



Mānawatia Te reo Māori. Ka piki te ora o ngā iwi katoa

E rere ana tātou i roto te kōripo o tēnei puna o te reo Māori  
Kua ruku hōhonu tātou ki ngā mīharotanga katoa o te reo tuatahi  
kātahi ka puea ki te ao hurihuri, ā, ko tā tātou  
he tākaro i roto i te wairehu  
he whakawhiti kōrero i te kārohirohi o te wai  
he puta atu ki te hāpori kia rangona whānuitia ai tēnei reo  
mā ō ngutu, mā ōku ngutu ka ora ai te reo  
Turuturu ō whiti, whakamaua, kia tina, haumi hui e tāiki e

The New Zealand Psychological Society Te Rōpū Mātai Hinengaro o Aotearoa acknowledges the mana and the treasure of our first language and joins with everyone to celebrate *Te Wiki o te Reo Māori*.

Te reo Māori has its own beauty and standing, naming the essences, landforms, places and intimate relationships that we have within Aotearoa. *Toi tū te kupu, toi tū te mana, toi tū te whenua<sup>i</sup>.*

As Ruki Tobin (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahu and Ngāti Whātua) elaborates<sup>ii</sup>

Te reo Māori is the key to understanding our past, our present, and our future as united peoples of Aotearoa. It is a living entity that draws its mauri or life force from the user. It opens the door to a different world that invites you to learn more about your connections to the taiao or environment and your place in the whakapapa or genealogy of the universe.

Te reo Māori will always have a place in Aotearoa. *Te Wiki o te Reo Māori* is an opportunity for all of us to think about how te reo Māori could have a place within our lives.

*Te Wiki o te Reo Māori* was born out of the struggle to resist the deliberate and relentless suppression by European settlers to Te reo Māori. Te Reo Māori Day on September 14, 1972, gave recognition to *Te Petihana Reo Māori<sup>iii</sup>* to parliament on that day. Over 30,000 signatures were presented by representatives of Ngā Tamatoa, Victoria University's Te Reo Māori Society, and the New Zealand Māori Students Association that called for the recognition and revitalisation of te reo Māori. It was expanded to a week to give us *Te Wiki o te Reo Māori* in 1975.

Paraone Gloyne (Ngāti Raukawa ki Wharepūhanga, Ngāti Maniapoto) has extended this further to Mahuru Māori urging us all to speak te reo Māori for the entire month of September. However, this kaupapa and *Te Wiki o te Reo Māori* is not about speaking our first language for a short time but everywhere all the time. *Ehara i te mea me kōrero te reo Māori i Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori anake. Me kōrero tātou i te reo Māori i ngā wā katoa. Kia māori anō te reo Māori ki Aotearoa.<sup>iv</sup>*

The Māori language has been one of our two official languages since 1987. Tangata whenua have shared this language. For those of us that identify as Pākehā and Tauīwi, to honour this *taonga* we can begin learning it. This requires us to do so with humility and acknowledging the *kaitiakitanga* of the language that resides with *Tangata Whenua*, as part of the customary rights enshrined in *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*.

As psychologists, mental health and well-being are always at the forefront of our concerns. Language is inseparable from how we think, and essential for constructing who we are. To be able to support those in our communities we need our psychologists and health workers to be able to speak te reo Māori. Equally we need the immediate preliminary helpers, such as whānau, teachers, our sports coaches, our doctors who are in their everyday lives to speak our first language. *Kia ūkaipō te reo*<sup>v</sup>.

Language has the power to filter and make sense of our world. It carries unique ideas and concepts. For example *Whiti Te Rā*, offers one of the pathways to help people back to wellbeing. It practically mobilises ideas from *whakapapa* (genealogy), *taiao* (environment), *wairua* (spirituality), *reo māori* (language, custom), *mahi-a-toi* (creative arts) *take pū te whānau* (family values). Practitioners who are trained in this and other models will have the necessary expertise to guide those seeking to change their lives, especially tangata whenua.

As an English Indian migrant to Aotearoa/New Zealand in 2002, I feel remarkably lucky to have had the opportunity to learn te reo Māori. It has not always been easy. I am not a natural linguist. I am frequently the slowest and least eloquent in the room. I give thanks to remarkable generosity from my teachers, those inside or outside classes. Te reo Māori has taken me to the farthest reaches of our country with *noho marae* visits that have helped me to be less ignorant of *tikanga* (protocols) and increased my awareness of *Te Ao Māori*. Inevitably, I have made mistakes. I urge all of you to not let this be a barrier to learning this treasure. *Mā te hapa, ka ako*. As a country, we have come a long way from the divisive politics that have surrounded te reo Māori. I am no longer asked so often in a quizzical or challenging way why I am learning one of the official languages of our country.

Over the last 20 years most Pākehā and Tauīwi have shifted from the Zero zone where they are adverse, disparaging and resistant to the Māori language. Many are now in the Passive Zone, who are receptive but not yet engaged in learning Te reo Māori. The challenge is for us to move to the Active Zone to be using, promoting and supporting the language in different ways. *Mouri ora rā me te mea, he reo e kōrerotia ana, he reo ora*.<sup>vi</sup>

At present most of our institutions continue to be dominated by the English language from our Parliament to our kindergartens. This crowds out our first language. It contributes to limiting Te reo Māori to becoming a functional everyday language and reaching the stage of intergenerational transmission. All of us will need to commit to becoming active learners of this remarkable language. Inspired by Te wiki o te reo and other movements such as Te Ataarangi, for the past 6 years, I have exclusively spoken te reo on Saturdays at home and in public. The majority reply in English and they are positive about our first language being spoken aloud. My dream is that one day I will be able to walk around our city streets and speak Te reo Māori fluently just as we would any other country who have been able to uphold their first language.

As Tauīwi/Pākehā, if you have not already begun your lifelong journey, *kia kaha*. Why not start during *Te Wiki o te Reo Māori*. A good place to begin is with the correct pronunciation of people, organisations, concepts, and places. If you have started, recommit to your lifelong journey to take your te reo beyond a basic level; take care to speak with humility especially in the company of those less privileged than yourself. *Kia ngākau māhaki*. We need to make a special effort to sit and listen when we are in the presence of tangata whenua; speak the everyday *te reo ōpaki* unless given permission to speak the formal, *te reo ōkawa*; and use whatever power you have to shift resources to tangata whenua so they can be at the centre of renormalising their language. Learning te reo is not enough on its own. It is part of the struggle for economic and social justice and self-determination.

The New Zealand Psychological Society Te Rōpu Mātai Hinengaro maintains a power sharing arrangement as part of its executive and maintains principle 4 of its Code of Ethics Social Justice and Responsibility to Society.

They have recently developed Te Rautaki o Te Reo Māori, a strategy to recognise te Reo Māori and the tikanga embedded within as a treasure and promote its use. As psychologists, we know that increasing visibility of te reo Māori is essential for increasing acceptance of other cultures, and by honouring *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* we can create a just future for everyone in our communities.

Whiua ki te ao, whiua ki te rangi, whiua ki ngā iwi katoa<sup>vii</sup>

**Submitted by:**

Quentin Abraham Past President on behalf of Rōpū Mātai Hinengaro o Aotearoa -The New Zealand Psychological Society

**Background to the New Zealand Psychological Society**

The New Zealand Psychological Society (NZPS) Te Rōpu Mātai Hinengaro is the largest professional association for psychologists in New Zealand. It has around 2000 members, including students, and aims to improve individual and community wellbeing by representing, promoting and advancing the scientific discipline and practice of psychology.

**Contacts:**

We welcome media contact at NZPS office, at [office@psychology.org.nz](mailto:office@psychology.org.nz) or phone: 04 499 1411 or [Psychology.org.nz](http://Psychology.org.nz)

---

<sup>i</sup> Hold fast to culture, for without language, without mana, and without land, the essence of being a Māori would no longer exist

<sup>ii</sup> Kaihautū of the National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa

<sup>iii</sup> the Māori Language Petition

<sup>iv</sup> May te reo Māori become normal once again in New Zealand

<sup>v</sup> Nurturing the language throughout all our homes

<sup>vi</sup> Life is like a spoken language, a living language.

<sup>vii</sup> Share it (the language) Unto the skies, with the world. With everyone. Whakarongo nā Te Kumeroa Ngoingoi Pēwhairangi (Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Koi).