Kaitiakitanga with Tame Malcolm
Recorded webinar transcript

Greta Dromgool

Kia ora koutou everyone, hello and welcome to our webinar, about kaitiakitanga. Ko Greta Dromgool ahau. I am Greta and I work for the Science Learning Hub. The Hub is a website that is produced by and for educators, and we work in collaboration with scientists to bring you the science that's happening in Aotearoa, and it is wonderful to have you here today. The purpose of our webinar is really to develop our understanding of kaitiakitanga, we want to share pūrākau narratives that are connected to this concept, and really hoping to inspire you to reflect on your inclusion of this concept in a classroom, and yeah, and not just kaitiakitanga, but other concepts from te ao Māori that you might be starting to think about and wanting to teach with.

It is my great pleasure today to have with us Tame Malcolm. So Tame has worked with us on the previous webinar. He is the general manager of Te Tira Whakamātaki, working in biosecurity in Aotearoa, and it is always great to have you here and to hear your kōrero.

So we're just going to start off having a look at Te Tira Whakamātaki. I've just put up a screenshot of Te Tira Whakamātaki's website there, and I really recommend you sign up to the newsletters, because it's always some great bit of information about what's going on in that field and it's really exciting to see what's been happening there, don't know if there's something in particular you wanted to share that make people aware of?

Tame Malcolm

I guess it's whakapapa, or the origins of Te Tira Whakamātaki. It's, we're quite proud that we are, by Māori, for Māori, with Māori, and all of that. It started from a need that within the biosecurity system, a lot of Māori would see similar issues, and so they were having sort of side conversations of hey, I'm seeing this and I'm seeing that, is there a way we can work together or help develop Māori derived solutions? and as a result Te Tira Whakamātaki was sort of born from that and it's grown from biosecurity origins, to now environmental solutions, using that indigenous evidence-based methods. That's the most fascinating job I've ever had to be honest, like learning some of mātauranga that helps protect the environment is fascinating.

Greta Dromgool

Yup, and that idea that you're probably just at the tip of that iceberg, of, yeah.

Tame Malcolm

Yeah, and I mean it sounds vague-as. I think in our last kōrero we talked, I cherry-picked some of the best research projects and programs and shared those with you, they still by far my highlights, that those ones we talked about In that first kōrero.

Greta Dromgool

And if anybody doesn't know what we're talking about, on the Science Learning Hub is the, a recording of that webinar with Tame, that we've done earlier. How do you say kaitiakitanga correctly?

Tame Malcolm

Yeah, kaitiakitanga, but there are few dialectal variations, Kaitieki, and it is usually spelt with, K-A-I-T-I-E-K-I-T-A-N-G-A. So yeah, there is a few, I guess you'd call them dialectal differences, but also accent differences. 'Ch-ch,' I know on the Chatham Islands I use that a bit more.

Greta Dromgool

Okay.

Tame Malcolm

The Moriori I should say, but I don't know if they have a kupu for kaitiakitanga, but I have heard someone else pronounce it 'ch,' but essentially kaitiakitanga, kaitiaki.

Greta Dromgool

I wanted to, at this point to point to this article that Tame wrote, talks about lots of things really, but it helped me understand the need to sort of push pause before using, kupu Māori, and check-in with where has my understanding come from of that? I wondered Tame if this would be a good time for you to just share your understanding?

Tame Malcolm

Yeah. So firstly thank you to everyone that's shared some whakaaro down the bottom. I think kaitiaki and the kupu kaitiaki means all of that, all of that and more. So before some people worry one day are they using it in the right context, I'd say if you've got a basic understanding of it, you probably are. I wrote this article to explore if we are using the word correctly, for the love of te reo Māori, it wasn't so much about the conservation acts, it was around my love for te reo Māori.

When I, and where I'm from in Te Arawa, the kupu kaitiaki often refers to deities, atua, tupua, everything above humans, and so when I heard people saying, oh so and so's a kaitiaki, or he's a kaitiaki, I'm a kaitiaki, I was like, when I first left school I was like, oh, that's interesting. Not saying it's weird, but for me it was different to hear people basically referring to themselves, oh my god, and I'm a demigod, I'm immortal, and I was like, oh that's, that's confident, I wish I had that person's confidence, and so I didn't think much of it, I just thought, oh, different, but then I also knew that some people do use it that way, and my wife, her tribe for instance, to them a kaitiaki is a conservationist. My wife's grandmother's sister wrote a good, did you call a booklet on it, explaining to them what it means.

So,that got me thinking more as well, that a lot of iwi have defined what a kaitiaki is to them. So as we are using this kupu, it would probably pay, because it's become so, such a normal part of New Zealand jargon really. Everyone, when you say kaitiaki everyone kind of knows exactly what we're talking about. The cost of that is though, that we're losing some of other more beautiful, other beautiful kupu, that describes it equally as well from different tribes and different dialects.

Greta Dromgool

And you've, you reference some of those in that article that we just shared above, so really recommend people have a look if they want to learn more about that as well.

Tame Malcom

The Tūhoe one was my favourite one, matemateāone and if you look at the translation, so Tūhoe use the word matemateāone, rather than kaitiaki, even though it's a verb rather than a noun, but they're having, in the dictionary it will say it's a deep passion for your whenua, for your land, but my mate from Tūhoe says nah, it means we'll die for our land. So, and I think that's, that is quite beautiful, poetically beautiful that their kupu that they use so freely, hey I'd die for my land, and that sort of puts things in perspective as well, that when we do use, you know, this kupu kaitiaki, well, I'd certainly die from my land, I don't know if I die for land outside of Te Arawa where I'm from.

Greta Dromgool

Yeah, choose where you live. So I, yeah, I really enjoyed reading that, and the, those different levels of sort of understanding and the stories that would be beside, behind those kupu. Yeah. I really enjoyed reading that. I think, that point that you make in the article around taking the time to discover what is the local terminology for what you're trying to represent, if you're an educational setting is really important. Yeah, and I think again it came through a little bit in our previous webinar, around, how do you describe it? It might be sort of the more violent side that we often sort of cover over a little bit if we're using words, like kaitiaki or kaitiakitanga, but actually, if it means dying for your land, that's pretty serious stuff.

Tame Malcolm

Yeah, I mean in some cases and I'm guilty of it myself, we've romanticised the kupu kaitiaki and we forget that some kaitiaki will kill humans, and so, you know in English we often think of angels and devils and or yeah, ghouls and goblins and then sort of fairies and pixies. Yeah. So yeah, we do have that thing. A kaitiaki can be both, so it can be something that takes human life to protect whatever it's been, whatever it's responsible for, they can be a ghoul, they can be a taniwha, but can be a manu, an ika, so yeah, having that understanding of the kupu kaitiaki, I just, I wouldn't want us to just fall into this trap that kaitiaki means this and only this, and then we lose all this other meaning behind it, as in like I said before that we lose these kupu that have some really other cool beautiful meanings as well.

Greta Dromgool

Thank you. You've touched on this, but I just, I want to clarify came through and registrations lots of times and that is around the can we, people, humans be kaitiaki and possibly, yeah, just your thoughts around that? How we might go forward if we're using this for maybe with students or something like that? Yeah, what else might we need to think about?

Tame Malcolm

Cool, so yeah, I'm not going to tell anyone you can't be a kaitiaki, and yeah, I'm a student, I've got no right to tell anyone what to do. So I won't, I'll never get caught in that debate. I do encourage people to learn the local dialect, if they are, if we're talking about preserving or protecting, conserving land, it would help to know the language and the word that pertain, that belongs to that land. So have that conversation with the local iwi, tangata whenua.

The second question and I, often gets left unsaid, but can non-Māori be kaitiaki?

Greta Dromgool

Yes.

Tame Malcolm

And there's a range of different answers to that. Everything from, some iwi will say, yep, anyone can be a kaitiaki, anyone can protect land, and they encourage it. They're right we need more kaitiaki. Right through to no, only Gods can be kaitiaki, and everything in the middle. So the example that often gets brought up is you have whakapapa to whenua, to be a kaitiaki. You have to whakapapa to the maunga, to the awa, or whatever that you are protecting to use that title, or to wear that mantle. Again, I'm not going, not trying to avoid it, but it's not for me to say. That's for tangata whenua to say, have that conversation. So for those, non-Māori who would like that title or are keen on using it, yeah, as I've said a few times now, have a chat with your local iwi to see what they think, yeah.

Greta Dromgool

Are we kaitiaki only if we come from a point of knowledge and experience, or can anyone be kaitiaki? So, I think that is slightly different from what you've just talked to and that it's around the knowledge and experience that you have, Yeah.

Tame Malcolm

I think and hopefully this answers it, but some people often think of a kaitiaki as someone who is on the ground doing some work, but in some iwi they think of it as a spectrum, I've used spectrum twice now so I'll have to find another word soon, but it can be even from on the ground right through to governance in policy or leadership. So, kaitiaki kind of can be sitting at a board meeting and trying to provide strategic direction on how the whenua will be protected. Kaitiakitanga could look like a manager organising the troops. It could be someone on the end of a shovel, digging holes to plant. So yeah, let's not often fall into that thing that kaitiaki are someone who's just on the ground, because we, that emits a lot of people who do a lot of work, as best as they can, and I just learned a new word the other day, ableism.

I kept, I'd be reading it for the last few years as 'abliesm'. So please don't laugh at me, but that's how I read it, and then it wasn't until someone heard me say it out loud, that they said it's ableism.

Greta Dromgool

I love those moments.

Tame Malcolm

And I'd just written an article about you know, picking our, our words. So here I am mispronouncing an English one, but yeah, I've said kaitiakitanga, if we fall into that trap again of just thinking it means this, we fall into a trap of ableism, where it's only people who are on the ground, sweating, working, running around the hills, but it's everything research is another one. We need more researchers.

The last point I'll make on this as well, is for Māori communities in the climate change space. My cousin Lani Kereopa found that when it came to kaitiakitanga or protecting the environment around climate change, we have plenty of governors and we have plenty of operational staff, be we left a lot of people in the middle, those ones that can organise, and so yeah, she started putting a lot of effort into hey, don't forget protecting our environment has all of that range of spectrum.

Greta Dromgool

Yes. Yeah, and I think we often have a lot of science educators join our webinars, and, we yeah, that's quite a big goal of the science education is making sure that students are aware that actually science looks like lots of different things and we need people to be working at these different levels.

Tame Malcolm

Yeah, and we need more people growing them. So even teachers have a part to play in this. So you don't get off scot-free teachers. You have a part to play in this, as you probably know.

Greta Dromgool

Absolutely, I heard, working with Pa Ropata, Robert McGowan. He talked to the term kaimahi as one that might be used for that, the action, taking the action of kaitiakitanga, for people that were doing that, and that, yeah, I quite like that in terms of that sense of being a worker for the whenua, yeah.

Tame Malcolm

Yeah, and that prefix kai is really, it is important, it can, you know kaimahi, kai being someone who's doing it for their mahi, just to work. Kaihākoke, someone who explores the forest, hākoke, kaihōparapara. Hōparapara is another word for explore. So there are words that have been used traditionally to describe someone, so yeah, and another one, just got me thinking on this one is some iwi differentiate Kaitiaki with a capital K, and kaitiaki with a lowercase case k, so capital K being yeah, so those celestial beings, deities, atua and tupua, ariki and the lowercase being humans that do the work, so lots of plenty of good options out there as well.

Greta Dromgool

Yeah, great. Something I don't know that we've touched on, it sounds like we've got, our participants have quite a good understanding, but just that we talked about kaitiaki and we've got kaitiakitanga, just that, yeah, the difference between those two?

Tame Malcolm

Yeah. I should know this, tanga is a suffix. Bear with me, I'll just quickly Google it, but there's a clean difference between, not a clear difference hold on, a suffix used to make verbs into noun. So kaitiak, and, what's kaitiaki? That'll be a noun won't it?

Greta Dromgool

Naming word. Nouns are for verbs.

Tame Malcolm

And kaitiakitanga, yeah kaitiakitanga to me is, is almost like a principle. So kaitiaki to me, yeah, I'm thinking rather than trying to read the dictionary, describe it how I like think of it. A kaitiaki is in some cases a person, or for us in Te Arawa a god. It is something or someone that protects. Kaitiakitanga is the principal of protection and that can take a range of many forms. Someone said a Dean is a kaitiaki, kaitiaki, and yeah, kaitiaki can be protector of many things, it can be a protector of knowledge, it can be a protector of a relationship, It can be a protector of people's feelings, and I've heard also this is a really hard way to explain it, but when things get too heated in a whananga, there's a kupu that acts as a kaitiaki. It's kind of like the safe word. It's the process that hey, if this word is dropped, everyone just take a breather and we'll work our way out of the yeah, so kaitiaki can be something as small as a word but with a lot of significant power as well.

Greta Dromgool

Hmm. Thank you. Talk about the 'tanga' being added to a word, gives it that sense of action, that act of doing. Hmm.

Tame Malcolm

Oh, that's the one.

Greta Dromgool

I would love it Tame if you could share with us some examples of kaitiakitanga, and yeah, so that will really help, help us grow our understanding of what it is that this means?

Tame Malcolm

Yeah, so for those who don't know, Greta and I had a chat about what was it a month ago? A while ago and she gave me the challenge, she said oh you know, could you find some examples, some pūrākau or something we can, some tangibles we can use to discuss, to explore the meaning. I thought I'm going to love this. I'm going to love getting in to trying to find some pūrākau, and what I did and we might save those for a bit later on if we have time. When I was sort of, I quickly just did a Google search, I

know that's as a researcher that's the worst thing to say, there was a lot of the kaitiaki stuff that popped up was sort of modern, contemporary stuff and it was around conservation, preserving land, protecting lands, but then the further back I went especially when I started looking at websites like papers past and present, kaitiaki were, oh it was often used to describe nurses and police.

So some of those initial roles were, they were called kaitiaki. So within Māori communities when they saw a police officer, they would say he kaitiaki tērā tangata, that's a person's kaitiaki, and then further, further the back I got, the more I started seeing it was people often referred to it as things that were protecting mauri. So rather than protecting ourselves, like a kaitiaki looks after us, I saw that back in the days of our tūpuna it was often used to describe protecting the mauri of places rather than just a person because at the end of the day, we're only a small piece of the puzzle and the big wider picture. So a kaitiaki was something that looked after that bigger picture, and it didn't necessarily care about us. If we were having an impact on the bigger picture, on the environment, we were removed from the envi- from the equation.

So we had stories like kaitiaki that would look after our waka. So in the article I wrote I talk about Te Arawa, got its name from the shark that was a kaitiaki that looked after our waka as it came out of a whirlpool. The birds that have been used to signal the arrival of enemies or alert people to danger, the one bird that helped out as a result of that the whole species got designated as kaitiaki and got placed above, you know normal birds, they became sacred and was tapu to touch them.

Also the behaviour of birds designated kaitiakitanga, so everyone knows huia right? The huia bird, and they're quite famous for their, I think it's called dimorphism, where the male and female look completely different. The female having the curved beak and the male having the straight beak, and there's two theories of why they're, oh so most people often I don't think I've got any examples, but the huia was famous for its tail feathers, that only rangatira could wear the tail feathers. There the black feather with the white tip, so you'll often see them in old paintings and pictures and carvings, and there's two theories of why they were called manu rangatira or you know why their feathers were used for rangatira and both of them refer to being kaitiaki. The first one is that because they displayed dimorphism and they acted in such a unique way, so the male bird would chip at the wood and get the first lot of insects, with his stabby beak, and the female would go in and get the bugs, the insects that were lower, further down in the rotting wood. So by not competing with each other they were able to both survive and thrive in normal circumstances before the arrival of humans, but also they displayed actual rangatira, what a rangatira should do. It should look after all the people and a lot of people often think rangatira as a male, but there's a saying, 'he wā tōna me whai te mana wahine, he wā tōna me whai te mana tane'. There's a time when there's a, rangatira looks like following mana tāne or following mana wahine, and so that's why these kaitiaki, if there is a rangatira. So they were kaitiaki in the sense they looked after their counterparts, their female, their male counterparts.

Another theory is that based on the ecological behaviour huia spent their times on the bush margin, I was going to say bush pasture margin, but we didn't pasture back then, but the edges of the forest, is where they sort of preferred to hang out. That's where a lot of insects were coming and going so they are usually found there. So when our tūpuna would get lost in the forest, they would see the huia fluttering back and forth and they knew if they followed that bird, it will take them to the outside of the bush, basically freedom and safety. So another reason why they were designated rangatira and kaitiaki was because if you needed to get to safety that bird will take you to safety, take you out of the forest and you can find your bearings if you were lost.

So that's sort of it's a quick brain dump some of the stuff, but more interesting stuff or for me anyway, and I wrote about it in an article. When I was trying to look up conservation and sustainable practices, when I was a kid, they didn't talk about it in my dad's generation, and as I started trying to find more and more examples I was difficult,

but that's because I was searching for the wrong type of information. So for us, conservation and sustainable practices is almost an active duty or responsibility where we go out of our way to do it. Whereas for our tūpuna back in the day kaitiakitanga like that was just how they lived.

So for instance when they went, I talked about this in our last webinar as well, for us the, for our tūpuna, the word for collecting pāua from the ocean was two tūpoupāua, not rukupāua. So ruku means dive and tūpou means to bend over. So a lot of people say now, 'ka haere au ki te ruku pāua'. I'm going to dive for pāua, but back in the day they'd say, 'ka haere au ki te tūpou pāua', I'm going to bend over for pāua, and basically what that leads to is that if you had to dive under the water to get pāua there wasn't enough around, you're in the wrong space, ah wrong place, you shouldn't be there, you should only ever have to bend down to get pāua.

And secondly, following up on the marine theme is that they would never eat shellfish near the water knowing that if the bacteria from the dead shellfish got back into the water, could kill the shellfish in there so they were taken far away and that's where those I'm going to say this one, middens? Yeah middens the, basically the big piles of scraps and food and stuff like that. They'd be taken as far away from them ocean as possible, eat everything there and leave it. So again that can conservation mentality was just built into our tikanga and every day actions.

Yeah, and then as for pūrākau, there's a few that speak to it, but not entirely to it as a concept we know, because like I said that our tūpuna sort of just practised it, for instance, a lot of people might think oh, you know when it comes to conserving our resources like manu or fish or anything like that, there was some hard and fast rules about it and they certainly were, but some people will be surprised to know that for fishing for instance, when the first fish was caught it was released back into the to the ocean – hei tohu mō Tangaroa, ika ā Whiro, ika i te ate – it's called the first catches ika i te ate, was given back to Tangaroa. I think anything else you caught after that was taken, whether it was undersized big size, I even think in some cases they took some iwi they took the pregnant ones, and everyone's like that seems weird that you know, how's that sort of conserving those species especially if you're reliant on them, but it when it came time for harvesting that particular species, they would only take in a certain time frame and so for that time frame for that time when it was open, it was open slather, take anything and everything you get, once that time is done, once the environmental cues had said hey, it's time to move on, nothing was taken.

So yeah, some of these once I realised that you know, I'm looking at the wrong, looking at this the wrong way, it was really hard to find kaitiakitanga in our pūrākau. There was a lot of cool ones that just sort of popped up what reading between the lines.

Greta Dromgool

When you were talking Tame about the birds that bring the, and they were in Waikato-Tainui, the ruru, they had some work done on that around the narratives with local iwi and hapū about the importance of that particular manu and the, the role that it has, and I imagine yeah, different areas will have different narratives that go with the particular species in the area.

Tame Malcolm

Oh, precisely, not only that but also I'd dare say most iwi have some kōrero about every single species in their, oh bird species in their ngahere and it's all different, the kōtare for instance for us if we saw, so I'm from for those don't know, I'm from Te Arawa, in the middle of Rotorua, and if we saw especially coming into wintertime the kōtare away from the water, it means basically oh it's time for us to start getting ready to chill out and relax. Kōtare, oh the kingfisher I should say, coming into winter there's not many bugs around, they've all gone to sleep, not many fish moving so he's realised oh yeah, it's getting a bit too cold by the water, I'll head up to high land where there might be the

odd bit of food that will keep me going until winter finishes up. So we know sort of once the Kōtare starts coming to our maunga, that's time for us to, back in the day would have been time to chill out and relax, but iwi on the coast for instance when I was talking to a whanaunga of mine who's from the coast, they were, he was saying that nah we know, kōtare go up to the mountains it means it's time to go diving, things getting warmer in there.

Oh wow, so, you know total opposites, but if sort of just take one narrative and applied it across the country, it could be almost disastrous.

Greta Dromgool

Yeah, that's quite yeah, that's really interesting I really love the idea that it's educators, we take the time to find out from our students what observations they've made of, might be the the manu or the different species locally and I love that idea of possibly if you could link to somebody in a different place and find out is it the same things that you're noticing or is it different things?

Would be a really lovely way to unpack that understanding of that localised nature of different behaviours of our species.

Tame Malcolm

Yeah, and even our language developed like that. So when our tūpuna first arrived here they'd all go back to, oh, is it Wairua Bar, down Marlborough somewhere, they'd go down there and have wānanga and share the names of different species that they were picking up on and share learning and it was sort of like a big get together and everyone would share their learning, so they could all prosper here, but then as time got on we started seeing differences in some of the kupu based on the ecological differences we were seeing, and I mentioned this in our last webinar.

Priscilla Wehi did a really good research paper on it; how the different names for the same species across the country gave an indication of the ecological role at play. So putaputawētā we're I'm from, a marbleleaf, it was known for housing wētā, obviously, and the name putaputawētā, and then wētā, but elsewhere it was called something different and I don't know it off the top of my head. That was sort of just one species, oh, I think it was one species they focused it on, but even for us, us in Te Arawa, our neighbouring iwi is Tūhoe, and hearing some of the differences that we have in some things is fascinating and even though we're neighbours, so time sort of differentiated.

The example I use there is for us in Te Arawa we call a kōura, the freshwater crayfish a kēwai. So when our ancestors just got there, they saw the kōura and they said oh, it looks like a kōura from the ocean, but it's a kōura from rerekē wai. Rerekē is different, wai being water. So it's a kōura from different water, not salty water. So rerekē wai and then they just shortened to kēwai so we call them kēwai. Little fresh, they're like this freshwater crayfish.

I was talking to my mate from Tūhoe and I said, oh get us a feed of kēwai for this whatever and he said, oh do you eat them? And I said, yeah they're beautiful, they're delicious, they're a delicacy, you know, it's what we sort of known for and he said yeah man, you guys are different in Te Arawa and I was like, no that's weird and he about a hour he was just mulling this over sitting next to me as we're sort of typing away working and he said do you really eat kēkiriwai? And I said, oh, I said kēwai what's kēkiriwai? And kēkiriwai is the green shield beetle. So he's been sitting there for an hour thinking that I eat green shield beetles and I was sitting there thinking that he doesn't know what like kēwai are, man, they're special in Tūhoe, but yeah, language differences.

Greta Dromgool

You're getting funny looks. Nobody going 'round to your place for dinner, huh?

Tame Malcolm

Yeah, I'll eat them all myself.

Greta Dromgool

Oh, cool, we're not too far off finishing, but there is another question that I wondered if you could respond to, and that was in a registration someone asked I'd like to know more about the use of karakia as part of kaitiakitanga? I wondered if you share something on that?

Tame Malcolm

Karakia, I'm no expert, I should have said this right at the start, I'm no expert on anything really, and this is sort of a little bit of what I know, and so I encourage everyone to go out and seek more answers, as always talk to tangata whenua and learn a little bit more from, sort of fill your kete, your basket, your knowledge basket. But karakia can take a great many forms, and they, they're, karakia to help keep you safe, physically, spiritually mentally, I mean everything in between.

So karakia in some instances, in some instances can be something like for me, before I go into the bush, a karakia can be something like hey stop, have a breather, and one of the karakias is 'Tiro ki ngā tohu o ngā tapuwae', is one of the lines in it. So which tohu is the sign, tapuae is footprints, and all that's saying is hey, are there any footprints in front of you? Meaning is there someone else in this forest? Am I going into a forest where there's other people? If so, are they hunting? Is it going to be dangerous? Should I be careful if I've got a rifle? So it's a very, you know in that sense that karakia is a very practical sense.

We were also told growing up in Te Arawa of Ngāti Tarāwhai. We don't say a karakia when we go back into our own forest, that, essentially that's our home. You don't say a karakia when you're going home. If anything we should be saying a karakia when we go into the city, because that's where all the threats and the risks are.

So in some cases it is a very practical observation doing a karakia. They can be short, they can be long, and it could be just giving you hey heads up. Another one is oh, I forgot what it's a kupu, it was a karakia I read, and it said, lift your chin up, basically. Oh no, raise yourself up to the stars and all it's encouraging you to do is hey, look are there any birds in the trees? Is it worth going out hunting birds if you can't see them around the edge of the bush? So again, very practical.

I know some divers, I'm not a diver by any means, karakia that helps slow their heart rate down. So they go through a karakia slows their heart rate down, which they need when they're going to go holding their breath underwater. So again, very practical uses, but at the other end of the like and I'm going to say spectrum, as those spiritual spirituality ones, so it's about in some whānau in Tūhoe they, they talk about it quite beautifully, that a karakia is using certain harmonies and frequencies to connect with atua, and again, I mentioned this in our last one, but this is a cheeky plug here, follow TTW newsletter, TTW newsletter to hear more about that research, but the power of frequencies and harmonies and so knowing that karakia can reverberate with the soul and help connect you to the place that you're going, or sort of keep you at ease as you're about to embark on a journey.

They can be used for anything and everything. So a simple journey, a simple trip, trying to write something, trying to you know, before you're having a hui, trying to think of something, before your kai. The kai's one interesting as well. That one's essentially about giving blessings or thanks for this kai. So hopefully that gives you an idea of sort of karakia can't connect everything and anything, and there's different types of karakia. There's inoi, there's pakupaku. Yeah.

Greta Dromgool

Yeah, I can imagine that in lots of places where there might be that sense of kaitiaki being atua or deities, that you might acknowledge them as part of a karakia going to a particular area.

Tame Malcolm

Yeah, and there's a huge difference as well between Christian religion and prayers and Māori religion, and Māori karakia. Professor Rangi Mātāmua, I was in a lecture once, and he said something really good. He said in Māori karakia, it's not like a prayer where you say you know, please lord can you bless us with this, or can you, where you're sort of asking. In te ao Māori, in karakias, E te Atua whakarongo mai to whatever atua you're praying to, hey listen up, this is what I need, if you see so fit, hook me up with it, otherwise, I'll just carry on my way, and it is very, it can seem informal like that, but it's not a case of you know, begging for something, it's hey, this is what I'm after, just letting you be aware of it.

The other cases for us in the pest control industry, a karakia can be invoking or awakening an atua. So before we go out trapping, we might say a karakia to Tūmatauenga, the god of war, god of innovation, god of strategy. Hey, look, I need your help here as I'm developing a strategy to trap possums or to remove possums from our forests, but when you do a karakia, a whakaarara like that, so an awakening karakia, you have to do a whakamoe karakia, so you have to put Tūmatauenga to sleep. As a god of war, he wants blood so if we satisfied that lust with the blood of possums, this sounds really gruesome, but any how, he has to be put to sleep. If not that will continue to impact on you and so when our tūpuna went to war, they were quite aware of post-traumatic stress disorder, long before the acronym came about.

So when they would go to war, they'd say a karakia to invoke Tūmatauenga, the god of war, once he was satisfied with blood, they would put him to sleep knowing that if they didn't PTSD could come about. So for us in the possum control industry, within Te Arawa, when we put Tūmatauenga in the sleep, we invoke Rongo, the god of peace. So once our work is done, we're like right it's time to return back to the god of peace now and chill out and relax.

And so I could talk all night about that one, but we'll sort of finish that kōrero there, and I think I mentioned this on our last kōrero as well. How karakia finish gives you an idea of where they're from. So āmene, āmine, is obviously Catholic, oh, Christian. Ihu Karaiti, is protestant, Ehu Karaiti is Catholic. So if you hear those, those are the different words for Jesus, the different religions translated Jesus in their different language, in te reo Māori, but most other things are Māori and comes from Māori religion.

So ask, some people have asked, you know, I'm not religious or I'm agnostic or atheist? Is it appropriate for me to say this and I'm like, oh perfect. If you don't want to say āmene, it's up to you, at the end of a karakia and you don't want to say it, you don't have to. That's the beauty of Māori is, it allows everyone their beliefs. With the other Māori karakia, that finish with like, 'tuturu whakamaua kia tina', that's simply just saying, hey, are we all in agreement? Are we all on the same boat? Do you agree with what I've said, and the point I was getting to was we've all heard the one, 'E Rongo whakairi ake ki runga'. When Tāne Mahuta climbed the heavens to get the baskets of knowledge, he on his way back down, he thought right, now that I've got these baskets of knowledge. How do I disseminate them? How do I make sure everyone has access to knowledge, so they can all be enlightened? So he went to his brother, Rongo, the god of peace and Rongo said, oh get them to hang it on their wall, like behind me, hang the baskets of knowledge on their wall so when they lie down to sleep the baskets will be above himself. So imagine if I was sleeping yeah the basket will be above me and I can reflect on it.

So that's why we say at the end of a karakia you might hear people say, 'E Rongo whakairi ake ki runga', which is Rongo the god of peace, whakairi ake ki runga – you know, hang it above me, and then the following line is, the line that follows that is 'tuturu whakamaua kia tina,tina. Haumie, hui e taiki e', which is you know, basically, we're all in agreement, we're all bound by that, we'll think that's cool, sweet. So for those people who don't you know, don't necessarily feel a connection to a Catholic prayer, a Protestant prayer, whatever have you, if you do about a Māori one, it's not, a karakia is not necessarily a prayer. It's just a hey look, I really enjoyed this wānanga, I hope you take it home and put it above your bed so you can reflect on it when you're lying down, which is simply what we're, I'm hoping everyone does tonight.

Greta Dromgool

Beautiful. Thank you Tame. We are at the end of our webinar, but I do want to let people know that there are lots of resources to support your journey to continue to grow your understanding around kaitiakitanga, and if you do have others that you think people would benefit from knowing about, please do share them. There was a lovely one I came across by Doctor Kura Paul-Burke and Doctor Lesley Rameka, around kaitiakitanga, and looking at an early childhood, but the actual the learning that was part of that could be for any age level that you're teaching. So recommend having a nosy at that one.

Once again, thank you so much, Tame, you're yeah sharing of your knowledge and experiences is just absolutely wonderful, and I always feel like my kete is getting filled up when we have a chat and lots for me to reflect on after our webinar today.

So thank you also to all our participants, it's brilliant to have you along, please give us some feedback and we really look forward to connecting again and continuing our learning.

So kia ora, and have a lovely rest of your evening, and really look forward to seeing everybody again soon, ka kite.

Tēnā koutou and ka kite, we'll see you next time.

