

# Whanaungatanga

It's about being  
connected

# **Whītiki te tangata, mārama te kitea**

The tighter the bond,  
the brighter the light

Whanaungatanga creates cohesion,  
a sense of unity, and a sense of  
togetherness amongst the people.

Whanaungatanga can be expressed through  
the relationships that are developed between families  
and their communities. The stronger and more  
cohesive these relationships, the more vibrant  
and enriching communities are.

## **Dedication to Ann Dysart**

*Ko Tinana te waka  
Ko Tu Moana te tangata  
Ko Te Rarawa te iwi  
Ko Te Tao Maui te hapū  
Ko Paparangi te tipuna  
Ko Matihetihe te marae.*

This booklet is dedicated to  
the memory of Ann Dysart,  
visionary kahukura  
of E Tū Whānau.

# Kupu Ruruku

## Incantation

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**Tiwha Tiwha te pō,  
Tiwha Tiwha te ao**

**Tupu mai ai te ka uru  
o te ora**

**i te kukunetanga o  
te tangata**

**Kia tupu, kia rea, kia  
whiwhi, kia whano**

**Kia puta ki te whaiao ki  
Te Ao Mārama!**

**Ka tū te tangata i  
Te Ao Tūroa e tū nei**

**Tū-te-winiwini,  
tū-te-wanawana**

**Tū-hikitia rā, tū-hāpainga ra**

**Nō Rangī, nō Tū, nō Tāne,  
nō Rongo**

**Kia hua mai te ora i  
te kawa ora, he kawa ora**

**Turuturu o whiti,  
whakamaua a kia tina!**

**Tina!**

**Hui e!**

**Tāiki e!**

**Life's mysteries are  
slowly revealed**

**Evolving from the font  
of life itself**

**Family is nurtured in the  
womb of humanity**

**Growing, acquiring the  
traits of brilliance**

**To emerge with the  
understanding to excel!**

**Enabled from the divine to  
utilise the energy  
of the universe**

**Standing with strength  
and purpose**

**Being resolute and confident**

**That I descend from the  
divine family**

**That my existence comes  
from the absolute order of life**

**Let us be firm in this belief!**

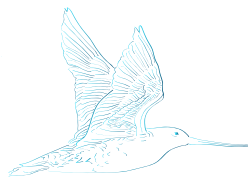
**Bind it firm!**

**Let us be one!**

**We have united in conscious  
thought!**



## Kupu Whakataki Foreword



Ko tōku whānau te uho o tōku ao  
Ko tōku whānau tōku ngākau nui  
Ko tōku whānau te ao.

My family is the centre of my universe  
My family is my heart  
And my family is my world.

Through the many decades that I have been working alongside whānau, I have often seen the beauty that is whanaungatanga. Whether whānau come together to celebrate birth, great achievements or milestones in a person's life through to the passing of a beloved whānau member, it is whanaungatanga that keeps them moving forward.

Whanaungatanga creates the cohesion and connectivity that keep whānau strong and vibrant. It is about how far whānau will go to support each other and it embodies the understanding that we are not alone. When we take positive actions and make decisions collectively for the betterment of the whānau, that is whanaungatanga.

Many issues challenge whānau and even strong whānau have problems like everyone else, but bad times do not destroy strong whānau. Strong whānau work together to overcome challenges, they invest their time and energy in activities they can do together, and they do not let other priorities take too much time away from this.

Above all else, whanaungatanga is about the strong and loving relationships that each has with the other.

**Teresea Olsen**, Kōkiri Marae Keriana Olsen Trust, Seaview, Wellington



## Kupu Arataki

### Introduction

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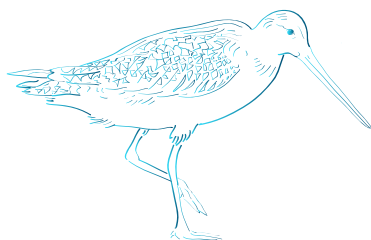
Whanaungatanga is the way that we stay connected with one another – it is the glue that keeps us close. Whanaungatanga nurtures and sustains the connections we have with the people we love and care about. It strengthens our sense of who we are and who we belong to.

At a practical level, whanaungatanga is about the relationships that each of us has with others. It's about the times that we enjoy one another's company over a meal, come together for a hui, or share special occasions such as 21sts, weddings and, sadly, when we gather for tangihanga. Whanaungatanga is also about how far we will go as whānau to support each other.

The word *whānau* refers to the act of being born, but it is more than that. When a child is born, they enter into a whole genealogy that spans thousands of years, a web of human connections that are self-sustaining and life-giving.

When E Tū Whānau was being developed, a number of hui were held around the motu to find out what whānau thought would be seen and heard in strong thriving whānau. Six values emerged from this kōrero and we've developed a set of resources – including this booklet – around each of these values.

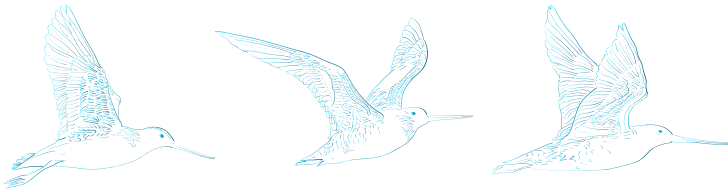
These resources aim to affirm the positive things that you are already doing, to share ideas, and to encourage you to take the time to think about what you want for your whānau.

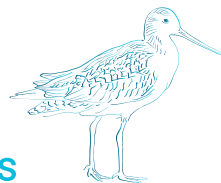




When children are born into a strong loving whānau, they are more likely to thrive and have a strong loving whānau of their own. Furthermore, when each child is born, they change the lives of those – the whānau – they have been born into. In this way, whanaungatanga changes to meet the needs of the whānau from generation to generation.

Around the globe, people talk about there being six degrees of separation – in New Zealand it is really only about two degrees that separate us. Wherever we go in Aotearoa, we often ask people we meet where they are from. This is followed by, “Do you know so and so?” Usually we continue asking until the other person knows someone that we also know. Doing this is a part of the whanaungatanga process, where we try to make new connections and build relationships based on relationships we already have.





# Whanaungatanga

## Key principles and practices

Whenever we think about a Māori value, we must remember that it is connected to other values. To think about whanaungatanga is to engage with whakapapa. Whakawhanaungatanga rests in tikanga – it is also about mana manaaki, aroha and kōrero awhi.

The word ‘whanaunga’ means *relation, relative or family*, and we can see this when we break the kupu down:

WHĀ	four
NĀU	belonging to you, yours
NGĀ	the (plural form)

Seen like this, whanaungatanga is the foundation of all rich relationships in life. These relationships can span (at least) four generations of tūpuna, relationships within our whānau, and relationships with others that we meet in daily life. In fact, connection to our tūpuna – who we carry on our shoulders – is what makes us able to relate to other people today. Connecting to other people through whanaungatanga is an invitation to encounter each other’s whakapapa and everything we stand for, as people and as whānau. Whanaungatanga is an invitation to bring our whole selves to relationships with other people.

***Mauria mai ō koutou mate kia whārikihia ki i te aroaro,  
kia mihia, kia tangihia, kia poroporoākitia.***

*Bring those who you carry with you to place in front of us  
So we may acknowledge, cry for, and farewell them.*

Whanaungatanga is also about an obligation to family relationships in the present time. It is the basis of our connections to everyone around us, such as our whānau, those we encounter on the marae or at work. Because whakawhanaungatanga asks us to present all of ourselves to people, it often means that relationships can carry on far into the future, growing in depth and meaning.



Whanaungatanga tells us that we are not alone, and that the whānau collectively supports, makes decisions and takes positive actions for the betterment of everyone. Through whanaungatanga, everyone in the whānau is connected; none of us live in isolation. Instead, whanaungatanga ensures that we are related to each other as people. Our lives are entwined – what affects one, affects all; when one person benefits, we all benefit. In this way, whanaungatanga reminds us that we share responsibility for each other.

Put another way, whanaungatanga begins with the whānau that surrounds us and reaches out to include everyone in the wider rohe in which we live. Whakawhanaungatanga extends outwards from our tūpuna, of whom we are the face in this present day. It is what makes meaningful connection with others possible; it also supports deep, long-lasting relationships with rich rewards for our whānau, communities and ourselves.

**Whanaungatanga is present when we:**

- **commit to our whānau as our first priority**
- **use our strengths and networks to support and advocate for one another**
- **know that our whānau is there to talk to, and that they'll back us up when we need their support**
- **see each other on a regular basis**
- **enjoy unplanned, spontaneous activities together**
- **pay special attention to the tamariki and rangatahi in the whānau, making sure they know they're loved, valued and respected**
- **believe whāngai are a vital part of the whānau.**





# Whanaungatanga

**The tighter the bond,  
the brighter the light**

**The tuakana is humble,  
the teina is diligent**

But the pōtiki will teach  
them both patience

**Enjoy one another's company  
whenever you can**

Actively create opportunities  
to be together

**Include your tamariki and mokopuna  
in whānau decision making**

So they will know what to do  
when it counts

***What can you do  
today to strengthen  
whanaungatanga?***



## Whānau Kōrero, Whānau Mahi

### Stories and activities

**The following stories and ideas came from hui held all around Aotearoa where whānau shared memories and thoughts about whanaungatanga.**

#### *Whanaungatanga – supporting whānau leaders*

A few years ago, a group of people were doing some study that required them to attend wānanga throughout the year. One wahine shared how whanaungatanga supported someone in their group to grow as a leader.

“On our first wānanga, one of our tāne shared that he was the mātāmua (first born, elder) for his iwi. He had been born in a time when the people were heavily colonised, assimilated and urbanised, so he didn't have the reo. He felt unprepared, lacking the skill needed to take up a leadership role, saying he only knew how to work in the kitchen. Because of this, he'd spent most of his life absent from the marae and from his people.

Our group decided to gently encourage him as an elder by asking his advice on the goings on in the kitchen and wharekai. After doing this for some time, we began to ask his advice on various things around tikanga, which he was able to tell us. You see, he knew more than he thought.

Then, at one particular wānanga, a conflict arose among the group and we just could not come to an agreement. The group was in serious danger of becoming divided, so we turned to our mātāmua for leadership and direction. Unsurprisingly, he was not comfortable. He did not want to make a decision for us, so we gave



him our assurance that we would go with his decision, even if we didn't like it. He said he would come back to us in the morning with his decision, which he did.

Now, many years later, he happily fulfils a leadership role amongst his people alongside others and with their support.”

**Leadership roles have been around whānau mai rano (forever). They were how our ancestors ensured there was steady leadership to guide our people.**

*Get together as a whānau and think about what leadership looks like. How can whanaungatanga support those who are leading at the moment? What about the next generation of leaders?*

## *Whanaungatanga – an anchor that strengthens whānau*

Another wahine told a story about the Christmas puddings her nanny used to make.

“Every Christmas we'd travel home from the city to be with our Koro and Nan, and to see whānau all returning home. We three kids shared a rickety old bed with a soft kapok mattress.

I can still remember hearing our Nan busy with the aunties and uncles preparing the kai for Christmas Day. They would talk into the small wee hours of the morning, and there was always lots of laughter. In the morning, we would be greeted by boiled Christmas puddings hanging on a line across the kitchen, ready for the different uncles to come and collect for their whānau.

Years later, a few of us cousins were reminiscing about Christmas when we were kids. Our grandparents had passed away many years before, and we were talking about our Nan's Christmas puddings and realised that no one had the recipe. So we decided that we would make one from memory.



One of the cousins who had spent a lot of time with our Nan remembered the finer details, such as not touching the cloth once the flour 'skin' had been sprinkled on. Another remembered that we had to use raisins and not sultanas, as our Nan had taught her, but we all remembered the can of condensed milk! Well, that was the most delicious Christmas Day pudding we had eaten since we were children."

**Whanaungatanga that is shared over special whānau holidays can be re-lived and loved again and again many years later. It anchors happy feelings and memories that strengthen the bonds that whānau need to thrive.**

*What memories of whanaungatanga can you share about whānau get togethers and celebrations?*

### *Whanaungatanga – sharing the catch*

A koroua living in a coastal community told this story, "On the coast each year, the moki would be running and it was the prime time to fish for this coastal delicacy. People would come home from the city and fish for the weekend. On the way home, they would call in at the different whānau along the way to drop off some of their catch, which was a welcome addition to the dinner table. They would take the time to visit and reconnect, tying the bonds of whanaungatanga tighter until next time."

### *Whanaungatanga – stepping up in times of need*

Several people also told stories about helping and supporting their whānau when things were not easy.

A woman recalled a time when her sister was having problems. Her Dad packed the whānau up and drove them to the other end of the country to collect the sister and her kids and bring them home. They stayed for a couple of months until she got back on her feet again.



Another wahine said, “Just like any whānau I guess, there are times of plenty and times when we struggle to make ends meet. When these times come, we make dinner dates and go to each other’s homes with what little kai we have. We put it all together and end up having a hākari or feast. This makes the hard times easier to handle.”

A tāne remembered the time a farmer was visiting whānau who had a whāngai (adopted child) with them. The farmer observed that they were particularly mean and nasty to the little girl. As he was preparing to leave, the farmer turned to the whānau and told them that their behaviour towards the girl was disgusting and that he treated his farm dogs better. He took the little girl’s hand and said he was taking her with him. When he got home, he rang the child’s grandparents and told them what had been going on, that if they didn’t come and get her, he was going to keep her and look after her himself. The next day, the grandparents drove five hours to collect their mokopuna. Years later, when the child had grown up, she talked about how she had been rescued by her uncle and raised by her grandparents. She said that she was always made to feel special and important and loved them so much.

**These are examples of whānau showing commitment to each other by coming together to do whatever needed to be done.**

*Undoubtedly, there will be examples of times when your own whānau were committed to each other as the first priority. It’s good to remember and be thankful for these times when whanaungatanga carried the whānau through difficult times.*

## *Whanaungatanga – reflecting on the past*

The old people always tell stories about the past when things were very different; they speak of times gone by when things made sense to them.

One story was shared by a wahine who had been raised on a country farm. She said “I remember one time when my dad and uncle were



climbing up the hill to the urupā (cemetery) at a tangihanga. They were quite old and needed the help of their walking sticks to get up there. When they finally made it, they rested at the entry gate. Leaning on a fence post, they looked out over their valley home with the little river meandering through it. As they looked, their eyes misted with memories of the good old days. They turned to one another and, pointing down the valley, talked about the whānau who lived at that bend, and other whānau who had their homes dotted along the valley. They talked about how whānau would help one another to grow and harvest their gardens. The old men remembered that there was a lot of laughter and music to be heard up and down the valley, and whānau wanted for nothing.

“They finished reminiscing and came back to the present. They looked out at their valley home which was empty and silent now as many whānau had gone to the city to work. There were no more gardens and whānau only returned home to bury their dead.

“Reflecting on this, one koroua turned to the other, sighing and asked, ‘Do you know what the problem is?’ The other asked ‘What?’ to which the answer was ‘Too much frozen peas!’”

**In days gone by, whānau relied on one another to grow vegetables, catch fish, dive for seafood and hunt for meat. Those were the days before take-away foods and push-button technology, when whānau lived close to one another and worked together, when their bonds were strong. Even though things are a little different today, whānau bonds are still strong, and our people still work together in lots of ways.**

*Next time your whānau come together for kai or just to be together, kōrero about what projects you work on together. What are other things you could do together? What things did the old people do that you could do today?*



## *Whanaungatanga – whānau times*

Whanaungatanga is sometimes about doing things together mostly because whānau just enjoy each other's company. The stories that follow are a few examples of whanaungatanga in action.

### ***Mahi tahi ... working as one***

A whānau talked about the time their marae was preparing for a big hui. Everyone came together to repaint the wharekai to freshen it up. Not satisfied with stopping there, they then painted the memorial hall next door and, while they were at it they painted the kitchen followed by the outside cookhouse. It was a great weekend.

But a small group of intrepid women had the job of cleaning the old wharepaku from top to bottom. Armed with thick rubber gloves, astringent cleaners, disinfectants and the like, they made their way to the wharepaku to begin their mission. As they walked, one of the women said, "Welcome to the business end of rangatiratanga" to which all the women laughed and went down on bended knee to begin.

### ***Moe tahi ... sleeping 'marae-style'***

A woman shared that movie nights were her favourite thing to do with her whānau. She said, "We get all the mattresses and take them into the lounge. Then we make popcorn, nachos or chip 'n' dip, choose a movie or get out the old DVDs, and 'park-up' in the lounge to watch them. We usually sleep marae-style, it's great!"

### ***Kai tahi ... eating together***

Another whānau member said, "We like whānau barbeques in summer. Someone brings out the guitar and we sing a few waiata while the tamariki play in the backyard. Sometimes we go down to the beach and tamariki gather driftwood and make forts. When the sun goes down, we bring out the marshmallows and the tamariki, big and small, have a great time cooking them on the fire."



### ***Mata tahi ... being together as one***

A kuia remembered recently sitting in her lounge with other members of the whānau. When she looked around, everyone, including herself, was on their mobiles or tablets. They had been sitting there for some time and hadn't really communicated with each other. So she put her phone down and declared that they were going to have a "mata tahi day". The others looked up and asked, "What's that?" To which she replied by asking everyone to put their devices in a basket for the day so that they could all spend the day together kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face). Despite some initial protests, from then on the whānau had a lovely day being with each other, talking, cooking and eating meals, laughing and generally just relaxing without distraction.

**Whanaungatanga can be about just being together and enjoying each other's company for no other reason than the enjoyment of being together. It's what whānau do.**

***Make a list of the favourite things your whānau do together. What can you all do to make it easier for everyone to get together regularly?***

***What new activities could you begin that allow everyone – especially the young ones in the whānau – to feel included, connected and valued?***







## Whanaungatanga – city life

Living in the city far from home sometimes means that ‘whānau’ are made up of friends and other members of the wider community brought together through whanaungatanga.

A woman said, “I am great friends with a wahine from up north, and there was a time when she asked me to live with her and her two children, so I moved in with my son who was around the same age as her kids. We enjoyed many years together in that home. On Saturdays we would go out to the markets, or the garden centre or we’d go shopping together. We all had chores we would do together on the weekends to keep our busy house in order. Sometimes we would have friends over for dinner. I thought we would probably grow old together as two little old spinsters. But, as life and love would have it, I met and fell in love with a man from home and, after many years, I finally married him. But my great friend and I still visit, and now we talk about the clever and mischievous escapades that our mokopuna get up to. Yeah, you don’t have to be related to be a whānau.”

Another woman talked about when she went to work in a little town on the coast where she didn’t know many people. She was staying with a friend who made it her business to take her to meet as many of her own whānau as she could. Telling this story, the wahine said, “Her example taught me what whakawhanaungatanga looks like. Over the years I was able to build great friendships and now, a decade later, I consider them part of my whānau.”

**Sometimes whānau are made up of friends, workmates or just people in the community who care about each other. It doesn’t really matter whether you are related by blood or friendship. What does matter is the quality and strength of your whānau and the things you do together and for each other.**

***What whānau-friends do you have, and what do you do to keep your relationships strong? Is there anyone in your community who may be in need of whakawhanaungatanga?***



## *Whanaungatanga – sports whānau*

There are whānau throughout the country who play sport every Saturday. They build strong positive relationships with their teammates and often their friendships evolve to include their whānau.

One tane explained that his regional sports team wanted to build stronger whānau relationships. He said, “Some years ago, around 60 whānau of all ages from various places throughout the motu embarked on a summer trip to a seaside marae. It was a first-time experience for most of them – many did not know what to expect other than sharing some time in the sun with whānau under the kaupapa of whanaungatanga.

Whānau were familiar with each other through their association within the sporting fraternity but little did they know that they would make a far deeper connection with each other than they could have ever believed. Over the two-day, two-night wānanga, we experienced a deeper level of whanaungatanga that is rarely experienced, even in the clubroom.

A carefully designed ‘sharing circle’ prepared whānau to safely express and share the thing that they valued most, which was aroha. In all my years of playing sport and, in particular, within the hard core game of rugby league, never have I experienced anything like this. It was unreal.

The circle drew whānau to an unobstructed view of what is often undervalued in the hectic and sometimes chaotic world that we live in. As whānau emerged from the ‘circle of love’, we treasured each other more than before. For a moment in time, we witnessed each other’s deepest desires and, from that, our connection would never be the same again. It would be deeper. Stronger. Real.



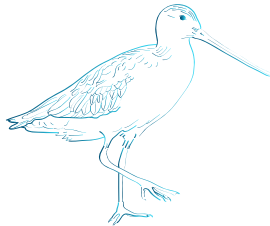
That is whanaungatanga! Valuing people for who they are and what they stand for, not for what they do. From that wānanga, we composed a whakataūāki that talks about how strong whānau bonds promote whānau success that shines brightly for others:

***Whītiki te tangata, mārama te kitea.  
The tighter the bond, the brighter the light.***

Still to this day, a number of the tāne from that wānanga freely and unashamedly express their love for each other with a 'Love you bro!'

**What whakataūki do you know that express what whanaungatanga means in your whānau? If you don't know any, maybe you know kaumātua who could teach you some – they will certainly enjoy being asked!**

***Get the whānau together to compose whakataūāki about whanaungatanga. Then, ask tamariki or rangatahi to design a poster that you can stick up for everyone to see.***





## Whānau kete

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Whanaungatanga can be expressed in many ways. It's probably something that you and your whānau do without even thinking.

Have a look at this checklist of some of the ways that whānau practice whanaungatanga.

- Talk about life's challenges or difficult experiences
- Support each other no matter what
- Share stories about the past and talk about our memories
- Regularly participate in whānau events and gatherings
- Mahi tahi – work together
- Kai tahi – eat together
- Moe tahi – sleep marae-style
- See one another often – have fun together
- Take time to connect and just spend time in each other's company
- Express in words and actions how much we mean to each other
- Call in to visit when we are going past each other's homes
- Take a share of the catch to whānau when we go fishing, diving or hunting
- Spend whānau holidays together
- Make sure everyone – especially tamariki and rangatahi – knows they are loved and that people care about them
- Make sure kaumātua and mokopuna enjoy lots of time together
- Maintain whānau traditions, such as Sunday visits, steam puddings, and regular phone calls to distant whānau.

Think and talk about what you can do more of, or what things you could start doing, to show whanaungatanga. You may like to use the Pitopito Kōrero pages at the end of this booklet to jot down ideas.



## Karakia

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### To begin and end a hui

Tupu te pō, tupu  
te ao!

Kia tupu te  
whānau i te ka uru  
o te ora

nei te whānau  
i te hikinga, i te  
hāpainga

Kia puta mai te  
māramatanga

Hui e!

Tāiki e!

Understanding is a  
transition like night to day!

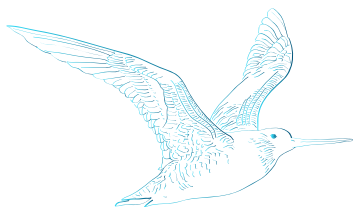
This helps family  
to feed from the font  
of life

Uplifting family,  
growing family

Understanding the  
brilliance of family

Let us be one!

We have united in  
conscious thought!





## He Mihi Acknowledgements

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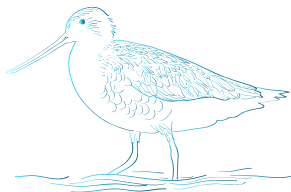
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Sasho Stosic – *Whānau Kōrero*

E Tū Whānau and all our contributors are happy for you to use the contents of this booklet to support your whānau whānui.



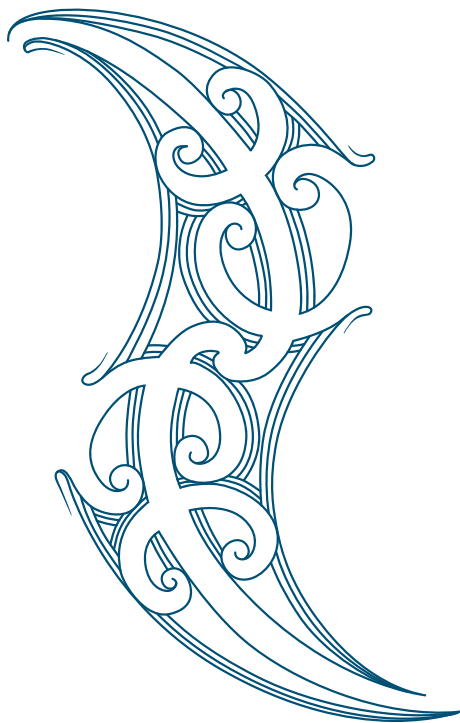


## Tohu

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Whanaungatanga is about relationships, kinship, and a sense of family connection. It is about relationships lived through shared experiences and working together to provide people with a sense of belonging. Whanaungatanga develops as a result of kinship rights and obligations, and it strengthens each member of the kin group. It also extends to others who we develop close familial, friendship or reciprocal relationships with.

This tohu shows the 'Mangōpare' design. It represents the coming together of two people in a relationship. It symbolises strength, courage, power, determination and a fighting spirit. This tohu also depicts two cultures mixing and blending, and beginning a journey together. The top motif meets the bottom motif on equal terms and on common ground, where all great relationships start.





# Pitopito Kōrero

## Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.





# Pitopito Kōrero

## Notes

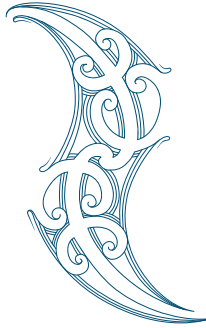
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# Pitopito Kōrero

## Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.



WHANAUNGATANGA

[etuwahanau.org.nz/our-values/  
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*E Tū  
Whānau!*

*Te Mana Kāha o te Whānau*