Supervision Hui – Silvia Purdie's reflections
From the Manurewa hui, 10 March 2025

What did you hear?
How does this connect with you?
Where to from here?
Anything you'd like to share with the group about yourself and who you stand with?

For me, I heard …

- I felt energy in the room. It started as a kind of nervous energy, as people came not knowing each other or quite why they were there. It quickly changed to a 'leaning in' energy … the immediate spark from respect for each other, of making connections around the room … the energy of sharing what matters to us as well as points of pain … fizzing energy that energises but in a peaceful way. I understand this as Wairua Tapu at work.
- I heard people asking themselves 'Am I in the right place?'. Such an interesting question, especially from a cultural & decolonialism perspective: what fears rise to the surface? Who gets to decide who belongs & who is 'out of place'? I loved being permitted to glimpse into people's process of coming to 'Yes, I am in the right place.'
- I heard a rich diversity of work contexts: family harm, social work, academia, church leadership, prison, private practice, nursing, training & PD, chaplaincy, climate change, city council, national bodies, students, youth … In the room we truly were a microcosm of the community sector in Aotearoa. That felt a real priviledge, a rare space across boundaries. It truly highlighted the importance of professional supervision as a tool which is adaptable and beneficial across diverse Kaimahi communities.
- I heard people grappling with the cultural framing and limitations of 'supervision': the word itself, different expectations, power dynamics and the power of reflective practice.
- I heard many of us being part of the huge recent increase in post-graduate training in Professional Supervision, both as Kaiako and students.
- I heard recognition of the absence of a professional body for graduates and those growing their work as supervisors.
- I heard people being strong and grounded in their cultural identity, holding together different strands within themselves, with a growing sense of pride and insight about how this informs and enriches their work.

This connects for me as …

- I felt my heart enlarged. We create space for each other to grow as we offer from our experience.
- I feel inspired by the possibilities as we do this work and encourage each other in it.
- I really liked being a cultural minority in the room. This obviously connects back to my childhood - and it's my own issue if I feel discomfort in a room full of white women. But I genuinely love being in culturally diverse spaces.
- I recognise that I'm increasingly discontent with classic western ways of doing meetings and trainings with a presenter and everyone else just listening. Whakawhanaungatanga is just so important and fruitful as a process! I trust the process.

- I heard people well connected with their faith and spiritual foundation. I personally love this and feel very at home with it, but I also want to make space for those who don't find the Christian framework helpful.

Where to from here …

- I do think Aotearoa needs a professional body for supervisors. My main motivation for this is to raise up the mana of those who have rich and diverse experience in leadership formation but who have not gone down the currently existing pathways of social work or counselling towards a professional membership.
- Personally, I am willing to offer some more national networking this year, specifically to organise Hui in Wellington and Napier, possibly other places if there are people keen for this.
- I manage a data base of about 100 people who have opted in to a 'Kaitiakitanga /Supervision Network'. Sign-in is at: https://www.conversationscounselling.nz/aotearoa.html
- A next step for this would be a website … any offers of help??
- I have a vision for a new entity, possibly called something like 'Kaitiakitanga Aotearoa: Professional Supervision Association'. 'Kā' is a rather awesome kupu, just saying!
- I think we should go ahead and call for founding members, start small and see how it evolves. Just do it!
- It could be cool for those of you in Auckland to meet up again sometime … I'll leave that to you folks to organise for yourselves.

Ko wai au?

My name is Silvia Purdie. I live with my husband Chris who is a NZDF military chaplain, in Upper Hutt, where I work in private practice as a counsellor and supervisor. I am a member of the NZCCA and an ordained Presbyterian minister. I also work in the space of climate change, and have helped to form Climate Mental Health Aotearoa.

My websites are

Faith-based resources & books: www.conversations.net.nz

Supervision & counselling: www.conversationscounselling.nz

Climate Mental Health Aotearoa: www.climatementalhealth.nz