

TIKANGA OUTCOMES — by Anahera Herbert-Graves

Tikangā is a body of God-given concepts and practices designed to uphold te ihi te wehi te mana te tapu me te mauri o nga tangata me te ao, and it is based on the fundamental principles of tika, pono aroha.



Whenever any one or more of these principles is not present, or is in conflict with another, there is a violation. Under tikanga, the ideal outcome to heal any violation is hohou-i-te-rongo, a reconciliation based on restoration of both the victim and the violator to a state of [toiora](#).

I was once asked to facilitate a hui between a whānau where a wife had died and her estranged husband had returned to live in the home he'd built and paid for on her whānau land. Her whānau wanted him off their land entirely, and he wanted them out of his house completely.

It quickly became clear that the whānau were there through heke tika (*birthright*), while the husband was there because he and his late wife had once loved each other enough for her to bring him on to her land, and him to build her the house. But pono did not seem to be there at all, and so the two parties were at each other's throats.

Finally, the wife's brother stood up and told everyone off to a standstill for what each had contributed to the conflict. He even told me off just for being there. We could tell he was wild that he had to say these things. But, most importantly, we all knew pono was in the house!

Straightaway the dynamic of the hui changed and that whānau were able to hohouterongo themselves.

An alternative tikanga outcome to hohou-i-te-rongo is muru, which can be likened to restorative justice based on redistribution of assets.

In another case, two teenaged boys stole from their grandparents, and when confronted by their koro, they'd shoved and threatened both him and their nanna with even worse violence if he didn't shut up.

At the resultant hui there was pōkēkē me pōhēhē aplenty from the boys and their whānau supporters, but no evidence of tika pono or aroha from beginning to end. It was clear that hohouterongo was just not going to happen.

Finally, the whānau supporters of the grandparents appointed a [taua](#) which went to the boys' house to perform the muru. Ironically, the boys' father called the police and his sons ended up being convicted in the Kawanatanga court on assault and theft charges.

When violators refuse to live or abide by tikanga, the only alternative is the lower laws of the Kawanatanga which can punish them, but will never heal their violation or restore them and their victims to toiora.

Tikanga, on the other hand, is the only way to do that, because it upholds te ihi te wehi te mana te tapu me te mauri o nga tangata me te ao. Enei nga mahi o te Atua me nga Rangatira hoki.

