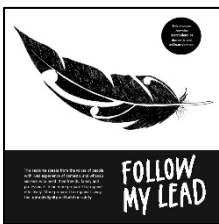


Māori, the Indigenous and first people of Aotearoa, uphold the right and authority to participate in systemic violence projects in respectful allyship with Pākehā. Response-Based Practice Aotearoa honours the values and principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi by acknowledging racialised inequity from inter-personal experiences of violence and the insidious structures that maintain it. Māori cultural rites, rituals and beliefs are holistic, conceptual and contextual. Te reo Māori language reflects the interconnectedness between people, the social world and the natural world across time and generations.

Throughout [Follow My Lead Aotearoa](#) te reo Māori has been used to invite conversation and enquiry from speakers and listeners of all ages, using a range of texts from whakatauki (traditional proverbs) to kīwaha (modern day colloquialism). Some whakatauki in this presentation are models within themselves, the intention is not appropriation but rather highlights points of connection and intersectionality, with respect. It offers interpretations rather than direct translations as their origins vary within tribal dialects, regions and diversities. In some places, whānau have shared their wisdom or lived experience.

Creating cultural safety, context and relevance for Aotearoa's version of Follow My lead



As a group, Response-Based Practice Aotearoa (RBPA) represent a range of ethnic diversities including Māori and non-Māori. The *Follow My Lead* Aotearoa version emerged from a shared vision between the members of RBPA where it was agreed that the [original Follow My Lead](#) document was an engaging resource which read well and could be enhanced for readers in Aotearoa. They considered how this could be done in a way that would uphold the values of Te Tiriti o Waitangi by including the presence and spiritual intelligence of Māori wisdom.

The RBPA group reflected on the need to highlight the ongoing forces of racism as an integral part of how interpersonal and structural violence is understood by those who identify as Māori. Revealing Indigenous responses to historical and multi-generational violence seemed pertinent to this inclusiveness, and added insights from a Māori lens brought these realities to life. RBPA upheld the beauty of te reo Māori throughout the whole document as an 'integrated' rather than 'added on' approach, re-working aspects of the content into te reo Māori. Attention was given to cultural appropriation / congruency with an insistence that all work was underpinned and informed by *tikanga* Māori (etiquette) at every level of engagement to avoid 'recolonisation'. RBPA shared the enthusiasm and energy in the collaboration with [Insight Exchange](#) who gave wholeheartedly and with generosity to the spirit and importance of these ideas.

When consultation with Māori from different communities began it was important to gauge a wide scope of feedback about the resource and decide how much 'rawness' should be revealed. The project ideas were initially shared with close Māori colleagues and *whānau* (family), where their *awhi* (assistance) was enlisted to translate certain aspects into te reo Māori. It was decided to use *whakatauki* (ancient proverbial sayings) and *kīwaha* (colloquialism) to actively engage all ages and levels of te reo Māori listeners while capturing the essence of meaning that literal translations are unable to provide.

In the weeks that followed, *hui* (meetings) with various *iwi* Māori from all over the *motu* (land) – Muaūpoko, Ngāti Raukawa, Te Ati Awa, Tainui, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Toa, Te Arawa and Ngāti Kahungunu were held to share these ideas and to ask for input and feedback. While some were *whānau* (family) and others were *whaiora* (seekers of wellness), all had lived experience(s) of violence. And they had plenty to say! The intimate conversations that followed recalled moments of heartbreak and triumph, enthusiasm and anger, passion and despair. Shared tears flowed over several cups of tea with a restored sense of hope that together, our great great grandbabies could thrive in a non-violent future world. With their consent, some of these narratives have been included as vignettes to breathe life into the pages.

The visual aesthetic features three similar but unique feathers as symbols of honor, respect and peace reflected in the *whakatauki*. It also represents the connections of deep love and respect shared by the group who believe in upholding each other's dignity, and the potential for transformation - no matter how small, to be possible.

“Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, ēngari he toa takitini”
“Success is not achieved by the work of one, but by the work of many”

Insight Exchange centres on the expertise of people with lived experience of domestic and family violence and gives voices to these experiences. Insight Exchange is designed to inform social, service and system responses to domestic and family violence.