated space as advanced by Smith et al (2008). Its ideas have been adapted to respond to the Pacific mental health context within New Zealand. Therefore, the two knowledge paradigms focused upon are that of the Pacific indigenous reference and the dominant Western mental health paradigm of the bio-psycho-social.

It is important to state that while this paper refers to pan-Pacific indigenous knowledge (that is, what Pacific nations have in common), it is recognized that ethnic-specific approaches (that is, Tongan, Samoan, Niue and so on) are required when pursuing in-depth understandings of indigenous reference points. For the purposes of this paper the word ‘Pacific’ is a pragmatic term employed to “gloss” and ideally encompass all ethnic-specific possibilities - rather than homogenize.

Why negotiated space? In an insightful study looking at Pacific mental health recruitment and retention issues, Southwick and Solomona (2007) identified several salient points. First, they acknowledged that: “Work has been conducted to establish that there is a cultural difference of understanding between the body of knowledge that constitutes the western bio-psycho-social explanation of mental health and mental illness and Pacific peoples’ holistic world-views (p. 21). They comment that, “Little research has occurred to mediate this polarity... To date these world-views have been presented as polar and mutually exclusive bodies of knowledge” (Southwick & Solomona 2007, p. 22).

When developing Pacific models of care, the “negotiated space” provides room to explore the relationship (*vā*) between different (and often conflicting) cultural understandings of mental health and illness in an in-between space. It is neutral in the context of knowing the shared histories of both parties and through a commitment to ongoing relationship the space is liberated from the order of both Pacific and Western knowledge traditions. The “negotiated space” is a place of purposive re-encounter, reconstructing and balancing ideas and values in complementary realignments that have resonance for Pacific peoples living in Western oriented societies.

This requires identifying and making explicit the assumptions implicit in the operating logic of competing epistemologies belonging to the Pacific indigenous reference [alongside] and the bio-

psycho-social. . It also requires being empowered to negotiate, resolve and better comprehend the cultural conflict between the different epistemological understandings.

One of the key assumptions underpinning the ‘negotiated space’ is that Pacific peoples have the agency and ability to purposively choose the best of “both worlds”, or at least negotiate a useful compromise between multiple knowledge bases. It is assumed that Pacific peoples are able to resolve and reconcile cultural conflict, as opposed to being trapped between cultures. Also implied is that having affiliations to more than one culture has potential advantages over a monocultural existence.

We theorise that within the “negotiated space” Pacific peoples are enabled/empowered to establish connections - as well as ‘breaks’ - from dominant Western ways of thinking. There are many patterns of possibility within the negotiated space:

- Bonding/collaborating by finding similarities with other cultural knowledge perspectives;
- Dialogically choosing to approach some things wholly as prescribed by the wisdom of indigenous paradigms;
- In other contexts choosing to be guided completely by Western knowledge, such as the bio-psycho-social;
- Leveraging off the creative energy and dialectics of opposing cultural viewpoints; and
- Synthesising, balancing and integrating new cultural responses.

The ideas put forward here are not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive; rather they describe initial attempts at theorising a range of intercultural options. It is expected that outcomes, agreements or solutions sourced from within the “negotiated space” will always be local, specific, situated, contingent and peculiar to their own time, space and context. Ideally outcomes ought to be applicable and responsive to complex and changing contemporary Pacific realities - but still richly source the indigenous reference providing continuing energy to the knowledge legacy passed on to us by our ancestors.

THE GENEALOGY AND STANDPOINT OF THE PAPER

This occasional paper theorises about different patterns of possibility within the negotiated space. It follows two rivers of thought which essentially flow in the same direction. Firstly, it examines negotiated space as it applies to systems, that is, between cultural knowledge paradigms. This draws heavily on the thinking and work being done by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Maui Hudson and research associates (2008).

The parallel river of thought in this paper shares the same current and logic flows of negotiated space but applies it to individuals. Rather, the lived experiences of individuals as they negotiate intercultural realities. This draws on ideas from the PhD dissertation being written by Karlo Mila-Schaaf focused on “second generation” Pacific peoples growing up in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

This paper then, is a collaborative venture between Maui Hudson and Karlo Mila-Schaaf who

have been theorising and discussing the potential applications of the concept to Maori and Pacific cultural dynamics for over a year. This has undeniably been an *emic* project, that is, we have drawn unapologetically from our own personal experiences, observations and learning.

As expected, we have drawn on ethics, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, psychology and other disciplines well established within Western academy. In addition, we have also drawn on indigenous knowledge resources, ethics, philosophy, understandings, cosmology and narratives available to us. But perhaps most importantly, we have described “negotiated space” in terms of it being meaningful to ourselves and our own experiences.

In other words, we have taken our lead from both learned institutions and our learned-intuitions. We have continued with the energy of ideas until they seem too fragile to sustain the weight of our suppositions. This has been (perhaps in true negotiated space style) both rigorously critical (that is, demanding in terms of our expectations of how logic ought to operate) but also instinctive and *felt*. Blatantly put, if ideas did not resonate with our own experiences or experiences we’d observed in people *that we knew*, we were suspicious of them (ideas).

Our subjective and personal approach differentiates this paper from the large *etic* body of work about cultural transition and cultural change (often described as acculturation). . That is, it purports to be objective, describes the experiences of ‘others’ (who are known first and foremost as research subjects to the researchers).

Therefore, we are writing about ourselves and ‘us’. We are writing and theorising about what “we do ourselves” and what we feel we may be generalised as *shared* with others in similar positions. This may sound like it is swayed with personal “bias”. Possibly this is a fair concern. But we own the bias, critique it as we go and aim to transcend its obvious limitations. Ultimately we would declare this “inside knowledge” and “first-hand” experience as useful - if not advantageous - to our endeavour.

Jean Mitaera (1997, as cited in Koloto, 2003) advocates the methodological position of “researcher as first paradigm”. We subscribe to this idea as useful. Laiana Wong (2008, as cited in Mila-Schaaf, 2008) suggests that indigenous researchers are held up to a level of accountability higher than their non-indigenous peers: not only are we directly accountable to our communities about the ways we represent them, but at stake also is the honour of our families, ancestors and generations to come. To be bold enough to write what we believe, to theorise and represent the experience of ourselves and those we care about, to generalise our *shared* experience, requires much deliberation and care.

THE PACIFIC MENTAL HEALTH CONTEXT

It has only recently been recognised, courtesy of the over-sampling in Te Rau Hinengaro (The New Zealand Mental Health Survey) that Pacific peoples in New Zealand experience mental disorders at higher levels than the general population: 25% compared with 20.7% of the overall NZ population (Foliaki et al, 2006, p. 185). Close to half (46.5%) had experienced a mental disorder at some stage during their lifetime (Foliaki et al. 2006, p. 185).

This same study shows us that only one quarter (25%) of Pacific peoples with a serious mental disorder access mental health services compared to more than half (58%) of the total New Zealand population (Foliaki et al. 2006, p. 179). This pattern of “greater need” compounded by the trend of being less likely to have this need met, is a disempowering combination that has become increasingly familiar in studies of the mental health of Pacific peoples in New Zealand.

Information from the primary health care setting shows that Pacific peoples are less likely to have a mental health issue arise as a problem - a rate of 0.8 for Pacific peoples, compared to 8.3 for the total NZ population (per 100 visits) (Davis et al. 2005, p. 35). The same data further reveals emergency referral rates in the primary care setting for Pacific peoples are sevenfold (4.3) the rate of the total New Zealand population (0.6) (Davis et al. 2005, p. 71).

High rates of schizophrenia, paranoia and acute psychotic disorders among Pacific peoples are of particular concern. They account for two thirds (66%) of Pacific inpatient episodes compared to 39% of NZ European episodes and less than half (48%) of the overall population (Pulotu-Endemann et al. 2004, p. 20).

With regards to Pacific young people (2002-2006), the most common reasons for inpatient mental health admissions (aged 15-24) were for schizophrenia, (48.0 per 100,000) followed by schizotypal and delusional disorders (15.1 per 100,000), compared to 26.8 and 10.9 respectively, for the total NZ youth population (Craig, *In Press*, p. 268).

Add to this picture, the fact that Pacific people make up 6% of New Zealand’s total population, yet they constitute 12% of all involuntary inpatient consumers (Pulotu-Endemann, 2004. p. 17). Further Pacific peoples’ utilization of forensic psychiatric services is described by the Ministry of Health as “significantly elevated” (164%) compared to the general population (Ministry of Health, 2005a).

The Ministry of Health have identified that Pacific peoples are more likely to use acute inpatient units (198 versus 170, per 100,000) and stay longer compared to the total New Zealand population (MoH 2005b, p. 25). Other research shows that Pacific peoples have the highest average cost of adult inpatient and community episodes; with the average (cost) weighting for Pacific peoples being 25% above the national average for inpatient episodes and 44% above the national average for community episodes (Pulotu-Endemann et al. 2004, p. 20).

The combination of having a higher burden of mental illness, particularly in the area of serious mental illness, with high rates of involuntary, forensic and acute admissions, low or late presentation to services which – once accessed – involve the longest and most costly stays - establishes a fairly bleak vista of the state of Pacific peoples’ mental health in New Zealand.

It is perhaps not surprising that the Ministry of Health has identified that building “responsive” services for Pacific peoples who are severely affected by mental illness and/or addiction “requires immediate emphasis” (2006, p. 27). There is an openness in this directive, to recognise that “responsive” services: “focus on recovery, reflect relevant cultural models of health, and take into

account the clinical and cultural needs of people affected by mental illness and addiction” (MoH 2006, p. 27).

Many notable Pacific peoples have been agitators to push open the boundaries of mental health responses and alongside their Maori colleagues, have negotiated space to articulate and develop how “cultural” might be understood (for example, see profile of Pulutu-Endemann and Fonofale model in Mental Health Commission, 2007). One can assume that it is partly in deference to the “bleak vista” provided by empirical accounts of Pacific mental health and the documentation of the evidential failure of mainstream solutions – that these new spaces have been possible.

There is now a growing body of writing about Pacific models of care (Agnew et al. 2004), with the publication of “Seitapu” being a significant contribution to ways of recognising cultural and clinical competencies in mental health practice (Pulutu-Endemann et al. 2007). As the work developing ‘Pacific models of care’ in mental health has gained impetus, there have been repeated calls for research into the theoretical thinking underpinning Pacific cultural models of care (Southwick & Solomona, 2007, Tiatia, 2008).

NEGOTIATED SPACE: A MODEL THAT PROMOTES INDIGENOUS THEORISING

Ultimately, the purpose of the negotiated space is the empowerment of indigenous theorising – practical examples being Pacific models of care and development of Pacific cultural competencies. The negotiated space provides a model for using the indigenous reference as “base” while having the ability and freedom to draw on any or all cultural nodes of knowledge. “The negotiated space acts as an intermediate stage in the process of encountering, understanding and then incorporating new knowledge into a worldview and provides a means of examining the nature of this knowledge exchange” (Smith et al. 2008, p. 6). We maintain that the ability to construct new knowledge is an important feature of maintaining the vitality of a culture.

Using Pacific knowledge as a starting point is a phenomenon that is gaining traction across the Pacific. Huffer and Qalo (2004) write:

“Two elements stand out. First is the awareness among growing numbers of Pacific academics of the need for a genuine and far-reaching contextualization--acknowledging the relevance and applicability of indigenous cultural values in contemporary settings. Second is the success of communities whose initiatives have followed the ways they know and understand, reaping many rewards (Huffer & Qalo 2004, p. 108).”

In mental health this recognises that systematic bodies of Pacific (i.e., Samoan, Cook Islands, Tongan, Niue, Fiji, Tokelau, Tuvalu etc) indigenous knowledge provide a (phenomenological) foundation for the cultural beliefs and ideas about mental illness; prevention, cause and treatment.

If we are to understand the beliefs, ideas and values that influence and inform the behaviour and experiences of Pacific peoples that are relevant to mental health – then we have to understand the corresponding Pacific indigenous knowledge system from which these some of these beliefs, ideas

and values are derived from. The classic definition of worldview or 'Weltanschauung' is: "the way a people characteristically look outward upon the universe" (Redfield, 1953 cited Dundes 1969, p.53). But this requires going beyond the instant, easy identification with the way a world-view might "gaze" at a particular something. It demands more. It calls for mapping the "world" of the world-view.

In this paper, it is proposed that culture is understood as "knowledge tradition" (see Hong et al. 2007). By defining culture as a knowledge tradition, it is recognised that it has epistemological and ontological aspects. A knowledge tradition is shared by many and ultimately a knowledge tradition informs and directs what and how we "know". Every knowledge tradition can be understood to have an operating logic and foundational philosophies which filter worldviews and which define the way in which Pacific people practice culture.

A grasp of the fundamental operating principles and epistemological underpinnings of a knowledge tradition is critical. The first step in the negotiated space model of indigenous theorizing requires the mapping of the worldview. In the Pacific mental health context, as models and cultural competency work has been developed there has been a strong call for "deeper" understandings of "culture" (Southwick & Solomona 2007). That is, the desire to move beyond the rituals, signs, symbolic representations – and even behavioural manifestations - of culture in favour of developing better understandings of the operational logic that underpins and influences the culture as a shared system. It recognises that all of these rituals, signs and symbols provide glimpses into better understanding epistemic origins.

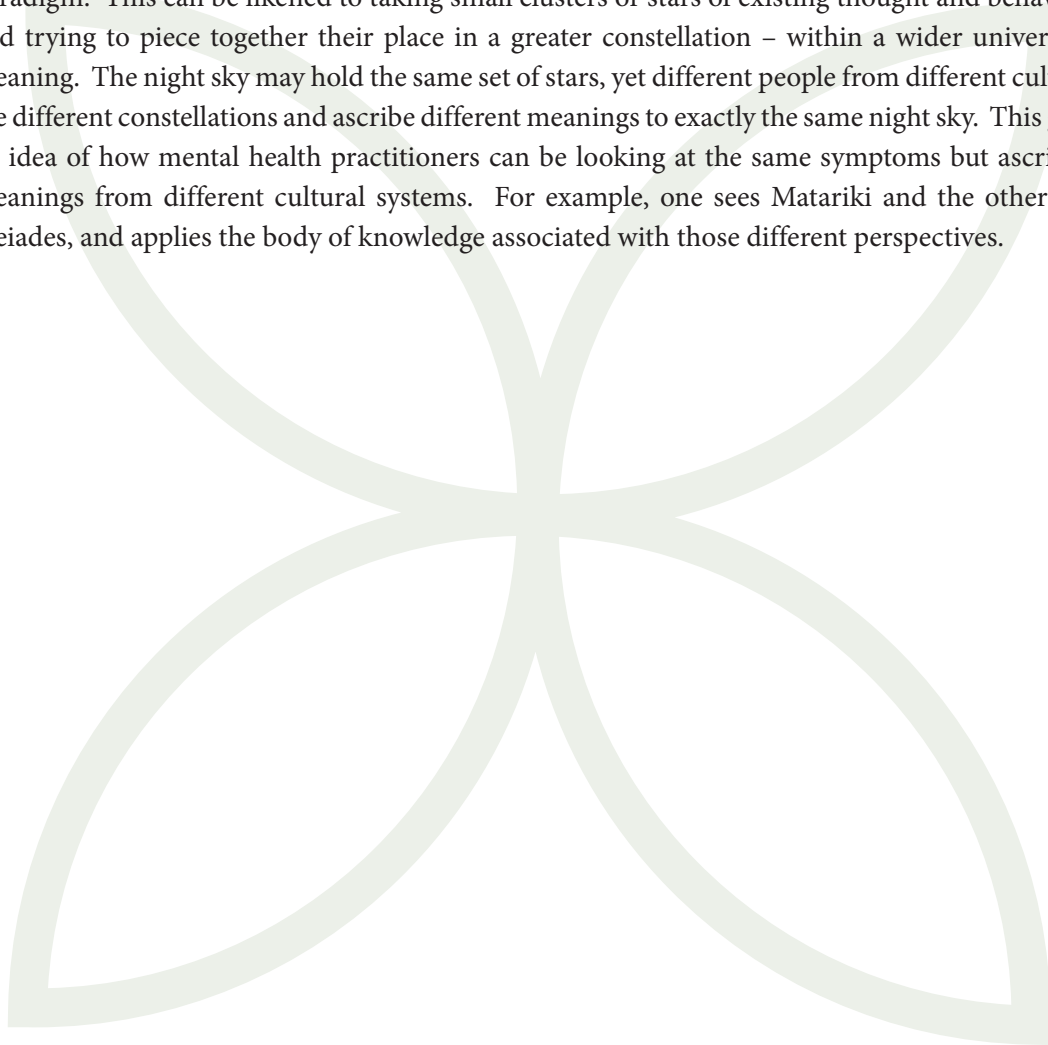
Even if we think of culture not as a grand construct that exists unto itself, but reduce it to the pragmatics of lived daily experiences, the logic of "operating principles" continue to have resonance. And when it comes to understanding differences and similarities across cultures – especially via entering the "negotiated space" – unless we have some grasp of the fundamental operating principles, we are reduced to manifestations of culture – the product – rather than the process.

The concept of paradigm is useful here. Kuhn (1962) was responsible for popularizing the term paradigm which he applied to science. A scientific paradigm is described as a set of received beliefs, shared assumptions, tenets and set of agreements that form the foundation of how problems are to be understood (Kuhn, 1962). A paradigm refers to the implicit underpinnings of a scientific methodological and theoretical endeavour which have achieved such widespread consensus within that framework that they are taken for granted. These implicit underpinnings form the foundation (and by proxy the confines) of all scientific endeavour within that paradigm.

While Kuhn did not intend his concept of paradigms to apply to other knowledge forms (aside from scientific) the concept travels easily and is also useful when thinking about indigenous knowledge. The term paradigm invokes a knowledge system that has its own internal consistency, logic patterns and is directed by fundamental guiding principles and implicit assumptions. This is metaphorically, the invisible hands that orchestrate interconnected logic, rationale, ideas, beliefs, and thoughts - possible within a cultural knowledge system.

Let's return to mental health. If we are to understand the beliefs, ideas and values that influence and inform the behaviour and experiences of Pacific peoples which are relevant to mental health – then we have to understand the Pacific indigenous knowledge system these derive from. The more we focus on culture for the purposes of cultural competency development, models of care and research, the more important it is to understand the operating logic and the foundational philosophy which filter worldviews and which direct culture 'as it is lived'.

This kind of work involves piecing together cultural beliefs, ideas, practices, and values that we can easily identify, attempt to ground and locate within a larger coherent knowledge system and paradigm. This can be likened to taking small clusters or stars of existing thought and behaviour and trying to piece together their place in a greater constellation – within a wider universe of meaning. The night sky may hold the same set of stars, yet different people from different cultures see different constellations and ascribe different meanings to exactly the same night sky. This gives an idea of how mental health practitioners can be looking at the same symptoms but ascribing meanings from different cultural systems. For example, one sees Matariki and the other sees Pleiades, and applies the body of knowledge associated with those different perspectives.



SECTION TWO: THE PROCESS

DELVING INTO OCEANIA'S LIBRARY

Obviously we cannot recreate our traditional Pacific communities in New Zealand but we can reclaim a sense of community through the identification of 'core values' that are consistent with the rebuilding and reconstruction of relationships that promote health and well-being for all our people (Taufe'ulungaki 2004, p.8).

Because of the legacy of colonization in the Pacific and its continuing impact on Pacific peoples living in Aotearoa, New Zealand a country which is heavily westernized, Pacific indigenous knowledge systems are not always easily accessed. At the recent 'Pacific Ethics of Knowledge Production Conference', it was concluded: "After a legacy of colonization (in some cases occupation), and more recently, increased globalization, trying to regain (lost) and maintain (endangered) knowledge is a crucial component of Pacific indigenous knowledge development" (Mila-Schaaf 2008, p. 65).

This approach to research is what one scholar has called: "An exploration into "Oceania's library" (the knowledge its people possess)" (Subramani 2001, p. 150). This is described by Okere, Njoku and Devisch (2005) as the process of "appropriation by cultures of their own rich genius" (p.1). It has been recognised that such exploratory work begins from ethnic-specific starting points (of cosmology, chants, language, rituals, protocols, collectively-owned stories, 'legends', songs, symbols, genealogies and festivals) which provide rich sources of analytical, theoretical, and conceptual information and tools, as well as an abundant mine of ancient Pacific core values and ethics (Mila-Schaaf, 2008). This is akin to discovering an intellectual turangawaewae or "place to stand" where one is able to scan and observe from a known marker or position.

Let us restate that while this paper refers to pan-Pacific knowledge (that is, what Pacific nations have in common), ethnic-specific approaches (that is, Tongan, Samoan, Niuean and so on) are obviously required when pursuing in-depth study of language, narratives, rituals and cosmology. Knowledge development grounded within Pacific epistemological world-views is powerful and transformative work.

This is also undeniably a creative endeavour. By its very creativity it is not only a reconstitution - but is also a re-imagination of an indigenous knowledge legacy. This means that this sort of project is open to criticism of "invention" (see Linnekin, 1992), but these kinds of criticisms miss the point. Re-vitalisation and re-imagination is not about being enslaved to (often dubious¹) "empirical" accounts of the past, they are about having the power and "space" to transcend the present and the past by purposively engaging with both.

Stuart Hall (1990) notes that discovering "hidden histories" has "played a critical role in the emergence of many of the most important social movements of all time – feminist, anti-colonial, anti-racist" (p. 224). In a Pacific context, Subramani identifies that "repressed knowledges" are vital to knowledge construction in the present (2001, p. 149). Hall (1990) writes that such projects provide: "Resources of resistance and identity, with which to confront the fragmented and

¹ See Waldram, J (2004) for a detailed critique of Western knowledge construction and empiricism concerning indigenous knowledge and culture.

pathological ways in which that experience has been reconstructed within the dominant regimes of... representation of the West” (p. 225).

We are not suggesting that reconstructing and re-imagining indigenous knowledge paradigms is a project that is ever complete or finished or resolved. Rather we are advocating the importance of space for such projects: to engage with one’s own culture, past, present and meaning-making systems on one’s own terms and to value such an endeavour.

It is also important to state explicitly that the “negotiated space” model places value on “Other” (that is, non-indigenous) knowledge systems. The willingness to engage and negotiate with “Other” knowledge is testament to the value of doing so. One of the key drivers of the idea behind the model was the desire for expansion, innovation – expanding parameters – learning and drawing from other ways of knowing.

This model does not advocate epistemological apartheid, nor do we advocate an integration or assimilation model. The negotiated space model actively works against dynamics that relegate indigenous cultural knowledge to that which is pre-contact, primitivist, essentialist – or in fact – in any sense that is “bounded” or constrained by ideas about what indigenous knowledge or culture ought to be. However, it also resists projects of assimilation which for all intents and purposes end up promoting a single ontology - against which all other traditions are merely evaluated for what they can contribute.

The negotiated space model recommends a strategy of recurring separation (the rebuilding and vitalisation of paradigms as separate coherent knowledge systems) as a necessary part of interaction. Separation is a temporary and recurring strategy that sustains ongoing engagement.

Therefore, clearing space to articulate and understand the indigenous paradigm is necessary. Reconstructing the indigenous knowledge paradigm cannot occur within territory that is occupied and dominated by science or that which demonstrates any hallmarks of oppression. But ultimately the negotiated space model may open up the field of what might be considered ‘indigenous’ or cultural – creating a more open signifier. Reframing the relationship between Pacific indigenous knowledge and other forms of knowledge is critical to such an endeavour.

REFRAMING THE RELATIONSHIPS: TEU LE VĀ

“One of the prime motivations for my own work... is to try and expose the historical roots of clashes between cultures in order to promote the possibility of dialogue... I think understanding always has to be rooted in history, it has to be rooted in ongoing relationship, and I’m enough of a student of Gramsci to know that relationships are never equal, that there’s never anything like an equal dialogue (Said, 2001 p. 271).

A socio-historical reading of the relationship between Pacific and the dominant “Western” (in this specific locale represented by British derived Anglo-European, Pakeha or Palangi) cultural knowledge systems requires us to recognise a colonial relationship. This has been characterised

by colonial culture's domination over, appropriation of, and dismissal of, indigenous knowledge (Gegeo, 2001).

Pacific indigenous knowledge has been actively deconstructed and rejected by dominant Western paradigms (theological, technological, scientific, humanist and so on) since the beginning of cross-cultural contact. This continuing legacy creates a context characterised by a problematic imbalance of power, resulting from sustained epistemological domination. In a mental health context, this ongoing epistemic domination is played out when Pacific understandings and bio-psycho-social understandings of aetiology (cause), illness, treatment and healing collide. For example, Agnew et al (2004) report: "Pacific peoples find it difficult to embrace the 'illness' model in mental health because of the assumption that mental illnesses (once diagnosed) are incurable. This is in contrast to the belief (especially in Samoan contexts), he suggests, where mental health problems are perceived as curable" (p. 12). In institutional settings, bio-psycho-social knowledge has the most powerful, "valid" and normative influence and hold on representations of mental illness.

Bringing together incongruent knowledge systems that have a problematic, inequitable history of dominance and conflict is not easy. Anderson (1998) has noted that, "the language of western medicine, with its claims to universalism and modernity, has always used, as it still does, the vocabulary of empire" (p. 529). Mila-Schaaf (2008) writes: "Western thinking tends to provide complete paradigms with little opportunity for indigenous peoples to engage critically with these ways of framing the world (p. 68).

Relationships are central to the concept of negotiated space. Understanding the way in which dynamics of power are played out is critical. Dialogue in an ideal sense, is an egalitarian meeting of equals. The model proposed here calls for engagement, interaction between cultures and cultural paradigms that are not equal. There are many cultural gatekeepers, purists, essentialists on both sides of the "paradigms" who disapprove any form of "impure" hybrid mixing – especially that which is potentiated within the negotiated space. It is also recognised that to some extent "mixing" with the dominant is considered by some a form of assimilation which demonstrates the continuing energy of colonisation.

How does one facilitate dialogue? How does one propose exchange in such circumstances? We turn here to the indigenous knowledge paradigm for solutions to this dilemma. Durie writes:

"The use of space is a necessary accompaniment of encounters, providing not only physical territory but also the psychological space to rehearse identity and to confirm the relationship between self and others" (Durie 2002:20).

Vā² is a concept shared among many Pacific cultures which refers to a "space that relates" between people, a "socio-spatial" way of conceiving of relationships (Ka'ili, 2005). "The vā is the spatial ordering concept that exists between things. It administers a code of good (ideal) behaviour, an invisible language that enables space and things to be configured in a positive manner" (Refiti

2 (Note: "Among the Japanese, it is similarly crucial not to disturb the wa, or the harmonious ebb and flow of interpersonal relations" see Markus and Kitiyama 1991, p. 228).

2000, p. 209). Autagavaia describes *vā* as, “Space, and in human relationships refers to the space (social, spiritual, psychological) between individuals or groups as something sacred (Autagavaia 2001, p. 60).

Taufe’ulungaki (2004) writes about *vā* from a Tongan perspective,

“In Tongan culture ‘relationship’ is described by the concept ‘vā’. Literally it means ‘space’. But in Tongan communities, relationships or the space between any two individuals, groups or between communities and nature are defined by the context in which the interaction occurs. Thus, when the context changes, the relationship changes also, even in the case of the same two individuals or groups and maintaining, nurturing and developing that vā, so that it remains strong and flexible, is behaving appropriately in each and every variation of the context. The well-being or health of the community is measured, therefore, by contextualised and acceptable behaviour and actions that are meaningful, worthwhile and beneficial to others (Taufe’ulungaki 2004, p. 6).

With regard to negotiated space, we are talking about a purposive spatial site of relationship between knowledge systems; a terrain of intersection where both commonalities and differences can be explored and understood. It is a mandated space that provides room for engagement and knowledge exchange and provides a reprieve from an explicitly political (and often polemic) relationship (or lack of relationship). It is a place that allows freedom of adaptation and retention, self-determined growth and self-conscious maintenance. As *vā* is a culturally located concept, it necessitates that this *vā* is guided by principles of balance, reciprocity and respect - although all is possible in the *vā*.

The negotiated space model opens up the confined quarters of the “caught-between” model of intercultural clash. It provides a larger landscape of different ways of tending, resolving, negotiating and mediating a *relationship* (that is, *teu le vā*) between cultures. This requires having the confidence to establish a relationship and the confidence to negotiate the nature of that relationship.

While the negotiated space provides opportunities for conceptual confrontation, it also values principles of equation, balance and alignment (see Tamasese, 2007). *Teu le vā* is often translated as “making beautiful the *vā*”: balance, symmetry, beauty – these are unapologetically “Pacific” and aesthetic values strongly linked to wellbeing and good outcome (see Kai’ili, 2008). It is suggested that the link between balance, aesthetic, beauty and health / wellbeing / optimal outcome remains a salient insight critical and applicable to contemporary conditions.

As a matter of preference, (and perhaps in true Pacific style), connections are made and conflict minimised out of concern for the relationship and a desire for harmony and symmetry within the engagement (see Kai’ili, 2008). Incongruence may be reconciled via a process of *talanoa* and dialogue (see Halapua 2003), or the distance between concepts may be found to be incommensurable. In these cases, at least there is an ability to know the nature of the distance between ideas or values that cannot be mediated or reconciled.

Southwick and Solomona (2007) suggest that the failure to translate western concepts of mental health and illness into Pacific concepts and vice versa results in “disconnected discourses” for both the Pacific community and Pacific mental health workers (p. 23). This paper argues that “negotiated space” provides the conceptual opportunity for establishing coherence, connections - and at the very least, ‘relationship’. This is in direct contrast to the dissonance and disengagement of “disconnected discourses”.

EXPANDING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE PARAMETERS

Constructing knowledge is an important feature of maintaining the vitality of a culture as (cultural) knowledge must constantly expand and evolve to deal with new environments and situations. All knowledge is first and foremost local knowledge (Okere et al. 2005). The difference between knowledge systems lies in the ways people move and assemble knowledge and in the ways in which people; practices and places become connected and form knowledge spaces (Turnbull, 2005).

As cultural knowledge systems come into contact with each other and interact, the cross-cultural contact creates a stimulus for exchange and growth. One of the drivers for creating and engaging in a “negotiated space” is the desire to be transformed by the “Other” on the basis of appropriating that which is useful from the ‘Other’ on one’s own terms.

The negotiated space provides room for knowledge and cultural exchange to extend the parameters of one’s own knowledge base. It is a place promising the bounty of innovation, freedom of adaptation, self-determined growth and purposive change. It is argued here that the concept of negotiated space has relevant application to some of the most difficult issues facing the Pacific mental health sector. This includes mediating some of the polarity between Western and Pacific indigenous paradigms of aetiology, illness and treatment.

One of the core ideas underpinning negotiated space is that the interaction between two cultural paradigms may be negotiated *purposively* to facilitate border crossing (knowledge exchange), manage boundary expansion (knowledge growth) and mediate appropriation (knowledge protection). Pivotal to the model is somewhat paradoxically the desire for dialogue to stimulate both understanding and critical reflection.

This heeds Edward Said’s (2001) repeated call for engagement with the ‘other’ rather than separation or separatist strategies: “The only way to do it is to get engaged, and to plunge right into the heart of the heart, as it were” (p. 222). The negotiated space model invokes the possibility of better understanding the nature of the distance between the two paradigms, identifying bridges as well as incommensurable differences.

Balance is a valuable principle for guiding outcomes within the potentiality of the negotiated space. The energy and process to achieve balance is part of the purposive role and function of the negotiated space. The negotiated space also facilitates and allows movement.

While the rebuilding and vitalisation of paradigms as separate coherent knowledge systems is

a necessary pretext to engagement and interaction, the adoption of separation strategies can potentially lead to an insular lack of critical reflection and analysis. Not being open to critique in the face of changing environments creates challenges to how one's cultural knowledge maintains relevance as the environment changes over time. Expansion, innovation, change and exchange maintain the relevance, and therefore survival, of a cultural knowledge field. This ensures that the distance between experience (of the community) and explanation (meaning assigned to the experience within the cultural framework) doesn't stretch to the point where the indigenous cultural knowledge becomes meaningless. Contextual congruency is a vital component of a living knowledge system.

Smith et al (2008) write: "Drawing conceptual links between what is already known and what becomes known, a process to validate new knowledge while retaining metaphorical synchronicity, ensures that the cultural identity of the people remains secure while society develops" (p. 7).

We argue that cultural knowledge must constantly expand and evolve to deal with new environments and situations. This means that while there is an advantage for "complete" in-depth understandings of cultural knowledge systems (often "prior", hidden or repressed knowledge) restoration is not the primary goal of the negotiated space. Rather, it provides space to enable a cyclical motion between deliberated upon maintenance and conscious *change* – the opposite of cultural stasis or stagnation.

It is the openness to critical reflection and generative critique that energises processes to explore knowledge boundaries, limitations and create new connections. Subramani (2001) writes that the re-inscribing of new Pacific epistemologies requires both deconstruction: "the critique of oppressive systems of thinking - enlightenment's assumptions about modernization - as well as Oceania's patriarchal conventions and invented traditions", as well as a process of reconstitution (essentially revitalizing traditional knowledge and ways of knowing) (p. 150).

The negotiated space then, is an intercultural space where conceptual links and breaks between distinctive and often incongruent knowledge systems are actively negotiated.

The negotiated space affords opportunities for people to negotiate:

- their relationship with existing cultural knowledge; [critical reflection]
- their relationship with new cultural knowledge; [knowledge exchange]
- their relationship with different systems of meaning and knowing; [understanding the limits of knowledge systems]
- their relationship with culturally distinctive parties; [power relationships] and
- how individuals manage cultural choices that arise from having awareness and access to more than one culture [dealing with multiplicity].

As well as being useful between "paradigms", it is proposed that the negotiated space has applicability when thinking about how Pacific individuals and families in New Zealand live intercultural realities.

SECTION THREE: PATTERNS OF POSSIBILITY

THEORISING PATTERNS OF POSSIBILITY IN THE NEGOTIATED SPACE

Theorising about the patterns of possibility engendered in the “negotiated space” has led to hypotheses about many different combinations of process and resolution of intercultural difference (and similarities). All of these possibilities refute narrowly conceived, linear models of “acculturation” which imply one-way-traffic from indigenous to Western.

In the context of Pacific mental health there is recognition that there will be no single best model. Gaining the best outcomes for Pacific mental health consumers requires having a range of services to choose from. This will vary from mainstream services enhancing the effectiveness of their cultural interface through to Pacific-centred service models that selectively use mainstream expertise. Increasing diversity will create an innovative service environment, more responsive to specific, situated and local challenges.

It appears that purposeful, formal interaction across cultures is often framed as “dialogue”. This framing of dialogue (with all it imbues, including that sense of egalitarianism among equals) tends to suit the interests of the dominant party. The dominant parties would prefer to dialogue, rather than negotiate. And in return, parties with less power would prefer to negotiate rather than dialogue. In fact, it is possible to argue that even when a less powerful party enters into engagement under the auspices of dialogue, they are constantly negotiating: negotiating meaning, identities, parameters, boundaries – as well as the outcome of such dialogue. This is a manifestation of resistance in working towards the transforming of power dynamics.

CONNECTING: SEEING ‘SELF’ IN THE ‘OTHER’

It is first recognised that the negotiated space enables commonalities and similarities to be acknowledged and affirmed. At times it would seem that there is little focus on the points of similarity across culture, and a preoccupation with difference. The negotiated space is a consciously neutral place where similarity across cultures can be discovered and acknowledged. It resists binary positioning of culture and enables room for shared and common ground. It seems unlikely there are not some shared elements - if not many shared elements - that betray the binary ways cultures are understood to be different.

There is an ingrained tradition of viewing indigenous knowledge and scientific knowledge to be the antithesis of the other – completely opposite – a binary relationship whereby each entity relies on its difference from the other as central to its own identity. This ignores an ongoing history of inter-relationships and overlaps between the different knowledge systems and undermines the common elements shared by the knowledge systems. This tradition needs to be recognised for the way it exaggerates difference and creates polarities which cannot be overcome – a mutually dependent relationship of never-ending negation.

Augsberger (1996) after a review of anthropological data about universally held traits writes that:

“We may conclude that five dimensions are universally present among humans: biologically we are a common species, socially we have common relational prerequisites, ecologically we must adjust to a common atmosphere and a limited number of climates; spiritually we invariably seek to touch the numinous, the transcendent, the meaning of our existence; and psychologically we have a intraspecies sameness of processes (p. 52).

Augsberger (1996) quotes Kluckholm and Murray (1948) stating that: “Every person is in certain respects (a) like all others, (b) like some others, (c) like no other” which in Augsberger’s words reflects the ambiguous relationships “between essential humanness, our cultural embeddedness and our individual uniqueness” (p. 49).

Interestingly, a comprehensive research project examining Pacific models of care conducted an international literature review and concluded:

“The Pacific styles of service delivery advocated by Pacific fono participants to be uniquely Pacific are indeed unique when compared to ‘White’ western styles of delivery. When compared to the service delivery styles of Māori, Hawaiian, Asian-American, British Black and Afro-Caribbean, American Hispanics and Alaskan peoples, however, this uniqueness becomes more debatable” (Agnew et al 2004:xii).

In particular, this research project concluded that a review of literature of Hispanic migrants (as a non-Polynesian group) and Pacific peoples, “showed striking similarities” (Agnew et al 2004: xii). The ways in which collectively organized and oriented societies develop different epistemological patterns and operate on the basis of opposing paradigmatic assumptions (compared to individually oriented societies) is worthy of unpacking further. This is the kind of work that identifies differences but also commonalities, potentially in unexpected places. The negotiated space affords considered and well informed arrangements that may reflect a meld of individuated and collectively oriented perspectives.

Establishing bonds, entering into relationship, to make connections is possible within the negotiated space – even across what are deemed incongruent cultural systems whereby a binary way of thinking about difference has led to emphasis on difference and conflicts.

Seeking connections and making (genealogical or social) linkages is described by Ka’ili (2008) as an important Tongan concept, particularly at the beginning of relationships. Effectively this is a rapport building technique that is a crucial step in *tauhi vā* (*tauhi* emphasising “tending, caring, taking care of the space) between people. Mafile’o (2004) writes about the importance of “Fakafekau’aki” translated by Churchward as a verb that means ‘to cause to be related to each other, to bring into relationship with each other, to correlate’ (Churchward, 1959 cited Mafile’o 2004 p. 246). Mafile’o writes: “This connection may be based on genealogy, church affiliation, which schools one attended, or shared knowledge of people or places. Fakafekau’aki then becomes a foundation for change” (2000, p. 246). Notably, Mafile’o is writing about the therapeutic relationship, within the context of social work.

Even when drawing upon the indigenous reference in order to deliberately transform the ways things may be done within mainstream 'mental health' there will be points of easy agreement, shared positions and simple connection. We call this the ability to "see self in the other".

Case Study One: "Connecting"

One example of straight-forward synchronicity can be demonstrated in the area of traumatic brain injury (TBI) rehabilitation (Faleafa 2004). Research on traumatic brain injury and Pacific peoples concluded that: "There appears to be universalities in TBI experience and global rehabilitation outcomes that transcends individual cultures" (Faleafa 2004, 117). While this study also acknowledged at the "micro-level there are cultural variations that have valuable implications when planning culturally appropriate rehabilitation services", the "universality" underpinning brain injury rehabilitation remained salient (Faleafa 2004, 1).

Another example in mental health is evidenced in the Seitapu Framework – at the heart of the model is a "competent worker" (Pulotu-Endemann 2007 et al). A competent worker is desired by all parties. What constitutes a competent worker may vary widely depending on the service user, the service orientation, the service catchment - however, the desire for a competent worker remains a constant – and dare we say it – "universal" desire.

In a report reviewing Pacific consumer experiences of recovery, Malo (2000) identified that, "While it was important that consumers could relate to all staff, almost all of the interviewees singled out one person working within the services, who was able to reach out to them... The interviewees felt that generally, the people who could show their humanitarian side were the people they appreciated the most. Their understanding and patience helped the interviewees to make vast improvements that aided their recovery (p. 12).

While this same report concluded that the services which were created to specifically target Pacific peoples and that were run by Pacific personnel "appeared to be of the most benefit" the humanity shown by staff regardless of ethnic origin remained a salient and important healing factor (Malo 2000, p. 13). A competent worker who is humane, is also a compassionate worker who embodies the spirit of the va.

To seek connections and establish common ground within the negotiated space enhances mutuality, arguably an important value in ethnically, politically and diverse contexts. Mutuality underpins a durability of shared interactions, a shared future, interdependency in development - it does not mean uniformity or homogeneity (Axelrod, 1984). Increasing mutuality involves creating and inviting a wider world of associations, setting the ground for co-operation, valuing reciprocity, altruism and building a richer community of collaboration (Axelrod, 1984).

It is deliberate that we place connecting as the first possibility within the 'negotiated space' model. Negotiated space leads both metaphorically and logically to the establishment of shared ground. As Durie concludes, space is: "necessary in order to explore relationships and establish boundaries" (2002, p. 19-20). In terms of the act of "negotiating" it may also be in ones best interests to form easy alliances where these are possible. Establishing common ground and points of agreement may

make it easier to hold on to their ground later (when it counts). After connection and conciliation, one may be better positioned to have the more difficult conversations about what is not similar, transferable or negotiable.

RESISTING: NEGOTIATING SPACE FOR DIALOGIC CHOICES

Connection across cultures and respect between them is one aspect of the negotiated space model. The potentially more challenging aspect of the model involves working with incongruity. If connection provides the foundation for engagement, then respect and integrity provides the basis for dialogue and informed choice. We refer to the term “dialogic choice” as the process of two cultural knowledge systems that come into contact with one another but respect the integrity of each by remaining intact without blending or fusing.

This extends beyond mere awareness or connection to deliberately weighing, sifting and then choosing ideas (based on merit and applicability) from one coherent knowledge paradigm over the other. This is not an integrative process, whereby there is a merger of some sort into a new position. Here different positions do not intertwine but allow the person, for each specific situation, to choose which knowledge base is appropriate to construct the intervention pathway. This kind of logic affirms a non-deconstructive way of making choices. The following quote from Augsberger (1992) articulates this:

There are cultures, the Javanese and Japanese, to name obvious examples, that do not value dialectic argumentative patterns. Where harmony and cooperation are basic values, verbal contradiction is not the first automatic choice in conflict. A more accepted process is to affirm the strengths of each other's position, let them stand without attack, and then join in exploring other options. Both parties search for superior options. In an argumentative idiom, the time spent dismantling or demolishing old positions is nonproductive effort; in an exploratory idiom the energy is turned toward constructive investigation. If a superior alternative is not found, the previous positions remain undestroyed. Frequently the old positions are essentially good – they cannot be simply discredited, but they are no longer necessary. When a creative alternative emerges, a choice can be made on the basis of values rather than on destruction of the past before reconstructing a future (Augsberger 1992, p. 59).

To understand the dialogic relationship is to visualise the distance (which notably also translates to an interpretation of *vā*) that exists between the knowledge systems. This provides a kind of map which references where the “other” sits in relation to your own system of meaning. It provides a glimpse of where they exist beyond the boundaries of your own framework of meaning. This essentially involves mapping distance without mediating it. It puts one in a place of understanding the nature of the difference or distance (or the *vā*) between two positions.

This resists acts of familiarizing and appropriating “the other into the controlled world of the self, to own the other” (Gurevitch 1989, p. 183). This recognises the freedom of the ‘other’ to exist as ‘other’ without being constrained (or contained) by expectations (or obligations) to be *same* to enter or maintain a relationship.

The tension between individually oriented and collectively oriented ethics and philosophies has repeatedly been identified as one of the critical points of difference between Pacific and Western perspectives (see Mila-Schaaf 2007, 2008). Spivak (2008) makes a distinction between cultures of 'rights' and cultures of 'responsibility' a "heuristic generalisation" but one which sees the "subordinate" cultures of responsibility basing: "the agency of responsibility in that outside of the self that is also in the self, half archived and therefore not directly inaccessible" (p. 36,27).

Triandis (1995) identifies that collectivism refers to a cultural pattern that is common in Asia / Africa / the Middle East / Central and South America and the Pacific. Effectively, more than two thirds of people live in cultures with high collectivistic value tendencies. In contrast, individualism is a cultural pattern that is found in most northern and western regions of Europe and in North America (Triandis, 1995).

Social harmony is an influential driver in collectively oriented societies, where people are viewed to be inter-related, interconnected and interdependent and there is a desire for equation and equilibrium within such systems (see Tamasese Efi 2007, Markus and Kitiyama, 1991, Ausberger, 1992). Markus and Kitiyama (1991) write that "the notion of an interdependent self is linked with a monistic philosophical tradition in which the person is thought to be of the same substance as the rest of nature" and "features the person not as separate from the social context but as more connected and less differentiated from others"³ (p. 227).

A preference for "indirect verbal interaction" has been noted among collectively oriented cultures, in contrast with the preference among individualistic cultures for "straight talk" (Ting Toomey 1988). Ausberger (1992) describes the difference between confrontational and direct-address individualistic cultures employ in situations of conflict, compared to collectively oriented societies whereby he describes: "A rich and elaborate code system of metaphor and simile may communicate arguments with complex and colourful rhetorical content that serves profound social purposes" (pg 31).

Anthropologist Adrienne Kaeppler (1993) writes of the Tongan term heliaki: "The important aesthetic concept here is heliaki, indirectness (to say one thing but mean another), which requires special knowledge and skill to compose and understand. The composer manifests heliaki in metaphor and layered meaning, skirting a subject and approaching it repeatedly from different angles. Hidden meanings must be unraveled layer by layer until they can be understood, for one cannot apprehend the poetry by simply examining it. *The most important Tongan arts are verbal, incorporating social and political philosophy and encapsulating the ideal of indirectness*" (Kaeppler 1993, p. 497) (emphasis added).

After examining and tracing some of the epistemic roots we now provide the example of a Pacific mental health encounter.

³ See Tamasese Efi (2007) for interesting synchronicities with Markus and Kitiyama's interdependent self and the way that the Samoan indigenous reference is described by Tamasese Efi.

Case Study Two: Dialogic Approaches

Makasiale (2007) writes about the experience of counselling a young Pacific woman. She explains the tension of meeting her for the first time and the challenges of establishing rapport, as well as getting to the heart of the problems facing the young woman. Despite her western training, Makasiale chooses not to speak “directly” about the issues facing her client but instead opts for *heliaki* (metaphor).

Makasiale describes speaking softly to her client saying that she can see the “rain” pouring within her. She talks poetically about internal rain and the young woman responds with tears, grief and emotion, pouring out the truth of her story.

This small example of exchange demonstrates how Makasiale’s choice of indirect and metaphorical language brings an ambiguity into play, which gives her client the option of whether and/or how she chooses to interpret the metaphor. She can choose to turn away from that which is implied - or she can connect to other meanings. It gives her power and saves ‘face’ in an awkward situation whereby the young woman is to some extent lacking power and is forced into an intimate situation of disclosure with someone new.

For people, counsellor and client, who are not well known to each other – this use of metaphor is a strategy that avoids a possibly humiliating route to shut-down. Makasiale draws on her own cultural knowledge and wisdom, avoiding direct language and therefore skilfully avoiding loss of face, ‘no room to move’ and a violation of the *vā* between people who are not known to each other. Her choice of *heliaki* leaves the unspeakable unsaid, but opens up the possibilities of hearing and speaking ‘truth’.

SECTION FOUR: THE CREATIVE PROMISE OF THE DIALECTIC

DIALECTICAL ENERGY: THE DYNAMIC INTERPLAY OF OPPOSING VIEWPOINTS

The title above was taken from one of the few research projects on Pacific mental health examining the Samoan perspective of self and how this is connected to wellbeing (Bush et al., 2005). When comparing Samoan and Palagi conceptualisations of self the research team discovered considerable differences: collective versus individual, spiritual versus secular, holistic versus reductionist, relativist versus universalist (Bush et al., 2005). The team identified challenges associated with these differences but chose to consider “these distinctions as *dialectics* as this term captures the potential for change that can occur through the dynamic interplay of opposing viewpoints” (Bush et al., 2005, p. 623).

This draws on Hegel’s famous theory of dialectics, which has three stages: thesis, antithesis and synthesis. In brief, this suggests that the mind generally moves one position (thesis) to the other side of this argument (antithesis) finally discovering a deeper unity from which the two sides are derived (synthesis). Finding unity in contradiction and incongruence with a preference for balance, affinity and equation is an alignment with the way Tamasese Efi describes the Samoan indigenous reference (see Tamasese Efi, 2008).

Dialectical interplay and resolution is a creative response to situations where one is faced with incongruent values and ideas sourced to different cultural knowledge systems. It is fair to state that we see some of the most exciting possibilities of the negotiated space will be derived from dialectical fusions within the negotiated space. These are synergistic unions, whereby the resulting product is greater than the sum of its parts. It is important to be clear that we do not view these dialectical outcomes as teleological (i.e., superior to what preceded it) but as context dependent outcomes that are localised, situated, and specific to the dynamics of that particular time and space. However, it is also important to realise that these synergistic or hybrid outcomes are not the only outcomes that are desirable. The negotiated space aims to do more than merely facilitate mixed unions. It is important that both dialogic outcomes as well as dialectic, syncretic outcomes are begat of the negotiated space. As Bell (2004) points out,

“The fact that traditional and hybrid forms of indigenous culture co-exist “marks both the survival and dynamism of indigenous cultures as well as indigenous refusal to be excluded from the projects of modernity and cultural critique” (Thomas, 1996:12). The other side of this argument, is that if only one of these two alternatives existed it would indicate the success of colonialism, either in relegating the indigenous to primitivism or in assimilating them (cited Bell, 2004, p. 87).

For us, the negotiated space must be a place that not only transforms indigenous knowledge but also upholds it. We recognise that the thrust to transform indigenous knowledge will be resisted strongly by holders and keepers of traditional knowledge, but we are also clear that living in an Aotearoa / New Zealand context in constant contact with mainstream New Zealand, and living in an increasingly globalised world, changes occurs everyday. The negotiated space provides an opportunity to think purposively and decisively about how we, as Pacific peoples, make conscious

decisions about vitalising our knowledge base so that it has continuing energy – not as a memory of a way of thinking or a museum or library relic in anthropological journals of the Polynesian society – but in everyday life.

The conflict between values derived from different knowledge traditions is illuminated in a number of postgraduate research projects conducted by Pacific scholars. A vivid example of this is provided in Samu’s (2003) research, where she examined the social correlates of suicide for New Zealand-born Samoan Youth. Samu writes: “Many NZ-born Samoan youth are forced to grow up in an environment that produces cultural and identity conflicts. They are exposed to sometimes conflicting values and practices of both the Samoan and mainstream cultures” (Samu 2003, p. 74). On reading Samu’s work, five points in particular where different values can be in conflict are identified:

TABLE 1: SAMU’S DIFFERING SAMOAN AND MAINSTREAM NZ VALUE ORIENTATIONS AS A SOURCE OF CONFLICT

SAMOAN VALUES	MAINSTREAM NEW ZEALAND VALUES
Family cohesion	Personal freedom
Subjugation of needs of individual	Autonomy
Reciprocity	Individuality
Gerontocratic	Meritocratic
Religious authority	Secular authority

Samu concludes that the tension between two sets of value orientations results in significant tension for the young NZ-born Samoan generation who must seek to reconcile these or suffer stress (2003). Samu suggests that this situation of uncertainty is similar to Durkheim’s concept of anomie which can result in suicidal ideation (2003, 112). Durkheim’s concept of anomie, which can be described as the fall out from “normlessness” is also identified by Tiatia (2003) as a risk factor in relation to Pacific youth suicide.

Certainly normlessness can be associated with poor mental health outcomes for young Pacific peoples; particularly when it is experienced alongside powerlessness, meaninglessness, confusion and social estrangement; other Pacific youth suicide risk factors identified by Tiatia (2003). However, it is also possible to mediate conflict and to negotiate between incongruent cultural knowledge paradigms. The negotiated space potentially offers a neutral place of intersection between competing epistemologies.

Research by Tau’akipulu (2000) examined Tongans living in New Zealand, recognising that they are, “exposed to two different value systems in New Zealand” and, “found that conflict between young members of the community and the older members was endemic” (Tau’akipulu, 2000, p. i). However, her research showed that some participants were able to mediate this conflict whereas others found such conflict too challenging to resolve. Two quotations are provided here to illustrate different sorts of experiences in managing the tension between two cultural and value systems. The first quote relays a negative experience and potentially describes an “anomic” state:

“A lot of the time I found my identity as a Tongan fragmented. A lot of the times I have found the switch from the Tongan world into the Palangi world a schizophrenic experience. I am constantly feeling awkward in both worlds because I don’t fit in both. It makes me feel like I really don’t want to belong to any of these worlds” (cited Tau’akipulu 2000, p. 40).

Tau’akipulu describes another participant’s quite different experience. She writes: “Siale has studied both sides and his conclusion is to be selective about everything, it is possible to get the best of both worlds. There is no need to be roped in psychologically” (2000, p. 52).

Tau’akipulu concludes that the tensions between individual and community and between the two value systems: “These tensions are at the heart of what it is to be Tongan in New Zealand” (Tau’akipulu, 2000, p. 94). Tau’akipulu’s research project shows that there are different ways that people may respond to situations of cultural conflict. It also indicates that cultural conflict may be mediated and negotiated effectively - or potentially one may become stuck and “caught between cultures”.

Academics have associated the historic exposure to more than one culture via migration or colonisation with poor outcomes. There is a large literature about the “marginal man” – which is summed up in the following quote by Park (1928) cited in Furedi (2001).

“One of the consequences of migration is to create a situation in which the same individual – who may or may not be a mixed blood – finds himself striving to live in two diverse cultural groups. The effect is to produce an unstable character – a personality type with characteristic forms of behaviour. This is the ‘marginal man’. It is in the mind of the marginal man that the conflicting cultures meet and fuse” (Park 1928 cited in Furedi, 2001, p. 34).

Furedi (2001) writes about the assumptions underpinning “marginal man” scholarships identifying that supposedly “Neither rooted in their own society or accepted by the West, the maladjusted individual lived between two worlds” and this “maladjustment also underlined a mental state that was problematic” (2001, p. 27).

Waldram (2004) wrote a book examining the way aboriginal/indigenous (from Canada and North America) mental health was approached in Western scholarship and was highly critical of the assumptions underpinning many of the theories. In particular, Waldram (2004) critiques the “caught-between-two-worlds” paradigm identifying that, “Acculturation theory with its emphasis on trait diffusion and replacement” is the “driving force” behind the paradigm (p. 117). Some of the problematic assumptions of the “caught-between-two-worlds” paradigm were identified by Waldram (2004) as:

- Cultural change being constructed primarily as loss, and rarely as gain;
- Cultural change being considered something that occurs only after cross-cultural contact, suggesting pre-European indigenous cultures were un-evolving and unchanging;
- Present-day descriptions of indigenous cultures assumed to be congruent with past (pre-

contact) descriptors;

- Pre-contact descriptors often informed by Western ideas of primitivism and the noble savage;
- Cultural change from a pre-contact past often constructed as inauthentic; and
- Little examination of the contributing behaviour of dominant or host societies (i.e., exclusion, discrimination, structural constraints, economic, political and social inequalities, limited opportunities etc)

Steinberg (2000) also writes that preoccupations with maladaptive indigenous peoples unable to acculturate: “Shifts the onus of moral and political responsibility for social change away from powerful institutions that could make a difference onto the individuals who are rendered powerless by these very institutions” (p. 68). Steinberg (2000) concludes that these are essentially “victim-blaming” ideologies (p. 68).

Certainly the caught-between-two-worlds paradigm and the “marginal man” scholarship allow very little agency to those caught or marginalised. In addition, they assume that people have a limited capacity for culture; that more than one cultural reference point cannot lead to advantage, but rather confusion and normlessness.

The “Negotiated Space” model aims to provide alternative ways of thinking about simplistic “quid pro quo” (“this for that”) understandings provided by the formulas that underpin understandings about acculturation. Acculturation is routinely conceived of as “one way traffic” transition from indigenous understandings, values, ideas, beliefs, knowledge to that of dominant Western. This often invokes a metaphoric magnetic pull towards the more powerful and dominant discourses on the basis of (technological, cultural, philosophical) superiority.

Instead of the narrow margins afforded by a vision of cultural clash or a thin tight-rope between cultural fields that are positioned as having no overlap or relationship, the negotiated space is a *vā* of re-encounter and relationship. The negotiated space opens up the possibilities and gifts that *vā* brings: “Not space that separates, but space that relates” (Wendt cited Refiti 2002:185).

This could be understood as an *intercultural* space: the in-between terrain where distinctive worldviews and knowledge bases enter into some form of engagement or relationship to potentially be expanded and innovated. This has parallels with Bhabha’s (1995) third space, which he describes in the following way: “It is the ‘inter’ – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the inbetween... It is in this space that we will find those words with which we can speak of Ourselves and Others. And by exploring this hybridity, this ‘Third Space’, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves (Bhabha, 1995, p. 209).

Bhabha’s (1995) third space, “gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognisable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation” (1995, p. 211). While there are many points of similarity with Bhabha’s third space, the difference with negotiated space is that is ‘purposive’ and deliberately reconstructive (rather than deconstructive with a randomly aligned and uncontrolled hybridity as the only product) (see Bhabha 1995).

With the negotiated space model, there is a strong emphasis on the relationship between the two paradigms – establishing *vā* – which is rooted in ongoing relationship, mutuality and respecting epistemological connections and difference. In addition, rather than a random hybrid mix, we are alluding to deliberate re-patterning, re-ordering and re-aligning in ways that (re)-create balance and beauty.

The negotiated space cannot be an oppressive space – it must value a level of neutrality and deliberately be de-politicised. There is a desire to uphold the integrity of the cultural knowledge bases (especially those previously marginalised) but this is balanced with openness to innovation.

It is recognized that the negotiated space model requires a high degree of agency. Macpherson (2004) warns that human agency, “occurs within a set of economic and social constraints that limit the range within which people are able to negotiate and construct identity” (p 455). Referring to Pacific migrants, he goes on to write, “The range of options available is limited not only by the Tongan and Samoan “cultures,” but also by social, economic, and demographic realities of life as a relatively insignificant ethnic minority” (Macpherson 2004, p. 455).

The constraints on negotiation and the ways in which options may or may not be limited are very real concerns to be considered. This is particularly the case when the economic situation of Pacific peoples in New Zealand is relatively deprived. The most recent Living Standards survey identified that 57% of Pacific peoples were living in some form of hardship, with only 1% enjoying “very good living standards”(Ministry of Social Development, 2006). The following quote by Steinberg (2000) is worth reflecting upon and can be added to the matrix of complex challenges facing Pacific peoples in New Zealand.

“We can readily observe the poor living by values and codes of behaviour that are divergent from those of middleclass society... what looks like a shared culture is, on closer examination, similar responses of discrete actors to the exigencies and circumstances that define and limit their choices. This is not culture pursued for its own sake, or prized for its intrinsic worth. Properly defined, it is not a culture at all, but only the defensive and reactive responses to structures of inequality as they impinge on the personal sphere of life. If it is a culture at all, it is the culture of last resort” (Steinberg, 2000 p. 66)

The agency and structure debate is one which Pacific peoples must grapple with and particularly in relation to mental health. While like Waldram (2004), we are somewhat suspicious of the assumptions that underpin the “marginal man” literature, we do not deny that conflict between cultural paradigms provides very real and difficult challenges. We also recognize that while some people may have the agency to negotiate effectively, others are more likely to experience the “cultural schizophrenia” described by Tau’akipulu’s research participant. Hudson et al (2008) write: “Negotiation is a feature of post-colonial society, where cultures are constantly negotiating/ resisting their identities and position in broader societies” (pg 2).

Being faced with incongruent value and meaning-attributing systems is both potentially a crisis and an opportunity. It is an opportunity to negotiate, leverage, mediate and come away with a

satisfactory compromise or innovative fusion – or not. What must happen, we would argue, is that there is a space for “reckoning” and putting language to the intersection between dominant western culture and indigenous “other” ways of knowing, being, seeing the world – in this case, Pacific. Again we stress the agency and freedom of Pacific peoples to negotiate and construct identities and embark on indigenous theorizing in a range of un-prescribed ways that depend on context.

There is a growing body of work that articulates Pacific cultural values and beliefs which represents “institutional agency” – that is, the ability to be resourced by institutions to do work that is located within the ‘negotiated space’. Organizations have put resources into the kinds of conceptual work we are describing. Such spaces have been negotiated politically and are often unprecedented, new spaces afforded by the (often expensive and economically quantifiable) failure of wholly ‘mainstream’ approaches for Pacific peoples.

It has been identified that some of the texts aiming to articulate Pacific values and beliefs are often silent on the ways that these values are in tension with “mainstream” values and beliefs. Such guides can take on the form of “check-lists” and *menus* of ‘Pacific values’ which provide only one dimension (sometimes nostalgic) to the complex and multi-faceted contemporary realities faced by Pacific peoples living in New Zealand. While we affirm the immense value of applying indigenous cultural values to contemporary settings, these cannot be “idealistic” lists of traits that do not engage in any meaningful way with the worldviews that are dominant or prevalent in our every day lives.

Engaging with the Western knowledge paradigm in all its forms can be a difficult task, as Spivak (1996) says (in frustration in an interview) “I don’t think we have anything to gain by trivialising the opposition either way. It seems to me that if you want to take on an extremely massive enemy you ought to take on the enemy in its dominant, dynamic and spectacular form rather than reflect your own bogus ignorance by calling it essentialised, especially in academic writing” (p. 303-304).

When it comes to developing Pacific models of care, especially for the younger Pacific demographic, to not engage meaningfully with contemporary youth culture as it plays out in New Zealand - on any level - seems short-sighted and myopic. The negotiated space model enables the opportunity to engage with other influences in a purposive way. As Smith et al writes: “The resilience of a cultural knowledge system is dependent on its ability to respond to transformation and change, to adapt and explain new phenomena in a way that retains a sense of resonance and coherence with the existing philosophies and psychologies of their own knowledge system” (Smith et al., 2008, p. 1).

Case Study Three: Negotiating Space for the place of spirit in the clinical context

To return to the ‘dialectic energy’ pattern of possibility in the negotiated space and ways of resolving incongruency, we proffer an example of this in therapeutic practice. The first is the example of mental health practitioner, whether they are a counsellor, social worker, case worker, nurse, matua, or community support worker being open to incorporating the spiritual domain into their practice. This may take a traditional religious form, such as opting to pray with their client. It may

be deference to indigenous pre-Christian spiritual understandings involving ancestors, spirits, curses or other-worldly explanations. In a research project focusing on Pacific models of care, it was found: “there continues amongst Pacific peoples a belief in “the spirituality of ‘old’” (i.e. in the cosmological beliefs of their Pacific ancestors)” as well as a strong belief in Christianity (Agnew et al., 2004, p. 14).

The ‘negotiated space’ encourages the examination of competing epistemologies. Mental health, from a Western bio-psycho-social model – alongside the medical model and that of science – has to a large extent separated all things metaphysical and religious from that which is “empirical” and evidence-based; Augsberger (1996) describes this as the Western “two-tiered view” of reality (p. 34). Drawing on Hiebert (1982), he suggests that such a two-tiered view completely separates the spiritual dimension (the sacred, miracles and exceptions to the natural order and faith in God) from science which is focused on secular understandings of the natural order (experienced via sight, senses, experimentation and proof) (Augsberger, 1996, p. 34). Augsberger (1996) identifies that there is an excluded middle in this two-tiered approach whereas with other worldviews, there is room for a three-tiered view of reality.

The three tiered view he characterizes as having “high religion”, cosmic beings (God, gods, demons) and cosmic forces (kismet, karma and fate), as well as “natural and social science” (that which is directly observable, sensory phenomena, knowledge based on experimentation and replication, natural forces and human interaction with these natural forces/objects). However, in addition to these two tiers is a middle realm, that of: local gods, local goddesses, ancestors, spirits, curses, blessings, ghosts, psychic phenomenon, astrological forces, evil eye, magical rites, charms, amulets, firewalking, psychic surgery etc (p. 34). Augsberger (1996) concludes that the “Western two levels exclude the traditional middle zone that is central in the epistemological model for the majority of the earth’s peoples” (p. 33).

In September, 2002, the paramount chief (now Samoan Head of State) Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Efi, wrote:

“If you want sight and insight into my psyche you will have to speak to the gods. You have to eavesdrop on the dialogue between my ancestors and my soul.

I was asked; “To do this one must what?”

Every Samoan who lives his culture speaks to the dead. The dialogue between the living and the dead is the essence of a Samoan spiritual being. It is this dialogue which provides substance and direction to his life so that in former days one of the principal objectives in hostilities is to disrupt this dialogue by excavating the dead from wherever they are buried or hidden, and burn them. One of the regular features of the constant warfare in the 19th Century was the excesses perpetrated on the dead which in many cases exceeded the excesses on the living. In order to understand this dialogue you would need to analyse the mythological, the spiritual, the cultural and historical reference point” (2002, p. 6).

The mental health system in New Zealand operates in alignment with an epistemology that does

not validate the “middle zone” of interaction, connection and manifestations of the dead with the living, and the spirit world in among the sensory world. And the mental health system in New Zealand for the most part, is informed by a paradigm dominated by secular, scientific and empirical understandings of human behaviour. Religion, for the most part, does not have a place in the clinical mental health context.

Unravelling the relationship between science and religion is outside the scope of this occasional paper. However, what we wish to draw attention to is the way the dominant paradigm from which mental health understandings are sourced is epistemologically distinctive from the indigenous Pacific paradigm.

This has particular relevance to mental health because, as referred to by Tamasese Efi in the quote above, the spiritual dimension is invoked in the aetiology (cause) and treatment of mental disorders. This is not necessarily easily reconciled in an institutional New Zealand mental health setting. However, anecdotally we are aware that many Pacific counsellors, who are Western-trained, pray with their clients as a pathway to healing (Cook, Ned, 2008, personal communication).

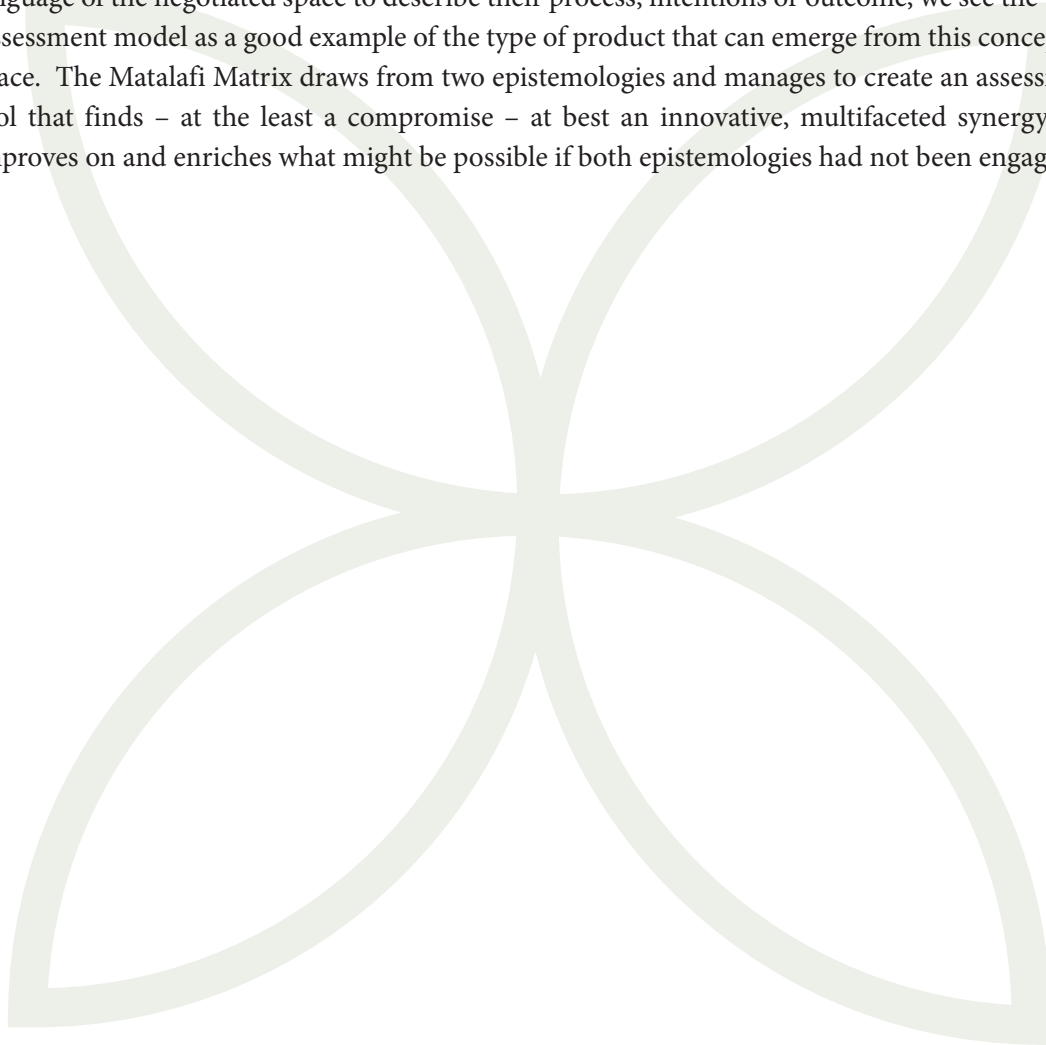
At face value the use of prayer could be viewed as a mechanism that contributes to providing a cultural safe environment and a way of improving compliance with mainstream mental health services. However as Pacific knowledge is holistic, humanistic, cosmological, spiritual, cyclic and collectively-oriented (see Mila-Schaaf, 2008), the Pacific epistemology in its holism actively embraces the spiritual and the ethereal in its meaning-making processes. A deeper analysis of the role of the spiritual within mental health practice requires a ‘negotiated space’ within which this discussion can occur.

Case Study Four: The Matalafi Matrix

An example of how Pacific mental health practitioners have managed or negotiated the introduction of the spiritual dimension into their work is evidenced in the ‘Matalafi Matrix’ which is the ‘Tupu Assessment’ (2007) used by the Pacific Mental Health and Alcohol and Drug Service at the Waitemata District Health Board. The Assessment (Tupu, 2007) begins by recording the clients identified ethnicity, first language and whether an interpreter is required. There is a “why now?” section to be filled in by the Tupu clinician which focuses on presenting issues, understandings of the problems faced by the client and their expectation of help. This is followed by the ‘Matalafi Matrix’ which begins by asking questions about *Aiga* (family relationships, peers, roles, responsibilities and affiliations). The second area of focus is *Tino Atoa* physical (appearance, health, disorders, and problems). *Lagona*, is emotional and psychological wellbeing relating to mood, feelings, depression, anxiety, guilt. *Aganu’u* is cultural requiring examination of the: “Cultural or ethnic meanings and considerations, how they explain what is happening (attributions), perceived causes of abnormal thoughts, beliefs or experiences (perceptual abnormalities)” (Tupu, 2007, p. 2). Notably the Aganu’u section seeks “epistemological” information about the worldview and meaning making and attributing belief and knowledge system employed by the client. This is followed by *Fa’aleagaga* (spirituality) which is approached in the following way: “What does spirituality mean to the individual and how does it impact on wellbeing?” (Tupu, 2007, p. 2).

The Matalafi Matrix section is followed by a focus on previous mental health service use, legal issues, presentation during the first assessment and a risk summary. The assessment sheet concludes with an initial summary and initial plan and prompts about where the client is positioned on “wheel”, motivation/insight, needs assessment and thus illustrates the way the Assessment draws on standard addictions knowledge and tools. The requirement for the client’s name, date of birth and NHI number alongside the District Health Board logo, shows the way in which the Matalafi matrix exists in an institutional setting.

Although the authors and developers of the Matalafi Matrix (Tupu 2007) would not have had the language of the negotiated space to describe their process, intentions or outcome, we see the Tupu Assessment model as a good example of the type of product that can emerge from this conceptual space. The Matalafi Matrix draws from two epistemologies and manages to create an assessment tool that finds – at the least a compromise – at best an innovative, multifaceted synergy that improves on and enriches what might be possible if both epistemologies had not been engaged.



SECTION FIVE: THE ART OF INTERNAL SPACE: NEGOTIATING INTER-CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

The final area we wish to cover is the idea of internal negotiation. That is, how individuals manage cultural choices that arise from having awareness and access to more than one culture or dealing with multiplicity.

The cross-cultural psychology literature recognises that there is a drift toward culturally pluralistic societies. It is premised that, “Individuals can acquire more than one such cultural meaning system, even if these systems contain conflicting theories (Hong et al, 2000, p. 701).

How does an individual incorporate more than one culture - and when is it that specific cultural knowledge systems become activated to guide meaning construction? We have already touched on the “marginal man” literature that views more than one culture as destabilizing and largely negative. What happens when individuals have more than one worldview at their disposal? The quote below belongs to a research participant of Jayne Ifewunigwe’s (2001), who described in the above passage the experience of being of mixed black and white heritage.

“Being aware that one’s systems of ideas isn’t absolute. It isn’t the absolute, the one above all others. There are many and they are all sort of parallel and contradictory, you just to have find that middle space” (cited Ifekwunigwe p. 54).

In an inherently personal way, this touches on the ‘negotiated space’ concept. It mirrors thoughts articulated in an article by Berking et al (2007) on “Being Afakasi” where they describe the experience of: “Having multiple lenses through which to view the world and which influence decision making” (p. 61).

This experience is not limited to people from more than one ethnic background but potentially to those who operate in more than one cultural world. Back in 1903, W.E.B. Du Bois wrote of “double consciousness”:

“One ever feels his twoness as an American and as a Negro: two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder” (Du Bois cited Zuckerman, 2004, p. 24).

Du Bois describes double consciousness as the sparring, warring, competing of two inner consciousnesses: one Negro, one American. Du Bois identified that a “double-life” was the “life every American Negro must live”, as a Negro and as an American (Du Bois cited Zuckerman, 2004, p.168). Du Bois saw the ultimate challenge:

“To merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He would not Afracalize America, for America has too much to teach the world. He would not bleach his Negro soul, for he knows the Negro blood has a message for the world” (Du Bois cited Zuckerman, 2004, p. 24).

During the development of the negotiated space model, we have shifted to theorise about individuals who have two or more cultural paradigms to draw from. This lends itself to a focus on internal negotiation.

Markus and Kitiyama (1991) write that people from different cultures have strikingly different construals of the self, within collectively oriented societies “the self is viewed as interdependent with the surrounding context, and it is the “other” or the “self-in-relation-to-other” that is focal in individual experience” (p. 225). The kind of impact that an interdependent – as opposed to independent - construal of self has for Pacific peoples relevant to contemporary mental health settings in New Zealand, we would argue, remains under-theorised. The negotiated space model effectively provides room for people to hold both individual as well as interdependent construals of self and to be able to choose or negotiate between these different perspectives.

There is a (largely American) cross-cultural psychology literature which focuses on potential cognitive benefits associated with the “exposure to more than one culture”, suggesting this “may increase individuals’ ability to detect, process, and organize everyday cultural meaning, highlighting the potential benefits of multiculturalism” (Martinez et al., 2006, p. 386). Martinez et al (2006) write: “When a person participates simultaneously in two different cultures, and these cultural worlds are to a large extent disjunctive, that person may be confronted with uncertainties, contradictions, ambiguities, and contrasting interests. The present work provides preliminary evidence for the idea that bicultural meetings of such cultural contact zones leads to the development of more complex and integrative cultural representations” (p. 402-403).

Bicultural individuals are seen to possess two or more cultural interpretive frames or schemas, networks of discrete specific constructs (Benet-Martinez et al 2006). They can engage in a process called cultural frame switching, where they shift between their two cultural interpretive frames in response to cues in the social environment. Hong et al (2000) write: “To capture how bicultural individuals switch between cultural lenses, we adopt a conceptualization of internalized culture as a network of discrete, specific constructs that guide cognition only when they come to the fore in an individual's mind” (pg701).

Hong et al (2000) proffers an interesting theory – that internally we may store culture as a distinctive system or network of meaning that is interrelated and interconnected, much the way we have described a cultural knowledge paradigm.

It is largely recognized that: “Little is known about how biculturals manage and negotiate their dual cultural identities” (Benet-Martinez et al, 2002, p. 494). And it is also acknowledged that: “there is not just one way of being bicultural” (Phinney et al., 1997, p. 9). There is a growing body of empirical evidence to support the idea that some bicultural individuals have a “greater ability to activate and utilize knowledge and skill sets acquired from both identities” and are consequently “better able to reap the benefits of being in a diverse environment” (Cheng et al., 2008:1182).

It is also posited that the ability to “cultural frame switch” may have meaningful cognitive consequences (Martinez et al 2006, p. 386). Cultural duality or plurality can lead to a way of

operating culturally which goes “beyond the respectful acknowledgement of difference to a fusion of horizons in which we both learn from others and are grounded afresh in our own best values” (Fowers and Richardson 1996, p. 620).

An example of this is described by Gloria Anzaldua (1987) who coined the *mestiza* consciousness. The *mestiza* is “constantly travelling between different worlds” inhabiting, “different realities, getting different, and often opposing messages” (Barcinski & Kalia 2005, p.103). Anzaldua writes:

“The future will belong to the mestiza... That focal point or fulcrum, that juncture where the mestiza stand, is where phenomena tend to collide. It is where the possibility of uniting all that is separate occurs. This assembly is not one where severed or separated pieces merely come together. Nor is it a balancing of opposing powers. In attempting to work out a synthesis, the self has added a third element.... That third element is a new consciousness – a mestiza consciousness – and though it is a source of intense pain, its energy comes from a continual creative motion that keeps breaking down the unitary aspect of each new paradigm” (Anzaldua, 1987, p. 379).

The resonance with negotiated space as it might be applied to individuals is clear. Berking et al (2007) identify valuable aspects of “the knowledge they had gained in negotiating the differences between the Samoan and the Palangi worlds” and described this as “knowing how to play the game” (p. 57). While Anzaldua (1987) heralds the creative consciousness raising possibilities, Berking et al (similar to Du Bois writing more than a century earlier), also acknowledge the challenges of “tiredness as a result of conflict between two internalised selves” (2007, p. 59).

The term bicultural is particularly loaded in a New Zealand context and refers somewhat exclusively to Maori / Pakeha or Maori / Taiwi dynamics. Following Robin Kelley’s (2003) lead, we look to the term “polycultural” to describe the way in which Pacific peoples in New Zealand are influenced by multiple cultures. Kelley (2003) writes:

“I think the term "polycultural" works a lot better than "multicultural," since the latter often implies that cultures are fixed, discrete entities that exist side by side -- a kind of zoological approach to culture. Such a view of multiculturalism not only obscures power relations, but often reifies race and gender differences” (Kelley 2003:1).

This aligns with Tupuola’s (1999) research which found that Pacific young women identified with more than one culture and that cultural and ethnic identities are not fixed (p. 186). Tupuola (1999) writes of her participants: “They did not identify themselves as bicultural but rather cross cultural” (p. 186). The notion of crossing cultures, fluidity and resisting mono or bi-cultural ethnic identities is a prevalent theme in Tupuola’s doctoral research.

Anae (1998) described New Zealand-born identity journeys as, “perpetual fluctuating movement from challenge to challenge over time” and “from Palangi space to Samoan space and vice versa” (p. 359).

As authors of this paper on the negotiated space, we are repeatedly drawn back to the notion of *vā* and the principles that underlie this pan-“Pacific” concept. Like other ways we have theorised “negotiated space” there are a range of possibilities afforded on an individual level. For many years, Tongan poet and academic Konai Helu Thaman (2004) has advocated that *vā* can promote peace and mutual understanding.

Ka’ili (2008) in his PhD dissertation writes about the system of *vā* promoting “symmetrical (mutual) actions” which “give rise to harmonious beauty” (2008, p. 215). He writes:

“In the end, the art of sociospatial relations is all about symmetry, harmony, and beauty... The performing art of tauhi vā is about the creation and maintenance of symmetrical forms through the mutual performance of social duties (fatongia). This symmetrical arrangement of tā and vā gives rise to mālie, and beauty evokes powerful feelings of warmth, elation, and honor among the performers (Ka’ili, 2008, p. 215).”

We draw on the Pacific (Tongan) indigenous reference which upholds balance, symmetry, aesthetic and beauty as ideal outcomes promoting a broader harmonic unity of alignment and equation. We propose that this applies equally to social harmony and individual wellbeing - which share an interdependent relationship.

We tentatively theorise that the patterns of connection, making dialogic choices, of harnessing the dialectical energy provided by opposing viewpoints and establishing a relationship between worldviews may remain salient. We return to the healing which may be afforded by the concept of *vā* recognising that this section is experimental, touching on a range of ideas that will be further explored in Mila-Schaaf’s PhD thesis.

CONCLUSION

There is a need to re-value Pacific indigenous contributions to world or “commonwealth” knowledge about mental health and wellbeing. The negotiated space provides one way to create room for indigenous theorising. Outcomes, agreements or solutions sourced from within the negotiated space will always be local, situated, contingent and specific to their own time, space and context. The model of “negotiated space” affirms that Pacific peoples have the agency and ability to choose the “best of both” worlds, to negotiate and resolve cultural conflict – and that these are the opportunities afforded by a multicultural or polycultural existence. Examples such as the Matalafi matrix also demonstrate institutional agency and we take this opportunity to affirm the importance of institutions investing in this kind of work and allowing such spaces to be negotiated.

Given the increasing prevalence of mental health issues amongst Pacific peoples in New Zealand it is vital that culturally appropriate models of care are developed. Such texts cannot afford to be silent on the ways that these values are in tension with “mainstream” or dominant values and beliefs. The negotiated space is a conceptual enabler aiming to harness the dialectics of that tension and open up the interface to enable a multitude of creative possibilities. Within this space we can understand, mediate, and negotiate intercultural conflict emerging with the most optimal resolutions that will serve Pacific peoples.

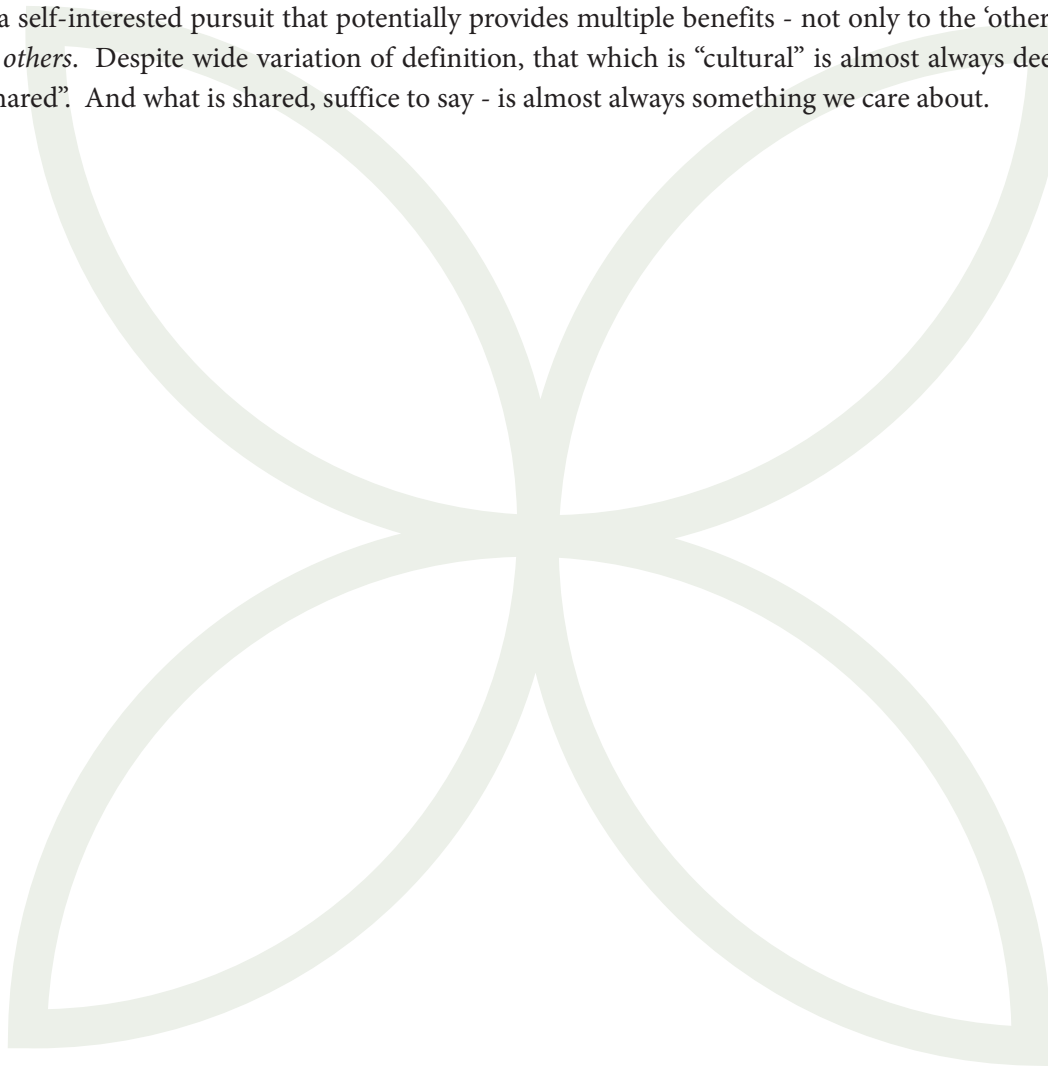
The “negotiated space” provides room to explore the relationship (*vā*) between different (and often conflicting) cultural understandings of mental health and illness on neutral ground. The “negotiated space” is a place of purposive re-encounter, reconstructing and balancing ideas and values in complementary realignments that have resonance for Pacific peoples living in Western oriented societies.

This requires making explicit the competing epistemologies of the Pacific indigenous reference alongside the bio-psycho-social and identifying the assumptions implicit in the operating logic of each. It also requires being empowered to negotiate, resolve and better comprehend the cultural conflict between the different understandings. We theorise multiple patterns of possibility of resolution and relationship within the negotiated space relevant to both research and service development within Pacific mental health and addictions. We also tentatively theorise about the individual negotiation of intercultural experiences. In the context of individuals negotiating intercultural space the discussion shifts from the linear confines of acculturation to engender a kaleidoscope of cultural patterns and possibilities.

To us, the negotiated space is the watering hole, the marae atea, the debating chamber, the kava circle. It is a space where intercultural negotiation and dialogue is given permission to take place. It is proposed that this space enables and empowers cultural innovation, acts of imaginative rediscovery, indigenous knowledge theorising and the creation of new relationships (*vā*) with other forms of knowledge and understanding. In a culturally diverse society, negotiating intercultural space is an on-going and never-ending process which promotes and upholds both individuality and community identities. It also opens up the terrain of mutuality and reaffirms connection – both in similarity and in difference.

Ideally outcomes of the negotiated space ought to be applicable and responsive to complex and changing contemporary Pacific realities. Yet we hope that they will still source the indigenous reference - providing continuing energy and momentum to the rich knowledge legacy passed on to us by our ancestors. We theorise that the ability to synthesise incongruent ways of interpreting, understanding and viewing the world may result in many advantages, as well as pose new challenges.

At the end of the day, the *vā* or terrain between oneself and other is the most fundamental environment of consequence to wellbeing. Negotiating intercultural space and making it beautiful is a self-interested pursuit that potentially provides multiple benefits - not only to the 'other', but to *others*. Despite wide variation of definition, that which is "cultural" is almost always deemed "shared". And what is shared, suffice to say - is almost always something we care about.



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