

MAORI CULTURE NOT UNDERSTOOD BY ALCOHOL WORKERS

Alcohol Counsellors and therapists do not know enough about Maori culture and how to deal with Maori clients, according to ALAC's Maori Co-ordinator, NGAMARU RAERINO. Here he gives an introduction to some of the basics that everyone in the alcohol field should know.

The culture factor should be borne in mind by all workers in the field of alcohol.

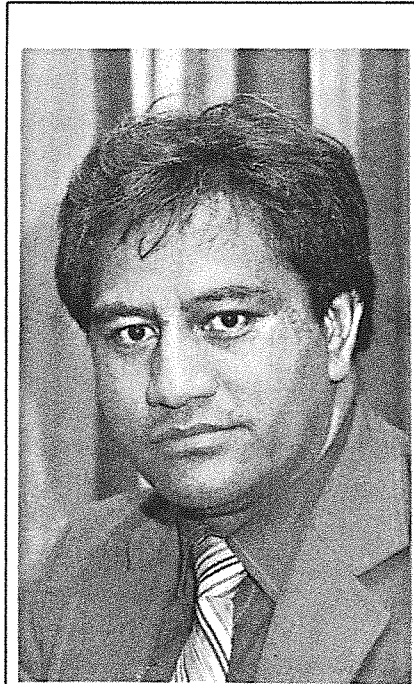
Every Maori is the integration and internalisation of the customs, and traditions of his tribe and area. The exceptions are so few it would hardly be worth mentioning. There would always be the few who will not want to be included in Maori activities. They would be either called "whakahihi" or "mana kore" both of which are derogatory terms.

It is not considered improper to ask another Maori - "What is your name? Where do you come from? Who are your relations" - and this goes on until some common ground is found. From then on the purpose of the meeting can proceed on a better plane.

The Maori considers man the most important feature on earth. Land is a strong second. A Maori pepeha or epigram highlights this - "Eaha te mea nui i te maku e kii atu he tangata he tangata...". "What is the greatest thing on earth? I will tell you. It is Man. It is Man". We would need to study this statement carefully. I feel that in order to work within the realms of this type of philosophical attitude everything must be planned and set to accommodate it in our daily activities.

I see that the biggest mistake a number of helping agencies make in offering the services of their organisation is that they attend too much to the present day situations and do not formulate a strategy nor a philosophical standpoint on either a six monthly term or a yearly term. Nor is there a long term plan. The Maori has a life long commitment to what he or she is doing. Their commitment to man and his surroundings is always uppermost in their minds.

If one was to lay a schedule of projects for the coming year covering services, both treatment and prevention, then it should be kept fairly close to this baseline. Then the main theme for the coming year most assuredly would be the improvement of the quality of life. Maximising the functional capacity of the individual, the group, family and the community. Not to concentrate whole-heartedly on ALCOHOL. The Maori does not go straight into the covered area too soon.



Ngamaru Raerino — the culture factor must be borne in mind.

At the other end of the scale you have the person who is intent on forcing out the Pakeha influences...they become the problem drinkers. They consider drinking with their mates and speaking Maori when they are full as the done thing for Maori people. There are two ways of life in New Zealand. Most Pakehas know one. All Maoris know two. Their way and the Pakeha way. This heavy drinking does cause the deterioration of maori culture. Formal controls administered by enforcement officers do not seem to have the desired effect of instilling care. What is required is an internalised form of control. The Maori people to have a vested interest in the drinking establishments.

Maori people always seek out their relatives no matter what area of the globe they reside in. So the coming together of Maori people should not be viewed as a bad thing. Quite the opposite - they will most probably form their own control measures. Most Maori people are reluctant to refuse an invitation to go out with their mates to the pub. Finally I think more emphasis should be placed on better and positive aspects of the Maori and any other individual.

To appreciate the methodology of working with the Maori people one must understand taha Maori, the Maori perspective. Or have a working knowledge of those aspects of Maoritanga that encompasses your work. For example such things as Ihi are bandied about by many people without much depth or explanation as to the full importance of the terms. These would be the intangibles of the culture, the abstract. To deal with the Maori the worker or therapist will definitely need to know what influences his behaviour and what are the best methods of working with him or her.

IHI The psychic force from within the individual that motivates him into action.

WEHI The aura that surrounds the individual after he psyches himself up. The appearance is normally forboding. Fearsome.

MANA The spiritual force conferred on the individual from outside himself. Given to him for deeds he has done or for the status he holds. The force gives the individual charisma.

When all of these combine well in the individual there appears on and around the person a spirituality. It could be of love, peace, care or Maoriness. The individual, the occasion, the activity in its own right has a life force. Something that energises the whole situation. This is called "MAURI."

The Mauri can be awakened . . . Whakaoho

It can be pacified . . . Whaka rata

INTANGIBLES	TANGIBLES
Esoteric knowledge	Day to Day living
Kauae Runga	Kauae Raro
IHI	WHANAU
WEHI	HAPU
MANA	IWI
TAPU	AROHAI
	WHANAUNGATA
	NGA
WAIKUA	MANAAKI
MAURI	TANGIHANGA

All this kind of activity is best centred on the Marae.

A QUOTE BY RANGINUI WALKER

BEING A MAORI IS

Having the greatest Koro and Kuia in the world.
Respecting your Kuamatua because they have deserved it.
Having 250,000 brothers and sisters.
Fouling up the Government with statistics.

Having nowhere for the tamariki to go and getting a visit
from the police who want to see them.
Not laughing at your tamariki when they mispronounce your
korero. Tough korero.
Not giving up the struggle for survival.
Waiting patiently for another, Ngata, Buck or Te Kooti

To aroha paua and mussels, and to be told you have to have a
Pakeha permit.
To know the difference between a Maori, a Maori-Pakeha, a
Pakeha-Maori, a Pakeha and to be aware of the last two.
To never drink alone.
To be able to dodge daggers at Pakeha social gatherings.
To listen to all-white administrators and Uncle Toms tell you
that we are all Kiwis, and not to know what it is.

To pray to God before a hui.
Having a Pakeha tell you that it is wrong to believe in more
than one God, and listen to him tell you about God, Jesus
Christ, the Holy Ghost, the Virgin Mary, St Patrick, St
Francis, Joseph Smith etc.....

Too welcome a Pakeha at a Marae with the height of Maori.
poetic art and to receive a cup-of-tea conversation in reply.
To miss work because so many of your relations are dying.
Fighting for the Kiwi Government to save the country from
evils of communism and fighting the Government to save your
land.

Owning land and not being able to use it. Going to school to
eat your kai. Watching the teacher teach the other kids.
Punching a pakeha in the mouth because he called you
dumb. Getting your Pakeha spouse to go and ask the Landlord
for the flat. Belonging to a particular tribe which is the
best in the country. Believing your canoe is most certainly
better than the Queen Mary.

Having your friends and relatives accuse you of being a thief
because you drive a new car, earn more than \$7000, wear a tie
and have a new home. Thinking theres something wrong with
your colour T.V. when it appears to be hooked up to Great
Britian. Feeding everyone wwho comes to your door and getting
the best china out. Buying new shoes for your kids because he
gave his to his cuzzie. Watching Tarzan save Africa. Liking
Air New Zealands tail. Running yourself broke to service the
marae to service the whole world.

BEING MAORI IS SAD, BEING MAORI IS HARD, BEING MAORI IS TO
LAUGH, BEING IS TO CRY, BEING MAORI IS ME;

BEING MAORI IS FOREVER