+ Maramataka Insights Report

Reclaiming wellbeing through an Indigenous division of time







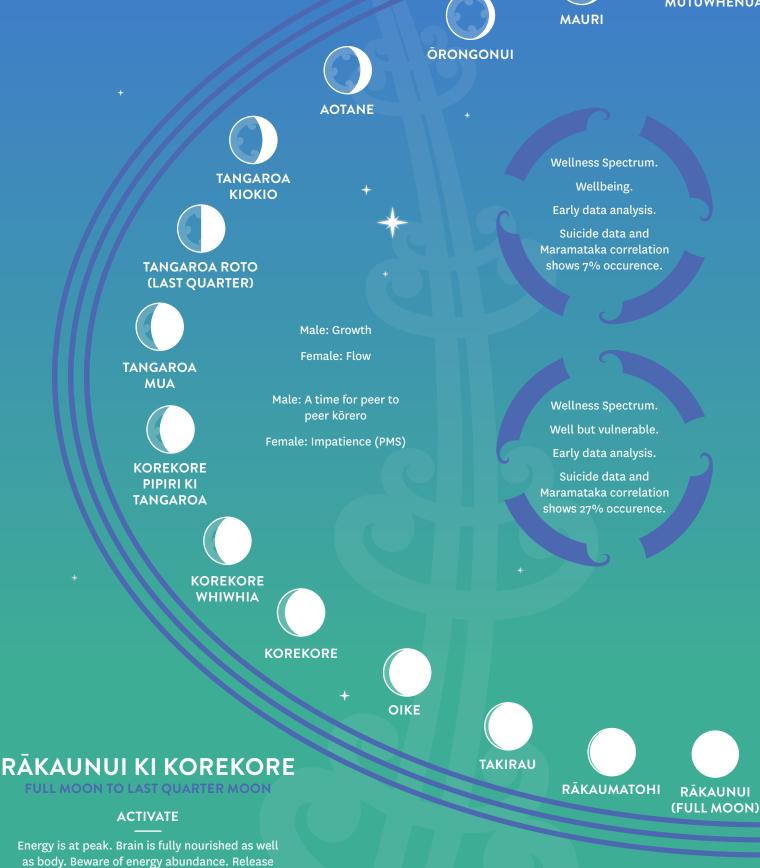
TANGAROA KI MUTUWHENUA

EVALUATE

Reflect and be grateful. Energy may feel high, prepare for change. Time to rest and reflect. May feel wary so restore self, energy will return.







energy. Pay attention to those around you.

WHIRO KI TAMATEA

INITIATE

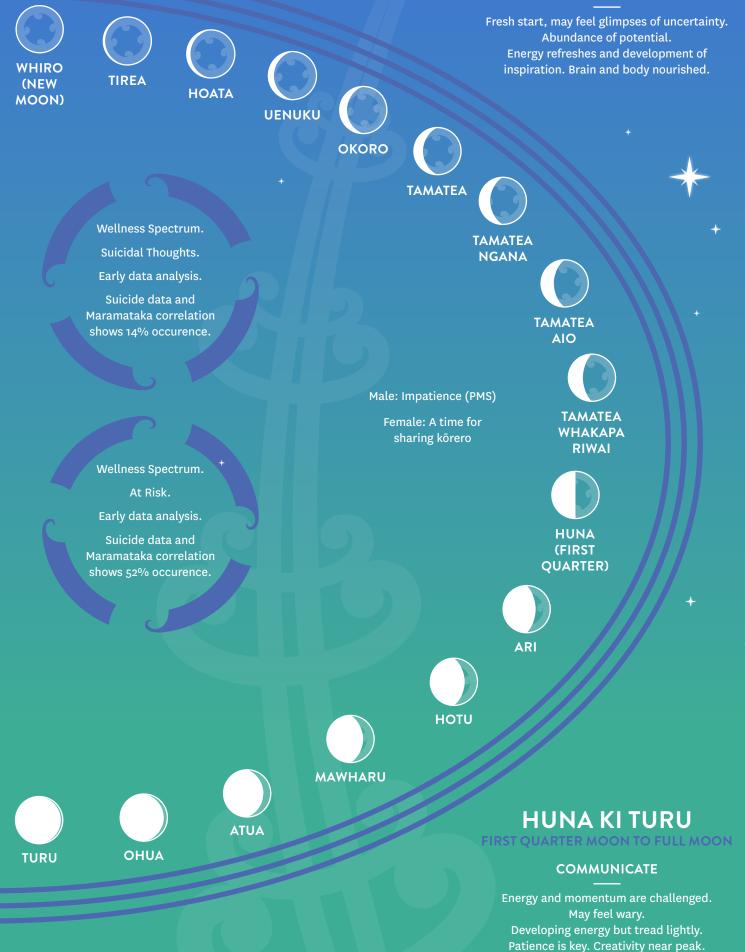


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Ko tõu piki amokura nõu, ko tõku piki amokura nõku.

Knowledge can be viewed through more than one lens.

This whakatauākī (proverb) originates from Rangitihi Tahuparae of Te Awa Tupua o Whanganui. This whakatauākī acknowledges the differing foundations and levels of knowledge that one accumulates through varied perspectives and context.

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Within the context of Maramataka, this whakatauākī acknowledges the different perspective when viewing the moon depending location on your whether you live central, north, south, east or west coast.

Acknowledgement

The Maramataka movement has taken hold throughout Aotearoa (New Zealand). The resurgence of mātauranga (knowledge) Māori practices and philosophies signals the growing demand for alternative and holistic approaches to managing health and wellbeing.

In the revitalisation of our local Maramataka whānau (family) and mātauranga Māori practitioners have begun walking alongside each other discovering the benefits of a Maramataka perspective in their everyday lives. It has been our privilege to capture and share their experiences through our four year journey.

We acknowledge and thank our koroua (elderly Māori man), kuia (elderly Māori woman), and knowledge holders who have guided us and shared their wisdom as we, together, have brought Maramataka to the forefront.

Purpose

Our intention is to explore and demonstrate how mātauranga Māori systems, traditions and practices when contextualised in contemporary settings are still, today, prevention opportunities. As Māori, we inherently believe that our systems, such as Maramataka:

- Increases the access and quality engagement with whānau most at risk of preventable chronic illness and disease.
- Encourages whānau to consider their health and wellbeing earlier, towards preventative practice.
- Amplifies the importance of whakapapa (genealogy/connection), whanaungatanga (relationships) and connection to te taiao (environment) our protective factors.

Background

Healthy Families NZ is a large-scale initiative that brings community and community leadership together in a united effort for better health. It aims to improve people's health where they live, learn, work and play by taking a systems approach for prevention. Healthy Families NZ has an explicit focus on equity, improving health for Māori and reducing inequities for groups at increased risk of preventable chronic disease.

Mātauranga Māori systems are more than just applying a practical function to life, our history is shared through pūrakau (indigenous narrative) that tell of whakapapa, tikanga (rules), kawa (Māori protocol and etiquette) and spiritual teachings. Maramataka revitalisation aligns with the Māori cultural renaissance which began in the 1970s right through to recent movements with the establishment of Matariki as a public holiday. Healthy Families Whanganui Rangitīkei Ruapehu are exploring how Mātauranga Māori Systems are prevention solutions for health and wellbeing.

Healthy Families Principles



Leadership

Collaboration for Collective Impact



Equity of Outcome



Line of Sight

Experimentation

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Adaptation



Implementation at Scale

Methodology

We have been the backbone, researcher and an advocate for the revitalisation of Maramataka practice in our rohe (region). We have been sharing and connecting with communities, knowledge holders, and practitioners across a range of settings to better understand how they are applying maramataka in their everyday lives, and what potential benefits they are seeing as a result of practicing a traditional indigenous framework.

We have collected and synthesised over 2,000 data points in the last 12 months, through online and kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face) prototyping. These have formed our first phase insights.

The four years of observation and research of the specific Maramataka in our region and alignment with varying kaupapa (purposes) has assisted with growing a body of knowledge specific to the narratives and locally sourced research informed by local tūpuna kōrero (ancestral knowledge).

Throughout the insights gathering process, a regular observation we noticed focused on the protective factors surrounding connection. Maramataka encourages a greater connection to the environment and its influences on wellbeing, helping the practitioner to be more observant and present.

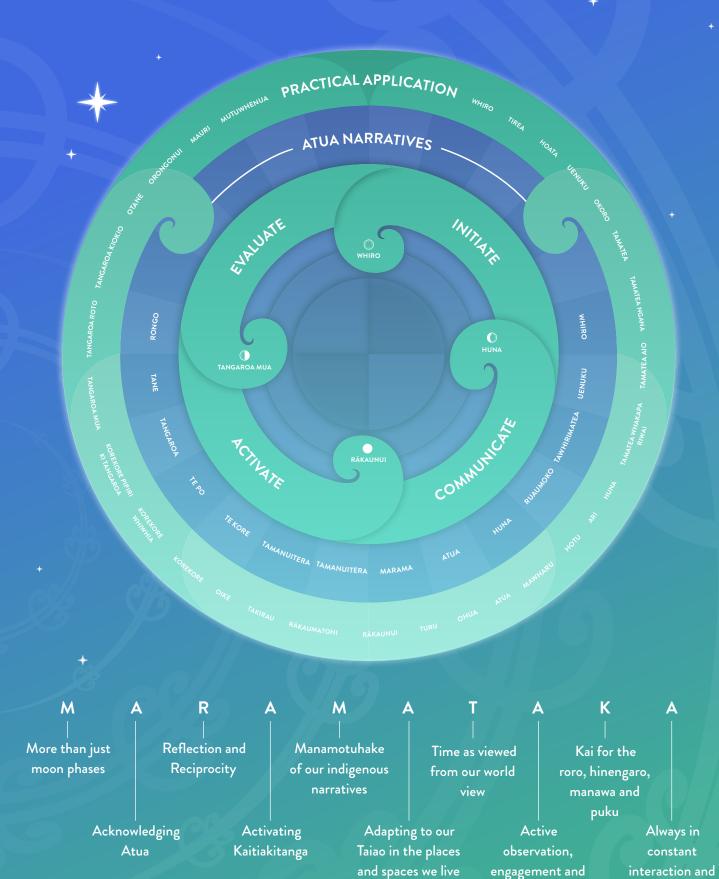
'Go with the flow, recognise water will always find its way through the greatest obstacle'

Our greatest successes come from our greatest challenges and the resilience and grit that come from these times give us new tools for our kete (basket)! (Local Maramataka practitioner, September 2020)

Design Challenge Question

How might we support the re-indigenising of Mātauranga Māori to enhance individual and collective wellbeing?

Maramataka observations are assisting our whānau to better understand their relationship with themselves and others. An indigenous world view explains scientific correlation through Mātauranga Māori pūrakau which is intergenerationally transmitted in storytelling.



Maramataka Insights Report

9

iteration

application

Critical Learning and Observations

Through our work across a range of complex systems in conjunction with our observations of the application of Maramataka we have begun to notice some key learnings we think are important to note:

- Maramataka is being used as holistic wellbeing from an indigenous perspective.
- Communities are looking for alternative health and wellbeing solutions.
- There is a strong correlation between people and environment.
- Maramataka is assisting whānau to share their reflections on their personal mental health and wellbeing.

- Whānau are actively in prevention versus intervention practices.
- Whānau want the ability to choose alternative approaches along with clinical support.
- Communities have an increased awareness of how someone's environment (setting, place) can encourage unhealthy or healthy practices.

Reconnection to Culture

We are hearing that while the depth of the framework may have skipped generations due to the loss of Te Reo, whānau continued to pass down the practical knowledge. The revitalisation of maramataka is beginning to bridge the gap of these generations, that had Te Reo me ona tikanga stripped away, providing a framework for whānau to learn more about their cultural practices and knowledge. As we explore this further with whānau we will learn more about people connecting to cultural identity.

"My nanny always did her gardening by the moon, and I remember little things like how the willow trees looked when we would go fishing." (Kaumātua kaunihera, February 2020)

Healthy Families Whanganui Rangitīkei Ruapehu have been working with our rangatahi in the Whanganui region who are voicing their concerns about why there isn't a balanced appreciation of Māori perspectives. We heard from our young people talk about the value of Māori culture and its importance in today's world because they see Māori contexts as spaces where everyone has a role to play, everyone is valued and see Māori whānau mobilise quickly to support each other.



Whānau recognise the value of Te Ao Māori perspectives (Māori worldview) which helps to inform how they can connect. Our Rangatahi (young Māori people) feel Te Ao Māori perspectives and Te Reo Māori should be more important in Aotearoa. They can see and want others to see the value in Te Ao Māori and Te Reo Māori as a vital part of New Zealand. Rangatahi strongly believe that this kind of acceptance would make Aotearoa a better place for everyone.

"I think before the maramataka I had goals and expectations linked to capitalism and pakeha expectations. I would push myself to achieve regardless of how I felt, pushing aside being tired or stressed. The maramataka made me realise that it's okay to have slower periods and to not feel guilty, to slow down in life or stop what you're doing. It kind of helped the internal fight I was having with myself and taiāo, instead I try to flow myself and taiāo."

"My dad always took us diving at a specific time when the moon looked like a bowl, this told them that it was a good time to dive and fill the bowl with seafood. It has really strengthened the relationship with my dad and I, now realising that these days were Tangaroa phases and that the knowledge he held was a mātauranga of our tūpuna."

(Maramataka practitioner, February 2019)

Insights at a Glance

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Insight #1

People are using Maramataka to reflect and act on their individual and whānau wellbeing

Insight #2

Whānau are using Maramataka in their everyday lives

Insight #3

People are discovering they have an innate connection with Maramataka and a Te Ao Māori worldview

Insight #4

Maramataka is being used across natural and built environments

Insight #5

Our whanau are connecting to Maramataka as a practical tool, reintroducing a healthier and more holistic relationship with kai.



People are using Maramataka to reflect and act on their individual and whānau wellbeing

Health and Wellbeing

Whānau are using the Maramataka as a self reflective and self awareness tool. Whānau feel they have an increased understanding of their feelings, emotions and behaviours and so, as a result, they are more proactive in how they deal with everyday life.

What research is telling us;

Campbell and Burgess (2012) argue that local communities need to be empowered to have control over health agendas that affect them. We believe that the technological assumptions of Western psychiatry (Bracken, Giller, & Summerfield, 2016) make it singularly ill-suited to help with the sort of psychological and social problems that emerge in indigenous societies in the post-colonial period.

Maree Kopua, D., Kopua, M. A., & Bracken, P. J.. (2020). Mahi ā Atua: A Māori approach to mental health. Transcultural Psychiatry, 57(2), 375–383. https://doi.org/10.1177/1363461519851606



What we are hearing from our community;

"Using the Maramataka as a reflective tool has provided another layer of perspective and a bit of a moral compass for adjusting myself, or responding differently in certain situations and interactions"

> "I suffer from depression and anxiety and grief so this research has given me balance and peace... I am responsible for my actions and truths."

> > "The Maramataka has given me positive thoughts about my relationship with my whānau and friends with productive outcomes"

"Self-awareness. Understanding behaviours in myself, whare (house), whānau, that can be affected by different phases"

"I try my best to actively invest my time into following Maramataka and incorporating it into my everyday lifestyle. Over the past few years it has become permanent."

"I'm new to the application of Maramataka wisdom, I'm becoming aware of the different energy and how I respond or feel on that day"



Whānau are using Maramataka in their everyday lives

Making sense of the real world

Whānau shared how they are applying Maramataka in the different aspects of their lives. The accumulated stories show us they feel more effective and present in their lives.

Whānau have also shared how they are able to manage themselves and their own expectations in different contexts. As a result people are feeling more empowered. We are seeing that this mātauranga is innate for many people and has provoked their curiosity and desire to learn more.

What research is telling us;

Kaupapa Māori insights and evidence validate and affirm Māori practises and solutions. They acknowledge the relevance and success that Māori led solutions and approaches have played in achieving wellbeing for Māori. The validation of kaupapa Māori insights and evidence should be supported by a commitment of investment and routine translation of insights and evidence into policy, service development, planning and accountability processes.

(Broughton and McBreen 2014. Broughton D. McBreen K. 2014. Mātauranga Māori, tino rangatiratanga and the future of New Zealand science. Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand 45: 2, 83-88.)

(NZQA 2012. NZQA. 2012. Conversations on Mātauranga Māori. Wellington: New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA).



What we are hearing from our community;

"I work as a psychologist. Introducing Maramataka to my mahi, has meant I can be more in tuned when working with Māori whai I te ora. (Māori seeking wellness) I take note of days to kōrero on tough topics. When helping them process trauma, make sense of their experiences, emotions or thoughts I link it to my basic knowledge of the Maramataka. This has been well received and many of the whai i te ora have begun to incorporate this into their lives and pathway of recovery. I also link them into other platforms acknowledging that I am still learning myself, that I do not have all the answers. However, I also share my personal experiences of using the Maramataka for hauora (health) planning. Something I do weekly."

"Since embedding it into my life regularly l've learning about it felt and more healthy, confident and grounded. It helps explain times when I struggle. It's also a good way to mediate the pressures that come from a te ao pākehā (western) world. It's a gateway to te ao Māori, knowledge and tikanga especially for the those like me who live off their whenua (land)"

"As I am currently a full time university student as well as a part time policy worker it is important for my time to be planned and structured. Every Whiro I lay out what assignments, meetings and classes I have and (where possible) allocate days to complete those tasks based on the Maramataka"

"I am trying to note how it affects me personally. I am wanting to track how our tamariki (children) respond to it both at home and at kura (school)."



People are discovering they have an innate connection with Maramataka and a Te Ao Māori worldview

Mātauranga Māori

Maramataka is a body of knowledge handed down by tūpuna, that our whānau want to be more connected with. It is applied theory that brings about interconnectedness of tinana (body), hinengaro (mind), wairua (spirit), whānau (family) and taiao (environment). This is creating an interconnected holistic understanding for whānau of their health and wellbeing.

We are noticing those lost from cultural identity are finding Maramataka is a safe practice for reinvigorating a sense of cultural connection.

What research is telling us;

Mātauranga Māori is the pursuit and application of knowledge and understanding of Te Taiao, following a systematic methodology based on evidence, incorporating culture, values and worldview. Pūrākau and Maramataka comprise codified knowledge and include a suite of techniques empirical in nature for investigating phenomena, acquiring new knowledge, and updating and integrating previous knowledge. Pūrākau and Maramataka can be both accurate and precise, as they incorporate critically verified knowledge, continually tested and updated through time.

Hikuroa, D.. (2017). Mātauranga Māori—the ūkaipō of knowledge in New Zealand. Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand, 47(1), 5-10. https://doi.org/10.1080/03036758.2016.1252407



What we are hearing from our community;

"I use it to whakahauora (enable wellness). It helps me with connecting and expressing my Māoritanga. Which in turn makes sure my mental wellbeing is right. I make sure that my taha hinengaro, taha tinana, taha wairua and taha whānau align with the phase, season and Taiao. Such as high energy days I do more exercise. During the Tangaroa phase I drink more water and give my plants more water"

> "I have been focussing more on myself, past practices of our tūpuna and using natural resources in our whānau's daily lives. It is a natural tool/gift our tūpuna used and I want to bring it back into my whānau life."

> > "It is healing intergenerational trauma through ancestral knowledge"

"Maramataka makes sense to me because it connects me more to the ways our Tūpuna lived"

"Because it's Mātauranga Māori and makes sense to me that we can use it in our daily lives like our tūpuna."

"I like the idea of releasing and manifesting ceremonies so that I can plan and plant the intention I have for the marama"

"I try to live in an intentional way, maramataka teachings support mine and my whanau lifestyle in an organic, wholesome and thoughtful way and I am delighted daily by the guidance of this ancient kaupapa."



Maramataka is being used across natural and built environments

Environments where we live, learn, work and play

The Maramataka has shown that as a natural environmental system, there is acknowledgement amongst our users that the learnings are transferable across built environments too.

Taiao - Natural environment

A Te Ao Māori world view, the health of our natural environments also reflects the health of its people as indicated by this well known whakatauākī by Rangitihi Tahuparae, "Ko au te awa, ko te awa au - I am the river and the river is me". The iwi (tribe) and hapū (sub-tribe) of the Whanganui River have an inalienable connection with, and responsibility to "Te Awa Tupua" and it's health and wellbeing.

Personifications of the natural world

Mātauranga Māori systems and cultural values are considered something important that not only contributes to Māori success, but living by these values is seen as something that could provide Māori with strength and a better understanding of themselves and their place in the world.

Custodianship of the Maramataka is becoming more apparent with the continued implementation into everyday lives. There is growing interest in kaitiakitanga (guardianship) as iwi restore their environment and their culture.

The Maramataka is allowing an opportunity to engage with a personification of the Taiao through Māori Atua (Māori Gods) and kaitiaki (guardians) and as such allows the user to further develop their understanding of Atua.

Atua as original kaitiaki are an almighty presence and offer a sense of Māori champions in a world dominated by western philosophies on mythology. This allows for us as descendants of these Atua to emanate the role of kaitiakitanga that they portrayed and in turn enhance our own DNA with a superpower associated with our Atua (Te Ahukaramū, Charles Royal).

Traditionally, Māori believe there is a deep kinship between humans and the natural world. This connection is expressed through kaitiakitanga – a way of managing the environment.

Traditionally, there was an intimate relationship between people and their environment. The health of a community was reflected in its environment and vice versa. For example, if waterways

were unclear or polluted, something was amiss with the local people. Kaitiakitanga was based on this relationship.

Mātauranga Māori is considered by some scholars as incompatible with science (Howe 2016). Pūrākau and maramataka have hitherto generally been ignored or disregarded by the wider science community. What those who disregard it fail to comprehend is that pūrākau and maramataka is knowledge generated using the scientific method explained according to a Māori world view (Hikuroa, D, 2017).

We have noticed that whānau are discovering the value of a taiao-centred approach that can help nurture identity, wellbeing and Te Reo me ona Tikanga.

What we are hearing from our community;

"An example: If you are aware that it's Whiro, you can refocus, restart, re-adjust your goals."

> "Certain people feel gloomy around this phase as well. Being aware of this will help you work around it."

> > "I believe in the life force of Papatūānuku (earth mother)"

"Spiritual health and wellbeing is vital. What that means for people vary, for me it means being outside with Papa and Rangi and spending time with whānau, particularly kaumātua"

"A way to become more deeply connected with the natural world and my local environment, to learn the cycles of the moon, tide and seasons."

Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, 'Kaitiakitanga – guardianship and conservation', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/kaitiakitanga-guardianship-and-conservation/print (accessed 28 January 2021)

Hikuroa, D.. (2017). Mātauranga Māori—the ūkaipō of knowledge in New Zealand. *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 47(1), 5-10. https://doi.org/10.1080/03036758.2016.1252407



Our whānau are connecting to Maramataka as a practical tool, reintroducing a healthier and more holistic relationship with kai.

Mahinga Kai - food gathering and sustenance

The first and easiest practical application of the Maramataka is in the form of mahinga kai (food gathering practices). This in turn has supported positive mindsets towards exercise, nutrition, mental health and wellbeing in life.

Mātauranga Māori practices like Maramataka were required in pre-colonial times for selfsufficiency such as fishing, gardening, gathering wild plant food, this knowledge was highly valued and village life was so well attuned to ensure the survival of the village. Customary practices maintained the balance between communities and nature. For activities such as hunting birds, gardening and fishing, this ensured that resources were managed sustainably.

We noticed during COVID-19 that whānau wanted to reconnect to gardening and self-sustaining practices, fueling the existing movement of regenerative indigenous kai practices. Healthy Families Whanganui Rangitīkei Ruapehu has played a pivotal role growing a local regenerative, inclusive and resilient food system by backboning a Whanganui centric collective made up of local knowledge holders and stakeholders in the food system. This can be a catalyst for systemic change.

The Maramataka has helped our communities to learn a method of gardening that is a practical learning tool and has been helpful to get whānau practically activated with Mātauranga Māori and turning the tide on food sovereignty placing the control of food back into the local communities.

We believe that a regenerative kai system will lead to improved health and wellbeing of our people, foster multiculturalism, develop climate resilience, enhance the natural environment, create employment and empower communities through pou that guide the Whanganui Kai Ora collective.

Whānau: Our whānau and communities are connected by kai and are able to meaningfully participate in the food system.

Whanganuitanga: Our local values form the foundations of our food system - this means our local food system reflects who we are as people of Whanganui.

Resilience: Our local supply chains are secure against external disruptions such as ecological, economic or social upheaval.

Sustainable & Mana-Enhancing: Our kai is produced using sustainable practices which move our communities away from reliance, while uplifting human and environmental wellbeing.

Easiest Choice is the Healthiest Choice: Nutritious food is affordable and easy to access.

What research tells us:

Māori life was and is still very dependent on the Maramataka (Clarke & Harris, 2017; Hikuroa, 2017). As 70-80% of the earth is saturated by water through oceans, seas, rivers and lakes, the Maramataka should be understood as a key effector to sustaining life. Māori utilised their understanding of the Maramataka to construct a schedule around harvesting, as certain periods and phases favour the crops (Devonshire, 1997) This exhibits one prime example of how the Maramataka has been used in order to benefit one's hauora.

What we are hearing from our community;

"Māra reminds us that kai doesn't come from the supermarket, it comes from our taiao which is why it's so important that we make that connection and protect our taiao as our source."

> "I have recently started connecting maramataka rhythms within māra looking at optimal times for cultivating planting and harvesting"

"Māra, aside from kai for me it's exercise, meditation and reflection in one"

"I would love to see Maramataka moving into different dimensions. Harvesting rongoā (Māori traditional medicine), creating treatments and giving of mirimiri (massage) treatments."

"An onsite māra kai also means that we can participate in the communal practise of sharing kai and contributing to the growth of kai that can benefit more than just our nuclear."

TE TAI, A. O. (2019). Tangaroa Ara Rau: Tangaroa the Atua of Human Movement.

The Impact Opportunity

The case for change is clear - to address the severe systemic issues in Māori health a radical shift is required. This shift must be so inspirational that it cannot be mistaken for tinkering. The New Zealand government's recent announcement of significant health reform is the type of radical thinking we need. The Whanganui Rangitīkei Ruapehu district has a higher Māori population and we continue to die earlier from avoidable deaths than our Pākeha counterparts. It is refreshing to see that finally we have a government that is committed to do what is needed for health equity. Healthy Families has been pivotal in capturing narratives and listening to our Māori communities and the rhetoric is the same: Aotearoa needs to explore holistic health services created by Māori for Māori.

The Maramataka revitalisation movement demonstrates how Healthy Families are contributing to indigenous solutions to override the crippling impact of colonisation on Māori wellbeing.

The Whakamaua 2020 government report on Māori Health Action Plan, the Ministry of Health sets the Māori Health Action Plan 2020–2025 intended to contribute to healthy futures for Māori. The plan explicitly recommends the integration of mātauranga māori into the health and disability system and mātauranga Māori as a professional skill. It recognises mātauranga māori as a legitimate source of knowledge in Ministry and DHB funding and commissioning processes. The plan acknowledges the need to build knowledge and understanding of mātauranga Māori through research and evaluation to accelerate improved Māori health outcomes. Whakamaua was informed by the final report of the Health and Disability System Review (2019) which highlighted the importance of mātauranga Māori as a vehicle to provide cultural constructs for improving Māori health and wellbeing and the delivery of healthcare and services in Māori communities.

The next iteration will provide opportunities to measure our own narrative as indigenous and demonstrate the need for a whole of system reform to accelerate and spread the delivery of kaupapa Māori and whānau-centred services within a highly calibrated health system. We will move into a space of building a compelling body of evidence to show not only what is currently working in the prevention space but what can work in the prevention space.

There is an opportunity to strengthen rangatiratanga over hauora Māori, to empower Māori to shape care provision and give real effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, when leadership is supported at all levels of the prevention effort. Strengthening the prevention system requires constant reflection, learning and adaptation to ensure strategies are timely, relevant and sustainable. Long term commitment is required by multiple partners, from different sectors and at multiple levels to generate greater collective impact on the health of all New Zealanders.

Te Maramataka o Whanganui

An overlay calendar adapted to the phase names used in the lower reaches of the Whanganui River as published by the Whanganui River Trust Board

The patterns have been developed by Maramataka practitioners in the Whanganui rohe through tūpuna, kōrero, kaumātua interviews and personal observations and interactions. These patterns are always evolving and adapting seasonally and annually. It is mindful that the user use these as guidelines first to establish and journal their own personal journey through Maramataka to discover their own expertise knowledge in the places and spaces they live, learn, work and play.

Te Maramataka o Rangitīkei

An overlay calendar adapted through two Maramataka used in the Northern & Southern Mokai Patea Tribes.

The patterns have been developed by Maramataka practitioners in the Mōkai Pātea rohe through tūpuna, kōrero, kaumātua interviews and personal observations and interactions. These patterns are always evolving and adapting seasonally and annually. It is mindful that the user use these as guidelines first to establish and journal their own personal journey through Maramataka to discover their own expertise knowledge in the places and spaces they live, learn, work and play.

– Scan QR code



Whanganui Maramataka



Rangitīkei Maramataka

Call to Act

If you are interested in partnering and would like to find out more about this kaupapa please contact:



Meretini Bennett-Huxtable meretini.bennett-huxtable@teoranganui.co.nz

Phone: (021) 0531833

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Or for further info: www.healthyfamilieswrr.org.nz

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