

People need Nourishment

(not judgement)

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What is nourishment?

Experiences, knowledge, a consciousness, a spirituality that:

- Strengthens, deepens, *affirms their identity* as an individual and as a community
- Brings peace, security and *understanding about the world* and their place within it
- Offers them guidance and confidence about what to do with their lives and *how to live life with grace, dignity and mana*

Nourishment can be...

- Healing
- Educational
- Loving
- Connects deeply to where people are at
- Does not force something into people
- Acts on a good relationship between the nourished and the source of nourishment

Hence, we need to ask, *what are we feeding our people?*

Are they *deriving nourishment* from it?

(Recognising, also, that not all people have the same needs and requirements. *The nourishment that works for one person may not be nourishment for another.*)

The Problem of the Noisy, Information Economy

People receive information from a truly bewildering array of sources:

- Families
- School
- Television, Radio
- Internet
- Print Media
- Retail facilities
- Sports teams
- Friends
- Church
- Politicians

Because of the vast amount of information received from a wide range of sources, it is not surprising that *many people get confused messages* and lack clarity about values, outlook, worldview.

In a modern economy, *'attention' is the key commodity*. Getting the attention of the buying public is of great importance.

This means everybody is scrambling to get attention, to *get a piece of everyone's attention.*

Sometimes the *noise is deafening and can be quite disorientating* to a person who has no anchor in their lives to help make sense of it all.

It is in this *milieu* that the conditions are set for a spirituality that is:

Simplistic with clear, unequivocal messages

Successful in gaining attention – marketing its messages, particularly to the faithful

Demonstrates its *power through economic means* - measurement of God's grace through money

Demonstrates its power through
*'seeing off' detractors and
remaining staunch*

Seems to *create community and
identity* in a world of fragmented
communities and identities (criticism
strengthens its resolve)

This kind of spirituality *fills a need* for many people.

A need for *community, stability, clarity of values, simplicity* of thought.

There is *much to learn* from studying this situation.

The problem with this kind of spirituality, however, is that it *relies on a forceful even heroic ideology* about the world rather than an analysis and an empathetic relationship with the world as it actually is. *It does not teach us to love life as it is.*

It commences with a deep disquiet and a *belief that the world is fundamentally wrong*, it exists in a fallen state. Further that the reasons for this fallen state continue to exist and exist in us.

Like all beliefs, if one holds it fervently enough, *one will come to discover evidence for it everywhere* which seems to deepen and reinforce one's belief.

Māori Situation 1

- Many Māori are attracted to a fundamentalist spirituality
- Simplicity of ongoing messages
- Force of personality
- Measurement of grace in monetary terms
- Be conspicuous and explicit about the effect of your message (drive a good car, good clothes and so on)
- Many deculturated, low income, decentred families want a simple, assertive, 'powerful' Christianity that speaks directly to their situation

Māori Situation 2

- Many Māori are attracted to a fundamentalist Māoritanga
- Simplicity of ongoing messages
- Force of personality
- A real experience of power
- Conspicuous and explicit about the effect of your message (being powerful upon the marae and in hui)
- Many deculturated, low income, decentred families want a simple, assertive, 'powerful' Māoritanga that speaks directly to their situation

The Post-Modern World

- In a situation in which all values, ideas, perspectives are relative, how are we to get an orientation to life? What values or outlook should we live by?

The Three Great Questions

Philosophers say people are struck by three great questions:

- Who am I?
- What is this world?
- What should I do?

My Responses

1. Engaging the World

- I want to engage the world of my actual experience
- Accepting the world as it is
- Being in rhythm with the world
- Utilise knowledge, experience, culture I have available to me to make sense of it
- This includes making use of mātauranga Māori

2. Animated, illuminated

- I want to feel guided, illuminated, animated by some 'higher' or 'deeper' power
- I want to feel that my individual life resonates with something larger than just myself, that I have become the vessel of something good and profound
- I want to feel the extraordinary regularly in my ordinary life

My God

- **Love** - ultimately and completely
 - A love beyond the world of duality
 - Resist the definition of God as merely a mountain of good
- **Creative** – bringing forth the abundant gifts of the spirit into our existence
- **Compassion** – a musical experience, sympathetic resonance, empathy

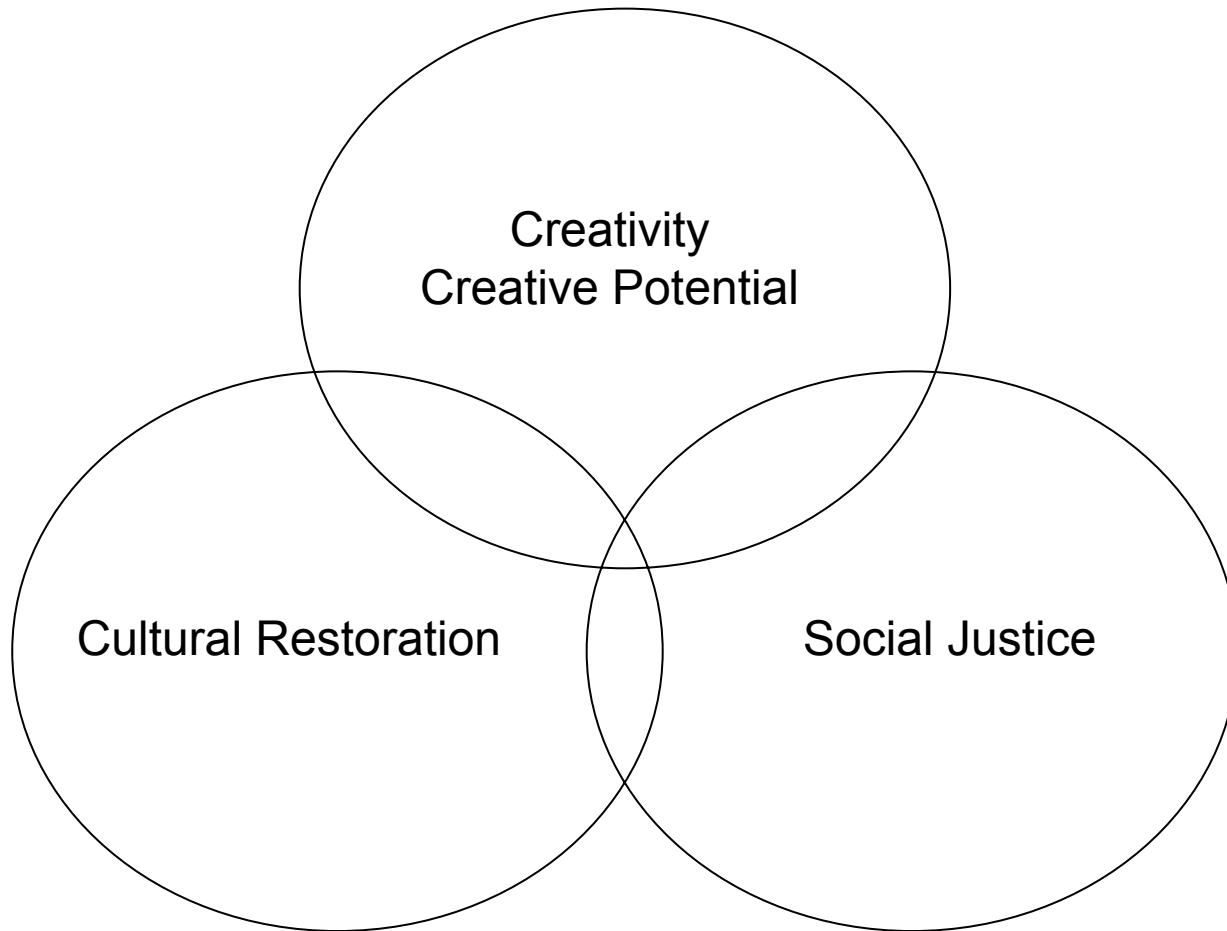
Mātauranga Māori

Utilising Traditional Wisdom in our
experience of the world today

Aspects of the Māori renaissance

- Quest for **Social Justice** e.g. claims
- **Cultural Restoration** e.g. language restoration
- *Tino rangatiratanga*
- *Mana motuhake*

Moving to Creativity and Opportunity



Crossing the Threshold

- Moving through
 - *Tangata Māori* to *Tangata Whenua*
- Moving through
 - *Te Ao Māori* to *Te Ao Mārama*
- Moving though
 - *mātauranga* to *wānanga*