

A NEW PARADIGM FOR MAORIDOM
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(This material is written in response to the recent release of the Maori Health Initiatives)

When Te Kohanga Reo movement began many years ago, the mindset of Maori leaders was that a new paradigm was required; one that was to take Maori beyond their current notion (both individually and collectively) that only the English language could benefit Maori; and only one form of education could place their children into employment, and secure ultimate success for their future.

A few others thought differently; this minority group of people had a new paradigm: a new reality whereby Maori could create, with an infused spirit, and ignite a taonga that was desperately in need of new energy. Those blessed ones who took up the challenge provide a model for all of us; their commitment and sheer joy in their tasks have given so many the opportunity to learn the reo.

There was a great debate, one that went on for a long time. Fear was at the base of the main argument and appeared to virtually consume those who even for a moment allowed themselves to doubt the indigenous seed within them. They ignored the fact that this seed is the life-giving force that has been carried within them since Hawaikinui, and will continue to be carried to the point of transformation as we evolve into a new species of enlightened beings. This is, however, another topic.

Facing these challenges from the people and the government, Maori leaders then joined together to create a new vision for the tamariki who would fill the Kohanga Reo classrooms, and for the future generations yet to take breath. Their dreams became a reality; grandparents and parents alike joined to embrace what for some was extremely painful as they associated any form of Maori Language with a grim memory of the past, not worthy of remembering. So painful, in fact, that if Maori had anything to say, it would most likely be, "it's just not worth the battle."

And it certainly was a battle, not only among education leaders, but also an outcry from within Maori. This did not serve the cause at all. However, a reaction from those who were not yet involved forced them to make a stand and join together. The outcome: an enormous boost of positive energy that led to success.

Time has washed away and cleansed many of the negative thoughts and insecurities that held such a tight grip upon the psyche of some, and has brought us now to a point of no return. – A NEW PARADIGM.

The Te Kohanga Reo movement is the greatest achievement – certainly in my lifetime – for Maoridom; it enabled the revival of the language and the resurgence and empowerment of an indigenous people who were long ago delivered from the shores of Hawaikinui to this new land. A special beam of light now seeps out from within an almost forgotten world – carried by the ancient voice of the mother tongue.

Now, the time has come for Maori to have yet another paradigm shift. Our worldview and everyday connectedness with life plays an integral part in the development of the

entire country – and even beyond that, globally, and reaching further still to a universal and cosmic existence.

Since the beginning of time, our ancestors have taught us the importance of whakapapa – the voice that speaks the lineage of who we are, where we have come from, and who our people were and their journey. We are not separate from them today, nor will we be separate from them tomorrow.

If you believe you are separate – then sadly – you are lost. The breath that gave birth to each and every ancestor is the very breath that birthed you. You are not separate – not now – not ever. When you understand the interconnectedness of nature and the forces of universal creation, you will be awakened to your own connectedness to the all that is.

It is, no doubt, the truth when we say Maoridom is at its greatest when in unity to achieve a common goal. The indifferences of the past and or present can no longer be entertained; as an indigenous people, Maori must be able to overcome themselves and their egos.

Values, beliefs, and attitudes require addressing: when you look at how far we have come and where we yet need to be, not enough ground has been covered. Having information, listening intently, and thinking carefully before acting requires a shift in approach.

Many experts in science tell us time is not on our side; it has almost run out. Our environment is collapsing at an unprecedented rate; we rely on the availability of clean water and uncontaminated food to survive. What we do to others we, in turn, do to ourselves; we are all breathing the same air, and we all need clean air to survive. Science also tells us that we each have an individual responsibility to participate in this change. We cannot separate ourselves from it, and as an indigenous people, Maori have a greater responsibility.

We have been told by our Tipuna (ancestors) how the land will sustain us forever; we are connected to it and it is connected to us; we are not separate; New Zealand belongs to all people who feel it and are connected to it through the energy of their hearts. Until that time comes, we have yet to hold the new paradigm in our hands.

There will be no need to talk about it; we will feel it with every fiber of our being; we will be in unity and at peace, and this feeling of unity will connect us beyond to Matariki. Then and only then will we find our place in the universe. We will see, with eyes wide open, our Tipuna standing there waiting for us, drawing us forward as if they are magnets.

Maori are the caretakers of this land, and from this thinking will be birthed a new paradigm, a new reality. Maoridom speaks of unity all the time. It is one thing to talk about it and quite another to live it. Unity is a natural experience; it is not something that is planned; nature does not plan to grow flowers in the field; it happens naturally. When Maoridom becomes a reflection of the events of nature, the penny will drop. The noise will be so loud it will be heard beyond in the Pleiades. We are all one, connected through eternity, bonded with the land and all its inhabitants.

During a recent visit to Hawkes Bay, I travelled to the top of Te Mata Peak to speak with the ancestors and join with my whanau in a karanga to them and introduce them to my new moko; at that moment, I heard the mountain speak to me. I realized this was my mountain. On paper, I think it belongs to the City Council; I'm not sure; I don't really care. What I do know is that as long as I wish to, I am able to communicate with this mountain, and I feel I am a part of it and its history. This is a personal connection, one we are all able to attain, and one that is the birthright of Maori. New Zealand is our land and always will be; it is God's gift to us to be its caretakers.

As caretakers, our task is to keep our waters clean, our shorelines full of kai moana, and the land unpolluted. We will always own it in this sense. The Earth is our home; no one can expel us from Earth; we have no other home, and yet the abuse of our beautiful planet is enormous. This abuse has grown to such a degree that our lives reflect the very hostility and repugnance that for some has become the normal human expression. The treatment of women and children in this country is the greatest reflection of a land that we are not connected with.

Te Reo was at an all-time low when Maoridom's paradigm shift to embrace the Kohanga Reo movement and ignite the fires of Te Reo was birthed. A recent United Nations report also highlights what may be a move toward the Maori becoming non-existent. What a shocking thought! This must be yet another wake-up call.

Every indigenous tribe upon the planet is now being challenged as to what their next move will be . . . what the sign is . . . how we will know the time is now.

Science tells us these times are extremely critical. Change can come in many forms; however, in the past several years we have seen gross devastation on a magnitude unknown to our planet, certainly in this age. Natural disasters have now become an almost weekly occurrence. Either we can participate constructively in this time of change, or with our ignorance, we can rail against it as we stand by and watch our environment and our people disintegrate before our eyes.

Our planet has its place in the universe, and all life forms here affect it. We must come to understand that our existence here is only a tiny part of an enormous picture and that it has a ripple affect that sends energy far beyond our physical selves and our immediate surroundings.

As a species, we are at a critical point in our evolution, we require new knowledge, and we need it now. Maoridom requires a paradigm shift in order to survive the incredible onslaught of change coming our way.

Current health issues are a reflection of our environment; everything is connected. When this is understood, massive change can be accomplished to drive Maori in a manner that is consistent with an evolving species. Recent United Nation reports addressing our environment are a crucial reminder of our individual responsibility for our health, and the collective responsibility for a paradigm shift in health awareness.

Perhaps new and innovative measures can be entertained, such as energy medicine, Dr. Bruce Lipton's Biology research, and other such research findings. These ideas and concepts are congruent with Maori Tikanga's Three Kete of Knowledge.

Physical, social, biological, economic, and political factors have a direct affect on health; to fail to address this would be foolish; they are all directly related to the environment and individual health. While the words 'harnessing the spirit' are spoken, within the Maori health system there is little or no attention paid to spiritual well being, the basis for all things Maori.

I recently read the new report on Maori health and the direction it is taking, and it is simply not enough – and we can no longer sit back and say it is enough. The initiatives must come from the people; the government will not pick us up and feed our spirit.

It is relatively simple to criticize society and its shortcomings; it is far more difficult to find the solutions and then to implement them to set a new and prosperous direction for health. Social problems have a direct impact upon community health, crime, unemployment, violence, poverty, and hunger – not to mention global warming and the destruction of the Earth's environment.

In times past, tribal life ensured that each and every member was taken care of; however, when disease struck, it had the potential to wipe out the weak, and thus reduce the population of Maori in large numbers. The onslaught of a new disease that has the potential to wipe out Maoridom is the current disintegration of our environment: the breakdown of a community and its people. The long-term implications of our actions have failed to be addressed and we are now being faced with neglect in the care for our women and children, a violation of their human rights.

Maori are in partnership with the universe; through ancient knowledge, myths, and legends, they have long been able to connect to places in the universe such as Matariki, and identify with the many worlds beyond and the vast underworld below. These connections need to be embraced when addressing a paradigm shift and looking at the totality of Maori health. If the body is physically ailing then, without a doubt, the spirit is weakened.

If Maori do not achieve a paradigm shift, I am concerned that they will be neither intellectually nor emotionally prepared for the changes and challenges of a future world that is speeding toward us like a bolt of lightning from the night's sky!

We now must generate the same energy and drive that was harnessed by the Kohanga Reo movement and place them in the health sector to overcome the all-consuming plague that is increasingly creating victims of drug and child abuse. The deaths of beautiful young women and their babies have reached numbers that are outrageous!

A paradigm shift is required. Maori have done it before and we must do it again! Without it, the light of realization – a distant cry from the spiritual base of our ancestors – will not pierce through to the hearts of those driven by money and greed. Maori Health service providers who are not and do not practise what they preach should not

be lecturing about health issues. This is an unacceptable reality. We must **live** the paradigm.

To quote Dr. Edgar Mitchell:

*We must swiftly evolve to the next level by eradicating pervasive ignorance concerning who we really are and why we are here.
We must recognize that the behaviours and practices of global civilization are not sustainable, or face the extreme likelihood of mass death and destruction, if not extinction all together.
Some writers have called this the need for a Conscious Evolution.*

Who is Dr. Edgar Mitchell

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgar Mitchell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgar_Mitchell)

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‘Te Ohonga’ The Awakening – a journey to a new world. A documentary video/slide show is now planned by others who also support *a new vision* to embrace a new paradigm, in the hope Maori and the nation as a whole are swiftly able to move through this window of opportunity that is NOW open to humanity, as Mother Earth moves closer into the frequency of unity.