

Indigenous psychotherapy, COVID-19, and the online space: Yarning about challenges and opportunities

 pacja.org.au/2021/04/indigenous-psychotherapy-covid-19-and-the-online-space-yarning-about-challenges-and-opportunities-2

Gina O'Neill, Taz Clay, Hinewirangi Kohu-Morgan, Bianca Stawiarski, Gavin Morris, Gávi Ansara & Keith Tudor

Introduction

This article is an edited transcription of a yarn/kōrero between four Indigenous (psycho)therapists and three invited allies. The original yarn/kōrero explored the experiences, challenges, and successes of Australian and Aotearoa New Zealand Indigenous healing practitioners, psychotherapists, and counsellors during the COVID-19 pandemic. The knowledge collected in this article comprises the original Zoom recording, the transcript of the recording, post-recording email responses and additions from those present for the original yarn/kōrero and those not able to be present for all or some of the original recording, and a glossary of terms used (included at the end of the article).

Yarn

Introductions

Gina: Well, thank you everybody for taking up the invitation to be part of our Zoom article and, as a way of starting, I'll pass it over to Gavin for an acknowledgement of Country. Thanks, Gavin.

Gavin: Thank you very much, Gina. It's a privilege to be here. I'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we're all meeting today. And I know that we're all sitting on Aboriginal lands across the country; I'm on Larrakia land in Darwin in the Northern Territory. I'd like to acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their ongoing connection to land, sea, and community, to pay our respects to all Elders, past, present, and emerging. It's a privilege to be in this space, it's a privilege to work in the country that we do, and it's incumbent upon me to do really good work and I'm really looking forward to sharing this group today.

Gina: Thank you, Gavin. And also, I just wanted to acknowledge Keith in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Keith: Tēnā koe, thank you, Gina.

Gina: Tēnā koe. Did you want to say anything about where you're coming in from? Because we don't have Hinewirangi Kohu-Morgan here.

Keith: Well, standing in for my mentor, whaea, and friend, Hinewirangi, I'll just offer some brief words: e ngā mātāwaka, e ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā rangatira ma, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa—by which I acknowledge the waka (the canoe), on which we all arrived in these lands, however far back; your authority; your languages; and your leadership.

For myself, I want to say what I've just put on my name on my picture on Zoom: “Kei te whenua ki Te Kawerau ā Maki tōku kāinga ināiane” which means, “My home rests on the land of Te Kawerau ā Maki” (the local iwi or tribe here in Titirangi, West Auckland). I feel that connection literally because, right now, I'm sitting in my study (garage) in a pole house, so I have a direct connection with the ground underneath me. So, I pay my respects to the land and to Te Kawerau ā Maki. I also want to acknowledge that I'm here in this meeting by invitation; I feel honoured and privileged to be here and so I probably won't say very much more. But yeah, I'm really very pleased to meet you all, and to support you, Gina, and I want to acknowledge the work that you've put into bringing us here together tonight.

Gina: Kia ora, Keith. Yeah, and kia ora koutou, kua tae mai nei i tēnei wa i tēnei pō, which is, “Here we're in this space tonight,” and, “Welcome and thanks, Keith”. All right, so, how about we start with some introductions of who we are and how we've come to be here. So, how about we start with you, Bianca.

Bianca: Sure. So, I'm Bianca, and following on from Keith's touching in on where we are, I'm on Kaurna and Peramangk Country here in South Australia. I'm a Badimaya (Badimia) woman. And so, that's from Western Australia, so I'm not on my own Country. And I've come to be here because I'm working in this space, I'm doing things a little bit differently than most of you. So yeah, I'm a counsellor, but I'm also an equine-assisted psychotherapist, so working with horses to help people move through their experiences. And I'm really honoured to be in this space with all of these amazing people and talking about the online space, so, yeah, thank you.

Gina: Tēnā koe Bianca. Okay. Gavin?

Gavin: Thank you. Yeah, I'm Gavin, I'm a lecturer at Charles Darwin University in Darwin. And I've recently completed a PhD (see Morris, 2019), which investigates Indigenous healing practices of the Northern Territory (NT) in response to colonisation. So, a lot of the work that I do is in the community and I'm very privileged to have the relationships that I do, and that network extends into groups such as this. So, I very much look forward to the conversation that we'll be having today around a really important topic. And, yeah, it's great to be here.

Gina: Thank you. Gávi?

Gávi: I'm very honoured to be here. I'm on Boon Wurrung land, which is outside of Naarm (Melbourne) in Victoria. I'm struck by the concept of displacement. And how much people who have already been massively displaced in a traumatic, multi-generational way, have now experienced an additional profound displacement into an online space, and how that

displacement can obscure some of the forms of colonising that happen. I remember yarnning with senior Larrakia elder and leading social work scholar and educator, Dr Christine Fejo-King, about communication protocols among Aboriginal peoples, as addressed in some of her published work (e.g., Fejo-King, 2013, p. 1). She's written about the communication protocol of people introducing themselves culturally, that when you go into somebody's space in Aboriginal communities, you know what Country you're on and people position themselves by saying who they are and where they come from when they first meet. This makes it possible for people to know how to apply cultural protocols, identify relevant Aboriginal law, and feel culturally safe (Fejo-King, 2013). This is something non-Aboriginal therapists often fail to do, when we don't acknowledge our own positionality and privilege. But if you're online, a lot of people don't realise it's still colonising if someone's forced to come into the therapist's space, rather than the therapist being invited into Aboriginal people's space on Aboriginal people's terms. And it just really struck me that therapists don't notice that type of colonising happening as clearly if it's on Zoom, but it's still happening.

I'm honoured to be part of this yarn. I'm not from colonial white-Anglo Australian ancestry, and I'm also not from an Aboriginal Australian background. So I'm in a kind of third space. As a polycultural person, my ancestors were targeted for racialised genocide and forced displacement. I'm often culturally excluded or marginalised in white-Anglo-Australian-dominated spaces. I'm also not an Aboriginal person or a Māori person, and I am accountable for living on stolen Aboriginal land. So, that is my complicated vantage point. And yet, I would say that I've felt more welcomed, more invited, and more included in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Māori spaces than I ever did, or ever do, in white-Anglo-Australian spaces, so I'm really honoured and moved to be here.

Gina: Thank you, Gávi. Taz?

Taz: Hey, sorry, it's been raining down here. Yeah, so I've been working in the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander LGBTI health sector for five years. And I've been using my lived experience around child protection and all that stuff to advocate for policy changes and that sort of stuff. Gávi actually got me into this because I did a Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA) training about a month ago around how to best work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brotherboys, like, trans men. So, that was a really cool sort of thing that I did and it's been really rewarding for me, I guess, being able to influence policy that helps other young people coming through get the best lives that they can get. So yeah, that's sort of what I've been doing. I'm living here currently in Bundjalung Country, but I'm from Palm Island and Mount Isa, known as Bwgcolman and Kalkadoon.

Gina: Thank you, Taz. Thank you. So to Keith, in terms of an introduction.

Keith: Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa. Greetings to you all. In Aotearoa New Zealand, when we introduce ourselves in such contexts, we tend to offer our pepeha, which is like a genealogy in which I would say things such as, "ko Helvellyn te maunga, ko Don te awa, ko Waka Oranga te waka". So, I would be describing my

mountain, my river, my waka (canoe), and so on. In doing this, one of the things I say is, “He tangata Tiriti ahau,” which translates as “I am a person of Te Tiriti” (the Treaty of Waitangi), a poster of which you can see behind me. In saying “He tangata Tiriti ahau,” I am as if I were signing up to Te Tiriti. Now, I wasn’t there in 1840—I didn’t sign it—but I’m positioning myself coming into this country to which I chose to emigrate from the UK 11 years ago in a bicultural relationship with Māori as tangata whenua, people of the land.

In terms of my day job, I’m professor of psychotherapy at Auckland University of Technology, and I’m also the editor of a journal called *Psychotherapy and Politics International*. Part of my own history has been being a political activist alongside being a psychotherapist. Sometimes, as you might imagine, that’s been a tension. I tend to fall on the side more of political activism, particularly as I get older. If anything, I feel more angry about inequity and injustice, and want to be more “out there,” in a good way.

For me, part of the background to this project is that Rhys Price-Robertson, who is the editor of the *Psychotherapy and Counselling Journal of Australia (PACJA)*, invited me to edit a special issue; we came together and decided to call for papers about experiences of being online. Because of my commitment to biculturalism here (in Aotearoa New Zealand), I was interested to open up or to suggest opening up space for this kind of talking about this issue—and for colleagues to have this opportunity to yarn or kōrero about the impact, as you were saying, Gávi, about the impact of working in the online medium also in the context of the interface or intersectionality of marginalisation, colonisation, postcolonialism, and so on. So, that was where my interest came from. I don’t often refer to myself as an ally, but I was very touched, Gina, that you invited me as one. So, I’m an ally, at least for tonight! But I don’t take that as given; I don’t put it on my CV. I feel like I have to earn that, most days. So, I feel very honoured and quite emotional about being invited here. So, that’s enough from me.

Gina: Thank you, Keith tēnā koe and also Gávi, just to recognise you both as being invited as true heartfelt allies for us here today. So, thank you. Okay, so as Keith said, pepeha is how we introduce ourselves, so I’m going to just do that quickly.

So, Ko Takitimu te waka ko Whanganui-a-Tara te maunga, ko Waingongoro te awa, ko Ngāti Kahungunu me Rangitāne ngā iwi, ko Ngāti Kurukuru te hapū, ko Gina O’Neill ahau, that’s my name.

I’m also an Indigenous gestalt psychotherapist, and, recently, eco-therapist. And I work with Gavin and Bianca on the College of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Practices. And I’m also doing a little bit of other work with Keith in another article about this very idea of working in the online space with COVID. And I also just want to acknowledge Rhys Price-Robertson, who’s the editor of PACJA that we’re coming together for tonight in this Zoom kōrero. “Kōrero” in Māori means a “yarn” as it does in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages—I’m not sure that it’s the same word in all of the language groups, but I know that yarn is a common term we all know here.

I moved to Australia 25 years ago. So, I've spent now basically half my life in both places. So, I too bring the experience of the bicultural nature of working in these two countries. And I'm very honoured to be sitting on Arakwal land in Bundjalung Country this evening. And I also want to say that being Māori and living and working here and on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands that I stand in solidarity with all that we do, so thank you.

So, tonight we're recording what will become a Zoom article, which in my mind is the first of its kind. We wanted to take this documentation through the very online platform—and Zoom being a popular one—that we've come to know more during COVID. And also to honour the Indigenous, all of our Indigenous experience, that not everything is written; it's actually about sharing and transmitting knowledge through yarning. And so, that's how it came to be here, that's what we're doing, making this article a Zoom recording. So, all of us in this group today will be listed as authors and it will be referenced like a standard academic article. And we'll all have a chance to see the article and the draft before it's finalised and published. And so, I just really want everybody to know that we're all part of this every step of the way.

Indigenous Therapy During COVID-19

Gina: The first question that I'm really interested in is, "What is it like being an Indigenous therapist or healing practitioner or a counsellor during the COVID-19 pandemic in the online environment?" I'm interested to hear how that has been.

Bianca: I'm ready! So, I've actually started off busy. An Aboriginal practitioner during COVID is extremely, extremely busy. But what an opportunity. I'm seeing more people reach out and access help when they may not previously have done so. Because they don't need to go anywhere. Well, they couldn't go anywhere for quite some time, but they don't need to go anywhere. They can be safe in their homes, and in their space, and they can choose to turn the camera on or turn the camera off. And to bring Aboriginality into the space has been really interesting and really fun. Normally, before we started this recording, I normally have a cuppa and I suggest people go and get themselves a cuppa and we just act as though there's no such thing as a camera here. And not act, but really *feel* that.

And I think it's really important that we see the opportunity for what it is. And we have the ability to reach so many more people that may not have accessed help before. And now people can actually say, "I want an Indigenous practitioner, I want an Indigenous counsellor or psychotherapist," and actually be able to access someone, which is huge. It's a really exciting time to be in, for people accessing services. I think that's probably the biggest thing.

Gina: And there are not many Indigenous healing practitioners around. The online environment has really enabled us to be able to be accessible.

Bianca: Definitely. And for people to actually now understand that they can request an Aboriginal or Indigenous practitioner, whatever Country you're from. And the other interesting thing I've found is that non-Indigenous people, such as from India, migrants

that are here, are actually choosing to access Indigenous counsellors or psychotherapists because we *get* cultural obligations, we *get* different things that maybe aren't necessarily standard practice. And so, I'm finding that has also increased the workload because people are now thinking about something, it's easier for them.

Gina: Beautiful. My experience has been that I was working in Sydney, prior to moving up here (Arakwal land, Bundjalung Nation), and if people couldn't come to my practice, I couldn't see them. And there was a couple of people that had contacted me, and they were outside of Sydney. And when COVID kicked in, they contacted me and said, "Oh, you're on Zoom now, can we do some work?" And they're both Aboriginal and it's just been a delight. And because I'm an eco-therapist they often sit somewhere in nature or somewhere on Country and we work with the rocks and the trees and whatever is really important for them. So, yeah, I just relate to what you were saying about access.

Taz: I think with Zoom it's been good to see the government step up and really take, I guess, initiative, finally, to source funding and actually find a viable way for people to continue their health care needs outside of having to go get transport to go somewhere physically. It's been good to see that, it's like telehealth that's been built so that people can see the psychiatrists and psychologists and stuff like that. So, yeah.

Gina: Access is really important. And it's always been an issue in Indigenous circles, or health. For a different perspective, Hinewirangi offers us her experience in Aotearoa via email.

Hinewirangi: In Aotearoa it hasn't been that hard as we continued in our little bubbles and when we had people who needed help, we used masks and kept a distance.

Gavin: Great question. It's been a unique year, in a number of respects, obviously very much related to the symptoms of the restrictions around COVID-19. I represent the West in my background in terms of the fact that I have Indigenous children, but I come from a colonising background myself. So, I mean, that really interesting space that speaking with Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander people and occupying that space. It's been a unique year, and a lot of the work that I've been doing has been in relation to how to adapt non-Western, non-biomedical healing practices, psychotherapy practices, to a whole range of populations in the Northern Territory. I'm dealing with a lot with Aboriginal communities but making sure that the healing that's being offered is culturally appropriate. That's, I guess, the initial standpoint from my perspective. I've been leaning on the work, and been working in conjunction with, some key Elders and Aboriginal communities. And there's one that I'd like to mention from the Daly River community, the Nauiyu community, which is pictured behind me (as a Zoom background). Her name's Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann, who's just been herself named NT Senior Person of the Year. She talks about this healing, spiritual practice of dadirri (see Ungunmerr-Baumann, 1988, 1993, 2002), and we've been working around how the practice of dadirri can work. Obviously, it works on Country and you need to respect the place for which it's born, but also how that use of dadirri as a healing practice can be used off Country in different contexts, whether that be solitary and small groups or online platforms like this one. And we've been working

across the last eight or nine months around how do we take those really strong tenets, as healing practices, that are centred around dadirri, and use those in spaces where traditionally it wasn't found.

So, COVID has put a whole lot of restrictions and confinement through isolation and displacement: displacement from family, displacement from the Country. It forces people into their own space where if they feel comfortable and connected, that's great. If you're in an Aboriginal community in the Daly River, for example, and you're on Country, and you're confined, that's fantastic. But what healing practices are available for people who are off Country and confined, and in a space that they don't feel comfortable with? And that's the work that I've been doing with a number of Aboriginal Elders and communities in the Northern Territory over the last half year or so.

You're acknowledging a different knowledge system and value system, healing system, and you don't have to be Indigenous to respect that, but all of a sudden that privileged position of the West, of the white European, that colonised knowledge, which has been privileged for so long, is now *a* knowledge but it's not *the* knowledge. And COVID has kind of accelerated the space in some respect to what you're talking about, Bianca. And the work that you do is amazing.

Bianca: Thank you.

Indigenous Protocols Can be Lost Online

Gina: Okay so, the opposite to what we've just spoken about is, "What components of our protocols or indigenous therapeutic methods might be lost in the online environment?"

Bianca: I think that whole connection, that ability to be able to reach out and draw in the sand; I call it barna mabarn (Country medicine). So, just those things, I'm finding I'm drawing pictures now and I'm holding them up [to the camera] and trying to make sure that people can see them [laughter]. So, it's required us to be inventive, but there are some small things lost in that way. And that whole relational ability to be able to touch someone if it's needed, and it's that lack of extra security of... if someone switches off, they switch off—you know, as in turns Zoom off or whatever, and then won't answer their phone—there's a risk involved in that sort of stuff as well. But yeah, I think the main thing is being able to touch and, yeah, draw in the sand. I mean, I still use community protocols, cultural protocols when we yarn. And even if, the same thing, you were just talking before about picking up the phone and walking outside and sitting down. I sometimes do stuff with the horses that way too, and the horses are coming in and the dogs are coming in. But yeah, you have to be really careful about losing some of that stuff, the relational stuff.

Gina: Thank you, Bianca. Beautiful. I'd like to acknowledge Hinewirangi Kohu-Morgan. We had email exchanges and she mentioned about the mauri, the exchange of the breath of life, that is lost, right? For me to be able to feel somebody and relational co-regulation, I

don't think it's completely lost, but it takes a lot more to feel it and understand it through more of a verbal exchange, rather than at the feeling. That's what gets lost for me, a little bit. Hinewirangi actually raised this point further via email.

Hinewirangi: The online system is a European tool, it's easy for them because they don't have the same protocols, Kawa/Tikanga as we do. We required kanohi ki te kanohi, to share sacred breath-Hongi. This process helps us to greet the whare tapa whā (the four corners of the being) of the person we are seeing. This process helps me to ascertain the spiritual being, the whānau/family being, the tinana/physical being, hinengaro/the emotional and intellectual being of the person visiting and you won't be able to connect with this whare/house online.

Bianca: I can still feel that energy, though. I can feel when someone's heart is really heavy, I feel my heart feeling heavy. But it requires a lot more holding of the space, I think, when you're in this online space.

Gina: It's more of a given when you're face-to-face in the room. But there's some more attunement or really meeting *all of me* into that screen.

Taz: I was looking at the social and emotional wellbeing framework when I was thinking about what to talk about. And I think for some of my friends anyway, like mob and that, when COVID happened and everyone had to go into lockdown, a lot of my friends were, I guess, displaced on different countries that they weren't usually used to or they're not from. And being away from home is one of those things that can also really take a toll on the wellbeing of someone. And some people in the previous traumas that they've experienced, I think that whole idea of having to be contained inside four walls for a long period of time would have made help-seeking and stuff like that a lot harder.

Gavin: Yeah, just to continue on from your comments there, Bianca, about connection, I think that's a really important thing that can be at risk of being lost. Relational trauma requires relational healing, and sometimes what can happen is if you take Indigenous healing practices out of its context, it can be in danger of becoming colonised and morphed into some sort of Western biomedical sphere. And that was the danger of incorporating traditional Indigenous healing practices into the primary healthcare settings, like a community clinic or so forth, where the practice loses its integrity and becomes something else—it's not black and it's not white, it's just a greyness, where it loses its integrity and effectiveness. And then, as a result, the West then have an opportunity to criticise the traditional healing practice because it's lost its effectiveness because it's lost its integrity.

I think, my experience so far this year in relation to that has been that these online platforms have kind of kept that integrity in place. And I think it's been the expertise of the Aboriginal Health Worker, Indigenous Health Worker, to privilege the protocols which are so important to what we're talking about, and being able to execute that in different spaces. And online has certainly been accelerated because of the year that we've had. And, yeah, I think that's really important.

Translating Cultural Protocols Online

Gina: The next question is, “What components of our cultural protocols do translate and are useful in the online environment?” Bianca, before we started recording you spoke a little bit more to that holding up and bringing close to the camera so we could see the rocks and the pieces of wood, yeah, do you want to speak a little bit more that?

Bianca: Yeah, so, on the side of me [gesturing to table of objects], because for me it’s really important, especially when you’re doing back-to-back sessions via a medium like this. I mean, some days I’m five or six hours on Zoom, which can be quite heavy. [Laughing] Gávi, I can see you nodding away! But, you know, I’ve got things here to remind me, and quite often I’ll just be holding... [showing a piece of wood] this is from a birthing tree on the property I live on. I live on a farm and I always keep a piece of this with me, so I can feel grounded if things are getting really heavy. And then rocks, rocks as well [showing a rock], this is a beautiful piece of granite, and I invite you all to come here and experience it one day. The whole property’s full of these rocks, and they’re really grounding. But then I’ve also got a friend who makes bush medicine [showing a bottle of mandanga medicine] and sometimes just rubbing this on me while I’m... I call it yarning, but I mean it’s a counselling session... can be really, really helpful. And just having beauty around me and bringing that into the space, bringing the outside in. As you can see through the windows, I can see down over the valley and I can hear the birds singing. So, I’m actually, I don’t really feel like I’m in a room, I actually bring Country in, and I think that’s really important to not feel that you’re in this clinical, four-walled space, but everywhere around you there’s grounding and supporting things. And I feel the breeze on my skin and everything about that is honouring this space. And I think that’s really important for me.

Gina: Thank you, Bianca.

Bianca: And I encourage people to do the same thing.

Gina: When you were talking about that before, and again now, I even felt the support of all these pieces that you’re offering, deeply. And I’m only imagining that that would be the same for your clients and the people that you work with.

Bianca: I actually encourage them to go outside and find, ask for permission from the from the tree, to pick up a piece that’s fallen, and bring it inside and we talk about that stuff as well. We talk about what that’s like for them and how... and now that people can go back to Country, if they were stuck off Country, being able to actually... you know, I just recommended to someone today, “find a piece that’s from Country that you’ve been given permission to bring back with you so that you have that Country, you have your Country with you everywhere”. And it’s really important, especially for people who are working in the health space as well.

Gina: It reminds me of Tyson Yunkaporta’s (2019) book *Sand Talk: How Indigenous Thinking Can Save the World*. And I feel like we’re making our piece to bring our cultural practice and voice to, being part of that too. And I would agree that often people, their

safety is compromised in trauma, and that isolation that they feel, and there's something very powerful about asking them to go to Country or "How are you being responded to right now by Country?" And often my clients will say, "Well, I can really feel that breeze is cooling down the heat of my crisis, you know, I'm hot, my body, you know, it's helping me to cool". Or I might say, "Where is a true ally or a good resource for you right now?" And they go and come back, like what you were saying, Bianca, with something that really helps to anchor them into their space and their safety. Yeah, it's very important.

Gavin: I totally agree. And you can see with the backgrounds of us all that you can create... well, you know, quite often we're dealing with people who are in a tough time or are dealing with trauma, and their place of safety is under pressure. And I think we've been able to, through these online platforms, create an embodied place of safety. There are some common characteristics with Indigenous the healing practices around: What does safety look like? What does it feel like? What does it smell like? All the things that you're talking about there, Bianca. And I think, to some extent, or to a large extent, we've been able to replicate those strong characteristics, which are centred in Indigenous healing practices, and we've being able to translate those in an online environment without losing its impact and without changing its structural integrity. And it's testament to the healing practices themselves that they're so adaptable. But it's also showing everyone, whether Aboriginal and Torres Strat Islanders all the way through to the West, that once again traditional Indigenous knowledges and practices and so forth are so adaptable in a whole range of different contexts. And this online context now is under investigation.

Gina: Hinewirangi had a different view when I asked her what components of our cultural protocols translate and are useful in the online environment.

Hinewirangi: Nothing, in terms of Kaupapa, for us Kaupapa is kanohi ki te kanohi, seeing people face to face, no online but in reality. Other than just being able to talk with each other, it's like using the phone, it took away our ability to visit each other and sit together and discuss, the ability to converse, because you try not to spend long time on the phone nor online

The Future of Online Indigenous Therapy

Gina: I would like to bring in the question, "How do we see the future of the online environment for Indigenous therapy?" We've spoken about what's lost and what we bring culturally online. What do we think about the future?

Bianca: The opportunity we've got requires the therapist to really think outside the square, because working on Zoom can be quite confronting for the therapist as well. I mean, quite often, you see people doing their hair in the camera and, you know, things like that [laughing]. But we have to be really thinking about how we can set our spaces up, how we can remove the obstacle of it being in this virtual space. And that requires some thinking and some skill, but there is amazing opportunity. You've got people now in rural and remote areas that may not be able to access the expertise that they're looking

for. Whether that be, you know, a mental health side or whether that be a traditional healing practice, or whatever it might be. Now that barrier's just been removed, and it's encouraging people to seek help. So, I just see this space getting bigger and bigger. We've just removed all these barriers. But it does require the therapist to be creative and inventive and really hold space. The one thing I do get concerned about is burnout. People think, "Oh, yeah, it's just five hours," or whatever. But when you're in this kind of space where everything you do is... you know, the person is watching you, that requires you to hold a lot of energy. And so, yeah, that stuff does need to be touched on. It's an opportunity.

Gina: And that's something I've come across too, being around where there are people, and not really having a private space. And then stepping out of therapist role and being an advocate and just saying, "Hey, can we find a space?" I feel, being Indigenous, I can easily translate between those spaces because, apart from the actual therapeutic encounter, there are always other things with my indigenous clients that we're always advocating for: financial issues, all sorts of other issues, domestic violence, internet access, whatever's going on. Coming into the Zoom, and being at home, there are the different associated risks and challenges, but also beautiful exchanges that can happen with that as well. There's a lot of side things around that I find I'm managing as well. It's a new environment.

And burnout is a very big thing. Like, sitting down in front of this space [making a square screen gesture] for a long time; how do I look after myself in that? And I see you, Bianca, with all of the things that help you to stay well and safe in your space as you hold it for another. And that's important.

Bianca: It's super important. And also, you know how you were just saying, Gina, about acknowledging what's happening out here [gesturing to surrounding environment]. Sometimes, kids are gonna run in! Or their cat jumps up! I acknowledge that. We have a little yarn with child: "Hey, how you going? Yeah, I'm in this space". And then they move off again. Or, you know, having their pets come in can bring a greater sense of safety for that person. Let's just focus on the cat for a little while. And they try and shoo it away and I say, "No, no, it's okay". Then that just changes the environment, it becomes more natural. We wouldn't be shooing away an animal if we were in, you know, the physical space. And so, yeah, I just see opportunities, really I do.

Gina: I do too. And I think it goes against some of the training that I've had around, you know, boundaries, strict, got to be here in the room, and it's got to be no interruptions. And, you know, a lot of my Indigenous clients, all through my career, they've brought kids. That translates easily for me into the online space too, it is an opportunity.

Hinewirangi also brings in the idea of adaptability between western worlds and our cultural practices.

Hinewirangi: We need to be matatau/fluent in both worlds, as this Pākehā/European world is never going to give up its power and control, so we must learn to be balanced, and do what we must to hold on tight to the culture of kanohi ki te kanohi/face to face, as well as online conversations. If there is anyone who can do this it is us, Indigenous nations; we must maintain that servicing both ways are important. While COVID-19 is running rampant throughout the Indigenous world, we have to do what we have to do online, but it must never become the only way of doing things, we must hold on to our traditions and cultural ways.

Gavin: I think one of the great positives out of COVID-19, the isolation and confinement, all the rest of what we've experienced through the year, has been the acceleration of being able to showcase Indigenous healing practices in contexts which traditionally they didn't even belong or exist. You know, online platform, similar to the ones that we're talking about today, have been very Western-focused, very European. You know, it's the holders of the knowledge, it's all the parts of privileged society whose voices are privileged, who have all the socio-economic advantage, have had power over this type of an online environment. It was their knowledges that were reflected here. And I think, across the last COVID-span, we've seen a real recognition around providing support for marginalised populations, and, unfortunately, across Australia and beyond they do reflect large percentages of Indigenous people. It's offering assistance, support, and healing that's culturally relevant. And as a result of that, we've seen a real escalation in the propagation of a whole range of platforms similar to the one that we're talking about today. And I think the future's bright. Even in the research space, in 2020 alone, there's been a huge increase, and spike, in alternate healing practices beyond that of the traditional biomedical Western model.

Gina: Thanks, Gavin. Yeah, it's breaking down barriers, right? For our knowledge to be transmitted, in a way that's true for us, you know, our authority around that.

Gavin: I think without COVID this would have been a really false space, like a lot of this type of knowledge is in the Western world. But as a result of a chasm which is being created from COVID, there's this been this flow, which has been able to sort of occur organically. While the West has been... their attention has been directed back to the self, we've seen this real flow opening up of this space. And I think we're charged with the responsibility to make sure that we take this opportunity forward as well, that it's not just something where we see a big influx because of what's happened, and then we just go back to the status quo once things go back to normal.

Gina: Yeah, like a spreading out of the healing for marginalised populations, which haven't really had the dominant voice. So, to be able to really provide a lot of healing through this platform to people that wouldn't have got it. There's power in that. Thanks, Gavin.

Gavin: To add onto your points there, that in Aboriginal communities, remote Aboriginal communities throughout the country, particularly the Northern Territory, those seeking mental health support in community are entirely dependent upon one type of model, and

that's a very Western type of intervention. And that has its strengths, don't get me wrong. But it just doesn't reflect, and probably never has, the cultural awareness and safety, which are really important features in Indigenous healing practices that we have today. And mobile phone usage in Aboriginal communities is amongst the highest in Australia's population. I mean, it's extremely high, it's very widespread, even in remote Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory. And for them to be able to get to use social media in a way that gets culturally appropriate support opens up a whole new avenue of staffing non-Indigenous service provision in Aboriginal communities, in terms of education, health, and social work in a variety of different contexts. And it removes the issue around creating a place of safety in an Aboriginal community where you've got a constant turnover of staff, for example, which is just one variable of so many. Where you start to create a relationship with the person in the room, and then that worker leaves, and another one comes in, and that relationship needs to be built again. With this type of online platform, you have far more certainty—which is ironic considering the nature of how this has all evolved in our lives—far more certainty around being able to know what to expect, more adaptability that we don't have to just sit in a room provided by a Westerner, which privileges Western views, Western healing, Western knowledge. As you're talking about [Bianca], maybe we've got cats, maybe it's outside, maybe it's wherever the person feels most comfortable.

Opportunities for Indigenous Online Therapy

Gina: This question is “What opportunities are there online for Indigenous therapies?”

Taz: I think it will give more opportunities to have employed staff being mob! Give a chance for proper informed knowledge and practice pathways. It can create more pathways for support. Create a sense of connection through different areas that the meetings are taken.

Bianca: Absolutely, the move to provide more therapeutic services via online mediums can open up incredible opportunities for Indigenous therapists! Unfortunately, whether it be the nature of the therapeutic disciplines themselves, or the Westernised clinical approach, or education pathways, or the public's misconception that counsellors and psychotherapists are somehow “not as legitimate or qualified” as psychologists or social workers, the result has been relatively low numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples choosing counselling or psychotherapy as a profession. This means that, depending on where you live, you may be unable to access an Indigenous therapist. With increasing public confidence in online mediums, as long as you have a stable internet connection, you can potentially work with an Indigenous therapist anywhere within Australia or potentially from Aotearoa too as our privacy laws are similar. This means that there is the ability for Indigenous therapists working in this way to help people *and* generate a good income.

Hinewirangi: It would, for me, depend on the therapist and what kind of environment they are use too, and whether they too make the choice for themselves. For me, it depends on a number of things: the distance the person is away from me; the ability of that person to

travel to me (considering disabilities, financial restraints, etc.); their youthfulness, and that they choose to use this media understanding that one day they will have to come face-to-face; urgency to be seen, yet safe; and, illness and their inability to be well but need someone to talk with.

An Article Being Made From This Recording—A Break With Traditional Written Methods

Gina: The final question is, “What do you think about this recording taking place in this online environment rather than traditional written form? How does this relate culturally?”

Taz: I think having it online gave room for a yarn to take place, and to have all the concepts and emotions there on one page. It didn’t leave room for miscommunication, hopefully, and it still added to the sense of being together in a room discussing the subject. It allowed for the article to be written faster. And to have the conversation in one line, rather than in different conversations, makes it easier to decipher what everyone is talking about.

Bianca: I actually really enjoyed the article being recorded online rather than in the traditional written form. Culturally, this supports the way we yarn, and promotes the natural way that we build on the depth and quality of conversation through relational connection. Also, let’s be honest, due to COVID, I don’t know any therapists who aren’t feeling a little constricted with available time for written responses. Recording responses online in a group setting, if set up properly and without complicating issues at home, hopefully helps people to feel safe and less vulnerable when sharing their views. I believe it can reduce the “academic speak” that’s so easily expected through written submissions, promoting greater authenticity, spontaneity, exchanges of energy, uniqueness and relational connection.

Hinewirangi: As an Indigenous person, it wouldn’t matter because we come from a traditional oral language. Written and online are tools of the European. I can deal well with that as I am bi-cultural and truly that way, where my Māori narratives and ways of working far outweigh my Western ways of working. We know, many academics are saying, that Western ways are not working with our people and that they heal better when working in our cultural traditions. Consequently, I have no problem with it. I am well balanced in both worlds.

Gávi: Research on the cultural dimensions of meetings has documented the wide variation in meeting structures, norms, and practices across cultures (Kemp & Williams, 2013; Nataraj, Hampton, Matlin, & Meulemans, 2020; De Souza, 2020). As a non-Aboriginal, hybrid polycultural man who also isn’t from a white-Anglo Australian background, I’ve heard from many First Nations people around the world that white-Anglo-dominated meeting spaces are as alienating for them as they have been for me. This is an area where systemic racism and colonisation often intersect. The norms of the “nice white meeting” (Nataraj et al., 2020) and the pervasiveness of white supremacy culture in organisations (Centre for Community Organizations, 2019) seem to contrast starkly with the emphasis on storytelling, circular (spiral-shaped, non-linear) narratives,

flexible and organic pacing, and collaborative, in-the-moment agenda-developing that are the norm in the Aboriginal communities with which I've had the honour of collaborating. I wonder when white-Anglo Australians form committees, prepare meeting agendas, or facilitate group meetings if they consider how many of the mundane aspects of their routine processes are likely to feel violent, silencing, and oppressive for people from many distinct cultures. I wonder whether they are aware of the many people who prefer meetings where the agenda is mutually developed through the course of dialogue, where fixed timings are not assumed or coerced, and where meetings happen in the locations they need to occur for cultural safety, for as little or as long as needed to address the necessary concerns. I wonder, too, about how the documented disinhibition effect exacerbates the casual racism and microaggressions that can occur in group spaces.

As the scholar Ibram X. Kendi (2019) observed, there is no possibility of being “not-racist” without explicitly anti-racist action. Kendi (2002) explained that, “all policies, ideas and people are either being racist or antiracist. Racist policies yield racial inequity; antiracist policies yield racial equity”. Anti-racist efforts among therapists have yet to address racism in online spaces adequately. I've witnessed increasingly racist behaviours in online groups over the course of the pandemic. I have even been targeted for hostility by white-Anglo people who found a detailed Acknowledgement of Country threatening or insulting. The level of reactive white fragility (DiAngelo, 2018), unchecked white privilege, and emboldened, aggressive white supremacy in virtual meetings has increased noticeably over the past year, possibly aided by the disinhibition effect. It's become clear that many white-Anglo people who believe they understand the purpose of an Acknowledgement of Country seem to want a feel-good mention of the Country on which they reside in exchange for a metaphorical gold star and an assurance that they will not have to acknowledge the existence of Aboriginal people or the barbaric acts of cruelty and genocide that resulted in the land no longer being in the hands of the people whom they have named.

Virtual racism (De Souza, 2020) is aided by the sense of distance that can occur when people interact only behind a screen. If we wish to avoid the “nice white meetings” that perpetuate colonising practices and ethnocentric erasure, we need to question such fundamental elements of group facilitation as timing and agendas. The added surveillance possible through virtual communications also presents safety and privacy risks for people who have been targeted for state-sponsored oppression, as have so many First Nations peoples. As Nataraj et al. (2020) observed, in spaces where these white-centric norms are not interrogated and challenged, ostensibly neutral “bureaucracy instead functions to force assimilation into a system entrenched in whiteness”.

Gina: Our time is coming to a close. And I want to invite us all in. We've heard from Gavin. Keith and Gávi, if you wanted to make any comment about what we've been talking about at all, briefly. And I invite Bianca and myself to finish off with our experience of today and anything else we wanted to add around what we've been talking about.

Gávi: I guess what strikes me is that it's not just Aboriginal people who might prefer Aboriginal therapists, when Bianca was talking before about how people feel more comfortable going to an Aboriginal therapist, even if they're not an Aboriginal person, because they don't feel heard by the white-Anglo norms of therapy. I can really relate to that. Because if I were looking for a therapist within Australia, I would prefer to go to someone who is an Aboriginal person. I just don't know that I'd be understood as well by a non-Aboriginal Australian therapist, even though I'm not an Aboriginal person. And I think a couple of the things that really strike me as you're talking is, first of all, how much is missing from that Anglo-centric view of what a boundary is and what it does, and who needs a boundary, and how much of yourself are you supposed to put into space for it to be a genuinely healing encounter. And I know from a lot of the spaces I move in, the communities I move in, there's a real disconnect, where there are people in ethics committees or people working as supervisors who say things like, "Lived experience is inappropriate, you should never share it, it's always unethical". And we've got people in our communities, we've got research in our communities, saying, "We need to know who you are and where you've been! We don't even want to talk to you if we don't know where you're coming from. Whether you have the same lived experience or not, we have to know that *you* know your position and your privileges, because we have to know how to keep ourselves safe with you, and how to navigate that encounter". And I was really struck when Keith was talking about that positionality. And that's missing from how most white-Anglo authority figures within psychotherapy and counselling talk about the idea of boundaries and ethics.

And I'm just thinking of some of the work, early work that I did where, because of some of the languages I speak overseas, I was first given a role working with people with a language I did speak, and then I was assigned to work with other people because they said, "Well, you don't speak English. So we'll just give you all the non-English speaking people." However, I didn't speak that language. And there were no other people who spoke that language on the team. So I ended up having to, in this community team, provide services with people when we did not have a language in common. And I thought, "What on earth am I going to do to be appropriate with these people?" And what I learned was that there's something really powerful about sitting down—and this was home visits—sitting down at someone's kitchen table, allowing them to give you a [non-alcoholic] drink, and sitting, and being, and sharing a drink with them, without an agenda, without a clipboard, without a little tick box sheet where you're judging them and fitting them in a little box and giving them a number, and allowing whoever they wanted to be in that space, to be in that space with you. That is what they found healing. And there was such a profound disconnect, and there still is such a profound disconnect, between that reality and institutional policies.

I feel like the wisdom that each of you has shared tonight is a wisdom that I don't see represented in findings by things like Productivity Commission that says PACFA members are only capable of being "low-level, non-clinical providers". I think that, actually, the more distressed someone is, the more "clinical" a service they need, the more important their safety and attunement is, and the more essential it can be to have someone who

understands systemic oppression and is a healing practitioner. And I think of someone like Taz, who does that work but doesn't have a title, doesn't have the credibility, isn't part of that system, and yet does so much good and saves people's lives, but does not have a structure to support him in that. And it makes me think there's a real need for a shift in what we think of as ethics and boundaries, so that idea of positionality being part of enacting ethics, that idea of advocacy as a professional duty; that when I work with an Aboriginal person, it's not enough what I say in the space, it's not enough to kind of nod and say, "Oh, yes, yes, you've been through intergenerational trauma," but it's about who I am everywhere outside of sessions, not just in that space. And people know, if you're not that person everywhere, you're not genuinely that person with me. So that's all I wanted to say about that. And I'm thrilled to be here with all of you. I'm feeling very honoured.

Gina: Thank you, Gávi. I appreciate it; it's very important.

Keith: Well, I want to continue the theme of being honoured. It's been lovely, and the time has flown. I sort of think, "I want to do another hour". You know, time-space has gone. But, thank you. There's an irony; Gávi, you just quoted this "low-level, clinical provider," and I think, "Wow! I want to be a low-level clinical provider because that means I'm nearer the ground".

I've railed against the concepts of relational depth (see Tudor, 2014/2017), and I'm thinking, why don't we talk about relational breadth or width? You know, there's this privileging of some sort of archaeological, geological layers of self, which derives from the Freudian tradition, and so on. Anyway, I just wanted to riff a little bit off what you'd said, Gávi, because it's so beautiful and poignant.

What I've really learned from today is, what I noticed about the four of you speaking, was your optimism. It really struck me that you—and particularly Bianca—you exude it. Also, I wanted to turn on my microphone. I was on mute out of respect, because of the background noise. But, of course, when I'm on mute, you don't hear my "Yeah"s, "Mmm"s, and "Woo"s, and so on. So that's interesting in terms of where online culture has sort of taken over that relational space. And so, in some ways I want to sort of unmute everyone and just have all the "yeah"s, and burps, and whatever. So there's something about your optimism, and seeing particularly Gavin and Bianca and Gina also talk about the opportunity that working online offers, which I just thought was very lovely and generous and open. And I think, "Yeah, of course, it means that we can reach distant parts". That's probably more true in Australia, but still relevant here in Aotearoa New Zealand, and means that I can work with somebody in Southland (a region in the deep south of the South Island of New Zealand) or a colleague can work with somebody in Northland (a region in the far north of the North Island of New Zealand). So, I'm taking that away. Also I think about the equalising space. In some ways it's a tension because, you know, we could be invading somebody's space; at same time they can choose not to share their picture. But I do think there's the opportunity for a different relationship with space, online. So that was another thing.

I guess my concern is that I heard you all talk about being busier than ever. Bianca, you talked about, you know, “I’m busy, busy”. So, as an ally—as I’m being called an ally—I guess my thought is, and I’m not expecting you to answer, but what I’m left with is, “How can I help my Indigenous colleagues, brothers, sisters, however you identify, with that? Is there anything that I and other allies can do to support you so that you don’t get burnt out, so that you don’t get overloaded?” I mean, one obvious thing, and I’ve been trying to work on this in the context of education and training, is educating and training more Māori students—because I think we should; I just think it’s the right thing to do. But I’m just aware that in this exciting, opportunistic, expansive time, you could end up, yet again, more overloaded, more overworked, more demanded on, and so on. I care about that, and I worry about that. So, I suppose that’s also what I’m taking away.

Finally, what I’m taking away is that heart, and I’m looking particularly at you Bianca, with your enthusiasm and the rocks—I have a bit of a relationship with rocks back in the UK, or certain stones anyway and sacred stones—and I just think, “Wow, we can communicate, strangers can communicate, pretty much heart-to-heart across this strange and wonderful medium”. So ngā mihi nui kia koutou, a big thanks to you all for all your mahi (work) Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa, which means “Greetings to you all, including me”. It’s been a complete privilege.

Gina: Tēnā koe, Keith.

Keith: And I’m not gonna go back on mute, so you can hear my, “Ah!” [Laughing].

Gina: Great! Gavin, any final thoughts?

Gavin: Bianca can quite rightly have the last word. Look, you’re a hundred percent right there, Keith. Bianca fills the screen. Gina does as well. And, Gávi, the short time that we’ve known each other you can certainly pick up a presence amongst the group. And it’s a privilege to be here. Keith’s point about burnout is a valid one. And it’s not an excuse, to be burnt out, to get this right. It can’t be, “It was too much, and it became too hard, so then I had to stop”. We need to work out a way, a model for us all, to make sure that what we do now we get right because we’re in a very privileged position.

Gina mentioned earlier about the College of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Practices group, which we both sit on with Bianca. And, you know, the primary objective of that group is to accredit, validate indigenous healing practices in exactly the same way that they would do for a Western healing modality, so they’re seen as equals. And we’ve created a real chasm of opportunity there, but that’s what it is at the moment, it’s an opportunity, and it’s our responsibility to get that right. And as an ally myself, I feel a great sense of responsibility to ensure that I carry the load in a way which helps people now but also we get the job done, because that’s really important.

Gina: Thanks, Gavin. I’m glad you mentioned that. I was going to tautoko back to Keith around what we’re doing in terms of educating and trying to have more practitioners and getting our work out there so other people can do it. Bianca, the last word rests with you.

Bianca: [Laughing] Lived experience is really important. We need more people, more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners, and also in New Zealand as well. We need more people seeing this as a valid way of giving back to community, of helping people. Also, we need to make sure that we look after ourselves. I do this [gesturing to table of objects]—it's not just a beauty thing—I do this to protect and look after myself. And I spend most of my time outside on Country and it is my self-care. I go and sit by the pond and make sure that I give time to listen to the birds and feel the wind. I think we need to make sure we look after ourselves otherwise we can't help anyone. And if we're struggling with our own self-care, then how do you hold relationship for anybody? Yeah, I think that's really important.

The volume of people, there needs to be so many more people, so many more Indigenous practitioners saying that this is a valid way to go. That their skills and lived experience is recognised, and, as you said, that's what that group is about. And that we think that there's a different way of doing things, like this medium. And recognising when we are getting to that point of needing a break, not getting too burned out. Because there are too few of us in this healing profession to risk losing one. So I think it's all about us all supporting each other, looking after each other, encouraging more people. And that our training systems are indigenised.

I can tell you that I spend most of my time with my shoes off! Or sitting in the dirt, which is certainly not what my training told me I was allowed to do [laughing]. And I think It's about tipping the training on its edge a bit—not discarding it, because there are some amazing, fantastic things about our training, which is great—but changing the space, that this clinical four-walled space is not the only valid healing way. And yeah, thumbs up to all of us.

Gina: We're part of Country. We're part of this earth. And that it's reciprocated.

Bianca: And language. I think language is so important. You know, it warms my heart to hear even non-Aboriginal people speak my language. And they go, "Oh, there's that minya dog," or whatever. And I hear these little kids. It's so fantastic, and it becomes just accepted. And language is really healing. And I've mentioned language specifically because we've been using language tonight. But also last night was obviously the opening premiere of *The Furnace* (Mackay, Kenney & White, 2020), which is filmed in my Country and Badimaya has been spoken in language, is being spoken on the big screen, which was really exciting to see. Let's not avoid bringing language, or Country, or energy into spaces. Let's embrace that! This is what makes us so sought after. It's our heart, it's our energy; we do things differently, that's what it's about.

Gina: Tihei mauri ora! Ahh, my heart is just filled with so much warmth. And I'm noticing it's raining here. And as we've been talking, the rains have been falling, and when I look back at the trees now on the mountain, everything has a freshness. It's been nourished. And that's how I feel right now, I feel very nourished by the space. Thank you, Bianca, for

finishing us up. Thank you, Keith and Gávi for your allyship. And thank you, Gavin and Bianca, for your beautiful insights. And I feel very honoured to have been tasked with bringing everybody together. And thank you very much, mainly for your time in this space.

Bianca: And for the conversation, for starting a conversation about Indigenous practitioners being in this [online] space. I can't wait to read the article because it's going to be really interesting, and will hopefully get people thinking.

Gina: And Taz because he had to go early and he made that offer to email. Let's do that: email out the questions to those that were not able to be here, had to leave early, and to us for the two questions that we did not get to in this recording. So, I'll annoy you all again a little bit after this, and would love to hear your responses. And thank you, thank you, thank you [Hands in prayer].

Glossary

Ahau	I, me, I am, name
Arakwal land	Byron Bay area, New South Wales, Australia
Awa	River
Badimaya	Cue, Nanninne, and Mount Magnet to the North, Paynes Find to the South, Yalgoo to the Southwest, and the Northwest lays along the Sandford River, Western Australia
Barna mabarn	Country medicine
Boon wurrung, Naarm	Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
Bundjalung Country	Northern New South Wales, Australia, from Grafton on the Clarence River of Northern New South Wales, north to the town of Ipswich and the Beaudesert, in Southern Queensland, and down around the other side of the Great Dividing Range and back to Grafton
Bwgcolman	Palm Island, Queensland, Australia
Dadirri	Aboriginal deep listening, mindfulness healing practice from the Nauiyu community, Daly River in the Northern Territory

Hapū	Subtribe
Hongi	Sharing of sacred breath, pressing noses
Hinengaro	Emotional and psychological well-being
Iwi	Tribe
Kalkadoon	Mount Isa, Queensland, Australia
Kaurna	Adelaide Plains, South Australia
Kanohi ki te kanohi	Face-to-face
Kaupapa	Māori approach
Kōrero	Talk, speak together
Mahi	Work
Mana	Spiritual authority
Mandanga	Country medicine
Māori	Indigenous people of Aotearoa
Matatau	Fluent, capable
Maunga	Mountain
Mauri	Life force
Mihi	Greeting
Naiyu land	Daly river, Northern Territory, Australia
Pākehā	Non-Indigenous, European

Pepeha	Introduction
Peramangk	Barossa Valley in the North, South to Myponga, East to Mannum, and West to the Mount Lofty Ranges, South Australia
Rangitira	Sovereignty, weave people together
Tangata whenua	Indigenous peoples of the land
Te reo	Māori language
Tihei mauri ora	A call to claim the right to speak, a call to the life force
Tikanga	Guardianship
Tinana	Physical well-being
Tupuna	Ancestors
Waiata	Song
Waka	Canoe
Whaea	Mother, aunt, aunty
Whānau	Family
Whare tapa whā	The four corners of well-being
Whenua	Land; placenta, sustenance
Yarn	Talk, speak together

Authors

Dr. Gávi Ansara (He/Him) is a psychotherapist, clinical educator, and community activist living on stolen and sovereign Boon Wurrung land in the Kulin Nations. He holds a PhD and MSc in Psychology (University of Surrey, England), Master of Counselling (Monash), and BA in International and Cross-Cultural Health with Concentration in African-centred approaches to African Studies. Gávi has 20 years of international Anti-Oppressive Practice alongside people and communities with marginalised lived experiences. He was Guest Editor for PACJA's Special Issue on Anti-Oppressive Practice. Gávi is: an Australian Association of Family Therapy [AAFT]-registered Clinical Family Therapist; an AAFT-Accredited Clinical Supervisor; a Pink Therapy Advanced Accredited Gender, Sex, Sexuality, and Relationships Diversities Therapist (AAGSRDT); a Registered NDIS Disability Services Provider; and, a PACFA Clinical Member. He also holds specialist qualifications in: trauma, grief, youth, and refugee mental health, and relationship counselling. Gávi is a hybrid polycultural man of faith who has multiple names in multiple languages, and all of them are his "real" names. He grew up in urban and rural China, on stolen lands of the Eora Nation, and elsewhere. His work is informed by lived experience of disability, poverty, homelessness, migration, racist violence, intergenerational trauma from genocide and forced displacement, and marginalisation due to gender, body, kinship, and sexuality oppression. He strives toward ongoing cultural humility regarding his literacy, verbal, allistic (non-autistic), sighted (not Blind or visually impaired), and non-Aboriginal privilege in an ableist, allistic-centric, classist, colonising, and racist society. Gávi serves as Convenor of PACFA's Diversity in Gender, Body, Kinship, and Sexuality Interest Group, Associate Editor of the International Journal of Transgender Health, and Co-Facilitator of Honouring Diversity, Examining Privilege, Challenging Oppression, an anti-racist, polyamory-and-kink-affirming, and neurodiversity positive Australian Centre for Emotionally Focused Therapy (ACEFT) Peer Development Group. He received the American Psychological Association's Transgender Research Award for original, significant research, the UK Higher Education Academy's National Psychology Postgraduate Teaching Award for excellence in teaching psychology, and the University of Surrey Vice Chancellor's Alumni Achievement Award for outstanding contributions to standards and policies in international human rights and social justice.

Taz Clay first started working in the mental health sector at 17 with headspace National. During this time at headspace, he was able to progress the conversation about Indigenous trans people and the intersectionality of being trans and First Nations in Australia, with a particular focus on suicide prevention. This work led Taz into working across many different sectors, including state and federal governments, Department of Child Safety, the alcohol and other drugs sector, as well as the suicide prevention sector. Much of this has focused on the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander LGBTQ+ mob. Taz uses his lived experiences to strengthen the overall health of the many communities he represents.

Hinewirangi Kohu Morgan is a Māori artist, poet, and activist who lives and works in Aotearoa (New Zealand). She is the Vice Chair of the International Indian Treaty Council, a representative for the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Movement. Hinewirangi is a founding director of the Māori Women's Centre which runs programs that help end

domestic violence and rebuild community while promoting radical changes in the domestic violence sector and in the dominant political and economic systems. She teaches in her homeland of New Zealand and abroad, conducting workshops on all aspects of the Maori philosophies of mental, physical, and spiritual wellbeing. Her areas of expertise include traditional Māori parenting and healing, Māori flute-making (Taonga Puoro), and Indigenous poetry and drama. Her published works include a four-part collection of poetry entitled Kanohi ki te Kanohi about her travels to indigenous communities around the world.

Dr. Gavin Morris' teaching career spans two decades in schools around Australia. He currently lectures in undergraduate and postgraduate programs at Charles Darwin University in the Northern Territory. Gavin's experience relates to Indigenous health, education, and research, and he has developed significant relationships with several Aboriginal communities throughout the NT. He holds a Bachelor of Education from James Cook University (Townsville, Queensland), a Master of Education from the University of Sydney (Sydney, New South Wales) and a PhD from Charles Darwin University (Darwin, Northern Territory). Gavin's PhD investigates the trauma associated with the experience of colonisation and the traditional healing practices specific to a remote Aboriginal community. Gavin is a board member of the Northern Territory Board of Studies and a member of the College of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership group affiliated with PACFA.

Gina O'Neill (she/her) is a descendant of Ngāti Kahungunu, Rangitāne, Ireland and Germany, living and working currently on Eora and Bundjalung lands in Australia. Gina is an experienced psychotherapist and ecotherapist in private practice, an educator, and a supervising consultant (MasterGestalt Therapy, GradDipCouns, and BAppSocSci). She has 20 years of clinical experience supporting individuals, families and groups presenting with addictions, mental health, relationship issues, and trauma-related experiences. Gina has worked in private psychiatric clinical settings, non-government organisations, and in the public health sector. She is a member of the PACFA College of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Practices and the PACFA research committee. As a New Zealand Māori woman, her interest is in growing her Indigenous healing practice informed by te Ao Māori in reciprocity with the natural world, and the intersection with gestalt psychotherapy to support healing relationships with people and our environment.

Bianca Stawiarski is the Founder and Managing Director of Warida Wholistic Wellness. She is a strong, centred, and purpose-driven healer, consultant, speaker, lecturer, author, trainer, and change-maker. Leading organisations from across the globe have sought out Bianca to create and deliver sensitive and engaging programs both online and in person, or to educate wider audiences through their publications. Bianca has become a preferred provider to local, state, national, and international organisations, as well as government departments and agencies. She is in demand due to her dynamic, uplifting, and engaging training and healing style—across areas of wellbeing, trauma, business, and support of First Nations peoples. Bianca is highly skilled and qualified, and brings with her a unique approach, which is the culmination of her decades of work experience (including high

levels of government), her vast amount of qualifications and accreditations, her lived experience, traumas and healing, and her absolute connectedness to her culture and Country. She has the specialised ability to create, facilitate, and deliver unique mindset changing programs, provide therapeutic support that is culturally safe, trauma-informed, and empowering, as well as develop and present customised wellbeing training. Bianca infuses her calming, resilient, earthy, Indigenous connectedness into all that she does. At all times, she draws upon her Badimaya (Badimia) and Ukrainian heritages, connection to Australian Indigenous wisdom, sense of community, and holistic healing approach.

Keith Tudor is professor of psychotherapy at Auckland University of Technology, Aotearoa New Zealand. He was a political activist for a number of years (in the UK and Italy); since emigrating/immigrating to New Zealand, he has been engaged in the politics of biculturalism and is an associate member of Waka Oranga, a Māori-led organisation of psychotherapists, health practitioners, and health care providers. As a qualified social worker and psychotherapist, he is interested in the interface and interplay between the social/political world and the psychological world; and is the editor of *Psychotherapy and Politics International*.

References

Centre for Community Organizations. (2019). *White supremacy culture in organizations*. [Adapted from Tema Okun's work for Dismantling Racism Works.] Retrieved from <https://coco-net.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Coco-WhiteSupCulture-ENG4.pdf>

De Souza, R. (2020, July 4). *Virtually racist: Anti-racist work in the time of Zoom*. Retrieved from <http://www.ruthdesouza.com/2020/07/04/virtually-racist-anti-racist-work-in-the-time-of-zoom/>

DiAngelo, R. (2018). *White fragility: Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism*. Beacon Press.

Fejo-King, C. (2013). *Let's talk kinship: Innovating Australian social work education, theory, research and practice through Aboriginal knowledge*. Magpie Goose Publishing.

Kemp, L. J., & Williams, P. (2013). In their own time and space: Meeting behaviour in the Gulf Arab workplace. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 13(2), 215-235. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470595813485383>

Kendi, I. X. (2019). *How to be an antiracist*. Vintage Books.

Kendi, I. X. (2018, December 6). This is what an antiracist America would look like. How do we get there? *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/dec/06/antiracism-and-america-white-nationalism>

Mackay, R. (Editor, Writer), Kennedy, T. (Producer), & White, T. (Producer). (2020). *The Furnace* [Film]. Hoover's Gold Pty Ltd.

Morris, G. (2019). *Edge of sacred – Exploring the life stories of the Nauiyu community. An investigation into trauma and the traditional healing practices of a remote Aboriginal community* [Doctoral Dissertation, Charles Darwin University].
<https://doi.org/10.25913/5ebb25ee03fe6>

Nataraj, L., Hampton, H., Matlin, T., & Meulemans, Y. N. (2020). “Nice white meetings”: Unpacking absurd library bureaucracy through a critical race theory lens. *Canadian Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 6, 1-15.

Tudor, K. (2017). The relational, the vertical, and the horizontal: A critique of “relational depth”. In K. Tudor *Conscience and critic: The selected works of Keith Tudor* (pp. 191–201). Routledge. (Original work published 2014)

Ungunmerr-Baumann, M. (1988). Dadirri. *Compass Theology Review*, 22, 9-11. Ungunmerr-Baumann, M. (1993). Dadirri: Listening to one another. In J. Hendricks & G Hefferan (Eds.), *A spirituality of Catholic Aborigines and the struggle for justice, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Apostolate* (pp.34-47). Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane.

Ungunmerr-Baumann, M. (2002). *Dadirri: Inner Deep Listening and Quiet Still Awareness: A reflection by Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann*. Emmaus Productions.

Yunkaporta, T. (2019). *Sandtalk: How Indigenous thinking can save the world*. The Text Publishing Company.

[Return to Articles](#)