

# Aroha





*Awhi Mai*  
*Awhi Atu*  
*Aroha Mai*  
*Aroha Atu*  
*Tatou Tatou e*

## Foreword

*He mihi Aroha atu tēnei kia koutou e te whānau kātoa, ko te wāhanga ki wa tātou mate maha kua mihi ia kua tangihia kua ea.*

*Ko rātou kia rātou ko tātou ēnei nga kanohi ora kia tātou kia ora ra kia tātou kātoa.*

*Ko te Tūmanako kia tau tonu iho te Tama a te Rangimarie ki runga ia tātou kātoa i roto i te maumahara ko te mea nui ko tō AROHA.*

Te Reo Māori is a beautiful language. When we hear the word ‘aroha’, it conveys a meaning that has great depth and breadth. It is so much more than just a word, it is an expression of a way of being. Across the world, there are so many words that express different forms of love. But it is about ‘your truth’ that tells the real story of giving and receiving aroha. Aroha is most often translated as ‘love’, and that is a powerful and beautiful word, but in English it is often used in many ways that do not always signify great depth.

Aroha from a tikanga point of view is all about giving unconditionally. It is to observe closely, to listen carefully, to see clearly, and to feel sensitively what is going on for others - to see the light and the soul of others, through any and all situations. In a fast moving world, we need to pause and reflect more, to allow aroha to flow, and to deepen our interactions and relationships with each other.

A stone skimmed across a calm lake can skip many times, lightly touching the surface. But it is also the ripples that permeate out - and where the stone began its movement and where it finally sinks - that will leave a lasting impression. So too with aroha - constantly shared, unconditional and unwavering to all others.

Naida Glavish



## He Ruruku mo te Ako

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*Whakarongo mai! Whakarongo mai!  
Whakarongo mai ki te ia tipua  
Whakarongo mai ki te ia tawhito  
Whakarongo mai ki te hā o Tāne  
Ko te hā tēnei i ahu mai i te pūpuke, i  
ahu mai i te hihiri, i ahu mai i te mahara  
Tēnei te aro mai i tōu hā, tēnā te aro atu i tūku hā  
Ko te hā nō whea, ko te hā nō Tāne  
Ko te hā nō whea, ko te hā nō Rongo  
Ko Rongo ki te whakatipua, ko Rongo ki te whakatawhito  
Ko Rongo ki te maimai aroha, he aroha  
Hara mai te toki!  
Haumi e! Hui e!  
Taiki e!*

Let us open our hearts  
Open our hearts to the divine vibration  
Open our hearts to the original vibration  
Open our hearts to the love of humanity  
Love that originates from the thought,  
energy and memory of love itself  
You give me your love, I return my love to you  
Love, originating from the base of humanity  
Love, originating from the foundation of peace  
The divine peace, the original peace  
The eternal peace that extends love to all  
Let us engrave these words for eternity  
Unite! Let us be one  
We have united in conscious thought

## Introduction

It has been said that in the Māori world the heart is more powerful than the mind. The stories and examples handed down from our tīpuna tell us so. One example is when Tane went up into the heavens to get the three baskets of knowledge. He asked Io-Matua-Kore how he would know which baskets were the right ones to select and the answer was “Your heart will tell you”. In essence, the mind will rationalise but the heart will sense the truth and tell you what is good for you and what is not good for you – it is aroha that feeds the heart.

Naida Glavish relates the whakatauākī that was given by Aperahama Te Taonui to his people:

*He taniwha kei te haere mai  
He taniwha tae kuhu, tae huna  
Kore rawa koe e kitea  
Kia kitea rāno koe ki nga kanohi a ō mokopuna  
Ina kite koe  
Hipokingia koe to mokopuna ki te Korowai Aroha o te Whānau*

*A demon is on its way  
This demon will arrive by stealth, by deceit  
You will not see it coming  
Until you see it in the eyes of your mokopuna  
When you see it, the only solution will be  
To wrap your mokopuna in the loving cloak of the whānau*

*This small booklet will share some of the many stories that were told by whānau about how they are wrapping their tamariki and mokopuna in the Korowai Aroha o te Whānau.*



## What is aroha?

When talking to different whānau at many hui around the country we were told that aroha could be broken down into these three separate words:

**ARO** direction, focus, presence  
**OHA** generosity  
**HA** divine breath or life force

People also felt that aroha represents a higher purpose for doing things - it is non-judgemental and it is about the spirit in which you do things, as much as it is about the things that you do.

When discussing this topic, one woman said “Aroha is like breathing in all the mamae, hurt and worries of another and breathing out love, joy and hope”.

An old whakataūāki says - ‘Aroha tētahi ki tētahi’ - which means to give aroha unconditionally, one to another, always, in all things, so we know it is reciprocal and unconditional. In our daily lives it is often aroha that prompts people to go out of their way to do things for others; for example, the way that our people support whānau who are in need. This might be by making sure tamariki are safe, helping with housing and jobs, delivering firewood to the kaumātua and even helping out with money.

In our everyday lives we give aroha in different ways and at different times. What we don’t do very often is talk about what aroha is, or think about how we demonstrate aroha and make it a conscious part in all we do in our lives.



## Aroha is there when you...

- Visit whānau who are unwell or need cheering up
- Notice a child doing well and give compliments for their efforts
- Give an unexpected gift
- Treat people with respect, fairness and kindness
- Build a loving home that welcomes all who visit
- Go out of your way to help someone
- Do the little things that help others, and make people feel special or that they really matter.

## Aroha is...

**Aroha is** about showing your affection and appreciation of other whānau members without reserve.

**Aroha is** unconditional, based on the understanding that all members of the whānau belong to you and you to them – there is a collective feeling of love, regard and respect for one another that is totally accepting, no matter what.

**Aroha is** the basis of strong whānau – strong whānau let each member know on a daily basis, through words or action, that they are loved and appreciated.



## Whānau mahi - aroha

A number of hui were held to find out what people thought would be seen and heard in strong thriving whānau. Here are some of the stories that were told about aroha and the different ways that we express it.

### *Aroha - curiosity is a good thing*

In any whānau, hapū and iwi the expression of aroha is overflowing when the whānau come together at tangihanga to grieve as one for their whānau who has passed. One time a woman new to the whānau asked why they were attending a tangihanga for someone they didn't know. The reply was: "Anyone who comes and lies in state on our marae is 'ours', whether we know them or not and we give all our aroha to them and their whānau, every single time."

The woman in the story was impressed by the depth of aroha that was an everyday practice in this whānau.

*Do you know of any other practices that show such aroha? Just watch and listen and you will see them everywhere.*



## **Aroha - traditions**

A kuia, who was renowned throughout her iwi for her love and laughter with witty jokes, was also known for her steam puddings, which were the best for miles around. At tangihanga or special occasions, without fail, she would call into the marae to make her steam puddings for the hakari. At Christmas time whānau would receive puddings for their table with an extra one for the freezer.

The aroha with which she made those hundreds and hundreds of puddings made them so delicious and special to look forward to, and whānau would savour their taste until next time.

*Are there any little things that your whānau do that show or carry on a tradition of aroha?*

*What acts of giving and kindness could you begin in your whānau?*

## **Aroha - labour of love**

At one marae, when there were tangihanga or large gatherings, you could always count on one of the kuia trundling along in her rickety old truck which would be filled to the brim with her mārakai for the people. The kuia did this right up until her old age. She only stopped when her body could no longer bend down to work her gardens.

You might say that's manaaki - and it was - but it was her aroha for her people that motivated her.



## **Aroha - one for all**

Someone said: “Every year Dad would put in a garden and we kids would weed it while Dad was at work. That garden was so big, it took us forever to do the weeding and water it. The thing is, we knew that most of the vegetables would be given away to whānau in the surrounding area so that all the little ones were well fed.”

*Kaumātua also talked about giving out vegetables to whānau from their garden and the joy it gave them when they saw the happiness with which they were relieved.*

*If this ever happens to you, then stay awhile and help them in their garden just to spend time with them. Maybe take your whole whānau to help so that they learn how to not only tend a garden but how to extend aroha.*

## **Aroha - day to day things**

A young man said that his life was full of aroha. He said it was in the little things his whānau did together, like spending time at the beach looking for driftwood or playing in the backyard or at the local park - just having a good time together!

He believed it was so important for him to really get to know his kids – to listen to them and encourage them to talk, to read, to spend time with their kaumātua (and to hear the stories), to do small jobs and care for others in their whānau.

Yeah...these were the little things he remembered from his upbringing that helped him to be a good dad.

*What are the things that you do with your whānau to help strengthen and uplift them?*

## *Aroha - kindling kindness*

Another person said that at one time their whānau had three macrocarpa trees which had grown very tall and were in danger of falling down in a storm. So the men, young and not so young, were all called together to fell the trees and cut them up for firewood. For weeks and months afterwards the men would come every now and then and take away a load for themselves and for the kaumātua (koroua and kuia) in their area - to keep them warm in the winter months. It was the same group of men who would also go fishing and share the catch with the kaumātua. And sometimes their whānau would go and collect the kaumātua and take them to hui in the district or take other kai, like pūhā and watercress, to them.

*These acts of kindness are done out of aroha for the kaumātua who are treasured by whānau far and wide. It is an everyday thing - even in the cities whānau dig into their freezers and pull out frozen kaimoana or other such delicacies to give to their kaumātua.*

## *Aroha - gift of time*

A memory recalled by a woman when she was nine years old, tells about how she went to her grandparents for Christmas; she was just one of many grandchildren. One day she was upset with some local children who had bullied her. To smooth away her anger her grandfather put her on his bicycle and rode down to the local store and told her to choose something special, just for her. She chose bananas which were a real treat back then because they were very rare. She remembers that moment as special because her grandfather had not only given her a treat, but also the gift of his time and attention which made her feel loved and important.

*What a fine example for our young people to learn about how aroha is carried down to the next generations.*

*Give your whānau as much time and attention as you can.*



## **Aroha - acceptance**

Another whānau talked about a young boy who always seemed to get himself into trouble with the law. Whenever he did, he would turn up for a 'chat' with the old man. This happened many times over the years and each time he would be offered a 'cuppa-tea', food and some 'advice' which often came in the form of a good 'telling off'. The thing is, the young boy knew that whatever he did he would still be accepted by the whānau. He was so predictable that the Police would ring up to ask if he had shown up yet.

## **Aroha - always giving**

In one town there were these two 'Aunties' who would have all the naughty kids of the area 'hanging out' with them. Quite often when they were parked in town you would see all the kids gathering around their car just chatting and laughing at one story or another. In many instances the 'Aunties' would foster many of the kids; sometimes though, they would have 'too much week left at the end of their money'.

Over the Christmas time they would bundle all the kids of the town who had nothing else to do but get into trouble, and take them off to 'camp out' at the beach. Here they would gather kaimoana, pūhā or watercress from the surrounding areas and cook them on an open fire right there on the beach. Everyone would have a thoroughly great time.

*This is an example of aroha being consistent, unconditional and totally accepting. We found that there were similar stories where, no matter what, people would be accepted.*

*What stories do you have in your whānau where people are always welcome?*

### ***Aroha - reminders***

A woman talked about her mother who would display the gifts that had been given to her on her wall, in her lounge. Over the years these gifts filled the walls and included clocks, ornaments, tea towels, kitchen utensils, little cards made by a mokopuna and the list goes on. Every time her mother was given a gift, the woman and her siblings would think “Oh no, there goes another one”. In the end the siblings tried to take them down as they felt the ‘gifts’ had been up there long enough and were gathering dust. Their mother, a kuia by now, said not to touch them as they were treasured taonga of ‘aroha’ that had been given to their whānau. When the kuia passed away the woman looked at all those dusty tea towels and gifts on the wall and just couldn’t take them down. They were reminders, left behind by their mother, of the aroha that filled their home.

*This story is an example of aroha in action. Think about how you as a whānau like to show aroha to others and how you like to experience aroha in your lives.*



## **Aroha - brotherly love**

This story comes from an area where the men are great fishermen and are known for their expert seamanship - plying their rough, isolated seas for a living. A man tells of the time when his brother, son and a friend went missing at sea in a great storm. The authorities had made the decision that it was too dangerous to look for the missing men so the search was called off.

The brother denied the claim that nothing could be done and, against all advice and entreaties for him to stay, he went out to sea in search of his loved ones. He said the sea was as bad as it could get, the water was white and the swells were huge. But he was a skilled skipper and knew the waters well. He had an idea about where his brother might be so he headed off searching in that general direction. After some time he saw some shapes bobbing up and down in the surging waves and felt great relief, for he knew he had found his brother. They all returned to land safely where they were met with joy, celebration and relief.

This story is talked about as one of the great rescues of that area. It was aroha for his brother that prompted this man to take his life in his hands and snatch his loved ones from certain death.

## ***Te ihi, te wehi, te wana!***

*Find out if you have similar stories and share them with your tamariki and mokopuna. We hold gems of aroha in our stories that we share around firesides, at the marae, at kai time and better still at bed time.*

## Whānau kete

Aroha is shown in many ways and is something that you and your whānau probably do without thinking.

The following is a simple checklist that highlights some actions that whānau do. You can look through the list to see those you are already doing, and think about what you could do more of or what you could start doing.

### *In our whānau...*

- We show our appreciation for each other by our kind words and deeds
- Our homes are filled with happiness and laughter, most of the time
- We think about the needs of others before our own
- We cuddle our tamariki and mokopuna whenever we can to help fill their days with our aroha
- We lend a hand to whānau in need
- We prepare our meals with aroha and no matter how humble, our kai is always delicious and satisfying
- We share whatever we have - kai, clothes, time
- We take people as they come, without judging them, and treat them in the spirit of aroha which warmly accepts all things and all people.





# Start a whānau kete

*What could you do more of?*

Lined area for writing responses.

## Whānau karakia

### *Whakatimatanga – To begin a hui*

Whakatupua te aroha nō Rangi, nō Papa  
Whakatupua te aroha nō Rongo, nō Tāne  
Whakamaui te aroha mō te tāngata  
Kia tupu, kia whai hua!  
Hui ē!  
Tāiki ē!

*May the love of the Universe bind us  
May the love of the Pillars of Humanity bind us  
May the love for humanity be confirmed  
To grow and prosper collectively  
Let us be one  
We have united in conscious thought*

### *Whakamutunga – To end a hui*

Whakamaui te aroha ki a Rangi e tū iho nei  
Whakamaui te aroha ki a Papa e takoto ake nei  
Whakamaui te aroha ki a Rongo, ki a Tāne  
Whakamaui kia tina  
Tina  
Hui ē!  
Tāiki ē!

*Affirm the love of the Universe to bind us  
Affirm the love of Mother Earth to bind us  
Affirm the love from the Pillars of Humanity to bind us  
Bind us and our actions  
Consciously as one  
Let us be one  
We have united in conscious thought*



## Live life with a generous and humble spirit

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Do things in the right spirit  
*Expect nothing in return*

Accept people as they are  
*Do not judge the person, only their actions*

In times of trouble help others find their hope and direction  
*Everyone has the spark of greatness within them*

***What do you do to ignite the spark?***



## The Tohu

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The Tohu (Māori design element or symbol) depicted throughout this E Tu Whānau booklet of aroha symbolises my journey, your journey, our journey as whānau. The stories in this booklet show that aroha is reflected, given and received in many ways and forms. The three stylised figures represent whānau, hapū and iwi, highlighting the whakataukī, *“He aha te mea nui o te Ao – he tangata, he tangata, he tangata”*.

The kōwhaiwhai design depicts nurturing, support and guidance; while the tāniko design symbolises leadership and strength. The poutama design represents within this kaupapa different levels of learning and teaching.

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