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# Looking at Dance through the Te Whare Tapa Wha Model of Health

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A dissertation submitted in *fulfilment* of the requirements for the award of

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## COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Abstract

This dissertation uses Mason Durie's *Te Whare Tapa Wha* (the house of four sides) model of health to examine the benefits of participating in dance. Durie's (1994) model is widely used and taught throughout *Aotearoa* New Zealand as a guide for discussions and practices involving total health and wellbeing. The four sides of the house are: *taha wairua*, the spiritual aspect of health; *taha whānau*, social aspect; *taha hinengaro*, mental and emotional aspect; and *taha tinana*, the physical aspect; each of which will be applied to circumstances, situations, and phenomena found in dance. Each aspect of health, although they stand alone in their own right, is interconnected with, and relies on the other. Dance is a place to explore, understand, and come to know oneself and others in each aspect of health; as dance is a holistically healthy activity which empowers an individual in life, as it reflects and amplifies issues, perceptions, and ideas, and is a place to explore those issues. Dance enhances the sense of spirituality and connection to one's self, others, and the environment. This occurs through muscular bonding, use of the shared breath, and the feeling of connectedness between people when honouring and embodying one's ancestors and history through movement. The dance community can also be a surrogate family, through developing how one builds and maintains relationships by building rapport, caring for others, and creating a sense of belonging within the group. Dance improves the ability to think through the body, and is a site for physically maintaining and improving the body.

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Tēnā koutou,

ka kite ano.

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# Chapter One: Knowing Through Dance

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Life is complicated, complex, and messy, and the effects and remnants of life are inscribed in and on the body (Rowe, 2008; Shilling, 1993). A study of body movement, including how the person thinks about and represents movement (aesthetically or non-verbally), and why, will assist in understanding how life is ingrained on and through the body. This is an examination of dance, and dance's effect on the understanding of the body, self<sup>1</sup>, others and life:

Through my body I experience the environment, I establish relationships, above all I experience myself – what it feels like to be me. This is very variable: I feel elated, sluggish, determined, idle, excited or depressed. These states are recognised by myself and others through my actions and attitudes, and my actions reinforce and change my experience of myself (Foster, 1976:14).

As shown in dance practitioner Ruth Foster's quote (above), dance, and the study of the body is a way of knowing and coming to know in, about, and through one's self, body, and others. With this concept in mind, this dissertation explores the ability and potential of dance to accentuate, amplify, provide a place for discussion of, and examine issues and phenomena encountered in life. The platform on which this discussion will be based is Mason Durie's (1994) *Te Whare Tapa Wha* (the house of four sides) model of health, which I will use as a tool to analyse how dance accesses and informs each aspect of the self and body. As this model is of *Māori* origin and is steeped in *Māori tikanga*<sup>2</sup> way of knowing, I will use *Māori* definitions, knowledge and understandings of life on which to base my descriptions and explanations.

## Dance and Life

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<sup>1</sup> Reference to one's body and one's self is not to emphasise and reinforce a Cartesian duality of an individual, but to promote the view that dance involves and develops all parts of the person. The use of the word 'body' implies only the physical body and its potentialities and capabilities; and the word 'self' implies the mind and how one is constructed or viewed. Additionally, 'individual' suggests just the mind, cognition, and one's actions, while 'person' implies a similar perspective. Each of these words to this researcher, are insufficient to portray the holistic integration of what it means to be an individual human; however, the 'body' and the 'self' together seem to give sufficient scope at this point in time.

<sup>2</sup> *Tikanga Māori* could be described as 'the correct way of being and doing'. Unfortunately, this description barely begins to scratch the surface on how *tikanga Māori* is more a way of life that can involve practices, customs, and a value system for how to live. For a fuller and more detailed description of *tikanga Māori*, see also Mead's book *Tikanga Māori: Living by Māori Values* Wellington: Huia (2003).

Dance has been assumed to be a universal activity, in that every person has the ability to dance in some manner. This notion has the underlying assumption that every person can do the same dance (Bolwell, 1998). Additionally, this notion draws from the idea that dance is a form of non-verbal, or pre-verbal communication used by 'primitive' societies as a communication tool and method for understanding, which is then further refined and developed (linearly) to eventuate in 'higher' art forms, epitomised by ballet (Layson, 1994). The linear development of dance, where dance is seen to progress in sophistication from less civilised (i.e. Eastern or global south) forms such as African or *Māori* dance, to more civilised (i.e. Western, or global north) forms such as ballet, is problematic due to the mis-representation of dance history and how dance has 'evolved', which echoes the history of 'civilisation' in the world, as described by Layson<sup>3</sup>:

The traditional approach is by means of a systematic study which attempts to cover all aspects of dance and either starts with 'pre-history' and concludes with the dance of yesterday or selects a sizeable portion of the whole, such as several centuries. This mode of study has the merit of moving steadily through time so that broad features, as in the growth and development of dance styles, can easily be historically situated. However, the disadvantages are considerable. Even if the dance of 'pre-history' can be studied, and, given the lack of evidence, this is clearly in doubt, or the dance of many centuries considered as a unified whole, which is also problematic, the attempt to encompass such a wide time-span inevitably leads to superficiality. Furthermore, in such study there is always the danger of succumbing to the notion that dance, like human activity in general, has evolved into ever more advanced states and is, in some way, 'better' as time progresses (Layson, 1994:5-6).

Dance is also considered a holistic activity of involvement (Pietrobruno, 2006). The assumptions about dance abound: dance transcends boundaries, feelings which occur in the dance experience are common, and any cultural form of dance allows one to experience a collective identity through participation in and practice of that cultural dance (Pietrobruno, 2006). Ideas and examples of these assumptions, like those of Myron Howard Nadel and Marc Raymond Strauss, envision dance as:

Transcending any categorization is an overall sense of oneness for those who dance. Dancers are aware of the vitality of their movement, and of dance's binding and energizing value. They want to do it and sense its deep, intrinsic worth. Dance is a nourishing and quite pleasant experience (2003:xx).

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<sup>3</sup> A deeper discussion on the study of dance history may be found in *Dance History: An Introduction* Edited by Janet Adshead-Lansdale and June Layson. New York: Routledge (1994).

Dance has been touted for its physical benefits as a form of exercise (Clippinger, 2007). Dance also has the ability to connect people due to non-verbal means of communication; as it does not necessarily need or use words, every person watching dance has the potential to understand the message portrayed (Hanna, 1979b).

Other claims to the holistic and 'primal' nature of dance state that dance is integral to life (Green, 1998; Primus, 1998), to dance is human (Hanna, 1979a), and is 'perhaps the most human of art forms' (Sweeney, 2000:20). Dance is fundamental to all people (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1997), and is a 'fundamental element of human behaviour' (Anderson, 2004:6). Similarly, the progressive view from the New Zealand Ministry of Education, states that dance is a 'significant way of knowing, with a distinctive body of knowledge to be experienced, investigated, valued and shared' (1993:19). Such justifications and assumptions of dance as an integral aspect of human life raise simple, but complex questions. Why are such claims being made about dance? Why should every person have the opportunity, if not the right, to dance? What is so special about dance that the aforementioned statements are made? And, if dance is integral to life, then will the structures and concepts found in the structure and practice of dance also be found in life?

If dance is so special, why is it that not every person is involved in studying it; as people from different positions in life, different cultures, backgrounds, and in different contexts, dance for a multitude of reasons – including celebrations of life and death, progressions through life-stages, entertainment, and just 'the pleasure of dancing' (Rouget, 1985:118; Buckland, 2006b; Primus, 1998). Also, dance may be considered a connecting and distinctive feature across groups of people, and a way one comes to know oneself, others, and one's heritage and ancestry; a dancer can become a 'living archive' of cultural knowledge (Nicholls, 1998:54; Fraleigh, 1987; Nelson, 1996). However, one of the difficulties which dance has when vying for recognition in the minds of people around the world, is that there are many, many different forms of dance, and many movement sequences which may be defined as dance by some people, but not others; this can make it difficult to decide which cultural dance should be focused on.

I agree that the above claims and statements can be made, but the underlying assumptions (such as all dance is universal, and every person should participate in the same style of dance) in such statements must be disputed and discussed. Throughout this dissertation, I will use the word *dance* instead of describing each and every type of dance which could be included, and I will feature some

dance forms to emphasize various points. This does not mean that I too assume that there is only one dance or style for all people. Each person dances for different reasons, and it is the feeling one gets from participating in and viewing dance, that transcends and connects people across a variety of forms or styles of dance, and which will be discussed. I contend that dance is a place for coming to know oneself and others, in, about, and through oneself and body, as well as through others' bodies.

Moreover, while the statement that 'dance is integral to life' highlights the importance of dance in all facets of human life (H'Doubler, 1998), sometimes it does not seem as though that idea is getting across or retaining its importance (Nicholls, 1998; Ward, 2008b). Dance, like other arts, is an often marginalised aspect of human activity, and dance and the other arts struggle worldwide to maintain a position in discussions of education, health, self, and wellbeing (Robinson, 2006; Thomas, 1995). However, if 'dance has existed from time immemorial', as dance writer Janet Anderson (2004:6) claims, then surely there is something about dance which keeps drawing people back to its practice.

But first, questions of what is dance, what it means to dance, and what is a dancer, arise. As there are many forms and variations of what may be called 'dance' across the world, and many approaches that may be taken to them, these questions are difficult to answer. Unfortunately, what makes defining 'dance' even more elusive is that 'dance' can mean the movement performed, the performer (dancer), or the message or meaning the movements are trying to portray (McFee, 1992). Also the ephemeral quality of dance and movement can make it difficult to pin down what is being defined. For the purpose of this research, I contend that 'dance' is not restricted to a particular style, instance, feeling, or person who is 'dancing'; it is not solely defined by the staged 'professional' performances of a 'dance' or by 'professional' performers; I include as much as possible in the notion of dance.

Since dance means many things to many people, in this dissertation I will provide another entry into the discussion of how dance in all its aspects is embedded in human life, relationships, explanation of events, expressions, and activities, and how dance is a valuable activity for all people (Cooper-Albright, 1997; Fraleigh, 1987; Moore & Yamamoto, 1996). Respected hula dance practitioner, Sharon Māhealani Rowe succinctly describes why dance, and in this case Hawaiian hula dancing, should be valued:

Hula is a moving encyclopaedia inscribed into the sinues [sic] and postures of dancer's bodies. It carries forward the social and natural history, the religious

beliefs, the philosophy, the literature, and the scientific knowledge of the Hawaiian people. It is, therefore, more than the dance from a particular Polynesian people, more than swaying hips and talking hands, more than competitions, vacation entertainment, or a weekly workout routine (2008:31).

As explained by Rowe (2008) in the above quotation, dance is more than just the movements, the dancer, and the message or meaning of the dance. I intend to discuss the holistic nature of dance, and dance's ability as a singular activity to exceed and be a part of many aspects of one's lifestyle. Following Rowe's example, I will explain and develop the knowledge and understanding of concepts inherent in the practice of dance, which continue to strengthen and develop the foundations of this valuable life activity.

### **The Study of Dance and the Body**

Early research on dance predominantly focused on participation levels, the structure and presentation of dances, dancers' experiences of dancing as explained in biographical and autobiographical works, choreographic methods, and descriptions of dances. This impression was noted by feminist scholar and dance professor Ann Cooper Albright in her book *Choreographing Difference: The Body and Identity in Contemporary Dance*, where she noted that:

[A]t the same time I was gradually becoming aware of various feminist critiques in philosophy and literature, I was also becoming (less gradually) dissatisfied with what I was reading in dance theory. Besides the work of dance theorists and critics such as Edwin Denby and John Martin... and Don McDonagh's... as well as the mostly anecdotal biographies of famous dancers, there was little substantial dance scholarship on the library shelves (1997:xiv-xv).

The academic study of dance, through arguments developed by Dewey (1938) and Eisner (1978) in the study of the arts, has plunged deeper into the construction of dance as a significant way of knowing and an embodied practice of specific skills and knowledge. The margin between dance as an art and the body as a site of scientific study has increasingly been blurred to provide a greater wealth of knowledge about dance, the practice of dance, and the dancer. Examples include, but are not limited to, works by: British professor of dance Helen Thomas on sociology and dance; British emeritus professor of dance and somatic studies Sondra Fraleigh on dance and the lived body/embodiment; British research professor of performing arts Theresa Jill Buckland on dance and culture; associate researcher in cognitive and affective neuroscience, Netherlands, Ivar Hagendoorn on dance perception and the brain; Australian researchers Robin Grove, Catherine Stevens and

Shirley McKechnie on cognition in choreography; current dance research from Roehampton University in England; The Watching Dance Project from Manchester University, England and their Dance Research Electronic special issue on 'Dance and Neuroscience – New Partnerships' (to be released in Spring 2011); and New York's The Dana Foundation's research on neuroscience and dance<sup>4</sup>.

However, these and previous studies and views of the body and self in dance, still seem to delimit the body to one static construction, within a codified context, with not enough understanding of the changing context and ephemeral nature of dance and the dancer. Many of the theories, arguments, descriptions and concepts surrounding the body compartmentalize how to view, describe, discuss, analyse the body, or, refer to multiple selves contained or enacted within and through the body, which is problematic when discussing dance. Similarly, Jackie Stacey's (1997) study of her survival of cancer, explains her experience of the western medical sector's compartmentalisation of the body into fixable bits. This view, as Stacey recounts, does not take into account that the body is a single entity, and that 'fixing' one part affects other parts of the body (also in Davies, 2007). This also indicates the separation of the mind from the body, and how the western medical sector rarely treats the person as a living being: the person usually is ignored, and body parts put on display and discussed as if the person is not there, or is a third party (Davies, 2007). The same may be said in some dance arenas, where the person performing is rarely taken into account; rather, body parts are touted for their ability or inability to perform certain movements, with little regard for the whole person or the interconnectivity of the parts of the body and self (Aalten, 2007). Dutch cultural anthropologist Anna Aalten (2007) further discusses this disembodiment in ballet, where pain, hunger, and exhaustion are ignored and seen as par for the course in the demanding pursuit of the 'ideal' body. Aalten and Stacey's work on the disembodied individual will be returned to later in this chapter.

From the perspective of sociologists John Law and Annemarie Mol (2002), and English sociologist Chris Shilling (2007), much of the theories on and of the body, its interactions with others, its families, cultures and societal structures, how it works and what it does, delimits the body to a particular time, place, interaction, context or structure. When studying people and their interactions, this reduction of context is similar to the compartmentalisation of the body mentioned

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<sup>4</sup> See references at end of dissertation.

above and must be refuted; particularly in the case of dance where the ephemeral quality of dance means that images of relationships are constantly made and lost in the act of dancing. The perspectives of English professor of sociology, Nick Crossley (2007), and Shilling (2007), which I share, is that it is essential to remember that the body is a 'thinking body' (Charlesworth, 2000); the self is embodied; and one's body and self is a lived entity, which constantly changes, adapts, reacts to, conforms to, and rejects its environment. Furthermore, the body (and the self) lives and moves in a lived space/context, so that the demands and effects on oneself also constantly change (Birke, 1999; Shilling, 2007).

Hence, by knowing and understanding the different ways in which one negotiates influences on one's life, one may choose which aspect of self to focus on in each instant or instance (Davies, 2007; Shilling, 2007). In other words, the body and its self are in constant negotiation of the various effects on and within the body (Robinson, 2010). To have power and some kind of 'control' over the body and self, one needs knowledge of, in, and through the body and its context (Davies, 2007). If one is to have knowledge and power, one needs to be able to think through the body via the use of all aspects of the integrated and holistic body, and not just the mind, to think and learn (Charlesworth, 2000; Davies, 2007; Rowe, 2008). I suggest that dance is a medium to gain such knowledge to empower the individual. As emphasized by Sondra Fraleigh:

Because dance is in essence an embodied art, the body is lived (experiential) ground of the dance aesthetic. Both dancer and audience experience dance through its lived attributes – its kinesthetic and existential character. Dance is the art that intentionally isolates and reveals the aesthetic qualities of the human body-of-action and its vital life (Fraleigh, 1987:xiii).

As will be shown throughout this dissertation, dance is an ideal activity to be involved in, over and above other pursuits including sport, cultural activities, and the arts. Dance is able to access and address – as a cohesive whole – more issues, concepts and knowledge related to the body, self, others and life, while the other activities are restricted in only addressing only a few aspects and not the entirety. Hence this dissertation draws on and explains concepts and terms related to biological and phenomenological research about how the body and the self interact with each other, and how they together interact with the environment. Using all of the body's methods for gaining information increases the amount of information from which the body can base its decisions. More information produces more knowledge and understanding about a situation, giving the body more ways of solving or reacting appropriately to the situation. Research involved here includes but is not limited

to: non-verbal communication methods and the perception of meaning, thoughts, and creativity evident in movement (as discussed in Grove, Stevens, and McKechnie, 2005); the use of all the senses to gather information for the brain to process and respond to; the use of both the 'low road' emotional channels in the brain and not just the 'high road' rationally thinking pathways in the brain to inform decisions and knowledge creation (as described in Goleman, 2006); and what Howes (2005) terms 'skin knowledge'. Blackman describes skin knowledge as:

[A] form of intelligent bodily knowing or understanding that forms an important component to our sense-making activity. Rather than touch being viewed as a contact, lower sense, it is understood as a form of sentient activity that provides body competences that enable our movement through the world... It exists as an interface between the self and other, biological and social and organic and inorganic, and is both internal and external... The skin is therefore an instrument of communication that allows us to sense and feel in the world (2008:86).

Different theories<sup>5</sup> are useful in understanding different aspects of the body, but rarely do they accurately describe the body as it is lived<sup>6</sup>, and the changing conditions under which one lives. Such restrictions rarely take into account Law and Mol's (2002) argument of complexity or Mol's (2002) argument of multiplicity – that is, the body is not singular, but multiple, and changes depending on what context and instant the body is being viewed and defined (Mol, 2002). Mol's argument of the body-multiple and complexity, explains the ways in which a person can change how they present themselves to others, at different moments. Through the analogy of a polyhedron (a many-sided object), these concepts and that of embodiment, the 'absent-present' body, perception and reality, entanglement, and the 'performing self', can be understood. In this analogy, the person is the polyhedron, and although the polyhedron stays the same object/person, the face/aspect/side which another person views or which the polyhedron/person shows may change. This suggests that some facets which can and may be shown or perceived may be radically different – as they are on different sides of the polyhedron; or, they may be remarkably similar – where the sides are touching.

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<sup>5</sup> These theories include feminist theories on how the body is viewed and displayed in performance, sociological studies on how cultural or social processes are manifested through individual actions and habits – called *cultural inscription* – and also how breathing together creates connections and attachment between people which strengthens their affinity towards each other – called *muscular bonding*. See Blackman (2008) for a fuller description, discussion and critique on key concepts and theories on and of the body.

<sup>6</sup> The lived body and the lived experience refer to how a person experiences their body and life as it is happening. This may be through (for example) experiences of illness and health or a sensuous experience, and this perspective assumes that bodies are always 'unfinished' and in the process of becoming (Blackman, 2008).

However, again the polyhedron/person is still the same object, despite which side is being shown and perceived<sup>7</sup>.

Which self/face a person thinks they are showing may be different to that which is perceived, as one aspect may be portrayed, but due to the position of the viewer a different side may be seen. For example, for a child, its parent may be considered unkind for not letting the child have an ice-cream. However, from the grandparent's perspective, the parent may be preventing the child from becoming sick, because the grandparent is aware that the child has lactose intolerance. By seeing one side of the polyhedron/person, other aspects may also be glimpsed or 'leaked' (Fast, 1971). For example, one's feelings may contradict what is said, which is shown through subconscious movement (Fast, 1971). The number of surfaces or selves of a person may depend on the person (some people may have more, or fewer, facets than others). How the body is constructed and theorised, changes due to the different aspects and situations being analysed. Furthermore, Mol's body-multiple is not limited by the skin. This means that a person can not only exist in another's mind, but extend to connect with others (for instance, being known because of a group with which one is involved), whether human or non-human<sup>8</sup> (Clark and Chalmers, 1998; Game, 2001; Mol, 2002).

Through dance, one can explore what the body can do and become. Effectively, by doing and becoming, one becomes more human – take for example, 'feral children' who, by living with animals, become more animal than human, which is exhibited in their behaviour, mannerisms, and how they live (The Telegraph, 2006). By practicing being human, and moving, breathing, interacting, and emoting in the different ways there are of being human, one becomes human. The body can be made and re-made through how the body is practiced: there is production of a self through enactment (Butler, 1993).

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<sup>7</sup> See Goffman (1959) for a similar discussion on the 'performing' self and the 'public' self which comes into play in a social environment, and is a tightly managed facade of what a person wishes to present to others.

<sup>8</sup> Game (2001) discussed her potential to become at 'one' with her horse, which she became more aware of while teaching her paralysed horse how to walk and canter again. She described the connection, awareness, and attunement to each other that occurred, and how this improved the horse's recovery and ability to canter again. This phenomenon is discussed by Haraway (2004) in relation to objects or medical robotics becoming an extension of the human body. One easy to understand example is that of a blind person's cane becoming an extension of the arm, which assists in negotiating and being aware of the environment. In this case, the blind person's body becomes a human body plus cane.

Consequently, the study of the human (body and self) and its interaction with others and the environment is complex and messy. One way to study the holistic self is through a holistic notion of health, which sees the body and the self as a lived entity that moves and interacts with others in a lived environment. Through a specific holistic model of health and being, this dissertation analyses how and why dance is integral to life.

### **Dance and the Study of Health**

In what many people term being 'in health', the body is an absence or an absent-presence – meaning that it is not noticed, and only occasionally maintained through what are considered good eating habits, practices, or exercise; only in illness does the body maintain a somatically felt presence through aches, pains, injury and illness. How does one shift a perspective of the body from an absent-presence to a felt, lived body? And, is that shift a progression towards 'good' health?

Criticisms of an 'absent-presence' occurring in dance include studies such as those by Aalten (2007), which discuss how professional ballet dancers force upon themselves an absent-presence perception of their bodies. She observes that through injury, the professional dancer brings the absent-presence of the body back into consciousness, allowing the dancer to re-pay attention to the lived body and re-experience how the body works and its capabilities. Aalten suggests it is through pain that one re-learns and becomes aware of one's body. However, I would argue that in the teaching, learning and doing of all dance, awareness of the body and conscious appreciation of what one's body can do should be present at all times, to prevent injury and mal-treatment of the body, and prevent the dys-appearance<sup>9</sup> of the body from one's consciousness. Admittedly, studies such as those by Aalten suggest otherwise. In her study, there is a gap between the dancers' bodily awarenesses and their conscious care for their bodies – a dys-appearance of the body, or an absent-presence, which leads to abuse of the physical body (the will or the mind overpowering the body). However, if the body is brought into consciousness, injuries may be prevented, and Aalten's dancers would not experience such drastic or career-ending outcomes. In other words, if one increases the

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<sup>9</sup> In Drew Leder's (1990) book *The Absent Body*, he distinguished between the *dis*-appearance and *dys*-appearance of the body. In *dys*-appearance, one's body is seen as 'ill', 'sick', or 'bad', in that it lacks function, and is seen as dysfunctional. In *dis*-appearance, the body naturally and normally fades out of consciousness – i.e., muscles aching informs of their presence, otherwise they are not consciously felt.

awareness of the body, self, and potentiality, the practice of dance and the lived experience changes. Similarly, Pulitzer Prize winner Alice Walker said 'About this, [Stephen] Biko was right. Once your consciousness changes, so does your existence'<sup>10</sup>.

Dance is connected to how one experiences one's context. This connection to context occurs through the body, and is inscribed in and on the body (Crossley, 2007; Learning Media Ltd, 2003). The study of the body and self through holistic health and wellbeing allows access to how such experiences, amplified and known through dance, are inscribed. A holistic model of health and wellbeing holds within it different notions of how the body may be viewed, valued, contextualised, manipulated, and used. Dance allows one to practice being healthy in all aspects, and access into understanding what being healthy means. Dance also provides a space and place<sup>11</sup> to practice and explores such aspects:

Every culture has used dance to promote the health and healing of its people. The human body, the primary medium for dance, can communicate the ideas, beliefs, and practices of a culture through the expressive language of movement and can increase the level of physical fitness through physical activity (Ward, 2008b:33).

Knowledge of how to be healthy, and live a 'full' life (in all aspects) (Veenhoven, 2000) empowers an individual to practice and improve health and life. This may not necessarily be through bio-medical practices (Davies, 2007; Stacey, 1997; Watkins, 2007), as they focus on singular 'parts' or conceptualizations of the body, but through recognition of the integrated-ness of the 'multiple selves', all of which affect and are affected by the other (Mol, 2002). As mentioned earlier, delimiting the body to a 'fixable' part ignores the connection between the parts, and the same problem may arise due to other 'parts' not changing – consequently recreating the initial problem (Stacey, 1997; Davies, 2007). Thus, to alter a 'part', the whole structure must also be addressed (to examine and understand the ways each 'part' is affected); this is why a holistic view of the body and the self is needed. In this case, knowledge is power (Foucault, 1995).

Health and wellbeing may be seen to be a way of life, intricately involved in the ways one lives. Thus, in studying health, one studies how one lives, which may explain the World Health Organisation's

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<sup>10</sup> This quote comes from Walker's presentation at the Steve Biko memorial lecture at the University of Cape Town on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

<sup>11</sup> Which I will be differentiating in the dissertation.

attempt at describing a holistic definition of health (which follows). Additionally, wellness may not necessarily mean optimal functioning of the body (as shown and argued in McNeill, 2009), but aspects of health operating in harmony create a sense of total wellbeing. Reasons for 'optimal' function to be excluded from the perception of total health include the idea that physical disability or physical illness implies an incomplete sense of optimal physical health, despite having good social, emotional, and mental wellness (McNeill, 2009).

Any study of health and wellbeing is complex, as 'defining wellness or health is difficult' (McNeill, 2009:109). A starting point for general discussions and descriptions of what it means to be totally healthy may be the World Health Organisation's (WHO) definition of health, which 'dates back to 1947, and despite minor changes to suit varying contexts, remains largely unchanged' (Jensen, 1997:421). Apparently, according to this definition, the world is supposed to have the same views and minimum standards of health. WHO states that 'health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity' (World Health Organisation, 2010).

This definition does not consider emotional, spiritual or cultural influences on health, and the use of the word 'complete' implies that no person can become totally health, as argued by Larson (1996). And, the lack of significant changes in over 60 years raises questions of its validity now. Local conditions and contexts need to be taken into consideration, as different people, cultures, and countries have different notions of what health is and means – for instance, what constitutes a health issue in one culture may be a social services issue in another. 'Implicit in the self-understanding of Africans is that there must be a spiritual solution to what Westerners would view solely as material problems' (Piper 2009:72). However, the definition does raise questions of what it means to be healthy and well, how to become healthy, and how is health a holistic entity.

Research in the health sector contends that health also encompasses access to culture and cultural practices, basic human needs, social justice and equity, education, peace, a stable eco-system, and sustainable resources, as shown in the Ottawa Charter (World Health Organisation, 1986), and by Richard Eckersley:

Human health has multiple sources: material, social, cultural and spiritual. We are physical being with material needs for nutritious food, clean air and water, and

adequate shelter, as well as physical activity and sleep. We are also social beings who need families, friends and communities to flourish. We are cultural beings – of all species, we alone require cultures to make life worth living. And we are spiritual beings, psychically connected to our world (2007:S54).

As I have briefly described thus far, there are a broad number of paradigms from which to study dance, and how dance relates to life, the lived experience, one's body, and one's understanding of self. This is to outline the breadth of study from which to draw when studying the interrelated features of dance, life and health, and considerations that take place in deciding what to focus on when looking at dance. To take a more holistic perception of what happens behind the scenes in dance while still drawing together different aspects of dance academia, performance, participation and movement analysis, a model which encompasses or touches upon each, and more, of these areas in a cohesive way is useful in not only linking all aspects together, but provides access points from which to delve into the depth of knowledge found in dance. Due to my perceived need for a cohesive outline which funnels and brings together very different research involved in dance, and provides a basis from which to expand, I have chosen an *Aotearoa*<sup>12</sup> New Zealand model of health as a way of describing, analysing, and discussing health. This dissertation will use the *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model developed by Mason Durie (1994), professor of *Maori* research and development and assistant vice-chancellor (*Maori & Pasifika*) at Massey University in *Aotearoa* New Zealand, to develop my argument.

My reason for choosing Durie's *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model is that, with Durie, I believe 'Māori often articulated issues which had worried a wide cross-section of New Zealanders but which had not otherwise been able to find expression' (Durie, 1994:213). This statement correlates with, and expands to include, understandings of health issues of other nationalities, backgrounds and cultures. The *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model is easy to understand, and coherently explains issues in health which are largely disregarded in other models and ways of studying the holistic lived body and self. I have also chosen to focus on Durie's *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model as it is one of the most recognised and widely used within *Aotearoa* New Zealand. Many *Māori* and non-*Māori* organisations use the *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model to address health problems within many situations, institutions or

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<sup>12</sup> In the *Māori* language, the word *Aotearoa* now is synonymous with New Zealand. Originally, *Aotearoa* (which means 'land of the long white cloud') was the name for one place in the North Island, but has grown to include all of New Zealand. Both *Māori* and *Pakeha*, non-*Māori*, use either or both words as the country's name, as will I throughout this dissertation, depending on ease of reading and context.

organisations. For example, 'headspace', an Auckland-based website for teenagers, their families, and schools, uses the model to explain and address a multitude of mental health issues (<http://www.headspace.org.nz/maori-mental-health.htm>, accessed 20 April 2010). These issues include definitions and possible treatments for depression, stress and anxiety, self-harm, substance abuse, and eating problems (amongst other issues). The website provides explanations on what to do about peer pressure, what is normal behaviour, how to identify abnormal pressures on oneself and others, and what to expect when going to a health centre to treat these issues, and provides links to other websites and places for help.

In relating this model to dance, the model provides a linking point which draws together both practice and research which contribute to the experience of dance. The different topics and areas of knowledge which are encompassed in the model allow various viewpoints and places from which to examine dance, whilst providing a common ground to come back to. Although it is a model of health, I feel that it is a relevant starting point, as dance invariably involves the body, and studies of health scrutinise the body in ways which are of use to the study of dance. This relationship between the many facets will be further described and discussed throughout this dissertation.

### **The Aotearoa New Zealand Context**

Due to the nature of the *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model, my own upbringing in Aotearoa New Zealand, and the use of a bi-lingual vocabulary and world-view conception in Aotearoa, it is important to note that this dissertation is written in English, but implements many *Māori* words, concepts, philosophies and practices all of which are utilised and explained. Most *Māori* words do not have direct English translation, and many have multiple meanings in English: often a word-to-meaning, not word-to-word, translation occurs. For example, the word '*whenua*' means 'earth', 'land', 'country', 'state', or 'placenta'; so due to the different interpretation of the word *whenua*, the phrase *tangata whenua* means people (*tangata*) of the land, those who belong to the land, those who are from or bonded to the land, or indigenous peoples (Mead, 2003: 269-70). I have therefore chosen to use a variety of definitions from *Māori kaumātua*, elders, and people who have written about *Māori* and their philosophies, to aid my discussion and use of *Māori*. I acknowledge that the translation will never be exact, but I wish to convey the meaning in the best possible way by drawing on many examples of use and definitions. At all times I wish to show my respect for *Māori* culture and protocols, as there is wisdom regarding *Māori* perspectives and *Māori* knowledge to which I am

unable to do justice in this work. And, I am responsible for choosing which aspects and concepts to explore in order to provide a coherent overview.

In New Zealand, *Māori* words, phrases, and concepts are often situated in sentences which are mostly comprised of English words. It has become an acceptable way of thinking, talking, and writing about *Aotearoa*, and concepts, and practices within *Aotearoa* New Zealand. Consequently, to an uninitiated person the bi-lingual nature of the language may seem confusing. However, the use of both languages within the same sentence is the common (and one hopes, best) way to communicate a large variety of ideas, notions, and practices pertaining to *Aotearoa*. Throughout this dissertation the *Māori* word will appear first, followed by the English translation, to acknowledge the prominence of *Māori* concepts and philosophy, and also aid understanding of the concepts introduced.

As this researcher understands it, *Māori* and Western perspectives of health are integrated in *Aotearoa*. *Māori* perspectives are increasingly becoming more accepted as a means of understanding health concepts and issues by New Zealand educators, health professionals, and Ministers of Parliament, as well as a cross-section of society in *Aotearoa*. The Western concepts and explanations (of health being 'only' physical and dietary health, which derives from the Cartesian duality of health) falls short for many people. The *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model is not exclusively *Māori*, although it draws on traditional approaches to *Māori* health. It can be seen as a *Māori* view of health for all people, as it is non-discriminatory, and covers a wide variety of issues which impact on health but may not be recognised in other views of health (Durie, 1994; McNeill, 2009).

### ***Te Whare Tapa Wha, House of Four Sides***

Durie's (1994) *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model is one of many *Māori* philosophies of health becoming increasingly recognised in contemporary society in *Aotearoa*. Other *Māori* models of health include Te Rangimarie Pere's (1982) *Te Wheke*, the octopus; and Mason Durie's (1999) *Te Pae Mahutonga*, which refers to the Southern Cross; and *Te Ao Tūtahi* – this model's title is virtually untranslatable, yet denotes the idea of worlds standing side-by-side (Henwood, 2007; McNeill, 2009; The New Zealand Ministry of Health, 2010). These philosophies and models of *Māori* health are not independent of each other, and are used in conjunction with one another (Durie, 2001; McNeill,

2009). They all draw on different aspects of *Māori* ideology, cosmology, *tikanga*, way of life, and philosophy to add to the knowledge of factors relating to health from a variety of perspectives.

Te Rangimarie Pere's (1982) *Te Wheke* uses the imagery of an octopus to explain and 'represent different structural components of the total personality within a socio-cultural framework' (McNeill, 2009:99). Each of the radiating, and intertwining tentacles symbolises a different aspect of being *Māori*, and this model amplifies those concepts of being *Māori*. The eight aspects as explained in McNeill (2009) are:

- *Wairuatanga*, spirituality
- *Mana ake*, uniqueness of the individual
- *Mauri*, ethos which sustains all life forms including the language
- *Hā a kui ma a koro ma*, traditional cultural legacy
- *Taha tinana*, physical aspect
- *Whānaungatanga*, kinship
- *Whatumanawa*, emotional aspect
- *Hinengaro*, mind

On the tentacles, the suckers 'represent the many facets contained within each of the configurations (of life)' (McNeill, 2009:99), and the head of the octopus represents the individual and the family unit. *Whaiora*, total wellbeing, is 'reflected in the eyes of the octopus' (McNeill, 2009:99). The intertwining of the tentacles explicitly refers to the interconnectedness of all the aspects of being.

Mason Durie's (1999) *Te Pae Mahutonga* uses the imagery of the Southern Cross constellation to discuss the requisites for health promotion and preservation. The use of the Southern Cross is significant for *Māori*, as that star constellation guided the first *Māori* to *Aotearoa* on their journey from *Hawaiki*<sup>13</sup>. Henwood (2007) explains that:

Te Pae Mahutonga (Durie, 1999) is one example currently finding favour with a range of programme providers. Based on the Southern Cross constellation, the navigational guide comprises two "pointers" regarded as necessary to undertake tasks and roles – Ngā Manukura (effective leadership) and Te Mana Whakahaere (autonomy) – and four "central stars" depicting the cornerstones of wellbeing –

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<sup>13</sup> *Hawaiki* is the *Māori* term for the mythical island from which people are born and return to upon death – it is the resting place of the ancestors (Royal, 2009). In some traditions, *Hawaiki* is the physical place where *Māori* people begun their voyage to *Aotearoa* (Royal, 2009).

Mauriora (access to te ao Māori [the *Māori* world]), Waiora (environmental), Toiora (healthy lifestyles), and Te Oranga (participation at all levels) (2007:156).

*Te Pae Mahutonga* model of health promotion is ‘a symbolic map for bringing together the significant components of health promotion, as they apply to *Māori* health; and as they might also apply to other New Zealanders’ health (McNeill, 2009:99).

Another model of mental wellness, *Te Ao Tūtahi*, aims to describe and encompass the ‘complexity of *Māori* existence’ (McNeill, 2009:96), for use in understanding research on and of *Māori* people, and how *Māori* people ‘move effortlessly between different worldviews and realities’ (McNeill, 2009:112). The objective of this model is to ‘depict the different cultural influences and experiences that have shaped *Māori* contemporary lifeways’ (McNeill, 2009:96) through the imagery of four ‘worlds’ standing side-by-side, within which one navigates life. In this model, the four ‘worlds’ are four concentric circles which interact with each other and have permeable boundaries. The four increasingly smaller circles are described by McNeill (2009) as:

- *Te Ao Whakanekeneke*, Global world: being the outermost circle
- *Te Ao Pākehā*, European world: being the first inner circle
- *Te Ao Hou*, synthesis of cultural elements from *Māori* and *Pākehā* worlds: being the second innermost circle
- *Te Ao Tawhito*, *Māori* world – origins in pre-contact *Māori* existence: being the innermost circle

This model is ‘primarily a methodological tool to analyse *Māori* reality or realities’ (McNeill, 2009:110). The movement or interaction between the four circles ‘creates cultural configurations and influences – both positive and negative’ (McNeill, 2009:111), and seeks to explain and ‘align the different worlds in which *Māori* interact’ (McNeill, 2009:111). These *Māori* models for use within the health sector describe slightly different Maori worldviews and philosophies, which interact and build on the other<sup>14</sup>.

The fourth model, *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model of health, draws upon the image of a house on a piece of land. The house, being compared to a *wharenuī*, or meeting house, is comprised of four walls and a roof, each of which signify an aspect of health. The image of the house on the land shows the

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<sup>14</sup> For a fuller discussion on, and description of each of the *Māori* models, please refer to Henwood, 2007 and McNeill, 2009.

connectedness of the aspects of health, and how each aspect is not singular, and added together, creates a larger, unified whole – *hauora*, total well-being. This model will be described in more detail in Chapter Two.

As professor Durie recognised when discussing *Māori* mental health issues within *Aotearoa* ‘it is impossible to address *Māori* health without understanding the wider environments within which health status takes shape’ (2001:35). I contend that this holistic understanding of health should be applied to every person, not just to *Māori*. As Dr Hinematau McNeill<sup>15</sup> asserts, ‘*Te Whare Tapa Whā*’ reflects in essence a holistic perception of health that is more generic in that could easily be translated and applied to any cross-cultural analysis of wellbeing’ (2009:102). This may explain the model’s widespread use and application across *Aotearoa*:

Underlying the *Te Whare Tapa Whā* model is the consistent theme of integration. Individual health is built into a wider system, the boundary between personal and family identity being frequently blurred. Similarly the divisions between temporal and spiritual, thoughts and feelings, mental and physical are not as clear-cut [to *Māori*] as they have been in Western thinking since the advent of Cartesian dualism (Durie, 1994:74).

As indicated above, the interconnectedness of parts of health, like the aspects of the body and the self, all rely, depend, interact, and exist, because of each other.

## Conclusion

As the health perspective of *Te Whare Tapa Whā Māori* focuses on the integration of all factors pertaining to life and how they influence one’s state of health, and its acceptance of the changing context and dynamics of environment on the body and self, it is an appropriate means of studying lived experience. Similarly, observing holistic health issues and practices in dance is beneficial to the study of holistic health. The structures, issues, practices and outcomes of positive health are inherent to dance, and maybe most importantly, are unseen. People participate in dance for many reasons, and its health benefits do not undermine its underlying nature. A main factor for

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<sup>15</sup> For a fuller analysis of each of the models of health mentioned in this dissertation, their similarities to the World Health Organisation’s definitions of health and wellbeing, and their application to the *Māori* people of *Aotearoa* New Zealand, refer to McNeill’s article *Maori Models of Mental Wellness*, *Te Kaharoa*, vol.2, 2009 p.96-115

participating in dance is in the enjoyment of dancing (where the awareness of the health benefits fall far behind):

All in all, wellbeing comes from being connected and engaged, from being suspended in a web of relationships and interests. This gives meaning to people's lives. Many of the sources of wellbeing are interrelated, the relationships between sources and wellbeing are often reciprocal, and one source can compensate, at least partly, for the lack of another' (Eckersley, 2007:S54).

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## Chapter Two: *Te Whare Tapa Wha* (House of Four Sides) Model of Health

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The *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model of health will be used in this dissertation to explain how dance is a medium to learn about self, body, others and life, in, about, and through movement. Throughout this chapter, I will explain how it is a tool to understand the many aspects of health and their interactions which contribute to *hauora*, or total health and wellbeing.

In discussing the four walls of the *whare*, house, I will not follow the order of the aspects of health as they are described in Durie's (1994) book *Whaiora: Māori Health Development* (which is the primary source for this model). Durie offers the aspects of health in the following order: *Taha Wairua*, spiritual health; *Taha Hinengaro*, mental and emotional health; *Taha Tinana*, physical health; and finally, *Taha Whānau*, social health. Although these aspects are inter-related and none more important than the others, I have chosen to alter Durie's ordering, as previous studies of dance have emphasised some aspects over others, and through acknowledging *Māori tikanga*, way of being, I will order the chapters based on the aspects of health as follows.

I will start with *Taha Wairua*, spiritual health, for the connectedness of the spiritual aspect of health to the surroundings and all aspects of life, and the importance that the spiritual aspect of life has within everyday living in *Tikanga Māori*. Second is *Taha Whānau*, social health, to emphasise the important role which family and society have on health. Third, I will describe the concepts of balance and focus which underlie *Taha Hinengaro*, mental and emotional health. Finally, a discussion of *Taha Tinana*, the physical aspect of health will take place. I have chosen to place *Taha Tinana* last because of the western notion that physical health is the only aspect which is of importance when discussing health and total well being. As much as physical health is needed for a person to be healthy, it is not the only aspect which should be considered. These four aspects of health will form the basis of the following four chapters. All aspects of health are integrated and dependent on each other to provide a sense of *hauora*, total health and wellbeing, for each individual.

Detailed description and analysis of the *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model is necessary to allow entry into discussions regarding the different aspects of personal health and provide a comprehensive vision of the topics approached under this model. Previous descriptions and publications of this model barely expand beyond a few lines, if not beyond five pages, on the details in each aspect (for example, Durie (1994); Henwood (2007); McNeill (2009); Fraser (2004); The New Zealand Ministry of Health (2010); the Health and Physical Education Curriculum Statement from the New Zealand Ministry of Education (1999); Morice (2006)). This model has also been criticised within *Aotearoa* as an inadequate way in which to historically and holistically view Maori health, and that it is simplistic (McNeill, 2009). However, I choose to use this model as others have chosen to use it – as a starting point from which deeper discussions relating to health, ownership and knowledge can emerge. For its use within this dissertation, a more detailed description of this model will be necessary to show how, using this model as a tool for analysis, dance is a medium through which to understand and know *hauora*, total health and wellbeing, and the self, body, others and life.

As described in Chapter One, the imagery of the *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model is of a *whare*, house, on a piece of land. The house, which is compared to a *wharenuī* or meeting house, is comprised of four walls and a roof, each of which signifies an aspect of health that integrates and interacts with each other, and contributes to the overall picture of *hauora*, total health and wellbeing (Durie, 1994). This image is not aligned with the colloquial saying ‘my body is my temple’, where the body is referred to as a house or building to be adorned, built, maintained or improved through physical exercise and nutrition. The imagery of *Te Whare Tapa Wha* lies deeper than this superficial presentation of the body, and is culturally relevant to *Māori* people, and the people of *Aotearoa* New Zealand (Fraser, 2004).

### ***Hauora*, Total Health and Wellbeing**

*Hauora* comes from the word *hau*, one of the *Māori* words associated with the spirit, soul, life-force, ‘spark’ or essence within a person and within the surrounding environment (Mead, 2003). An early scholar of *Māori* people, practices, lifestyle, and culture within *Aotearoa* New Zealand, Elsdon Best, in one of his many writings on *Māori* culture depicts *hau* as:

[A]n intangible quality, one of three potentiaē pertaining to such things. It is the vital essence, but is not the same as the *mauri*, or active life-principle. It represents

vital force, vitality – perhaps “vital principle” is the best definition that can be given. (Best, 1922b:32).

Similarly, in the glossary of *Tikanga Māori: Living by Māori Values*, written by current Waitangi Tribunal member and esteemed Māori scholar Sir Hirini Moko Mead, *hau* is defined as ‘vitality of human life, vital essence of land’ (2003:360). *Hauora* is defined as ‘health, spirit of life, vigour’, and as ‘healthy, fresh, and well’ (2003:58). *Ora* translates as ‘life, health, vitality’, and to ‘be alive, well, safe, cured, recovered’ (Moorfield, 2010). *Hauora*, attempts to describe an intangible but recognisable energy of a living person – implying that an energy state may be great or small. This may be synonymous with a state of vitality, wellbeing, or total health (on a continuum), depending on each aspect (and interaction) of health, and how each aspect impacts on wellbeing and vitality.

Within the notion of *hauora*, the four main aspects of personal health are complexly intertwined. However, for the purpose of this discussion, they will be described and discussed separately. *Hauora*, total well-being, is the overall personal picture of health which depends on the ‘strength’ of each aspect, and its interactions with the others. If one or more aspects of health are ‘weaker’ than the other(s), then overall health consequently weakens. In this notion, total health is described as and defined by, more than the lack of illness; each aspect of health is of equal importance to, relies upon, and is a part of the other (Durie, 1994). To extend the imagery of the building as a metaphor for *hauora*, if any of the walls are weaker or shorter than the other, the building will be unstable, and may fall. Consequently, each aspect of health needs to be nurtured for a totally ‘healthy’ person.

Sociologists John Law and AnneMarie Mol discussed complexity in the concept of time, which may be aligned to this discussion within the concept of health. Law and Mol (2002) describe how:

Time flies, but it flies like a swallow, up, down, off quickly and then coming slowly back again. Attending to such a time brings complexity into play, for simple orders may be made visible by snapshots of frozen moments. But they *are* only snapshots. What is visible in them may be hidden on the next image – and then become visible again a little later – and even snapshots may show traces of what is but also isn’t there, of complexities that surface earlier, later, at and in some other time (2002:13).

The same may be said for one's self, and one's sense of self, personal health, identity, place, belonging, and wholeness. At any instant, one, many, or none of the aspects of self may be at the forefront of consciousness, to slip away at another instant. Such shifting grounds and fluctuations in the complexity of the self and perception of self and body, implies that at any moment, different aspects of *hauora* may be in need of attention, regulation, maintenance or acknowledgement. Due to that interplay and the complexity of conscious awareness of health and wellbeing, each person's sense of self and wellbeing is a negotiation of the interacting aspects which provide a perception of the *whare*, house (or body).

### ***Tūrangawaewae, Land, Ownership, and Identity***

The connection to land, *tūrangawaewae*, a place to stand or put the feet, is very important in *Māori* culture (Mead, 2003), and provides a foundation for *hauora*, total health<sup>16</sup>. In *Māori* philosophy, land is ideally not to be owned – a person does not have ownership over land but a place to be looked after and held in keeping for the generations to follow<sup>17</sup> (Durie, 1996; Mead 2003). Similarly, one's *hauora*, health and wellbeing, may be seen to be owned by the collective, not just the individual. In other words, every person is responsible for every other person's *hauora*, health and wellbeing.

In the *Māori* language, land is also often referred to as *Papatūānuku* – mother earth. *Papatūānuku*, in connection with *Ranginui* (father sky), created the numerous gods (who each rule over different aspects of the elements and world), who eventually created the *Māori* people (Barlow, 2009; Best,

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<sup>16</sup> For a more complete discussion on the relationship between land, *Māori* health, and the effects of colonisation in *Aotearoa* New Zealand, please see Sheppard, 2005.

<sup>17</sup> Due to colonisation, ownership over land in *Aotearoa* New Zealand changed from traditional *iwi* or *hapū* (tribal or group) – maintenance of the environment, where a 'sale' was the transfer of certain rights of access to, or use of, parts of the land – to that of the colonising *Pakeha*, whose perception was that land is individually owned, and solely for the use of the owner (McAloon, 2009; Sheppard, 2005). However in 2010, much land that is held by the *Māori* people in any aspect of *Whanau/Hapū/Iwi* is held in trusts or incorporations (Sheppard, 2005), where many owners have a say in how land is used (for example, whether the land is protected, reserved for national parks, or developed in accordance with *Māori* values, customs and interests at heart), and how the land may be passed on. This relates to how land was originally divided and governed, which is now written into legislation for *Māori* land ownership. Several key authors note that, 'The 1993 Act now makes it extremely difficult for *Māori* land to pass out of *Māori* ownership' (Durie, 1996:191) (also in Durie, 2001; Mead, 2003; Sheppard 2005).

1922a; Best, 1929; Brown, 1907; Mead, 2003; Shortland, 1882; White 1856)<sup>18</sup>. In *Māori whakapapa*<sup>19</sup>, a person can often trace back forefathers or foremothers to the first *waka*<sup>20</sup> which arrived in *Aotearoa*, and consequently further back in mythology to *Mau*<sup>21</sup> and the gods, and *Papatūānuku*, mother earth, and *Ranginui*, father sky, who evolved from the light (*Te Ao Mārama*) following the darkness (*Te Pō*) (Best 1922a; Brown, 1907; Mead, 2003). This creation story involves and reinforces the connectedness of the environment and the people to life, the living, and death. By looking after *Papatūānuku*, mother earth, the land, and drawing upon her strength, one remains connected to the ancestors and cycle of life, and ultimately, maintains a healthy lifestyle (Sheppard, 2005).

Consequently, the building which sits on the land has its roots and foundations in the land, hence a connection with the past (ancestors who looked after the land for the current generation), the present (current generations who use the building), and the future (generations to come for whom

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<sup>18</sup> Referencing so many authors, particularly noting the year written, emphasises that the writing of *Māori* mythology and philosophy has not significantly (if at all) changed, and that some of the first (and most significant) authors on the *Māori* people and their customs obtained 'correct' information, valued then and now.

<sup>19</sup> *Whakapapa* is similar to the concept of genealogy, however there is more to it than just tracing one's ancestors ([www.maori.org.nz](http://www.maori.org.nz)). Knowledge of one's ancestors names and significant events is open knowledge, however the *tapu*, sacred matters which was carried with that information is restricted knowledge, and only available to a few *kaumātua*, elders, or *tohunga*, the sacred knowledge keepers. Which information and knowledge passed on may be different for each *whānau*, families, or larger *iwi*, tribal groupings. However, each story is considered correct as there is more than one version of history which can be passed on. The importance of knowing one's *whakapapa* is emphasised regularly in *tikanga Māori*, way of being. A person's *whakapapa* is spoken at the beginning of *mōteatea*, speeches, as people introduce themselves through their placement of themselves in context of their history. In other words, one is introduced through one's ancestors and the ancestor's relationship to the people to whom one is introduced.

<sup>20</sup> A *waka* is often described as a canoe, and can be of various sizes, depending on its need or function. The *waka* referred to here are the canoes which brought different *iwi* to *Aotearoa* New Zealand, from which come all *iwi* and all *Māori* people of *Aotearoa* New Zealand.

<sup>21</sup> *Maui* is one of the main figures in *Māori* mythology. He is one of the sons of the gods, and many stories of his adventures tell how he shaped *Aotearoa* New Zealand, as well as how he made man mortal, discovered fire, and so forth. Consequently, there are many stories of *Maui* which explain the world of one's ancestors, and describe how the current world came into being.

the building is being held). The land and the building is literally a place to stand (Mead, 2003), a place where the body is grounded, and from which one can walk and explore surroundings:

*Tūrangawaewae* represents one spot, one locality on planet earth where an individual can say, 'I belong here. I can stand here without challenge. My ancestors stood here before me. My children will stand tall here.' The place includes interests in the land, with the territory of the *hapū* and of the *iwi*. It is a place associated with the ancestors and is full of history (Mead, 2003:43).

In taking an intergenerational account of land and building into the imagery of the *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model, personal health and well-being can be impacted on by the past, as in: how the land was previously treated – synonymous with how the ancestors were colonised or persecuted; the genes a person inherits; the present condition of the land when acquired; and having a full family (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, extended family and friends) around as support (Durie, 1996; Durie, 2001; Meredith, 2009). Similarly, personal health and wellbeing will continue to act on further generations, by an individual being present for the younger generation through their own personal good health, and maintenance of the land in preparation for the next generation (including accounting for the reduction and possible extinction of species, and the impact on climate change and pollution) (Sheppard, 2005). This viewpoint is supported by Mead, who argues: 'One of the continuing challenges of life is to try and improve the birthright that is to be passed on to the next generation. But it is equally challenging to protect and maintain the legacy one receives' (2003:61; supported by Durie, 1996). A view of the land being in 'good' condition for future generations means being in good health, able to serve and guide younger generations, and provide a culturally relevant space for future generations to grow.

The connection to the ancestors through connection to land assists in identity formation, in that one comes to know oneself through knowledge of one's heritage and place within the group (Durie, 1996; Mead, 2003). Identity, the knowledge of where one comes from and access to knowledge and practices, is also a founding point for *hauora* (Durie, 2005; Henwood, 2007). One can embody one's heritage through the learning of 'traditional'<sup>22</sup> or 'cultural' dances and consequently embed in one's body the practice of one's culture and heritage<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> I have placed the words traditional and cultural in quotation marks to acknowledge that what may seem to be traditional or cultural dance may be incomplete, or an appropriation of what one thinks is traditional, due

Moreover, land may be seen as home. A place to come back to, either while living, or to have the body returned to upon death. Land may also be seen as a place where an individual is accepted (almost without exception), because the person is family, and from the land (Mead: 2003). Accompanied with the notion of land being home, is the concept of *Whenua*. *Whenua* is the *Māori* word which means either placenta or land (Durie 2001; Mead, 2003). Traditionally, and increasingly in modern society, when a child was born, the placenta was buried on the land so there would always be a physical connection to the land, which amplified a sense of connectedness to the people, and assisted in the development of identity: there was literally a place from which one came (Durie, 2001; Mead, 2003). Synonymous with the concept of *whenua* is the term *tangata whenua*, literally ‘people of the land’, or original inhabitants (Barlow, 2009; Durie, 2001; Mead, 2003). The *tangata whenua* drew from, and replenished the land, and were intimately connected with it – again reinforcing the potent connection between land, identity, culture and people<sup>24</sup>.

### **Te Whare, the House**

The house or building shown in images of *Te Whare Tapa Wha* is often a *Māori* meeting house, or *Wharenuī*. As noted by McNeill, the ‘concept of the *whare* (house) is laden with covert meaning’, given the ‘*Māori* penchant for the poetic use of symbolic iconic *Māori* metaphors’ (2009:97), which adds meaning, value, and significance to this model. For *Māori*, a *whare*, house, may have different functions and be known by different names, including *Whare Whakairo* (carved ancestral house), *Whare Wānanga*<sup>25</sup> (house of learning), *Wharenuī*<sup>26</sup> (the big house), *Whare Tūpuna* (ancestral house),

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to knowledge being lost through forced removal. Examples of such forced removal includes the forced use of the English language within schools in colonised countries and the demeaning of what were called ‘primitive’ practices. Consequently those languages and practices are lost as elders containing such knowledge pass away, and no other person is there to replace or continue that chain of knowledge. Not all traditional or cultural dances have lost elements of authenticity or authentic movement; however, in some dances knowledge has been partially or fully lost.

<sup>23</sup> See Rowe (2008) for an example of such bodily knowledge of culture within the medium of hula dance.

<sup>24</sup> Additionally, it is common in the *Māori* language for buildings and place names to refer either to parts of the body, or to ancestors, to further emphasise the continuous connection of the body and one’s heritage to the living world and the identity of the *iwi*, tribal group, to the lived and living environment.

<sup>25</sup> The *Whare wānanga* is the house of learning. *Wānanga* refers to the baskets of knowledge bought from *Hawaiki* (the spiritual place where *Māori* people originated from) with the gods and ancestors who discovered

*Wharepuni* (meeting house), *Whare Tapere* (house of entertainment, storytelling and dance), as well as other names for buildings which have specific functions (Mead, 2003; Royal, 2004). I will only discuss the *whare whakairo* as an example of the meaning and imagery in how the body may be viewed within the *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model.

*Whare whakairo* is the name for a carved ancestral house. In contemporary society, the *whare whakairo* has come to represent important tribal ancestors, rather than the traditional practice of depicting the nuptial embrace of *Ranginui*, mother earth, and *Papatūānuku*, father sky (Barlow, 2009). The internal structure of the house represents an ancestors' body which embraces the people within the house. According to Barlow, the main structural similarities are: 'the main ridgepole (*tāhuhu*), the rafters (*heke*), and the barge boards (*maihi*) represent the backbone, the ribcage, and outstretched arms of an ancestor' (2009:179). Additionally, each of the carvings, weavings, and sections of the *whare* are of significance, for the ancestors they represent, who created the panels, and which stories they tell. Certain protocols (too detailed to describe here) must be adhered to within the *whare whakairo*, to respect the *whare* and the ancestors (Barlow, 2009). Like the connection with land, the *whare whakairo* is a place where a person belongs, and is revitalised:

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*Aotearoa* New Zealand (Barlow, 2009). However in contemporary society, *Wānanga* also refers to the *Māori* tertiary institution, or a *Māori* department within a tertiary institution (Mead, 2003). Both meanings of *Wānanga* rely on, and describe the importance and sacredness of learning in the *Māori* society. Knowledge is considered *tapu*, or sacred, and so there are particular procedures to acquiring knowledge, and definite places of learning – *Whare Wānanga* (Barlow, 2009; Best, 1924; Mead, 1969). In particular within the arts, one of the *whare Wānanga* is the *whare pora*, the house of weaving. The *whare pora* describes a specific site for the creative arts (in this case, weaving), emphasises the high place of the arts within *Māori* society. In some cases, the *whare pora* was 'not actually a building, but rather it was the collective to weavers old and young who worked within the principles of the house, who protected its traditions and made sure that novices were properly inducted into the *tikanga*. There was a knowledge base belonging to the house – a *mātauranga* of weaving – there were procedures for novices to follow, and there was *tapu*' (Mead, 2003:256). Surrounding traditional *whare Wānanga* are many characteristics and practices to which Mead (2003) describes in detail. For the purposes of this dissertation, it is noted that learning and knowledge acquisition was (and is) considered sacred, and not everyone was privileged with all information – indeed it often took many years to start to acquire a detailed understanding of *Māori* knowledge.

<sup>26</sup> The *wharenuī* is one of the names used to describe the traditional meeting house which is prominent within the *marae* (*Māori* community of buildings). It can be a general meeting place where issues pertaining to the *iwi* are discussed, where visitors are met, and where people may sleep (Mead, 2003). The *wharenuī* is a common concept within *Aotearoa* New Zealand, and is used in everyday language.

When *Māori* people assemble on the *marae*<sup>27</sup>, and especially in the *whare whakairo*, they are, in essence, returning to their roots and to the source of their being. They congregate in the bosom of the house to be instructed on tribal matters and to be rejuvenated in spirit by being among the spirits of their ancestors and gods (Barlow, 2009:179).

Such a concept of acknowledging the power and place of a building (and the people within it) has power in itself, as it represents a person's concept of identity and belonging. The repeated motif of connectedness and interweaving of all aspects of health is evident in *Māori* philosophies of health:

And so it happens on many occasions when *Māori* visit their places of birth or upbringing, that they experience a rejuvenation of spirit and a therapeutic restoration of their total health (physical, mental, and spiritual) and are ready to face the challenges of life once more. To return to one's birthplace and to participate in discussions with elders in the presence of ancestors and the gods is something equivalent to the Christian practice of attending church, where one expects to be uplifted and feel peace of mind through worship (Barlow, 2009:181).

Knowing that a house is *tapu*, sacred, emphasises the importance of the *whare* as the building used within the described imagery. This model reminds us that the whole person should be considered sacred and treated as such. The different ways of viewing the building, may align to the different ways of viewing the body, as mentioned in Chapter One. The most important aspect of the *whare* is that it is a whole building, and not just parts, which are discussed separately below. To facilitate understanding of each aspect of health, I will discuss how they relate to the individual, and then expand the concept outwards to other people and then to the environmental context. Like ripples from a droplet of water, these aspects increasingly flow outwards and affect each other, and the circles may be smaller and closer together, depending on the closeness of the relationship and vice versa.

## **Taha Wairua, the Spiritual Aspect of Health**

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<sup>27</sup> Before colonisation in *Aotearoa* New Zealand, the *marae* was the name for an area of land which was in front of a *Māori whare whakairo* or carved meeting house within the *pā* or fortified villages of each *Māori iwi* or tribal group (Barlow, 2009). Currently (in 2010) the word *marae* refers to all the buildings and facilities associated within the *Māori* community which are designated for community use. The buildings usually consist of the *whare whakairo* (carved meeting house), the *wharekai* (dining hall and cooking area), and the *marae ātea* (the sacred space or area in front of the carved meeting house which is used for welcoming ceremonies) (Barlow, 2009).

In the *Māori* language, *wairua*<sup>28</sup> is usually translated as ‘soul’ or ‘spirit’ (Best, 1922b; Mead, 2003; Shortland 1882). To know oneself, and establish and maintain a connection to one’s *wairua*, soul or spirit, is the starting point of personal spiritual health (Durie, 1994). *Taha Wairua* also encompasses a person’s *mauri* – their spirit or vitality, often called their life-force (Best, 1922b; Durie, 1994; Mead, 2003). This is similar, but not the same as one’s *wairua*, soul or spirit, or one’s *hauora*, total health and wellbeing. Spirituality means not only be how a person connects to their *mauri*, life-force, but how that connection radiates outwards to involve and connect to others and the environment (Durie, 1994). Like the *mauri*, the *wairua*, ‘spirit’ of a person, is inextricably connected to the environment. Thus spirituality is seen to pertain to all aspects of life (Best, 1922b; Durie, 1994).

In *Māori* ideology, the *wairua* ‘became a part of their existence as a person from the time the foetus developed eyes’ (Mead, 2003:55) and will continue to exist ‘long after the death of the life they were attached to’ (Mead, 2003:55). Upon death, the *wairua* leaves the body, and according to different *iwi*, may either linger and protect the *iwi*, become *tureha* (mountain or forest fairies), become *tiramaka* (companies of sky fairies, but active souls), or return to *Hawaiki*, the traditional homeland which the forefathers and foremothers left in order to discover *Aotearoa* New Zealand. The latter is ‘the resting place of peaceful *wairua*’ (Mead, 2003:56) (also Barlow, 2009; Best, 1922a; Shortland, 1882). Significant relationships with place and environment are evident in *Taha Wairua*, spiritual health, as seen by Durie:

Land, lakes, mountains, reefs have a spiritual significance, quite apart from economic or agricultural considerations, and all are regularly commemorated in song, tribal history, and formal oratory. A lack of access to tribal lands or territories is regarded by tribal elders as a sure sign of poor health since the natural environment is considered integral to identity and fundamental to a sense of wellbeing (Durie, 1994:71).

Consequently, the supernatural realm is of importance within the *Māori* philosophy, as the spirits, guardians, and fairies could be manifestations of ancestors.

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<sup>28</sup> Although words such as *wairua* (spirit) and *mauri* (life force) may seem like different words to describe the same things, within *Māori* terminology and philosophy, the *wairua*, *mauri*, and *hau* (vital spirit) (along with a other words not mentioned in this dissertation) denote different aspects of the spirit, life force, health and vitality of a person. A fuller description of these terms, and others, may be found in Elsdon Best’s (1922b) book *Spiritual and Mental Concepts of the Maori* Wellington: Dominion Museum.

Alongside the soul, or spirit, and the supernatural world, are the many god-like figures in *Māori* mythology and ancestry<sup>29</sup>. Each ancestor is either credited with different deeds or events which led to knowledge within the mortal realm, or is a protector or manifestation of the environment and created what one sees and experiences today (Barlow, 2009). In other words, 'health is related to unseen and unspoken energies' (New Zealand Ministry of Health, 2010) which created the world, and to live in peace, harmony, or health, one needs to acknowledge and adhere to practices which respect and value the environment and one's personal connection to that environment.

*Taha Wairua*, spirituality, also suggests the aptitude to have faith, and comprehend and understand the links between the human situation and the environment (Durie, 1994). This comprises religious beliefs and practices but is not limited to formalised religion, e.g., one need not attend a place of worship or believe in a particular god to have a spiritual life (Durie, 1994).

Consequently, *Taha Wairua* emphasises the unseen and unspoken connections between the self, others, and the environment, and how those connections interact and impact upon health (Durie, 1994; Durie, 2001). A disruption or ailing of the spirit may for example, manifest physically or in the breakdown of a relationship with a partner (Durie, 1994). As a result, 'health' issues may run deeper than superficial bodily expressions of illness, and the perception of what it means to be 'ill' may be different to Western cultures. In *Māori* philosophy, without a spiritual awareness, one is more prone to injury and illness (Mead, 2003).

### ***Taha Whānau*, the Social Aspect of Health**

*Whānau*, in *Aotearoa* New Zealand is generally taken to mean family. However, in *Māori*, *whānau* also means to be born, giving birth, offspring, family group, or used as a familiar term of address

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<sup>29</sup> Additionally, for everything which a person does, there is: a guardian to acknowledge or please, protocol to follow to ensure protection, and a 'right way of doing things' (often called *tikanga Māori*, although *tikanga* has more meanings). To add *mana*, value, depth or esteem to an activity, acts of acknowledgement are also considered. In this way, the spiritual realm is intimately connected to life, practices, and surroundings, and acts to maintain dialogue between what one does, how one lives, and the surrounding environment (physical and spiritual). Spirituality is more than religion; it is a way of living.

(Mead, 2003). The concept of *whānau* is broader than ‘nuclear family’, and is often used to describe the close-knit community or group (Durie, 2001; Mead, 2003), i.e., a person from a dance company may call the other members of the company *whānau*. Due to this broader aspect of family, *Taha Whānau* covers a wide range of relationships which are evident in the importance of *whānau* in daily life. These relationships include: *tuakana-teina* (older sibling-younger sibling, although the two people may not be related, and may not be children) including mentorship; *kaumātua* (elders) who make sure protocols are followed and knowledge is maintained and passed on; the connection of *whānau* to larger kinship groups such as *hapū* and *iwi*, where one represents more than just oneself when performing an activity (such as speaking at an official meeting); and the notion that everyone, not just the parents, is responsible for a child of the community (Barlow, 2009; Durie, 2001). Because of these varied notions of *whānau*, *Taha Whānau* in the *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model represents not only family, but also society and societal connections, thus the social aspect of health.

*Taha Whānau* is also the link between family and identity, which involves the capacity to belong, care, and share, and the idea that individuals are part of a wider social system (Durie, 1994). There are two main considerations within this domain: firstly, the family is the prime support system, physically, emotionally and culturally (Durie, 1994); and secondly ‘*whānau* provides us with the strength to be who we are. This is the link to our ancestors, our ties with the past, the present and the future’ (New Zealand Ministry of Health, 2010). In other words, *Taha Whānau* is a multi-layered connection between the individual, the family, and personal history. ‘Understanding the importance of *whānau* and how *whānau* (family) can contribute to illness and assist in curing illness is fundamental to understanding *Māori* health issues’ (New Zealand Ministry of Health, 2010).

At its basis, *Taha Whānau*, social health, deals with a sense of belonging. It is the deep, personal conviction of being a part of a group that a person feels and experiences, which gives the sense of oneness with another person –in essence, very similar to *Taha Wairua*, spiritual health. The essential difference is that *Taha Whānau*, social health, deals with relationships with living people. Consequently, *whānau* covers a broad range of interpersonal relationships and events or activities which impact on society, or on which society impacts.

### ***Taha Hinengaro, the Mental and Emotional Aspect of Health***

*Taha Hinengaro* deals primarily with the mental and emotional aspect of health (Durie, 1994).

According to Maori beliefs, thoughts and feelings come from the same source (Durie, 1994). As explained by Best:

The *Māori* employs the expressions *aro*, *hinengaro*, and *ngakau* in order to define what in the West is called “mind.” *Hinengaro* is also used to denote “conscious.” The definitions of the word *aro* are “mind, seat of feelings, desire, the bowels, to know or understand” (1922b:39).

*Taha Hinengaro* is also the ability to focus the mind, and balance the rational and emotional to respond and project one’s views and opinions in the most appropriate way. For ‘positive’ health in the *Taha Hinengaro* aspect, a balance is sought between what has been called the ‘rational’ and the ‘emotional’ brain.

Mental health is not just measuring the Intelligence Quotient, or the ability to learn and recognize puzzles, patterns, repetitions, to problem-solve, have abstract thought or to analyze. Mental health can evolve into the question of ‘what is knowing’, and ‘how does one come to know’ (Eisner 2005). Mental health implies brain health, including sensory input, and also deals with the body and how consciously aware one is of sensory input, via the means of vision, hearing, touch, pain, temperature, taste, smell, balance, and proprioception (knowledge of where one’s body or body parts are in relation to others). Being ‘mentally healthy’ includes being aware of one’s body and the sensation of one’s thoughts and thought processes.

Emotional health is not being ruled by the emotions, or completely ignoring them. Emotional health includes the ability to know what emotion one is feeling, being able to manage that feeling, and to act in an appropriate manner in expressing that feeling in a way which doesn’t harm oneself or others. Such self-insight, self-knowledge, and an ability to manage emotions, is the seat of emotional health. A balance between the rational/logical and the emotional aspects of thought and action may be sought for ‘positive’ mental and emotional health (Goleman, 1996).

*Taha Hinengaro* acknowledges the link between thoughts, feelings and actions; this dimension of health assists in validating the non-verbal, and in communicating through non-verbal means (Barlow, 2009; Durie, 1994). In other words, *Taha Hinengaro* comprises the connection of the inner being (what occurs within one's mind) to the outer world (reality, or the lived space one occupies) (Morice, 2006). *Taha Hinengaro* is not only the conceptualization of lived space, but how one feels about, and acts, within it.

### ***Taha Tinana*, the Physical Aspect of Health**

*Taha Tinana*, physical health, is for many the most familiar aspect of health and well-being. *Taha Tinana* is:

[T]he capacity for physical growth and development. Good physical health is required for optimal development. Our physical 'being' supports our essence and shelters us from the external environment. For *Māori* the physical dimension is just one aspect of health and well-being and cannot be separated from the aspect of mind, spirit and family (New Zealand Ministry of Health, 2010).

Obviously, *Taha Tinana*, physical health, involves the body itself, and how one looks after the body in terms of exercise, nutrition, ability and physical capability to produce movement, and the presence or absence of illness or disease. However, this is not to say that the body is a machine to be maintained or 'fixed' when there is a health issue. The body is not an absence (Baum, 2003) or absent presence (Blackman, 2008), only to be noticed when it is incapable, injured, or sick.

Concepts surrounding *Taha Tinana*, physical health, can also be expanded to include body language, embodied knowledge and muscle memory, and the training and use of the body to create movement and meaning. Essentially, *Taha Tinana*, physical health, is the examination of the body, what it is capable of, how it manifests itself, and how one maintains one's body and its functions (Durie, 1994).

### **Conclusion**

To reiterate the concept of *Te Whare Tapa Wha*, I return to the image of a four-sided building on a piece of land. Each part of the picture is important in its own right, but individually cannot comprise

the whole picture. Each aspect needs, is dependent on, is defined by, and works with the others to form a unified, cohesive whole:

Individual health is built into a wider system, the boundary between personal and family identity being frequently blurred. Similarly the divisions between temporal and spiritual, thoughts and feelings, mental and physical are not as clear-cut as they have been in Western thinking since the advent of Cartesian dualism (Durie, 1994:74).

Each wall symbolises a different aspect of health, and the total building shows the connectedness of the four aspects and how they contribute to a person's total well-being. This concept of equality is important in emphasising the significance and validation of all aspects of health. For the building to stand, each wall needs to be strong, of equal height, and to support the roof. Without one wall, or with one wall weaker than the others, the house will fall down (Durie, 1994). As further described by Morice:

Underlying Te Whare Tapa Wha is the consistent theme of integration. The boundary between personal identity and family identity is seen as fluid and permeable. Opposites such as temporal and spiritual, body and mind, thought and feeling are understood in relative rather than absolute terms. Dualism and discontinuity are returned to their rightful place within a convergent continuum. The optimal treatment of ill-health, then, does not exclude scientific and technical practices, but integrates these with spiritual, relational and ecological dimensions. Te Whare Tapa Wha is a wholistic assessment tool for any physical, mental, social or spiritual condition. In this frame, any objective condition or concern is linked not only to effective treatment but also to personal meaning and overall quality of life (2006:10).

*Hauora*, health and wellbeing, is a shifting ground of complex interactions, within which different aspects of health are of importance at any given moment. There is no resting place in *hauora*, as each individual has different needs and aspirations for improving, maintaining or dealing with health. As will be shown in this dissertation, dance is a medium in which to explore and develop the skills needed to understand and support *hauora*.

## Chapter Three: *Taha Wairua*, The Spiritual Aspect of Health and Dance

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To guide the reading of this chapter, I will begin with the connection in dance to self, and radiate that concept out to involve connections to other people, environments, and the ancestors, as a way of understanding the facets of spirituality evident in dance.

### ***Taha Wairua*, Spirituality**

In this discussion, spirituality is the connection of self and spirit to others, the environment, and the supernatural. This connection partly manifests through synchrony of movement and shared physical breath which occurs when dancing with others. Breathing and moving in unison and harmony either within an individual (through the focus on breath and movement) or with other people, allows an increased focus on the shared sensations, enhancing the feeling of being connected and in sync with the self and others (Goleman, 2006; Lande, 2007; McNeil, 1995). This feeling of cohesion, and focus on harmony and oneness, can be projected outwards to attune to others and the environment, enhancing and amplifying the sense of unity (Eckersley, 2007). As well as connecting to the environment and other people, one can feel connected to ancestors, spirits and the supernatural (Mead, 2003). The connection to ancestors is part of *taha wairua*, spirituality, as the ancestors (at least in *Māori* culture) inform, influence, and contribute to the self through their sharing in a person's movement. This phenomenon relates to a person becoming a 'living archive' of legends and history through the medium of movement (Rowe, 2008). Eckersley notes that 'spirituality is a deeply intuitive, but not always consciously expressed, sense of connectedness to the world in which we live... Spirituality represents the broadest and deepest form of connectedness' (2007:554). This connectedness of self, body, mind, and others through the medium of dance will be explored in this chapter.

*Taha Wairua* is the starting point and basis of health, explaining how the connections between people and their environments interact and impact upon health (Durie, 1994; Durie, 2001). This discussion is based on the *Māori* words for spirit, soul, essence, vitality and life-principle, and the concept of spirituality in dance. In Chapter Two *hauora* was described as total health and wellbeing. The root words of *hauora* are *hau*, and *ora*; *hau* means 'vital spirit', 'vitality of human life', or

'essence' (Mead, 2003), and is one of three main elements of one's 'spirit' which intertwine and depict slightly different aspects of being. *Hau* is an intangible quality which describes the essence of a person, and 'is not located in any organ of the body' (Best, 1922b:32), cannot leave the body, and ceases to exist when the person dies (Best, 1922b; Mead, 2003). The more ordinary meanings of *hau* are 'breath', 'wind', and 'air' (Best, 1922b; Mead, 2003), which within a person relates to physical breath.

'*Ora*' means 'to be alive', 'well', 'safe', 'healthy', 'fit', 'to survive', and even 'life' (Moorfield, 2010). When joined with '*hau*', *hauora* may be thought to mean 'the breath of life'; however, this is not an entirely correct translation. '*Tihei mauri ora*', the sneeze (or breath) of life, which also infers one's right to speak, is a more apt description of 'the breath of life', due to the meaning of the word '*mauri*' (Mead, 2003). *Hauora*, then, is more likely to mean the wellness and safety of the vital essence, which relates more to the holistic concept of total health and wellbeing than to the 'spark' or 'active component which makes one alive' (Mead, 2003:363).

'*Mauri*', which means 'life principle', 'special nature', 'source of emotions' (Mead, 2003:53; Moorfield, 2010), or 'spark of life' (Mead, 2003:363), is the force which binds the body and the spirit together (Barlow, 2009). The *mauri* of something (inanimate objects and animals also have a *mauri*) makes it possible for that thing to exist within the bounds of its own creation; when a person dies, the *mauri* is unable to hold together the body and the spirit, and so becomes separated, ceasing life (Barlow, 2009). In the aforementioned saying '*tīhei mauri ora*', the breath (or sneeze) of life more aptly describes *mauri*, as without the *mauri*, the spirit cannot be constrained to the body or be the thing which makes the body alive. In other words, the *mauri* can be the binding force – a contrast to the Cartesian duality<sup>30</sup>. Body and mind are not separate, and through knowing and being aware of the body (a sentient individual having an embodied experience) one comes to know oneself (Aalten, 2007; Crossley, 2007; Okely, 2007). Dance is a vehicle for awareness of the body and breath, the unison of the focussed mind, body and breath, and a more detailed and conscious awareness of the embodied experience of life through the body (Fraleigh, 1987), which then connects one to one's *mauri* and *wairua* (spirit).

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<sup>30</sup> The Cartesian duality, a concept coined by philosopher Rene Descartes, is the split between the body and the mind, where the mind and rational, logical thinking is seen as superior to the body and the emotions.

*Wairua*, the third component of the spirit or being, encompasses notions of a 'spirit' or 'soul' which 'exists beyond death' (Moorfield, 2010). The *wairua* is immortal. On passing, the *wairua* travels out of the body, and goes to the resting place of the souls, in *Hawaiki*, the ancestral homeland of the *Māori* people (Barlow, 2009; Mead, 2003). There are other concepts surrounding *wairua* which are beyond the scope of this work.

Given the definitions of *hauora*, *wairua*, and *mauri*, spirit and spirituality is the connection to those elements of the self, and how that connection radiates out to others *hauora*, *wairua*, and *mauri*, and to similar elements found within the environment. Connection to the environment is stressed through the use of *karakia*, prayers or incantations, used to appease the *mauri* found within trees, birds, animals, insects, waters, and rocks etc: to make safe passage; encourage good growth and reproduction; or allow the elements to be used (i.e., in creating a strong *waka*, canoe) (Mead, 2003). Moreover, such connections are being made through non-verbal means, which implies that through movement, one comes to know, acknowledge, and understand *taha wairua*.

### **Spirituality in Dance**

Merce Cunningham said that 'Dancing is a spiritual exercise in physical form' (Anderson, 2004:52). Spirituality and spiritual awareness in dance can 'shift' the performance of a dance. In other words, the connection to the feeling of expansiveness found in the focussing of the breath and movement may raise the performance to another level, i.e., instead of the dancer going through the motions, the movements may become 'alive' and seem to resonate within the dance/dancer. The performance may be regarded as 'better', or more 'complete', as the performer seems more 'in tune'. This awareness of the body moving through space, in harmony with the dance, elevates the performance and viewing experience for dancer and audience. The viewer can sense the connection of the dancer to the movement, which is assisted by the dancer's total connection to body, mind, and spirit. That ethereal quality, in my opinion, begins with the connection to the self.

Spirituality in dance is difficult to discuss, as not all dances are of a spiritual nature, and not all dances emphasise the spiritual aspect of life. Dancers and viewers may not be 'attuned' to the

spiritual aspect of the movements or the dance, and may not acknowledge or know how a dance may be spiritual. Despite such varied knowledge, emphasis, and use of spirituality in dance, this notion will be discussed as if it were a part of dance (while acknowledging that such emphasis and use may not always be the case<sup>31</sup>).

One problem when discussing the spiritual aspect of health, particularly in relation to dance, is the difficulty of putting the 'spiritual' experience into words. However, as dancing is visceral, emotional, mental, physical, and extraordinarily personal (Foster, 1976; Morgenroth, 2004), there may be no need for words to describe what is felt, as the acknowledgement of the feeling itself is enough. As movement educator Ruth Foster explains:

In dance, movement takes on very closely the shape of sensation, and in turn shapes it. The experience of the dancer is an intimately personal one in which action may be said to be the very fabric of feeling itself (1976:6).

This quote highlights the unity of self and body that occurs in embodied, focussed movement, enhancing the strength of the *mauri* and the connection to self through dance. As Nietzsche observed, 'In song and dance, man expressed himself as a member of a higher community. He has forgotten how to walk and speak and is on the way into flying into the air dancing... His very gestures express enchantment' (Anderson, 2004:8). The sensation of movement and the focus on the experience of moving is a heightened phenomenon, connecting the self and body, and producing a sense of aliveness and vitality, or *hau*. This sensation of being 'alive' increases the awareness of the spirit, enriching the impression of the experience as spiritual. Sondra Fraleigh states that:

[T]here are obvious connections between existential thought, the body, dance, and art in general, since they are all founded in lived and experiential values... The lived-body concept attempts to cut beneath the subject-object split, recognizing a dialectical and lived dualism but not a dualism of body-soul or body-mind. A phenomenological (or lived) dualism implicates consciousness and intention and assumes an indivisible unity of body, soul, and mind (1987:3-4).

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<sup>31</sup> Due to the inadequacy of language when describing spirituality, the topic of spirituality in dance may seem unreal and abstract; hence there may be sceptics to the notion of seeking for meanings of existence in dance. I also realise that not all dances are of a spiritual nature, nor are all dancers 'spiritually aware or awake' while dancing. Still, some people have been 'moved' by a dance, a dancer or their own dance experience, and the concept of spirituality in dance assists in explaining this experience.

In other words, by realising the potential of one's *hau* and *mauri* through the body and movement, one can come to know, embody, and feel the spiritual aspect of life, becoming more connected to self, others, and the supernatural. Being consciously present in the moment (in a lived body), one experiences the *mauri* and can even use that feeling to assist in life decisions. In dance, this sensation and connection to one's *mauri*, *hau*, and *wairua* is heightened, due to the conscious focus on harmony of the breath and mindful movement of the body. Through the embodiment of thoughts and emotions, and their portrayal through movement (Malloch, 2005), one can come to see and know not only one's own thoughts and emotions, but also those of others (Goleman 2006), while also feeling connected to, and embodying the ancestors and spirits. By moving like another person, one may also come to understand how that person thinks and feels, and can even become like that person (Bavelas, Black, Lemery, and Mullett, 1986). Being able to recognise what is being thought and felt through the observation (and doing) of movements, will be discussed in later chapters.

### Connection to Self Through Dance

Dance increases the awareness of one's vital spirit and what 'moves' a person<sup>32</sup> (Climenhaga, 2009; Moore and Yamamoto, 1996; Torres, 2006). The act of dancing allows a person to disregard the surroundings to allow focus on the 'inner' self (Fraleigh, 1987; Moore and Yamamoto, 1996). A dancer's connection to inner self and outer energies epitomises the connection to *mauri*. Consequently, dance is a unique activity which can induce or maintain a spiritual connection to oneself and others, which is vital to *hauora*, total well-being (Cohen, 2008; Keesing, 1928). As Caulker maintains:

At its best, dance heals. It transforms and elevates. The body is a vessel through which the divine resides, waiting to be made tangible. Dance is a path through which the divine resides, waiting to be made tangible. Dance is a path through which the spirit, mind and body merge (2003:27)

In other words, spirituality is based in embodiment, the lived experience of self, spirit, and *wairua*, or through the *mauri* binding body and soul together. To experience the spiritual connection to self

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<sup>32</sup> "I'm not so interested in how they move as in what moves them" (Bausch quoted in Schmidt 1984:15-16). This has become a defining statement for [Pina] Bausch's work' (Climenhaga, 2009). Choreographer Pina Bausch was known for investigating and interrogating the underlying intention and motivation for movement and action, and using that material as the basis for her choreographies.

and others, one must be sentiently present in a somatically felt body<sup>33</sup>, and not an absent-presence<sup>34</sup>.

Dance and dancing is a place to become re-acquainted with the body, to experience and experiment with embodied movement through focus and attention on the body (Aalten, 2007; Hanna, 1979a; Moore and Yamamoto, 1996). The individual participating in a dance class can attune to, and become in touch with, the body (self and others) and what the body is experiencing or feeling (such as aches, pains, stress, or tension) which can also be observed or noticed by others (Aalten, 2007).

[Dancers] anticipate the beginning of class, and hope that it will be a good one. Criteria for what constitutes a “good” class vary from individual to individual; however, many dancers hope that first, their muscles will become warm quickly and that they will begin to feel the “connection” early on in the class. This concept is difficult for non-dancers – or even beginning dancers – to understand, but it refers to the fine-tuning of a professional dancer’s body, of which the dancer is keenly aware, and which must be re-discovered each day. It is possible for these “connections” not to be made from time to time, on an “off” day, and this is a bitter disappointment to the dancer (Hart-Johnson, 1997:194 quoted in Williams, 2004:209).

Dance teachers and choreographers Lynne Anne Blom and L. Tarin Chaplin similarly noted that:

This is where dance starts – from the inside – with an awareness of body and sensitivity to movement, your own and that of others you’ll be dancing with. You should carry that awareness with you, sure as a heartbeat, a primary and integral part of your approach (1989:22).

Becoming attuned to the body and self through consciousness of the body in motion, one is more aware of the total body (its inside workings), and how the body responds in a physical way to its

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<sup>33</sup> The ‘somatically felt body’ is Blackman’s term for the ‘aliveness or vitality that is literally felt or sensed but cannot necessarily be articulated, reduced to physiological processes or to the effect of social structures’ (2008:30).

<sup>34</sup> The absent-present of the body is described in Aalten (2007) through the example of neglect. ‘In everyday life most people, while depending on their bodies to engage with the world, are usually not aware of their bodies. When I try to catch a ball, my attention will be focused on the ball and not on the more complicated physical processes that allow me to catch it successfully... The elusiveness of the body or, as Csordas (1994:8) has formulated it, this ‘disappearance from awareness’ is the reason why Leder (1990:69) speaks of the ‘absent body’, stating that ‘it is *the body’s own tendency toward self-concealment* that allows for the possibility of its neglect’ (Aalten, 2007:111).

environment (Aalten, 2007; Fraleigh, 1987; Moore and Yamamoto, 1996). Although such inward focus on the body and how it moves may be a part of *Taha Tinana*, the physical aspect of health, such a state may also allow a person to enter into the quiet, meditative<sup>35</sup> space of the mind and the spirit (Blackman, 2008; Meredith Monk in Morgenroth, 2004; Rubin, 2001), that is, the spiritual essence.

### **The Breath and Physicality of *Taha Wairua***

As mentioned earlier, *hau* and *mauri* equates to the physical breath, or the breath of life. In dance, breath is a connection to the movements performed, and a way to somatically connect and be aware of one's being (McNeill, 1995; Lande, 2007). Synchrony of the breath is a way to be in tune and in harmony with music (if used) and other dancers. The use of the breath as a bonding agent between people was described by Brian Lande in regards to the military:

In the army, breathing 'properly' is a key embodied prerequisite for such practices as firing a rifle, running long distances, and even projecting authority on the drill ground. Without being able to breathe like a soldier, participation in military activity is severely restricted (2007:96).

In dance, the use and regulation of the breath in relation to bodily movement can be emphasised by focussing on the breath and on how inhaling and exhaling expands and contracts the lungs, rib-cage, and muscles of the torso (Huston, 1984). As attention is focussed on the act of breathing, so too the focus can be expanded to how movement extends and contracts with the muscles and action of breathing (Blom and Chaplin, 1989; Huston, 1984). The dancer is then more conscious of the synchrony between internal and external processes of the body, while the regulation of the breath may soothe and calm the mind and bring meditative properties<sup>36</sup> to the embodied movement (Shilling, 2007; Sutton, 2005).

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<sup>35</sup> For a discussion on meditation and the effects and processes of meditation see Rubin, (2001). A new view of meditation. *Journal of Religion and Health*. 41(1):121-128

<sup>36</sup> Meditative properties are not only the physical effects of meditation (decreased heart rate, respiration, oxygen consumption, and a calming and slowing of the physiological processes of the body), but the psychological effects (attention to the thoughts and thought processes, decrease in stress, expanding of the consciousness, and an increase in resilience) (Rubin, 2001; Wallace, 1970).

A choreographer may want to employ a dancer who is 'in touch' with the self (in this context, the awareness and connection to *mauri*, *wairua*, and *hau*, the body and the spirit). From that intimate starting point, the choreographer can develop movements and dances which are (more) intensely emotional and personal. Royd Climenhaga, observed that in choreographer Pina Bausch's works:

The dancers were asked to push beyond their accustomed role as impersonal movers to bring more of their individual lives to bear on the material and the means of expression... Bausch was beginning to uncover the very heart of the process of dance, the motivating impulse from which movement begins, and that impulse is always a person in a specific situation (2009:13).

American choreographer, Bill T. Jones noted of his own practice that:

I want my dancers to be in a place of engagement with themselves and their dancing.... You must approach it like any serious spiritual pursuit with a form that we call practice. Respect your body, which is your instrument. Understand it. Understand it's [sic] boundaries, its history, how it fits into the world. Make sure you're equipped with intellectual curiosity so that you can answer the questions about what you do (Morgenroth, 2004:142).

In these cases, connection to and awareness of one's own *mauri* is seen as imperative in the practice of dance.

A lack of consciousness, through the physical manifestation of the lack of connection to the body, occurs by working 'mechanically', or going through the motions without investing in the movement (Bertherat and Bernstein, 1989; Foster, 1976). 'Investing in the movement' refers to how the dancer engages with, and takes on, the dynamics and properties of the movements as if their own, instead of detaching from the intention and 'just moving'. It is this investment which differentiates a pedestrian walking down the street, and a dancer 'walking' across the stage: the attention, intention, investment and bodily commitment to the movement changes the qualities and impetus of the movement. As with any investment where one devotes time or effort to a project, the way in which the dancer devotes to the movement changes the way the movement is performed, and consequently, viewed and experienced. In this way the dancer adds that ephemeral quality to the movements, which can make a more interesting and engaging performance. Contemporary dancer, teacher and choreographer Jane Dudley in an interview with Susan Foster explained that:

One of the dangerous things in this process of working mechanically is class, working from habit, is that you are not working as a total person, totally in the

moment, and totally aware of the sensations of what your body is doing, and what the expressiveness of the particularly thing you are doing contains within it (Foster, 1976:43).

If a dancer is unable to draw upon their *mauri* or *wairua*, spiritual self, the dance becomes muddled, unclear, or bland to the viewer; the communication has been broken between the body and mind (Bertherat and Bernstein, 1989). In part, this breakdown may be due to the dancer not being in touch with the holistic self, and not embodying the lived experience of dancing.

The action or doing of dance is a way to experience and maintain the connection between the mind and body (Fraleigh, 1987; Moore and Yamamoto, 1996; Rowe, 2008). Dancing is an activity where a person focuses on the body and breath, making the connection to the sense of harmony in the mind and body, feel the moment, and embody the movement and emotional intentions of the choreography. As Myron Howard Nadel emphasises,

For many dancers and those connected with dance, true spiritual fulfilment means education and religious practices that employ a oneness of the mind-body experience... every nerve and muscle be recognized as having a part in all thoughts and that oneness of the conscious mind and the material body is an essential part of learning and living (2003:137).

### **The Breath as a Bridge from Self to Other**

As well as connecting to oneself through concentration on the breath, connection and focus can shift outwards toward others. The experience of the shared breath and breathing in time with others expands the sense of attunement and attachment to others (Goleman, 2006). 'One of the aspects of corporeality [connection between the mind and the body] that bind people together is a sense of cohesion which is experienced through the body as an expansive feeling' (Blackman, 2008:30). This expansiveness is emphasised in dance, as a person can feel whole, complete, or at 'one' with themselves, others, and the environment while dancing (Blom and Chaplin, 1989; Caulker, 2003; Foster, 1976). This feeling may in part occur because of the rapport which develops between people while moving and breathing together. Breathing in synchrony with another person establishes rapport and promotes positive feelings between oneself and others (Bernieri and Rosenthal, 1991). 'For rapport to bloom, full attention, positive feelings, and synchrony must arise in tandem' (Goleman, 2006:341). Hence a conscious awareness of the self and other is imperative to building

rapport. Dance is a safe place<sup>37</sup> to learn how to attune to others, and develop rapport. The attention and focus on the other person which occurs in partnering work in dance, allows dancers to practice the skills necessary for understanding and moving with the other person in the same or complementary movements. These skills include (but are not limited to) the matching of breath, watching where the other person is in space in relation to oneself, and moving accordingly, connecting through touch to assure or re-orientate a partner when necessary (Morgenroth, 2004). This focus and support for each other increases dancers' affinity for and toward each other, and increases the opportunity for rapport to develop.

In the book *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships*, Dr Daniel Goleman notes that:

A scientific lens can reveal what the naked eye can't detect: the way that, as each friend speaks, the other's breath subtly falls into a complementary rhythm<sup>38</sup>. Studies where friends in conversation wore sensors that monitored breathing patterns found the listener's breathing roughly mirroring that of the speaker by inhaling as the partner exhaled, or matching by breathing together (2006:31).

Dancing, through the experience of breathing and moving in time together, creates a link which helps to keep people together, an idea which is similar to McNeill's (1995) muscular bonding, as described by Newhall:

Historian William McNeill coined the term "muscular bonding" to describe the euphoric experience of human beings moving in unison, whether marching on the battlefield or folk dancing in the village square. Keeping together in rhythmic time is deep-seated in the human experience, emerging from a need so basic it is often assumed to be instinctive, like breathing or sex. The choice to join together with others in rhythmic movement requires deliberate proprioceptive responses and specialized movement vocabularies. This coordinated response of the brain to rhythmic movement of the large muscles requires cooperation between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems (2002:28).

Using non-verbal forms of communication, as well as being a place to attune to another's breath and movement, can teach people to look for cues other than the voice, intonation, or words in order to

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<sup>37</sup> On dance being a safe place, please see Chapter Four.

<sup>38</sup> On breathing during conversation, see David McFarland, "Respiratory Markers of Conversational Interaction," *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research* 44 (2001), pp.128-45 (Goleman's footnote).

understand another person (Moore and Yamamoto, 1996). Hence for some people, there is a perceived need to dance, to make meaning out of what is being expressed when words fail, and to look deeper into what is being expressed (Moore and Yamamoto, 1996).

In the article *Show Us The Way*, Mead (1962) recounted an example of the audience being affected by the performance of a dance via attunement to the breath, movement, and *mauri* in a dance.

I heard the wise and sensible words spoken upon the *maraes* [sic], words touching upon our troubles. I watched the entertainments – the *haka*, *poi* dances and other posture dances. Then, as I watched, the strange spirit of the *haka* touched me, penetrating to the very marrow of my bones. The life principle of the *Māori*, lying quiescent here, was stirred. It was being fed. Now spontaneously my tongue wants to dart out, my eyes want to dilate, my muscles jerk and I want to plunge into the *haka* (Mead, 1962:16)

In *Māori* this is called a *wehi*, an intense physical reaction to the performance (Dunphy, 1996). This reaction shows the connection that dancers and audience members can create, perceive, and physically feel through the lived experience of a dance performance.

Through attuning to another person via the shared breath or movement, the subtleties of how the body moves to convey emotion and the inner workings and thoughts of the mind can be noticed, which then forms cues to understand another person's emotional state (Goleman, 2006).

Attunement between people occurs through the regulation and harmonious movement of the breath, speech patterns, gestures, and subconscious movements with the other (Bernieri and Rosenthal, 1991; LaFrance and Broadbent, 1982; Malloch, 2005). This use of the body to convey emotions is a recognised and valid way of communicating and understanding another person's point of view (Goleman, 2006; Mead, 2003), as within the *Māori* culture, the emotions conveyed through bodily movement can be more important than words (Mead, 2003). Communicating in such non-verbal form supports feelings of affinity, rapport, and unity between people (Goleman, 2006).

Recognisable movement patterns (such as the wave of a hand) can be used by a choreographer or dancer to examine, manipulate, interpret, express, and explore meanings associated with the movement (refer to earlier example of Pina Bausch). Through exploring these types of movement patterns where the meaning behind the movement is known by all, the dancer and choreographer

can interact with an audience, producing a shared common knowledge (Burt, 2007). This shared 'language' further connects dancer, choreographer and viewer, creating a sense of belonging (in that moment), albeit in differing roles (Burt, 2007; Hanna, 2008; Metge, 1976)<sup>39</sup>. This shared language can be heightened in a group of dancers, due to their reliance on, and practice of, non-verbal forms of communication, as the members of a group have a shared sense of understanding, which permeates communication in such a way that the members may finish each others' trains of thought, or communicate with descriptive sounds or gestures, which other members of the group fully understand and comprehend (Bernieri and Rosenthal, 1991; LaFrance and Broadbent, 1982; Malloch, 2005).

While dancing with others, the sense of connectedness also occurs due to the heightened awareness of where the other person is in space, through the use of proprioception, peripheral vision, and attunement to the other person's movements (Malloch, 2005; Morgenroth, 2004). American choreographer Trisha Brown observed that she 'treasured the communication, the signalling that goes on between dancers in a tightly organised ensemble, when you have no music to tell you where you are' (Morgenroth, 2004:62). Through breathing in time with the movements performed and subsequently breathing in time with other dancers, coupled with muscular bonding (which occurs when people move in time with each other), positive feelings increase and rapport develops, increasing affinity towards others. Moments of synchrony in both thought and movement with another person can be a connection of the spirit, *wairua* and *mauri*. It may be this sensation which is referred to as the spiritual nature of dance.

## Religion and Dance

The feeling of expansiveness and oneness with others which occurs in dance may be why some dances are considered religious (Birringer, 1998), as this feeling is similarly attributed to a spiritual, and consequently religious, experience (Seybold and Hill, 2001). The term 'religious dance' has been used as an umbrella term to denote many dances which could be related to religion, and which deal with communication with 'higher beings' such as the ancestors, supernatural, god figures and spirits (Dunlop-MacTavish, 1997; Rouget, 1985). Also, in some religions, the use of dance is prominent in connecting with the religious figures. In Africa, 'Dance is undoubtedly a vital means of

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<sup>39</sup> The sense of belonging is imperative to holistic health, and will be explored in Chapter Four.

communicating with the sacred in African religious practices; it is an expressive form fully integrated within the worship system' (Ajayi, 1998:184). These 'religious' dances could include dances which are performed in a religious setting (e.g., a place of worship), cover religious themes or stories, are performed at religious events, or are a form of prayer or praise (Dunlop-MacTavish, 1997). As noted early on in this dissertation, spirituality is not necessarily based on religion or religious practices, although the practice of spirituality and religion may be similar. Within the notion of religious dance, other forms of dance which are similar to spiritually-informed dance may include trance, ritual movement, prayers, and the embodiment of messages to and from religious icons or idols (Nelson, 1996; Rouget, 1985). Spirituality and religion in dance may also refer to the practices surrounding the creation and performance of dance. Prayers, preparation ceremonies and rituals, and superstitious sayings and practices may all have a place in the activities around dance.

As observed by Rouget in *Music and Trance* (1985), much literature uses the terms 'religious dance' and 'ritual dance' interchangeably. As there are similarities and overlappings of form, style, setting, composition and performance in religious and ritual dance, these crossovers make it difficult to define and differentiate religious from ritual dance. The same can be said for trance dance, which I suggest may be broken into two broad categories which I will call<sup>40</sup> Shamanism and Possessional dances. The difficulty in accurately defining and categorizing the function and use of dance in trance ceremonies is mentioned in Rouget. For every example Rouget described that was labelled as trance, shamanistic or possessional dance, there was an almost identical example from another culture and author which described the dance as a different form (Rouget, 1985:3).

Although I distinguish between the different types of religious dance (in Appendix A), there is a very thin line where one 'type' of spiritual dance can be considered to be another. Nonetheless, these types of dance relate to the spiritual realm in their own ways, and occur across numerous cultures, religions, and religious practices (Fernandez, 1964; Dunlop-MacTavish, 1997; Rouget, 1985). Dance may not be the primary focus in each form; however, dance is a feature, with various motives and functions within each type (Rouget, 1985). Each may be a different and accepted way of connecting

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<sup>40</sup> For my understanding of religious, ritual, trance, shamanistic and possessional dance, please refer to Appendix A, attached.

to the 'spirits', to assist a group of people in the way of living everyday life. As Walder notes of the San Bushmen in Southern Africa:

There are no boundaries between the everyday and the spiritual... their spirits are involved in healing and rainmaking rituals, such as the trance dance. The Bushmen used dancing, singing and clapping to enter an altered state of consciousness, in which they received supernatural power through shamans, male and female, who used it to heal the sick through lay on hands, or making rain through the capture of an imaginary rain animal, such as the eland, or to enable the shaman's spirit to seek out and control game, or to locate friends and relatives to ensure their safety (2009:215).

Dance is a medium for connection to the spiritual realm to assist in everyday life. In some occurrences, the spirits 'take over' the dancer (or spirit medium), to guide instruction and give aid to the community (Nelson, 1996). This phenomenon has also been observed in *Māori* culture:

As established in the discussion on *tapu*<sup>41</sup>, *Māori* legends relate that knowledge and the arts have supernatural origins, which raises the status of the arts above that of prosaic activities and objects. At one time *Māori* artists were viewed as *tohunga*, or priestly experts, and the crafts themselves were often practiced in a trance-like or prayerful state.... It has been well documented that when young people grow up in a culture where the local arts are valued and encouraged, this creates a sense of unity within the community and gives them life-skills to navigate the many challenges facing them as they are reaching adulthood (Zaitz, 2009:203).

Similarly, within an Indigenous Australian practice, gods may 'enter' a person's body, controlling movement from which messages are transferred from the Dreaming<sup>42</sup> to the mortal realm (Nelson, 1996). This practice and acknowledgement of the spirits heightens the importance of the messages passed on through the dance, and often requires the preparation of the person to receive such spirits through prayers and incantations (Nelson, 1996). As mentioned earlier, through embodiment of another person's movements one can understand the other; so too can one understand the ancestors through performing their movements (Learning Media Ltd, 2003; Rowe, 2008).

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<sup>41</sup> In the most basic understanding, *tapu* means sacred (Mead, 2003).

<sup>42</sup> According to the Australian Government's website, 'The Dreaming for Australian Indigenous people (sometimes referred to as the Dreamtime or Dreamtimes) is when the Ancestral Beings moved across the land and created life and significant geographic features. The Dreaming, or 'Tjukurrpa', also means to 'see and understand the law' as it is translated from the Arrernte language (Frank Gillen with Baldwin Spencer, translating an Arrernte word *Altyerrengge*). Dreaming stories pass on important knowledge, cultural values and belief systems to later generations. Through song, dance, painting and storytelling which express the dreaming stories, Aborigines [sic] have maintained a link with the Dreaming from ancient times to today' (Australian Government, 2010).

Messages and information such as creational stories, esoteric knowledge, beliefs, values, and significant cultural practices can be learnt through participation in these types of dances, through the embodiment and lived experience of the ancestor's movements in one's own body (Gardiner, 2007; Rowe, 2008; Zaitz, 2009). As Merito comments:

I like portraying what our ancestors used to do, our *waiata-a-ringā*, action songs. It's also fun too, because at the same time we're learning, and that's the most important thing for us as *Māoris*, [sic] learning our culture, and learning the ways how our *Māori* ancestors used to fight and what they used to do (Learning Media Ltd, 2003).

As noted, knowledge of one's history and culture can occur through learning of the spiritual aspect of dance.

Dance can be used to venerate and celebrate the spiritual connection to the environment<sup>43</sup>. 'The African dance steps that the Stearn call "gliding, dragging or shuffling" relate to the union of man and the earth. The stamping of the ground with the feet is regarded as a sacred act celebrating this relationship' (Asante, 1998:205). This is further described by Moore and Yamamoto:

By imitating the movement of animals, trees, streams, clouds, etc., humans attempted to align themselves with the supernatural powers that they believed inhabited the natural world... Later, simple mimicry of the movements observed in nature developed into more elaborate rituals in which whole actions were imitated in rhythmic and stylized forms. By *doing* what is wanted to *be done*, the ancients believed they could practice sympathetic magic – influencing the gods and affecting the outcome of events (1996:161-2).

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<sup>43</sup> The word 'environment' here, refers to a number of concepts. Firstly, it represents the physical environment, such as the trees, plants, landscape, mountains, rivers, and the gods who created and protect those land-based constituents. Secondly it represents the ocean, and the plant and animal life within the water, and the gods who created and protect those water-based constituents. Elements, such as wind, rain, sunshine, fire, earthquakes, volcanoes, and the gods who created and protect those elemental constituents are also included. Thirdly, 'environment' refers to a physical place, and what happens in such place. As with the connection to others, due to such varied notions of environment, the connection with different aspects of the environment may require the execution of different types of dances.

These examples show the deep connection of movement to the spiritual realm, and how movement (and in particular dance) is a means of presenting and realising that connection. The connection of self to the environment is of such importance to *Māori* people, that their *reo*, language, is littered with words which relate to aspects of the environment and the person (Durie, 1994; Mead, 2003). Durie clarifies that:

Healthy thinking from a Maori perspective is integrative not analytical; explanations are sought from searching outwards rather than inwards; and poor health is typically regarded as a manifestation of a breakdown in harmony between the individual and the wider environment. There are several words and expressions which bind the individual to the outside world (1994:71).

With this manner of endowing the physical environment with personal characteristics, *Māori* people personify and emphasise their beliefs of the environment as a living entity who is an ancestor, god, and creator (Best, 1922a). By ascribing those characteristics and stories of creation, conflict, and relationships to the environment, *Māori* can draw on the environment as a source of strength, through a direct line of descent from the land (Sheppard, 2005). This encourages *Māori* to protect land resources, as harming the land signifies harming a person (Mead, 2003; Sheppard, 2005). Simultaneously, through reaching out to the environment and drawing strength from the ancestral stories, one may learn from the ancestors, and reinforce one's own identity and sense of belonging to the environment through performing and embodying the ancestors' movements.

### **Connection to Ancestors, the Supernatural, God Figures, and Spirits**

Reaching back to the ancestors through mimicry of their movements, a dancer and the audience can learn and understand from the ancestor, through embodying their knowledge (Rowe, 2008). Wetini Mitai-Ngatai explains this concept in regard to his choreography for the *Te Arawa kapa haka* (*Māori* performing arts) group:

The ancestors inspired me. It's just them and the awesome people that they were. I'm only trying to portray something of what they were in their time. They lived it, we're only re-enacting it. But, we re-enact it with such a passion, that we take people back to a time when you once saw this sort of thing really happening on the land. ... So we tried to make these things live again. And that's all it really is, telling a story, and being great story-tellers. So that has always been the main kaupapa – to connect with people, and also to try and retain much of the traditional essence within the performance as possible. For me to be able to bring these to life is a tribute to our ancestors (Learning Media Ltd, 2003).

Not only can the ancestors inspire movement and pass on knowledge through physical movement, but they can also assist a dancer in performing the movement. In my own experience<sup>44</sup> of the *haka*<sup>45</sup>, there is a sense of drawing upon the ancestors, spirits, and gods to assist the performance and intention of the *haka*. This presence may in part be because the actions for that *haka* have been passed down for a number of generations, and the actions have a history which is re-lived when they are performed again.

The presence of the ancestors enhances the rapport and attunement to the spiritual 'presence', due to a heightened consciousness of movements which have originated from the ancestors. By moving like the ancestors, one re-embodies the intention and feeling of the movement (Buckland, 2001; Rowe, 2008), enhancing the sense that actions such as the *pūkana* and *whētero* have originated directly from the ancestors. The *pūkana*, opening or protruding of the eyes, or *whētero*, protrusion of the tongue (Moorfield, 2010) may be said to be the ancestors or spirits coming through the performer, or the innermost expression of the *wairua* being released ([www.maori.org](http://www.maori.org)). Hence Rowe's comment of dancers and dance being 'moving archives' (2008:37) begins to make sense, as through embodying the movement, taking on the intention and feeling of the movement, and having a lived experience in a 'somatically felt body' (Blackman, 2008:30), one may feel connected to and have an embodied knowledge and understanding of one's ancestors (Buckland, 2001). Similarly, connection to ancestors could be a connection to another aspect of self: the ancestors can be evident in the self and be embodied and recognised by others.

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<sup>44</sup> Admittedly my experience of *kapa haka* and involvement in the Māori Performing and Creative Arts has influenced my decision in using both the *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model of health and Māori knowledge and *tikanga* (ways of knowing) within this dissertation. This involvement has influenced how I have come to view and understand dance as embodied knowledge which is considered by many as being as valid as other forms of knowledge. I have chosen not to emphasise *kapa haka* or Māori examples of dance within this dissertation, as I believe that this model can and does relate to all forms of dance.

<sup>45</sup> Many people have claimed that the word '*haka*' means dance (Best, 1924; Royal, 2004). However, the *haka* is not strictly a dance, but a challenge which is laid down to others (Mead, 2003). The traditional form of the *haka* is not performed to music, and an imperative part of the *haka* is the words which are chanted, with which specific actions are performed that reflect the words. The meaning is carried through both the words and the movements, to convey a total sense of unity in meaning and intention (Keesing, 1928). Traditionally, the *haka* was a war challenge that a group of people would perform before going into battle (Mead, 2003). It was performed to ready the warriors, to put fear into the other group in the hope that that group would leave without a fight; or as part of the challenge to visitors upon entry to the *marae* to make sure that the visitors' intentions are good, for example, that they would not steal from the *marae* (Mead, 2003).

Alongside the knowledge of the ancestors is the oral tradition of *Māori whakapapa*, which loosely means ancestry ([www.maori.org.nz](http://www.maori.org.nz)). Some *Māori* people can recite and make an ancestral claim to the first arrivals of *Māori* to *Aotearoa* New Zealand. Some can claim even further back to the gods who created and look after the land, oceans, animals, elements and other aspects of the environment. Some people can trace further back to *Papatūānuku* (mother earth) and *Ranginui* (father sky), and even to the beginning of Time (Best, 1924). Such an immediate (and often quoted) reference to a person's *whakapapa* or genealogy and heritage, and the understanding that a person is connected by blood to the gods and the environment, is a very real concept among *Māori*, which should be taken into consideration in almost all activities (Durie, 1994; Mead, 2003). Consequently, while dancing, some of the words which may be sung or chanted may refer to ancestors who assist in their performance, whether in the *haka* to provide strength and unity to the group and put fear into another group, or into assisting performers and viewers to acknowledge shared ancestry.

Like the *Māori* perception of being connected to the gods and ancestors through embodiment, other cultures or groups of people have aspects of spirituality in dance which assists in venerating, appeasing, consulting or revering the spiritual, 'other beings', supernatural, or 'higher beings' (as observed by Nelson, 1996; Primus, 1996; and Rouget, 1985). For example:

The African dancer remembers all others who danced the dance and why. The story behind the dance is not so important as who danced it, before whom was it danced, and is it now being danced well. Inasmuch as the experience sense is ancestral [sic] memory and involves ancestral [sic] connections, it is extremely significant because of its relatedness to spirituality, ethos, and empathy (Asante, 1998:213).

In this case it is not so much the embodiment of the ancestors which matters, but remembrance of the ancestors, because the performance matters. Mitai-Ngatai comments in regards to each *Māori* movement choreographed and performed:

Everything had a meaning. Everything had a tikanga behind it. And that's what I'm saying, when we go up onto performance, everything's got a tikanga, got a meaning behind why we're doing things. And it's history. It's passing over information to people that maybe they may not be aware of. They may even want to research some of those names and stories of those they are seeing up on stage (Learning Media Ltd, 2003).

This remembrance, story-telling, and research, instigated by movement, can be just as important as the performance of the dance. However, in some cases, the dance becomes the means of

remembering and passing on knowledge (Rowe, 2008). Shona Dunlop-MacTavish, who studied dance and religion in 'primitive' cultures throughout the world, found that:

Each tribe (of the Gaushan Ren) speaks a different dialect, and as they possess no written language, dance and song become the single means of preserving their history and passing it on to the next generation. For these Formosan aboriginals, like all tribal people I have since studied, dance is a form of spontaneous prayer. Whether their purpose is to cure sickness, or celebrate an important event – birth, death or marriage, or beg for a good harvest – they are courting the gods, seeking aid from placating, praising them. Life without the supernatural would be untenable, and the body is the sole offering (1997:144).

Dunlop-MacTavish raises a number of pertinent points. First, song and dance is a way for a group of people to preserve history (also in Buckland, 2006b; Rowe, 2008). The movement and singing reinforces concepts for that group, and provides a way of remembering, sharing, and embodying messages and concepts for each person (Rowe, 2008). Second, the dance may be a means of prayer. Moving and being moved, personifying and emoting feelings and thoughts of praise and connection to the gods, allows a person to offer a moving prayer of thankfulness, fear, celebration, and appeasement (McNeill, 1995). Third, dance may be a ritual in that certain movements may be performed to represent a particular god figure, or a set movement pattern may be used to appease or to signify glorification of one god figure (McNeill, 1995). Finally, the body may be a place for religion and spirituality to occur – within the body, as opposed to objects outside of the body. In such instances, spirituality in dance refers not only to the connection to spiritual beings (gods, ancestors, the supernatural), but also to oneself. Through connection to oneself, to one's *mauri*, one may have the ability to connect to ancestors, religious icons, belief systems, or gods, for myriad reasons.

## Conclusion

Spirituality in dance is a wide-ranging subject, which covers more than just the religious aspect of dance. Spirituality, in its most basic form, is the deep, conscious connection to the self through awareness and focus on the breath and the lived experience of movement. From this starting point, all the other connections to other people, the supernatural and the environment stems. Dance is a way to attune to, focus on, and experience this connection.

Spirituality can be experienced through the medium of dance. Dance can increase and promote the spiritual aspect of health, making participants in dance more holistically healthy. As Wallace noted, 'By not allowing people to practice spirituality, you are reducing their health, which then resonates out to community health' (2009:129). In effect, by not allowing people to dance, the feeling of expansiveness and connectedness to others and the environment is reduced, constraining a person's opportunity to be spiritually healthy. The practice of dance gives the opportunity to experience the sensation of being connected to others and increases the connection to the self, increasing *taha wairua*, spiritual health, and making for a more holistically healthy individual.

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## Chapter Four: *Taha Whanau*, The Social Aspect of Health and Dance

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Dance has a significant place in social and cultural life. It has the power to bring people together, enhance the connection between people, and provide a support structure for people in need of guidance. Dance teaches the importance of working together in a group, and how to rely on and assist others. By moving and breathing in synchrony with others, one connects to, and can improve the feeling of wellness in others, sharing emotions informed by movement. In this way, social health is improved, making a person feel better, with stronger social bonds and positive relationships. Dance allows a non-verbal way for people to connect to and support each other, adding to the feeling of belonging and being cared for.

At first glance, social health implies the collective health of a society based on individualistic indicators of health expanded to reflect the overall health status of the community (Wiseman and Brasher, 2008). These indicators includes statistics on the ratio of sick to healthy people, how many people are in hospital, are homeless or suffer from starvation and poverty, are chronically ill and ill-cared for, how the elderly are looked after (whether they are thrown into a rest-home or cared for by family members), and maternal health during an infants early years (Hall, 1992). This perception of community health is individualistic, as a person's health is that person's own responsibility; however, collectively the ratio of 'healthy' to 'unhealthy' provides descriptions on the 'health' of the community, labelling the community on different degrees of being 'healthy' (Hall, 1992). This view is based on the *taha tinana*, physical aspect of health, as the physical health of each person determines how 'healthy' a community is. These indicators of social health are not the ones which will be examined in this chapter; it is the relationships between people and how people support and care for others that will be discussed. The underlying observation in this chapter is that a group of dancers can be, and act as, a surrogate family for people who do not feel close to their own biological families. In this regard, the members of such a group seem like family members who guide, support and care more than biological families.

### ***Taha whānau*, The Social Aspect of Health**

In Chapter Two, *taha whānau* was described and based on a broad concept of family and its structure. This expanded to include: different relationships within the family structure; societal structures based on the family; links between family, ancestors, and identity; concepts of belonging; and how individuals impact on society, and society on the individual. In addition, Morice states that

Durie has proposed five positive capacities inherent within the whanau structure: Manaakitia, the capacity to care for whanau members, particularly children, the elderly and the less able; tohatohatia, the capacity to share, to provide a safety net by distributing money and goods to those in need; pupuri taonga, the capacity to provide guardianship, to act as trustees and manage resources; whakamana, the capacity to empower, develop human capital and engage in advocacy; and whakatakoto tikanga, the capacity to plan ahead and provide for the future. Whanaungatanga refers both to the overall sense of family cohesion and to the specific processes by which whanau ties are strengthened. In a practical sense, responsibility to relatives might be enacted in many ways and the rewards are significant – access to a shared pool of resources, guidance and emotional support, practical assistance in times of need, and a sense of identity that comes from a life lived in close cooperation with an extended group of significant others. From a Maori perspective, it is not principally our mental activity that connects us to each other and to the world we share in common, but rather the interpenetration of lives lived together in a particular place and time (Morice, 2006:20).

This quote highlights the depth and complexity of social health and wellbeing from a *Māori* perspective, and how social health is synonymous with the relationships people build and maintain, with thinking and planning for future generations, working with and for others, and the development of self in relationships. It also implies that social health is a two-way transaction, comprised of the group's support for the individual, and the individual's contribution to the group (Mead, 2003; Fraser, 2004). Without this basis of giving and accepting nurturance from *whānau*, the person's sense of identity, belonging, and self suffers (Durie, 1994). This concept of strong nurturing for family members through the development and maintenance of close *whānau* kinship ties because of *tikanga Māori*, way of being, flows through to the provision of support being expected to be given and received, and not to do so is seen as weakness (Mead, 2003).

One component of the values associated with tikanga is whanaungatanga. Whanaungatanga embraces whakapapa and focuses upon relationships. Individuals expect to be supported by their relatives near and distant, but the collective group also expects the support and help of its individuals. This is a fundamental principle (Mead, 2003:28).

In this model, looking after others is the same as looking after oneself, due to the impact of others on the construction of self/identity. As dancer and philosopher Maxine Sheets-Johnstone notes, a somatically felt body is not bounded by the skin, as the skin is a permeable structure (1992). This concept (mentioned in Chapter Three), was described as two people while dancing together becoming like extensions of each other, intensifying their connection and knowledge of each other; the limits of the body are extended to include the other's body (Manning, 2007). In this context, the strong sense of *whānau* connection promoting looking after others, and others being tied to the construction and embodiment of the self, suggests that in looking after others, one is looking after part of one's self which is embedded in others.

Additionally, it is the *quality*, not quantity, of the relationships which matter and impact on social health (Goleman, 2006). Having a larger *whānau*, to draw assistance from does not necessarily mean one is healthier, as the assistance and support may be less than that coming from a small, close-knit *whānau* (Goleman, 2006). Knowledge of others, social interactions, how social relationships 'work', how to build relationships, the different roles people play in society, and how to successfully interact with others, are all important skills to learn; they increase *hauora*, total health and wellbeing (Durie, 1994; Goleman, 2006). The ability to act 'successfully', means acting in a way conducive to positive interactions and enhancing positive feelings within others, which makes one more desirable to be around and befriend (Goleman, 2006). One's awareness of interactions and relationships helps one to navigate complex human relationships throughout one's life (Goleman, 2006).

*Taha whānau* encompasses aspects of *taha wairua*, the spiritual connection of the *mauri* to others (as noted in Chapter Three). *Taha whānau* also relates to *taha hinengaro*, mental and emotional aspect of health, as the emotional wellbeing of others is recognised through the caring of others, shown by the sharing of belongings, money, goods, and even the home, and encouraging another person to feel a sense of belonging (Goleman, 2006; Morice, 2006).

From research<sup>46</sup> based on the forming and maintenance of relationships, I believe that *taha whānau* is comprised of four components. First, it is the ability to interact meaningfully with others, and form positive relationships (Goleman, 2006). Second, it is the capacity to care, share and belong to a group of people (Durie, 1994). Third, *taha whānau* is the connection to the immediate and extended family, and the larger community. Finally, *taha whānau* also is the use of a safe base for social interaction (Durie, 1994). Each of these components is based on the ability to communicate effectively with others, and each begins with the family and connections built and maintained within the family (Durie, 1994; Mead, 2003). This relies on presence – on seeing and being seen; having a place within family and community; not being shunned or ignored; knowing and being known; and, possibly most important, being valued (Goleman, 2006; Senge, Sharmer, Jaworski, and Flowers, 2004). These concepts of health form the basis of this chapter.

## The Whānau

Definitions of ‘family’ vary. For some, the parents and siblings are family; for others, aunties, uncles, and other blood-relatives are family; for others still, close friends, or people who help them during hard times are family. Goleman states, ‘If an anxious child can find a secure “surrogate parent” – an older sibling, a teacher, or another relative who does much of the caregiving – her emotional pattern can shift toward the secure’ (2006:165). The surrogate parent provides the support, care, and sense of belonging which fosters the growth of positive relationships (Goleman, 2006).

The importance of *whānau* and the role they have in raising a child cannot be undervalued in *Māori tikanga* (Mead, 2003). As Durie explains, *whānau* have the capacity to empower individuals and smooth their ways or provide gateways into society, such in as sport, school, work, or the *marae* (2001; Morice, 2006). As Durie shows, the family and larger tribal/community group has a vastly important and influential role in the development of a person, which radiates out into other spheres (such as spirituality and physical aspects) of health. Durie (2001) signifies how involvement in the arts and performing arts in particular may be supported, encouraged, and used as a mechanism for

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<sup>46</sup> This research includes: Durie (1994). *Whaiora: Maori health development*. Auckland: Oxford University Press; Goleman (2006). *Social intelligence: the new science of human relationships*. London: Arrow Books; Gardner (1983). *Frames of mind*; Mead (2003). *Tikanga Maori: living by Maori values*. Wellington: Huia; and Barlow (2009). *Tikanga whakaaro: key concepts in maori culture*. Auckland: Oxford University Press.

social acceptance through *whānau* involvement. As noted earlier, *Māori* pride themselves on their ability to turn to and support family members (Mead, 2003). To turn away from family, and be 'independent', is seen as a deficit, not a strength (Durie, 1994; Mead, 2003). Durie describes the importance of extended family and social relationships to health:

*Taha whānau* acknowledges the relevance of the extended family to health... The much-lauded state of self-sufficiency or self-realization does not convey a sense of health to *Māori*... Even in modern times a sense of personal identity derives as much if not more from family characteristics than from occupation or place of residence... Underlying the *whare tapa whā* model is the consistent theme of integration. Individual health is build into a wider system, the boundary between personal and family identity being frequently blurred.' (1994:72-3).

Hence, one's health is a reflection of the values, policies, and nurturing which occurs within the community – the health of the group is as much a comment on the whole of society as of individuals therein. 'That does not remove individual responsibility for health, but it does balance it with collective accountability' (Durie, 1994:217). In the above quote, Durie raises the issues most important for *Māori*; how a person may be defined, identified by, or construct identity from family and the connection to family. Arguably, the same concept could be applied to every person, not just people from *Māori* culture or upbringing. As described by Fraser, one's identity and connection to family, *hapū* and *iwi* goes beyond the living, to include the ancestors.

The ability to recite one's *whakapapa* (genealogy) is valued as it honours one's *tupuna* (ancestors), stresses one's connection to others and clarifies one's identity. Identity itself is not just a personal or social construct—it is a historical, cultural and genetic one that traces one's emergence from others, and as a corollary, one's responsibility to others. In some respects, there is no-oneness<sup>47</sup>, as for Maori this spiritual link to *whanau*, *hapu* and *iwi*, both living and dead, means that a person is never truly alone. (Fraser, 2004:91).

The ancestors are an important part of *whānau*, so the connection to and guidance from ancestors is valued, recognised, and acknowledged in *tikanga Māori*.

In *Māori* society, the degrees of closeness are represented in *iwi*, tribal, structure. The immediate family is always part of the *whānau*. Because of this, *whānau* has been likened to the western structure of the 'nuclear family' of two parents and a child (Mead, 2003). However, due to the

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<sup>47</sup> Grant, 2002 (Fraser's footnote).

importance of family in *Māori* society, the notion of *whānau* encompasses more than just parents and child. Any adult can be a parental figure to, and have responsibility for raising the child (Durie, 2001). Within the *whānau*, *tuakana-teina* relationships are observed, where *tuakana*, an older sibling, cares for *teina*, a younger sibling. This mentorship-like relationship occurs in other spheres outside of the immediate family. For example it has been used in building peer-support networks in secondary schools, assisting new students' transition into secondary education, and building leadership skills in older students. These structures can also be found in a dance class, where the teacher can be viewed as a parental figure, guiding and giving support and advice to students through correction of technique, performance ability, and partnering skills in dance exercises. In some circumstances, students may be divided into groups to assist each other, as in a *tuakana-teina* relationship. This support network can be extended outside dance class, where students remain in contact, and provide support and friendship in other social spheres (Buckroyd, 2000).

The next level of closeness is the *hapū*, or extended family (Durie, 2001; Mead, 2003). The extended family includes aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, grandparents, and grandchildren, in traditional *Māori* society all living in close vicinity to each other (Barlow, 2009). Within one *hapū*, there may be many *whānau* groups (Barlow, 2009; Mead, 2003). A *hapū* is not just a family group which lives together; it is a viable working community group based on family and, like a community, there are different jobs or occupations which one may fill (Mead, 2003). For example, a person more proficient at hunting or agriculture may take on more of that role than a person more skilled in carving or construction of buildings (Mead, 2003). Each job or occupation is valued, with all members of the community contributing where needed (Mead, 2003); each person in the *hapū* has particular responsibilities and rights, depending on the role and place within the *hapū* (Durie, 2001; Mead, 2003). The same may be said for the surrounding people and structures in dance; staged performances often rely on lighting and sound technicians, ushers, costumiers, and backstage crew (to name a few), who all have important but different roles and responsibilities in the successful running of a show.

To many *Māori*, *taha whānau* is as important as the dance itself: dance can be a glue which maintains social cohesion, enhancing the sense of community for participants and audience members (Duranti, 1992; Kaepler, 1970; Kaepler, 2000). In dance, participation allows access into the group. When dance provides the reason for the community, a worldview is encouraged that

promotes its status and endorses participation in dance; this boosts self-esteem and self-worth, and enhances the sense of self due to participation in a valued social activity (Buckland, 2006b; Duranti, 1992; Rowe, 2008). Hence dance can affirm identity, bring people together, and teach people to interact in a constructive manner, and be a place to connect with other people, places, ancestors and cultural activities (Buckland, 2001; Kaepler, 1970; Rowe, 2008). As Nicholls notes about Africa:

[M]usical values and social values are interconnected, and in a sense, music and dance provide a microcosm of the world view. As a consequence, full participation in a dance performance requires initiation into cultural conventions beyond the mere translation of drum texts or interpretation of dance gestures. Working knowledge of the cultural calendar, social structure, esoteric lore, and socialization processes may also be the extent of an individual's enculturation (Nicholls, 1998:54).

Dance is not an isolated activity (Sasitharan, 2009). Music, movement, dancers and sometimes audience members are involved. The stories told in performance, and the passing on of knowledge and movements in learning the dance, adds to the social aspect of health through communication and a shared sense of purpose (Rowe, 2008). Similarly, connection to *whakapapa*, ancestors, and their stories occurs not only by telling the story but also by embodying the movements and feelings of the ancestors, enhancing knowledge from that ancestor (Learning Media Ltd, 2003; Rowe, 2008). This empowers an individual spiritually and socially, and strengthens sense of self through knowledge of one's history, identity, and sense of belonging to the group, or 'through understanding the roots of their heritage' (Barlow, 2009:174).

### **The Brain and Building Relationships**

As the brain is 'socially wired' (Goleman, 2006), the ability to establish and maintain relationships assists in establishing social health; the more socially proficient a person is, the better they are at understanding social situations and acting and reacting in socially acceptable ways (Goleman, 2006). The ability to care, share and belong is based on the ability to establish and maintain rapport and build positive relationships. The more secure support networks a person creates the healthier they become (Bowlby, 2005; Goleman, 2006).

How this connection to others develops is based on non-verbal messages, signals, and actions which are sent and received (Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal, 1990). Goleman describes the frequency and potency of these non-verbal messages:

Even though we can stop talking, we cannot stop sending signals (our tone of voice, our fleeting expressions) about what we feel. Even when people try to suppress all signs of their emotions, feelings have a way of leaking anyway. In this sense, when it comes to emotions, we cannot *not* communicate (2006:85).

By acting and reacting immediately, spontaneously, and sympathetically in a way which mimics and supplements the signals received, rapport is established, enhancing feelings of mutual friendliness and caring (Goleman, 2006; Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal, 1990). Learning how to attune to these messages, and how to act and react in a manner which facilitates positive feelings towards each other, does not just happen during childhood; it can happen at any age as long as the person is willing to learn (Goleman, 2006). Dance is a vehicle to learn how these messages are sent, through the study of actions and movements, what they mean, and how they can be interpreted (Hagendoorn, 2005; Hanna, 2008).

Goleman shows that 'neuroscience has discovered that our brain's very design makes it *sociable*, inexorably drawn into an intimate brain-to-brain linkup whenever we engage with another person' (Goleman, 2006:4). So, a person can be highly influenced by the emotions of others, an effect called 'emotional contagion': 'When we attune ourselves to someone, we can't help but feel along with them, if only subtly. We resonate so similarly that their emotions enter us – even when we don't want them to' (Goleman, 2006:26). Being around others who makes one feel good, has a positive impact on one's health, affecting self perception, confidence, self-esteem, and physical health (such as lowering blood pressure or decreasing the ability to catch cold) (Cohen, 1996; Cohen, Doyle, Turner, Alper and Skoner, 2003; Goleman, 2006).

These new discoveries reveal that our relationships have subtle, yet powerful, lifelong impacts on us. That news may be unwelcome for someone whose relationships tend toward the negative. But the same finding also points to reparative possibilities from our personal connections at any point in life. Thus how we connect with others has unimagined significance (Goleman, 2006:11).

These physical health benefits occur as a consequence of the ability to establish rapport. As Goleman observes,

Rapport exists only between people; we recognize it whenever a connection feels pleasant, engaged, and smooth. But rapport matters far beyond those fleeting pleasant moments. When people are in rapport, they can be more creative together and more efficient in making decisions... Rapport feels good, generating the harmonious glow of being *simpatico*, a sense of friendliness where each person feels the other's warmth, understanding, and genuineness. These mutual feelings of liking strengthen the bonds between them, no matter how temporary (2006:29).

In Chapter Three, it was established that rapport occurs through breathing and moving in harmony, as a result of shared attention and interest in what another says and does, shared feelings, and mutual empathy (the experience of being experienced) (Goleman, 2006). Non-verbal coordination helps the conversation to flow in a way where both people are heard and have an opportunity to be heard (Goleman, 2006). Such concepts and abilities rely on the use and understanding of non-verbal messages and emotional communication.

How does dance accomplish this? Part of studying dance is based on perceiving how the body moves, focusing on proprioception as well as expressing through action different qualities of movement to portray meaning and emotion (Stevens, 2005). Perceiving non-verbal messages and emotion in movement occurs in neural pathways and connections in the brain that go beyond the purely visual pathway from the eyes to the visual cortex (Goleman, 2006). This allows connection to other parts of the brain to inform what one sees, providing the emotional element and context to the image (Goleman, 2006). This intensifies the connection to the 'emotional brain', rather than the 'thinking brain', through using and consequently strengthening the neural pathways that connect to the areas of the brain which provide information on the emotional element (Goleman, 2006). Unfortunately, both pathways can interfere with each other (Goleman, 2006). For example, while in performance, by thinking about what one is doing, the rational, thinking brain overrides the emotional connection to the music and the breath, inhibiting performance and reducing the ability to be in a state of flow<sup>48</sup> (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Sutton, 2005).

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<sup>48</sup> Flow occurs in the performance of motor skills, and is influenced by the balance between one's perceived skill and the challenge of the movement tasks (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Weinberg and Gould, 1999). Being in a state of flow and the effect that it has on performance will be discussed in Chapter Six.

This notion of the 'emotional brain' and the 'thinking brain' is similar to Goleman's discussion of the 'low road' and 'high road' pathways in the brain, two different but interacting pathways that (mainly) visual information takes through the brain (Goleman, 2006). The 'high road' takes the path from the eyes, via the thalamus (where all senses first enter the brain) to the visual cortex and neo-cortex. The 'low road' also starts from the eyes, and travels via the thalamus to the amygdala. The amygdala signifies the main difference between the two pathways, and is used to withdraw other information from what is seen, beyond a simple perception of the image (Goleman, 2006).

The amygdala then extracts emotional meaning from the nonverbal message, whether it be a scowl, a sudden change of posture, or a shift in tone of voice – even microseconds before we yet know what we are looking at. Though the amygdala has an exquisite sensitivity for such messages, its wiring provides no direct access to the centers for speech; in this sense the amygdala is, literally, speechless. When we register a feeling, signals from our brain circuits, instead of alerting the verbal areas, where words can express what we know, mimic that emotion in our bodies (Goleman, 2006:15).

In other words, the eyes can take in subtle, yet poignant emotional messages before the verbal and visual sections of the brain register what has been seen and heard (Goleman, 2006; Morris, DeGelder, Weiskrantz and Dolan, 2001). The emotional content of what is observed is received first, and analysed by the high road, the 'rational brain' (Goleman, 2006; Morris, et. al, 2001; Williams, et.al, 2004). The high road is the 'thinking brain', which ponders what to say, how to respond, and what to do next; it is the head, while the low road is the heart (Goleman, 2006). This is due to the difference in speed at which each road works: 'The low road is faster than it is accurate; the high road, while slower, can help us arrive at a more accurate view of what's going on' (Goleman, 2006:17). In other words, one can register the emotion of fear in a person's face and bodily stance before recognising what that person is fearful about (Morris, et.al, 2001; Williams, et.al, 2004).

When interacting with others, both pathways work together to supply the brain with as much information as possible, to inform what the other is feeling, and to then act, speak and even breathe in a way which amplifies the interaction and sense of being at one with the other (Goleman, 2006:29; Lande, 2007; McNeill, 1995). Such information-gathering, and attuning to the other person through mimicking actions, gestures, breathing patterns and speech patterns, is known as 'looping'.

Looping occurs when two minds are working similarly, and the same parts of the brain are firing together, which implies that two people think and feel the same way (Goleman, 2006).

As people loop together, their brains send and receive an ongoing stream of signals that allow them to create a tacit harmony – and, if the flow goes the right way, amplify their resonance. Looping lets feelings, thoughts and actions synchronize. We send and receive internal states for better or for worse – whether laughter and tenderness, or tension and rancor (Goleman, 2006:40).

Being so attuned to another person in this manner, enhances communication and builds feelings of rapport and trust (Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal, 1990), which leads to greater feelings of self-worth (Goleman, 2006). Such moments of looping through non-verbal communication with another person are found in dance, as described in Chapter Three in the synchronous use of breath and movement, and will be further examined here (Blom and Chaplin, 1989; Lande, 2007; McNeill, 1995).

### **Synchrony and Positive Relationship Building in Dance**

Synchrony in dance is caused by being attuned emotionally and mentally to another's actions, and (as minds work along similar thought patterns), anticipating and predicting the others' movement, providing the viewer with a sense of multiple dancers being and moving as one (Manning, 2007). This sense of moving as one is learned and encouraged through practice when partners rehearse movements with each other. Consequently, the dancers bodies change and transform, as the dancers learn each others' movement patterns and ways of moving, and attune to each other (Manning, 2007).

Moments of flow also occur in groups, where all members of the group, performing the same movements at the same time, derive a feeling of closeness and cohesiveness with the other members (Lande, 2007; McNeill, 1995). Moments of flow between two or more people, can be sought after, and memorable for dancers and the audience (Blom and Chaplin, 1989).

One of the finest pleasures in life is dancing with others – with one special person or as part of a group. Dancing together has all the satisfactions of dancing alone, plus the excitement, involvement, complexity, and contagious enthusiasm of moving with others. In it, one gives up some part of one's individual initiative in order to submerge, merge, become part of the group (1989:176).

What Blom and Chaplin describe is use of the low road to connect with others, and how feeling with and through other people is a primeval, intuitive, and highly satisfying experience. Goleman notes:

Getting in sync can be a visceral pleasure, and the larger the group, the better. The aesthetic expression of group sync can be seen in the universal enjoyment of dancing or moving together to a beat. The same delight in mass synchronisation propels arms that swing as one in a “wave” sweeping through a stadium (2006:32).

In other words, the more people the more amplified the feeling of synchrony, which increases group bonding (Goleman, 2006; Newhall, 2002). Dancing and moving in-sync with someone, allows the brain to work in conjunction with another, which leads to feelings of closeness and connection (Goleman, 2006; Malloch, 2005; Manning, 2007). Hence, dance helps one feel secure to build, maintain, and explore relationships.

Part of the enjoyment of moving with someone stems from the ability of the brain to cause one’s body and face to mimic the bodily and facial movements of another person, through ‘mirror neurons’ (Bavelas, et.al, 1986; Siegel, 1999). Mirror neurons do what their name suggests: they cause a person to mirror the facial and bodily expressions shown by another person (Dale, Hyatt and Hollerman, 2007; Goleman, 2006).

Mirror neurons make emotions contagious, letting the feelings we witness flow through us, helping us get in synch and follow what’s going on. We “feel” the other in the broadest sense of the word: sensing their sentiments, their movements, their sensations, their emotions as they act inside us (Goleman, 2006:42).

When one sees fear in another’s face, one also mimics the expression of fear, and so feels fear; the transmission of emotion occurs through activation of the muscles caused by mirror neurons (Bavelas, et.al, 1986; Gump and Kulik, 1997). By imitating and taking on the expressions of another person, one can come to feel and express what the other person is feeling (Gump and Kulik, 1997).

As described by Edgar Allen Poe:

When I wish to find out how wise, or how stupid, or how good, or how wicked is any one, or what are his thoughts at the moment, I fashion the expression of my face, as accurately as possible, in accordance with the expression of his, and then

wait to see what thoughts or sentiments arise in my mind or heart, as if to match or correspond with the expression (Poe, 2009:170).

Mirror neurons are not just activated in the movement centres of the brain, but are also activated in the emotional, visual, and aural areas, producing and enhancing the same effects (Blakemore and Frith, 2004; Hagendoorn, 2010). This process builds and supports connections between people (which, although more a feature of *taha whānau*, starts with the knowledge of oneself and one's emotions evident in *taha hinengaro*, mental and emotional health). This ability of the brain explains why visualising movement allows the brain to practice movement without producing movement: 'seeing' it in the mind allows a person to draw on and activate mirror neurons, in effect, practicing and perfecting movement without actually performing it (Lewis, 1990). Hence visualisation and mental imagery of how a movement should look can be instrumental to the practice and performance of movement-based activities such as sport and dance, and heighten the mind's ability to focus, analyse and interpret movement all mental processes of *taha hinengaro* (Lewis, 1990). To visualise a dance the way it is supposed to be performed, a dancer focuses on how the movements look and feel (especially during peak performance). Through mirror neurons, the neural pathways practice and strengthen the desired movements, creating stronger neural pathways for the actual performance (Baars and Gage, 2010). Once the dancer 'stops thinking' and lets the body take over the movement (in effect, reducing neural noise and interference to the 'correct' neural pathways), the performance becomes better as pathways that have been practiced are activated.

This function of one's mirror neurons leads to the experience of being in-sync with another, and share an experience; which allows the capacity to feel as the other person feels, and consequently to empathise with that person (Goleman, 2006). Paying attention to the details of human movement, expression, and relationships, and portraying and experimenting with that knowledge in dance, leads to a greater understanding of people, their histories, and how to interact thoughtfully and appropriately in social situations (Grau, 1992; Lavanga, 2006; Rowe, 2008). Through noticing and being aware of the other persons' tone of voice, use of gestures, breathing patterns, and mimicking their movements, develops rapport, and assists in creating long-lasting, meaningful relationships (Goleman, 2006). Building relationships makes one feel connected to family, friends, workplace, and society (Goleman, 2006). All this aids one's sense of belonging, and in turn, boosts self-confidence,

self-esteem, and feelings of self-worth (Goleman, 2006), which can make dance a place in which to feel safe.

### **Dance as a Safe Place**

Finding a place to experiment with making relationships supplements learning opportunities for maintaining and building positive relationships. Such a 'safe' place or environment feels secure, where one can make mistakes without ridicule, and test different ways of connecting with others (Bowlby, 2005). This 'place' is not necessarily a physical environment, but may be a person or group of people around whom one feels comfortable and who become a secure base to return to when feeling insecure or sad (Bowlby, 2005). At birth and in the infant years, this 'place' is usually the parent(s), however as a child grows, this person can be another significant adult in the child's life (Bowlby, 2005).

Having a safe place allows relaxation, and implies no or little stress (Goleman, 2006). Dance is an activity where relaxation can be induced, and stress can be relieved (Bostick, 1997; Buckroyd, 2000; Ward, 2008b). Physical activity releases endorphins, pleasure-inducing and stress-releasing hormones which foster good feelings (Buckroyd, 2000). The ability of dance to relieve stress depends on the feeling of security in the dance space to explore and show relationships (Levy, 1988)<sup>49</sup>. Being in a safe place allows people to explore social dynamics and aspects of relationships which may be threatening (Levy, 1988). For example, when the use of touch and proximal closeness is threatening, due to prior experience, through dance this can be explored, discussed, and tested in a variety of ways. Dance provides a 'way in' to approach issues, to explore or overcome fears (Levy, 1988).

However, not only physical stress is relieved in a dance class, but emotional stress is also combated (Buckroyd, 2000; Ward, 2008b). Emotional stress can be dissolved by using dance to re-live moments where or when one has felt helpless and stressed. '[D]ance has an enormous amount to offer. It can enable the young person to find a positive means of expressing feelings that have not been identified in words, but yet are desperate for expression' (Buckroyd, 2000:31). This occurs through

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<sup>49</sup> Levy is not speaking about dance in a traditional sense of technique training, but uses creative dance as a form of therapy.

're-creation', meaning the moment is re-enacted in the dance medium, after discussions have occurred regarding the choreography and emotional intent in the movement, to either make it less stressful for the individual or to explore different outcomes (Buckroyd, 2000; Stein, 2001). A person may feel less stressed given an opportunity to react to a situation where there may have previously been no space to react (Levy, 1988; Stein, 2001). The chance to be heard, both verbally and non-verbally, allows one to feel valued and validated, which leads to relaxation and less stress (Goleman, 2006; Stein, 2001).

The functional outcomes of dance improve physical, emotional, and psychological well-being, as well as provide opportunities to experience new interaction patterns that influence the ability to cooperate with others on a daily basis and within a larger community (Ward, 2008b:35).

Providing a safe space encourages positive relationship development, due to the security and sense of belonging one feels in that space (Bowlby, 2005). As a dance class can be seen as a surrogate *whānau*, family, the class can become that safe space where one feels secure to develop and explore relationships. Eisner considers art as a means to access and learn about empathy (Eisner, 2005b). 'Empathy requires the ability to imaginatively project; art is a mean for cultivating such ability' (Eisner, 2005b:62). He also notes that:

For young children the taking of new roles through imagination is an important source of learning. It allows them to practice in the context of play what they cannot actually do in the 'real world'. It affords them opportunities to empathetically participate in the life of another (Eisner, 2005b:62).

## **Taha Whānau and Identity**

Who you are and where you come from can be explored in dance, as dance gives an opportunity to express and explore non-verbal or unseen qualities which link people together (Buckland, 2006b; Primus, 1998; Rowe, 2008). Having a group to belong to and feel secure in makes one feel that one can identify with others and draw a sense of identity from and with the group (Durie, 2001; Mead, 2003). 'The body is always relationally connected, it never just *is*' (Blackman, 2008:125).

Dance is a vital part of the socio-cultural life. The value of developing studies in this area is in order to understand its origins and relate it to the beliefs, social structures, and life of its people. The knowledge of an ethnic movement vocabulary is more meaningful and further enhanced when accompanied by knowledge of the purposes, occasions, conditions and the socio-cultural contexts in which it occurs. This form of art can be looked at as a symbol of human

behaviour and as a part of a social process which reflects and also influences the behaviour (Mariani, 1998:82).

The above quote draws attention to how an embodied knowledge of rituals and practices within a community and culture adds to the knowledge of that community and culture (Buckland, 2006b; Mariani, 1998; Rowe, 2008). Dance strengthens the sense of cultural identity through the practicing or embodiment of cultural knowledge, philosophy, and memory (Buckland, 2006b; Primus, 1996; Rowe, 2008). Due to the significant role that dance has in the creation and maintenance of identity, through construction of self, and interactions with others, Zaitz observes that:

[T]he importance of the arts to a community's well being cannot be overstated. The arts have traditionally been a vehicle to create a sense of identity and disseminate history within a particular culture and to help young people build self-esteem and develop co-operation and team building skills (2009:6).

Through viewing and participating in performances which show different aspects of society, one comes to appreciate and comprehend more about people, culture and society (Grau, 1992; Rowe, 2008). Seeing one's own beliefs, ideas, ideals, customs, and traditions on stage can be a source of pride, appreciation, and foster respect for one's upbringing, and the accomplishments of members within one's society (including those of ancestors or mythical beings) (Buckland, 2006b; Dunphy, 1996; Grau, 1992). In doing the movements of the ancestors, one relates to and embodies those aspects in oneself, enhancing the sense of belonging to the group and acknowledging self-identification within a group (Rowe, 2008).

Through dance, knowledge is transmitted in the actions performed and embedded in the body (Rowe, 2008); participation in the performing arts strengthens cultural knowledge (Buckland, 2006a; Desmond, 1993-4; Rowe, 2008). Using cultural dance as one example, Zaitz outlines the importance for *Māori* in continuing to use the arts as cultural heritage, and also a way to connect with the past and reaffirm the future through knowledge and understanding of one's culture (2009):

Maori haka are [sic] an important vehicle for the dissemination of Maori culture. They function as a social adhesive, bonding Maori through shared experiences of learning, practicing, and performing haka together. They take place at important social functions and serve to reinforce emotional bonds through kinaesthetic experience. They are created then learned by a group who agree that they have value and should be preserved (2009:37).

She goes on to say that '[l]earning these traditional stories through song and dance ensures that they will be remembered and gives the gift of a strong foundation in their cultural heritage to the upcoming generations of Maori' (Zaitz, 2009:107). This shared history and knowledge cultivates the sense of belonging, and further informs the sense of shared identity from the group and culture, because of the knowledge established through movement (Dunphy, 1996).

Dance can confirm social status and identity within a community (Kaepler, 1996; Snipe, 1998). Certain dances performed for a specific group assist in maintaining independence and identity, as well as status and rank within community and nation (Dunphy, 1996; Kaepler, 1970). This occurs not only immediately but potentially many years after a loss in social standing (Kaepler, 1996; Nicholls, 1998). An example comes from the Tu'i Tonga family in one of the Pacific Islands.

The Tu'i Tonga line lost power, but retained its high status, as the *me'etu'upaki* has been preserved and is still performed to demonstrate the high rank and traditional prestige of this line. As the poetry and movements were not completely understood, they were simply memorised and passed on, and new compositions were not relevant – which, as we will see is characteristic of ritual. The dance has remained essentially the same for more than three hundred years (Kaepler, 1996:16).

The meaning, identity, and people involved in performing and preserving this dance, as well as the individuals for whom this dance is performed essentially has not changed, although the context has due to changing social conditions from colonisation of the Pacific Islands in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century (Kaepler, 1996).

### ***Taha Whānau and the Arts***

Through the exploration of expressive movement relevant to the surroundings, one can come to a greater understanding of why certain practices evolved and the functions they once performed (Grau, 1992; Kaepllar, 1996; Williams, 2004). Art, particularly portraits or scenes of people, has power to move and connect with people (Ekman, 1992; Goleman, 2006; Kohler, Turner, Stolar, Bilker, Brensinger, Gur and Gur, 2004). Dance can have the same effect due to the presence of the body in live performance enhancing emotional connections to the images performed (Glass, 2005; Lewis, 1990).

At the Fourth World Summit on Arts and Culture, held in Johannesburg, South Africa in September 2009, T Sasitharan in his panel discussion on imagining tradition, claimed:

Nothing can live and grow in isolation; life is possible only because of the connections we make, and are willing to make as human beings; to each other, to things and to life itself. Art is possible because, ideologically, we believe in the connectedness, or at the very least in the connectivity, of all ideas, of all things, and of all beings through the human imagination (2009:5).

His words echo a holistic notion of health and emphasise the importance of the connections made between people. He further expands such ideals into the realm of art and artistic practices which reflect one's surroundings, and the connection to elements within the environment. This view was supported by filmmaker and arts activist Sanjoy Roy at the same conference. Roy further inferred that it is through the arts alone that you understand another perspective or mindset (Roy, 2009). From Roy's perspective, as an artist it is important to be the voice of your country or community, and to communicate and put your message and agenda 'out there' for other people to become aware (Roy, 2009).

Both these speakers focussed on the ability of the arts to reflect, challenge, and change society. They also stressed the importance of relationships between people for building societies which function in a beneficial way for all members, and how the arts can aid in that process. Performing arts can have a major function in a society. Not only do they entertain, but they provoke thought and question, reflect society, reinforce or question social customs, comment on relationships, educate; they can be used in an initiation or rite of passage, and provide an outlet for tension, grief or celebration (Nelson, 1996; Thomas, 1995; Ward, 2008b). Indigenous Australian expert and elder, Fay Nelson describes these multiple roles and functions of dance in Indigenous Australian society.

Aboriginal dance... I would say we would have dances for most aspects of life. Dance is part of the joy of being alive and it is part of the sorrow that life sometimes inflicts upon us. It is a part of the celebration of the passing of someone at the end of their life (1996:86).

A *whakatauki*, Māori proverb reminds us of the importance of others and the interconnection of all things:

*Hutia te rito o te harakeke*  
*Kei whea, te kamako e ko*  
*Ki mai ki ahau*  
*He aha te mea nui o tenei ao*  
*Maku e ki atu*  
*He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.*  
When the heart is torn from the flax bush  
where will the Bell bird sing?  
You ask me  
what is the greatest thing on Earth  
My reply is  
It is people, it is people, it is people.

University of Cape Town

## Chapter Five: *Taha Hinengaro*, The Mental and Emotional Aspect of Health and Dance

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As noted, Durie describes *Taha Hinengaro* as the 'expression of thoughts and feelings' (1994:70). *Taha hinengaro* also refers to the realm of beliefs. Durie recognises that for *Māori*, thoughts and feelings come from the same source within an individual and are equally valued, as the *Māori* way of thinking is holistic and integrative (1994). *Kaumātua*, esteemed *Māori* elder Dr Rangimarie Turuki Rose Pere outlines the range of processes and activities involved in *taha hinengaro*:

Hinengaro refers to the mental and emotional experiences that a person has in learning. Thinking, knowing, perceiving, remembering, recognizing, abstracting, and generalizing are processes that refer to the intellectual activities of the hinengaro. Emotional activities such as feeling, sensing, responding, and reacting are also processes of the hinengaro (2006:145).

There is thus no separation between the rational and the emotional, and as they interact and influence each other, to focus on developing one without considering the impact of the other is to invite ill health (Durie, 1994 & 2001).

*Taha hinengaro* and healthy thinking also involves the connection of the inner being to the outer world (reality or lived space one occupies) (Durie, 1994). This connection is emphasised in the *Māori* language where many words have more than one meaning – one meaning referring to the human body, and another to an object or thing outside the body (Durie, 2001; Mead, 2003). This concept, as described in Chapter Three, reinforces the connection of the self, body and its history to the environment and lived space, strengthening a sense of belonging<sup>50</sup> and of self (Mead, 2003; Rowe, 2008; Sheppard, 2005). Through this connection and knowledge of self, one comes to know and understand the surrounding world and how it impacts on oneself, and how one impacts on the world. Knowledge of the environment occurs not only through thoughts and thinking, but also through the senses (Baars and Gage, 2010; Grove, 2005; Rowlands, 1999). Through the senses, information about the environment is acquired and transmitted through neural pathways to the

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<sup>50</sup> Sense of belonging and how it develops was described in Chapter Four.

brain, for the brain to decipher, interpret, and make decisions (Baars and Gage, 2010; Pinker, 1998). This type of experiential knowledge has been described as sense-making or making sense (through reflection) of one's experiences, actions, choices, and lived environment in a meaningful way (Dewey, 1938; Weick, 1969). Discovery and exploration of the environment is most evident in babies, infants and children, as they learn, develop, and grow, and become aware of their surroundings and place within those surroundings (Eisner, 1978; Grove and McKechnie, 2005).

Western understanding of *taha hinengaro* divides this aspect into mental health and emotional health. Emotional health does not imply being ruled by the emotions, or ignoring them completely (Goleman, 1996). It involves knowing what emotion one is feeling, managing that feeling, and appropriately expressing it in a way which does not harm oneself or others (Goleman, 2006). Mental health implies brain health. Much of the brain has evolved and developed to understand sensory input, what the senses take in, which informs what is happening in reality (Pinker, 1998; Rowlands, 1999). So, mental health also involves the body, and how aware one is of sensory inputs – not just visual or aural inputs, but also touch, pain, temperature, taste, smell, balance, and proprioception (knowledge of where one's body or body parts are in relation to others) (Baars and Gage, 2010; Moore and Yamamoto, 1996). Optimum mental and emotional health is not a disassociated knowledge of sensations but an intimate knowledge of all parts and faculties of the body working in conjunction – a harmony of systems that integrate and rely on each other to function (Baars and Gale, 2010; Goleman, 1996).

According to Goleman (1996), Western societies disregard the senses, believing logic and thought are more powerful than what is felt. However, through feelings, body knowledge, and knowing through the senses, a person is shaped in a way that the rational mind and thoughts alone cannot, providing a more intimate knowledge of the self (Dewey, 1938; Eisner, 2005). These feelings then radiate out into what are considered 'emotional' subjects of self-concept and self-esteem; emotional connections to movement, place, people, or events; issues of acceptance into a group and feelings of connection to such group. The cliché 'actions speak louder than words' acknowledges that thoughts and feeling are manifested in movement (Buckroyd, 2000).

How one comes to know thoughts, feelings and emotions is based on how well one knows oneself. Through bodily or somatic knowledge, such as proprioception, knowledge of the sensations in the body, thought processes (awareness of one's thoughts and thought patterns), and feelings about oneself, a person develops a greater sense of self, which leads to greater self-confidence and self-esteem, all of which contribute to a better adjusted individual (Buckroyd, 2000; Goleman, 1996). *Taha hinengaro* has also been described as focussing of the mind, bringing thoughts and emotions into alignment to work together for the best possible outcome in any task (Barber, 2010). This ability to focus, and use both thoughts and emotions effectively will be discussed in the context of dance training.

### ***Taha Hinengaro and Dance***

As discussed in Chapter Three, participating in a dance class provides a space and time to focus on the body, as through dance one attunes to each part of the body and the senses, which develops how they work together to produce movement and recognisable emotions, and promotes co-ordination between body and mind (Grove, 2005; Hagendoorn, 2005). This convergence and unity of emotions and thoughts working together to produce movement trains the mind to focus and work in harmony, to allow a person to enter and remain in a state of flow. Flow, as described by Csikszentmihalyi, involves complete absorption in the activity (so involved in the activity that nothing else seems to matter), a merging of action and awareness (a person is aware of their actions but not of awareness itself), total concentration, loss of self-consciousness, conveying a sense of control (a person is not actively aware of control, but unworried by the possibility of lack of control), and not relying on external rewards for participation in the activity; movement is seemingly effortless (Weinberg and Gould, 1999). Because dance is a medium where these factors can be present and worked towards, dance can also be an activity which cultivates the ability to enter into and maintain a state of flow.

Dance can be likened to 'moving meditation' or activities such as tai chi or some martial arts (which have dance-like features) that focus on calming, relaxing, and focussing the mind through attentiveness to performing movements. Austin describes this attention to the moment as moving the practice of meditation beyond the constrained time of seated reflection towards 'daily-life practice' and 'the simple act of "being here now," during one's everyday garden-variety of activities'

(2006:31). In this manner, the practice of meditation evolves into a way of life. Learning how to focus on the moment and one's action and intention within that moment, and appreciating the moment for what it is, is a function of meditation, according to Austin (2006). Like meditation, dance can be a medium in which to learn these skills, and transfer them to life. Participation in dance can be a way to learn how to attend to the moment; focus and attune to thoughts and feelings; and provide a source of relaxation which allows the neurological functions of the brain to work more effectively (Austin, 2006). Austin's book *Zen-brain reflections* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press) provides a detailed description of the neurological functioning of the brain, and relates the practice of meditation (and research within the realm of meditation) to similar neurological studies of how and why those changes in the brain occur. He draws parallels between what happens physiologically and psychologically through meditation, and research which describes processes which adapt and evolve brain function, providing a solid link between increased brain functioning and the benefits of meditation.

According to Rubin<sup>51</sup>, Buddhist meditation 'quiets the inner turmoil' to 'gain a measure of clarity and focus about what you feel and who you are' and invokes a 'profound sense of connectedness with yourself, nature, the environment, and other people' (2001:121). This is similar to what was discussed in Chapter Three; however, the way this feeling comes about is through singular concentration on a task (such as breathing), in order to focus the mind and maintain a 'nonjudgemental attentiveness to our experience (teaching us how to see when we look, hear when we listen, and taste when we eat)' (Rubin, 2001:122). Due to this focus on movement and attention to the experience of movement, some dance may be seen as a meditative practice.

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<sup>51</sup> Like Austin, Rubin examines the function, practice, and purpose of meditation in relation to everyday life. Rubin delves more into the pitfalls and non-development which can occur, rather than the neurological aspects of meditation. He discusses the different types of meditation and their function, how meditation can be an escape from life, and due to this escapism how practicing meditation can sometimes stagnate the ability of meditation to relate to and add to the experience of everyday life. Similar outcomes can be observed in dance, where the focus on the body, breath, self and others can sometimes be not be transferred into life, limiting the similar benefiting function of dance and meditation to one's life. However, Rubin's discussion on the abilities and differing practices of meditation can be aligned with similar features of dance (focus on breath, attentiveness to the moment, experiential living), providing parallels between the benefits of meditation to those of dance.

Rubin discusses two main forms of meditation, concentrative and insight, and explains their usefulness in knowing oneself and increasing one's awareness and concentration on thinking and feeling. Concentrative meditation is the focus on a single object, such as the breath (Rubin, 2001). Rubin explains that the body is still, but relaxed, and the mind attentive to the moment-to-moment experience of the breath. Every other thought, feeling, and experience is excluded from awareness, which cultivates mental focus. This process and development of concentration can occur in dance, with moment-to-movement experience of movement also being attended to (reference). Rubin describes insight meditation as:

An inclusive state of mind in which we attend to the changing objects of our experience – non-judgementally noting and then silently labeling [sic] whatever thoughts, feelings, fantasies, or somatic experiences that we experience moment-by-moment... As attentiveness increases and becomes more refined, we can use the developing capacity to focus the mind to observe the nature of our consciousness (2001:123).

This increased awareness of the conscious state of what a person is feeling, thinking and experiencing, leads to greater self-insight and understanding of one's own thought processes. Dance can be a medium in which to explore and attend to this state of being.

Rubin, however, criticizes the meditative process, and argues that it removes a person from reality, and encourages avoidance of addressing the issues for which meditation was undertaken in the first place. For example, he describes the use of meditation to 'let go', 'don't do anything', and not investigate thoughts, feelings and remembered experiences while meditating (2001:124). Often this tactic is transferred into life, where feelings are not investigated, and the root causes of those feelings not addressed. Because of this, a disassociation with the lived experience occurs, leading to negative mental health, and mental 'illnesses' such as depression (Goleman, 1996). In as much as dance can be a place to let go and release thoughts and feelings, it can also be a place to investigate and explore the causes for them, allowing for resolution and the physical experience of a different outcome (Malloch, 2005). Dance is a place to become aware of one's own thoughts and feelings, acknowledge and transform them into action, communicating those thoughts and feelings to others (Stevens, 2005). This encourages the therapeutic effect of all kinds of movement, but especially dance for reasons already stated.

Like entering meditation, entering the state of flow requires achievement of optimal arousal (through being relaxed, controlling anxiety, and enjoying the activity), maintaining appropriate focus, planning and preparing for entering the state (in meditation this is through use of mantras, incantations, or breath), optimal physical preparation and readiness, optimal environmental and situational conditions, and being of the 'right' mental attitude (self-doubt inhibits entry into flow and meditation) (Rubin, 2001; Weinberg and Gould, 1999). Miroto describes this process in terms of dance:

According to my experience as a performer, being on stage needs a deep concentration even when the choreography is not completely clear. I then strive to just become aware and trust the structure of the choreography, and let myself flow with the moments and movements. This deep concentration has usually helped me to discover the answers needed to clarify the choreography (1996:48).

Through training in dance, each of these responses is improved, allowing greater ease of entry into flow and the meditative state. Technically, this occurs through attentiveness to relaxed and efficient movement and control of the breath while moving, which focuses and arouses the mind. While in this heightened state (as with meditation), one can exclude self-inhibiting thoughts and feelings, reducing anxiety and encouraging a preferred mental attitude (Austin, 2006). This is accentuated by the manner in which a dance class progresses. Class generally begins with exercises that warm up the parts of the body, to increase awareness and blood flow to those parts; which allows efficient movement when more complicated exercises occur later in the class (Clippinger, 2007). Working progressively through the body parts from isolation to complex whole-body movement, prepares and readies the mind and body for increased focus and attention to movement (Blom and Chaplin, 1989). Consequently, the dance class can also be a place and a time for the focus on oneself, increasing the likelihood of entering flow while dancing in performance. The ritualised exercises and focussed concentration necessary for high-level performance initially occur in dance classes and rehearsal.

Inhibitors to flow mainly occur as 'noise', the interruption and interference to focus, concentration, and the meditative state through unfettered thoughts and feelings, 'neural noise' (overstimulation and random firing of the neural networks), and the individual allowing external factors to negatively affect concentration and focus on movement or the breath (Baars and Gage, 2010). Using certain neural pathways in the brain reinforces those pathways, which can defer thought and emotional

pathways to those most often used (Goleman, 2006). This implies that the brain can become 'trapped' into more frequently using particular thought and emotional patterns, which can be either beneficial or detrimental to one's emotional state; reinforcing negative feedback loops or ways of thinking about a topic, increasing depression, worry, and anxiety (Goleman, 2006). In other words, the more one acts and thinks in a particular way, the more readily one will continue to act and think that way in a crisis because it is easy, and one has primed the neural networks to operate in that (potentially destructive) manner (Goleman, 2006). This can be an issue, as the outcome (an action, comment, or behaviour) may be inappropriate or ineffectual. The same can happen in movement patterns, where muscle memory and increased use of a specific neural pathway can inhibit the performance and development of movement vocabulary and efficiency and effectiveness of movement. To continue to develop in dance, one needs to consciously change and challenge the frequent use of those (sometimes) over-practiced pathways, while also discovering alternatives.

As well as unifying thoughts and emotions, dance can address other aspects of *taha hinengaro*. Through the creative process of choreography, in particular, the analytical tools of perceiving, remembering, recognising, abstracting and generalising mentioned by Pere are learned and practiced (Stevens, 2005). The emotional activities of feeling, sensing, responding and reacting are also used in dance making and performing (Stevens, 2005). As 'dance is central to the human beings expression of emotion' (Anderson, 2004:8), it is an ideal medium in which to explore and understand emotions.

As mentioned, *taha hinengaro* is the connection of self to the outer world, through exploration and use of the senses. This ability to find one's place in the world can occur in and through dance, as observed by Malloch:

We have seen that the infant's communicative expectations include sensitive assessment of whether the gestures that the infant sees and hears in the other 'fits' in time and quality with the infant's own behaviour, and this 'fit' is vital for the infant's wellbeing. Dance and music therapy use this intrinsic human capacity, explicitly playing with many sequenced gestures of voice and body, without the need for words, to form mutually created links between therapist and client, so that both can share companionable narratives of feelings and thoughts through time (Malloch, 2005:18).

In other words, dance is a place to safely explore one's environment, to focus on sensory input through the body, and attune one's actions, feelings and thoughts with another person through the shared meanings derived from movement and non-verbal communication (McNeill, 1995). Dance is thus a place to gain self-knowledge and insight.

### **Self Knowledge and Expression**

For Mayer, self-awareness is 'being aware both of our mood, and our thoughts about that mood' (Goleman, 1996:47). Another definition of self-awareness, offered by Stone and Dillehunt in the Self Sciences Curriculum (1978), is 'observing yourself and recognizing your feelings; building a vocabulary for feelings; knowing the relationship between thoughts, feelings and reactions' (Goleman 1996:303). However, Mayer stipulated that to know what mood one is in, 'is to want to change it' (Goleman, 1996:47). Of what does one need to be aware, when one talks about knowing oneself? As mentioned earlier, an intimate knowledge of the body and its sensations is one starting point. Dance, through its inherently physical nature and being both a product and a manifestation of the body, is an ideal place to explore the sensations of the emotions in the body, how they emerge and cause the body to act and react, and also explore and identify the root/cause of such emotions (Dunagan, 2005). As dancer, choreographer and anthropologist Pearl Primus noted, 'People use their bodies as instruments through which every conceivable emotion or event is projected' (1998:6). Dance can be a medium in which to explore the manifestation of emotions through movement.

Emotions cause a physical response, priming the body and mind for action (Goleman, 1996). The body does this by altering the blood flow to areas where it is needed, to allow more information obtained through the senses to reach the brain, for the brain to assess the information, take in what is happening, and plan what to do next (Calhoun and Solomon, 1984; Goleman, 1996). Each of the main emotional groups of anger, sadness, fear, enjoyment, love, surprise, disgust, and shame (Goleman, 1996:289-90), provoke a different physiological response, although which responses evoke or symbolise which emotions is not totally agreed upon by theorists working in this field (Calhoun and Solomon, 1984; Goleman, 1996). However, it is generally agreed that each emotional group manifests in different ways in the body, redirecting blood to different muscle groups, slowing or quickening breathing, widening or narrowing the eyes, and preparing the body for the best possible action/movement response (Goleman, 1996).

The specific facial expressions of fear, anger, sadness, and enjoyment, are universally recognisable, as Ekman's study showed: people from different cultures<sup>52</sup> were able to see a picture of one of the four aforementioned emotions and correctly say what that emotion was (Ekman, 1992; Ekman, Sorenson, and Friesen, 1969). His research suggests that every person, no matter the culture, has the ability to know and understand emotions in others from different backgrounds, ethnicities, and cultures; this implies a common background from which emotions stem in the brain (Ekman, 1992; Ekman, et.al, 1969). Each person has the capacity to experience the main emotion groupings, providing a common ground for communication and non-verbal understanding between people.

Recognising physiological changes in the body and noting and understanding the thought processes attached to those changes, is one aspect of knowing oneself. Identifying the cause of feelings and bodily responses, and being able to trace where they started, is another aspect of being self-aware (Goleman, 1996; Salovey and Mayer, 1990). Labelling the feeling, sensation, or emotion, aids in recognising what is occurring in the body, helping to understand and cope with those sensations, and to provide a point of reference for those sensations return in the body (Baars and Gage, 2010; Salovey and Mayer, 1990). One is able to identify an emotion or bodily sensation/reaction if one has come across it before, as noted by Hagendoorn:

At any moment, an individual's experience is not based just on data provided by the senses, it is shaped by memories, desires and intentions, conditioned by expectations, coloured by emotions, and contingent on the physical state of the body. The reasons why a certain piece may be meaningful to someone lie beyond scientific investigation and philosophical speculation, and even beyond each person's self understanding. Thus, while the primary perceptual and emotional responses are the same across different brains, the associations they elicit and the appraisal of these responses differ. This might explain why an audience responds unanimously to the same events, yet afterwards evaluates them in different terms (2005:146-7).

Because of this, an audience member watching a dance performance may be able to understand the emotional state of the dancer and the messages the dancer is portraying, through recognition of the

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<sup>52</sup> Not all cultures were based on the English language, and at least one was visually isolated, in that the participants had not seen television images or photographs before (Ekman, 1992).

facial expression of emotion, or by attending to the emotional content of the movement (Buckroyd, 2000; Grove, 2005). People relate to what those movements and expressions mean in their own bodies, and understand what the dancer is showing through association with their own experiences of the movement (Hagendoorn, 2005). This provides a more visceral and immediately personal understanding of what has been seen (Dunagan, 2005; Grove, 2005; Hagendoorn, 2005). This process happens through the activation of mirror neurons in the brain<sup>53</sup>: watching movement activates the same motor cortex neurons which produce the movements seen, without actually producing movement in one's own body (Di Pellegrino, Fadiga, Fogassi, Gallester, and Rizzolatti, 1992; Hagendoorn, 2010). This further connects the viewer to the performer through synchrony of neural firing, sharing of the breath (associated with the movement and emotional state), muscular bonding (as through mirror neurons, the viewer is 'moving' in time with the performer), emotional contagion (as a person's mood is affected by those which are around oneself, in this case the view through their attention on the performer takes on the performer's conveyed emotion), which builds rapport and strengthens knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of what is seen (Bernieri and Rosenthal, 1991; Friedman, 2005). The immediacy of live dance in this process is stressed by Nadel and Strauss:

Whether you realize it or not, you will also be assessing and broadening your own life experiences, and how they relate to what you have just seen. Why? Because viewing live dance is always a very personal experience. You are seeing and sensing bodies moving in space before you in unique ways... and, as humans, we automatically engage our emotions, thoughts, and even bodies when our human compatriots are doing actions of any kind in close proximity to us (2003:xviii).

By seeing emotions portrayed in movement by others, and mimicking those movements in one's own body, one can learn and understand the physical manifestation of the expression of emotional states (Grove, 2005; Hanna, 1979a). This discovery happens through experimentation and discussion of the emotional spectrum (Bavelas, et.al, 1986; Dunagan, 2005). Through experimenting with the main emotional groups, one may come to explore the nuances between the more subtle emotions, such as the slighter difference between 'dread' and 'wariness' (Goleman, 1996). The creative process in dance, handled wisely in class or individual practice, can allow time to know and understand differences between the emotions, without the pressure to give the 'right' answer; in life (and this includes rigorous dance training and performance), where the opportunity to reflect and trial different emotions and emotional can be limited (Dunagan, 2005).

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<sup>53</sup> See Chapter Four for a discussion of mirror neurons.

The arts teach students to act and to judge in the absence of rule, to rely on feel, to pay attention to nuance, to act and appraise the consequences of one's choices, and to revise and then make other choices' (Eisner, 2005c:208).

Dance is an ideal medium for this learning to take place, over and above that of drama and sport, due to the greater amount of attention on bodily movement and the emotional content and messages portrayed in movement and non-verbal means, for performance purposes, and for viewers to understand (Grove, 2005; Hanna, 1979a). Through dance practice one can take the time to question, experiment, explore and discover one's body and how it expresses emotions (Dunagan, 2005). How one shows emotions is also shaped by the culture by which one is surrounded; thus dance, an expression of culture and steeped in cultural practices, is an apt medium through which to explore appropriate (socially and culturally) expression of emotions (Hanna, 1979a).

Through the creative process in dance, a person can obtain a deeper understanding of how bodily movements express emotions, and how to change the emotional message by changing the movement (Climenhaga, 2009; Lewis, 1990). Additionally, one learns how the intention of the movement changes the meaning of the movement, even though the movement itself has not changed (Climenhaga, 2009; Grove, 2005). By attuning to the meaning portrayed, the intention of the movement becomes clearer, which in turn suggests the thoughts and feelings behind the movement (Bavelas, et.al, 1986). Due to attention to the quality of movements performed in dance, a person learns to portray emotional states and thoughts (Bavelas, et.al, 1986; Grove, 2005). This increases the emotional vocabulary, which in turn allows for a greater understanding of expression of emotions (Dunagan, 2005). As Williams describes:

If we must use the word *expression* in relation to dances, then we might better say that when we see dance anywhere in the world, what we are seeing is an expression of the choreographer's and participants' knowledge of human feelings, ideas, life, and the universe (2004:22).

As the quote acknowledges, this knowledge can be transferred into the lived context, to create a deeper understanding of one's own emotional expression and reaction to one's environment and others (Grove, 2005). 'People with greater certainty about their feelings are better pilots of their lives, having a surer sense of how they feel about personal decisions from whom to marry to what job to take' (Goleman, 1996:43). This knowledge, increased through dance promotes mental and emotional wellness, as the emotions do not 'rule' the body, producing a more stable emotional state

(Goleman, 1996). Being more emotionally stable prevents emotional ‘hijacking’ of thoughts (which increases neural noise), creating clarity of expression and decision making and allowing the mind to focus and concentrate (Goleman, 1996:14), which improves *taha hinengaro*.

### **More Than One Way of Knowing**

So far, this discussion on *taha hinengaro* and dance has focused on knowing and learning about oneself and others, through the body and the emotions. This material expands on developmental psychologist Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences. In his book *Frames of Mind: the Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (1983), Gardner comprised a list of seven (which later expanded to ‘up to twenty’ (Goleman, 1996:38)) independent intelligences<sup>54</sup> through which individuals construct, acquire and express knowledge (Goleman, 1996). He argued that these intelligences were not a totality, in that the seven intelligences were not all the possible ways of knowing or being intelligent, and this was not a fully comprehensive list (Gardner, 1983). These intelligences were a guide for what he saw as modes of knowing and understanding, which were separable from each other. One may acquire one or more of the intelligences to a high level, however, all are within a person, and are used differently by each individual (Gardner, 1983). What is important to remember in this discussion is that it is not a question of ‘what is knowledge’, but what are the various ways in which one comes to, or acquire knowledge, information, or understanding. And this happens in a multitude of ways, which is relevant to the learner.

In other words, the intelligences or modes of knowing interact, and may assist individuals in constructing knowledge in a way that is valuable and appropriate to them (Gardner, 1983). An expression by Connelly and Clandinin explains that ‘just as a pencil may be used for writing, a mode of knowing may be used for understanding’ (1985:182). Overall, the different intelligences provide different ways of accessing and acquiring knowledge in a way that is relevant and appropriate to the learner; which implies that knowledge involves teaching, and consequently learning (Eisner, 1978). Eisner further implies that knowledge is constructed by the learner, in a way which is relevant to the

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<sup>54</sup>The first seven intelligences are: linguistic, musical, logical and mathematical, bodily-kinaesthetic, spatial, intra-personal and inter-personal, which was later extended to ten possible intelligences by Gardner. The three main suggested possible additions include naturalist, spiritual/extential, and moral intelligences. For the list to reach up to twenty possible intelligences, some aspects of the original intelligences were divided into more specific aspects, such as leadership which falls under the inter-personal intelligence (Goleman, 1996).

learner, and also draws on and adds to their prior experience (2005). He proposes that 'first, the mind is not given at birth, but rather is shaped by the experiences a growing human has during the course of his or her life' (Eisner, 1985:xi).

In the case of dance, the bodily/kinaesthetic intelligence is seen as the most appropriate intelligence. However, other intelligences or modes of knowing are also used. In discussing modern dance pioneer Martha Graham, and her use of different intelligences, Root-Bernstein and Root-Bernstein wrote:

What she described was body thinking, that capacity to enact, recall and, in essence, reason with muscular tensions, postures and movements – as well as textures and pressures of the skin. Certainly the dancer feels what it is like – physically and emotionally – to move in certain ways and to use those body sensations to practice and enhance the technical performance of a contraction or a pas de deux (2003:21)

This comment shows the connection between the physical and the emotional, and how integratedness of movement is heightened in dancers and the dance experience (Pakes, 2006). They refer to movement memory, a phenomenon where one's body 'takes over' the movement, and 'remembers' the movement, without the person consciously thinking of what happens next (Weinberg and Gould, 1999). In other words, one's body remembers even when the mind does not. The Root-Bernsteins continue:

Body thinking also includes feeling or imaging body sensations in the absence of movement, as when a dancer mentally rehearses her steps or a choreographer, half asleep after a day's work in the studio, finally solves the transition from one dance movement to another. A real hallmark of body thinking, however, is the ability to project body sensitivities beyond the body itself (2003:22).

Again, this is a reference to the importance of visualisation in dance. Through dance one can learn how to think differently, take another person's perspective, pay attention to detail, and analyse what one is seeing and doing (Grove, 2005). That exposure strengthens one's development of the brain, as more and different neural connections are made, making the brain larger and heavier, but also more fully interconnecting its areas (Baars and Gage, 2010).

## **Art as Abstract Thought**

Other mental processes are inherent to how one thinks about these topics of exploring one's emotions, how they are expressed, and the different ways of knowing. Thinking skills such as describing, analysing, problem solving, critiquing, perceiving, remembering, recognizing, and abstracting are used in this discussion, and underscore learning in dance (Sutton, 2005).

In his arguments for the arts in education, Eisner wrote that 'one of the most sophisticated aspects of what children can learn when making visual images, is the fact that there are ideas, images, and feelings that can *only* be expressed through visual form' (2005a:65). This implies that the spoken language is limited in its usage for all types and means of expression, and promotes the arts as a vehicle for exploring and knowing through other forms, rather than just relying on words. Hence, the same could be argued for dance, in that 'there are ideas, images, and feelings that can *only* be expressed through *movement*'. By identifying, playing with, and experimenting with movements, one may learn more about their expressive selves, and the expression of emotions, thoughts, and ideas through different parts of one's body. A person who thinks and experiences through movement, comes to know and acquires knowledge differently to one who mainly uses words. In effect, participation in dance increases the forms in which knowledge can be known and expressed, increasing knowledge generally, and increasing the ability to understand and perceive events and situations from different perspectives.

One who has not experienced the unique contributions of the arts to human understanding is in no position to understand the variety of ways in which humans come to know. In this sense work in the arts provides a basis for philosophic inquiry into questions of what knowledge is, how it is secured, and how the utilities of its several species can be compared and contrasted. Such forms of learning are, of course, a far cry from the very young child's realization that he or she has the ability to bring images into existence, yet the whole range of what can be learned from making images should be explored and not only those germane to preschoolers (Eisner, 2005a:65).

Eisner also writes that:

The process of forming ideas is also a process of clarifying one's thoughts. To what extent does the process of expressing, feeling through the creation of visual images clarify the feelings that children have? (Eisner, 2005a:64).

Eisner touches on the thought patterns associated with knowledge of the emotions, and how the emotions can be expressed and presented in different media. Art, and dance, is a way (or form) of making sense of the world around oneself, and what happens in that world (Robinson, 2006).

Dance, like all art activities, offers the individual an opportunity to organize experience, make sense of self, problem-solve, and represent self-expression in metaphor. It can afford self-directed and increasingly self-mastering experiences. In dance one is in the world of the nonlinear, the felt rather than the thought experience, the soul and spirit; individuals in this world are informed by their authentic self, instead of the wholly adapted self (Lomas, 1998:153).

Through moving, experimenting, questioning, and clarifying one's thoughts in the production of art and dance, one uses and explores the different ways in which one can think, problem solve, explain one's choices, and use abstraction through different forms of representation (Robinson, 2006). Stinson, Blumenfield-Jones, and van Dyke mention such an ability of the arts and the performing arts to 'escape' reality: 'When I danced I could escape that world temporarily and even feel some sense of personal power within the safe space of the studio' (1990:17). This sense of power over the outcomes and consequences in one's life improves self-concept, self-esteem, and increases a personal sense of hope for oneself (Buckroyd, 2000). The sense of empowerment and autonomy increases the security of self-knowledge, allowing thoughts and emotions to emerge from destructive self-criticism, and turning reflexive practices outwards to appreciate and understand others (Buckroyd, 2000), which is important, as Durie explains:

Apart from having to suffer the will of others, lack of control and lack of autonomy run the risk of creating a sense of external domination and with it loss of violation, self respect, and human dignity. Good mental health is not compatible with mental and physical states of dependency; nor is dependency on the goodwill of others or for that matter on alcohol or drugs, compatible with the ability of individuals to make genuine choices or of collectives to exercise self-governance (2001:275).

## **Conclusion**

In *taha hinengaro*, mental and emotional aspects of health work together to positively influence health. Dance improves both the mental and emotional aspects, by training the mind to focus and concentrate, and potentially increasing one's insight about one's own sense of expression and ability to manage emotions. As thoughts, feelings and actions are closely interlinked, balance and harmony

is sought in the body, to build positive thought patterns and emotional management (Goleman, 1996). Dance and its creative process and expression is an ideal medium for improving cognition and providing an emotional outlet, increasing positive expression of thoughts and feelings. This develops *taha hinengaro*.

## Chapter Six: *Taha Tinana*, The Physical Aspect of Health and Dance

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The body has sometimes been a present but unacknowledged presence in the aspects of health and wellbeing discussed thus far. The aim of this chapter is to explore the possibilities of the body and its capabilities, how that informs each person's perception and experience of age, abilities, and the ways the body is inscribed and enacted; this informs one about self, others, and context (Fraleigh, 1987; Hanna, 1979c; Rowe, 2008). Through the body and senses one comes to know (Siegel, 1999); hence, knowledge of one's body, its capabilities and its restrictions must be explored to see how they change and inform experience (Rouhianen, 2007).

### ***Taha Tinana*, Physical Health**

*Taha tinana*, 'bodily health' (Durie, 1994:70) is usually referred to in terms of basic physical health indicators: muscle to fat ratio, cardiovascular health, nutrition, body weight, exercise, and preoccupation with the absence of physical illness (Brooks, Fahey, and Baldwin, 2005; Ryff and Singer, 1998). For Durie, *Taha Tinana* is the 'capacity for physical growth and development' (1994:69), and good physical health is necessary for optimal development (Durie, 1994; Morice, 2006; Weinberg and Gould, 1999). Hence this aspect is more commonly referred to as physical health, and focuses on the above indicators.

In reducing the body to a mechanical perception of functionality (the machine-like ways the body can move and perform), *taha tinana* indicates the body, muscle or meat without the mind (Cohen, 2008; Rouhiainen, 2008). In a sense this means doing and being, without thinking. Unfortunately, the concept of 'moving without thinking' undermines experts of the body (and movement function and capabilities) such as the athlete or dancer, and reduces the perception and understanding of how much work is involved in becoming an elite athlete or dancer (Root-Bernstein and Root-Bernstein, 2003) who only appears not to think. Research has shown that the body thinks (Rose, 1997); for example, the stretch reflex<sup>55</sup>, the step reflex<sup>56</sup>, and muscular or motor memory<sup>57</sup>, are all functions of

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<sup>55</sup> The stretch reflex is 'a spinal cord pathway between a muscle's stretch receptors and its own motor units' (Myklebust and Gottlieb, 1993:1036). When the tendon between the patella (knee cap) and the tibia (shin bone) is tapped by a rubber hammer, momentarily stretching the quadricep muscle group, the stretch

the body, which do not use the mind per se, but inform body and brain function (Baars and Gage, 2010; Batavia and McDonough, 2000). This chapter aims to discuss a 'thinking body' (Charlesworth, 2000), which should not be ignored and thus become an absent presence (Aalten, 2007) or absence (Baum, 2003).

Compared to descriptions in the other chapters, the *taha tinana* definition is relatively short. The western perception of good physical health is usually confined to regular physical exercise and solid nutritional habits (Siedentop, 2008). Unfortunately, what is considered to be desirable as the 'ideal body' is not obtainable for many people around the world (Brownell, 1991; Wright, O'Flynn, and Macdonald, 2006), and provides an unrealistic goal. Still, this often determines how and why people exercise (Brownell, 1991; Wright, et.al, 2006).

In contemporary Western societies (and through the processes of globalisation other societies as well) a health-ism discourse, which equates health with a slim body shape achieved through exercise (Kirk & Colquhoun, 1989), provides a powerful set of imperatives for the ways people should live their lives and construct their identities (Wright, et.al, 2006:707).

In *Māori* philosophy, an ideal physical body or image is rarely presented:

[E]arly observations and accounts of Māori were perceived of as an energetic, healthy and virile population that had developed a society where physical pursuits and games of skill were participated in by both men and women (Palmer, 2006:262).

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receptors within the muscles activate, contracting the quadriceps group, causing the lower leg to 'jerk' (Myklebust and Gottlieb, 1993). As the motor neurons between the agonist (in this case the quadriceps group – the prime mover) and the antagonist (in this case the hamstring group – the oppositional muscle(s)) are connected, the antagonists are also activated, causing the lower leg to pull back (Myklebust and Gottlieb, 1993). The same reflex is also found with activation of the achilles tendon (Myklebust and Gottlieb, 1993).

<sup>56</sup> The step reflex is one of the 'primitive' reflexes present at birth, but recedes within the first 6 weeks, to reappear as a voluntary behaviour at approximately eight months. The reflex occurs when the sole of the foot is touched by a flat surface; an infant will attempt to walk, placing one foot in front of the other (Zelazo, Zelazo, and Kolb, 1972).

<sup>57</sup> Motor memory is the long-term muscular memory of a task which is created through repetition and practice. Through repetition, the movement action becomes 'ingrained', allowing performance of that movement to occur without conscious effort to remember the action (Myklebust and Gottlieb, 1993).

This historic perspective suggests that *Māori* had little need for modern western constructs in maintaining physical health or obtaining an ideal body shape, as their own lifestyles were traditionally very active. Unfortunately, this traditional perception as to the (lack of) need for regular physical exercise has carried through to current thought, and modern *Māori* are not necessarily as active.

*Taha tinana* was expanded significantly by Morice:

Taha tinana or bodily wellbeing is maintained through customary observances as well as the usual Western practices of public health and healthcare services. Customary observances recognize that we do not just have a body, but are embodied in the world. We dwell in our body as our everyday environment. The body is the physical container of the self, but is more, for it is also a fundamental aspect or dimension of self... We cannot elect to not be a body. When we are physically present we are potentially available to others, open to their presence and their proximity, their gestures and their gaze, as they are to ours... Both our being and our doing are founded in our body, and there is a natural human tendency to take this body for granted until something goes wrong. In other words, underneath the so-called 'objective' conditions of health, the smooth working of the body's 'machinery,' is the issue of our relationship to our physical being... Physical health results from the interaction of genes and environment, but is also the consequence of a lifetime of living in a particular way (2006:3).

This lengthy quote indicates that for *Māori*, lifestyle factors and relationships with the self and body are as important as the western construct of 'functional' health.

As adults mature with age, their ability to perform basic activities and live independently will be determined by their functional fitness. Functional fitness includes mobility, self-care, the ability to manipulate one's environment, and the preservation of physical abilities that are necessary for an enhanced quality of life (Ward, 2008b:34).

Although the ability to perform movements to function well in everyday life, while also having energy to spare for emergency situations should be one part of physical health and wellbeing, this view does not require attainment of a culturally 'ideal' body. For each individual, the level of physical and functional fitness changes depending on lifestyle (Ward, 2008b); quality of life is more important than an ideal body.

Physical growth and development also takes the passage of time into consideration, how the body and its capabilities change, and how degeneration of movement ability occurs because of age (Bird and Drewery, 2000). How fitness changes throughout life, and how one adapts to the needs of the body to maintain functional fitness and recover from illness and injury, is a better indicator of individual physical health than arbitrary measurements of how much one can lift (Brooks, et.al, 2005).

A person may be aware of what the body can do, but the absence of capability, what the body cannot do, is just as telling (Caspersen, Powell and Christenson, 1985; Morice, 2006; Siedentop, 2008; Vonk, 2009). Basic physical fitness is mainly the ability to live a full life, without significant physical strain or inability caused by a lack of physical fitness and wellbeing (Caspersen, et.al, 1985; Vonk, 2009). For the body to perform movement efficiently and effectively, general indicators of physical ability – speed, strength, power, endurance, flexibility, coordination, agility – are a guide to how well the body functions in those specific abilities (Brooks, et.al, 2005; Siedentop, 2008). Each of these indicators can be specifically improved, and each aids in the effective functioning of the body (Brooks, et.al, 2005; Siedentop, 2008). These will be discussed further.

### ***Taha Tinana*, Physical Health and Dance**

Dance, an activity which uses the body as its primary medium, is inherently based in the physical health realm (Best, 1998; Hanna, 2008; H'Doubler, 1998). How a person uses the body and its potential for movement and expression is the basis of the dance experience (Foster, 1976; H'Doubler, 1998). All the issues raised within the realm of *taha tinana* can be confronted and addressed with dance. People who participate in dance have unique opportunities to be able to think and act conceptually through the body, over and above people who solely participate in sports (Foster, 1976; Root-Bernstein and Root-Bernstein, 2003). This is in part due to dance's focus on movement quality and expression, rather than just technical performance or movement outcome (Cohen, 1996). As Foster expands,

Athletes, gymnasts and high divers know, exactly, in terms of skill, what they are about; but the more they specialise, and specialise they must, the narrower their practice becomes, and what they know of themselves in terms of the medium – movement – is similarly restricted... The experience in movement of dancers and actors is not only much wider, but also more subtle because of its reciprocal

relationship with feeling. It is true that practice, especially for dancers, involves some repetition of certain phrases of action, but these are many and varies and should be – and usually are – rooted in, and reinforce, feeling (1976:10-11).

This quote outlines the difference in qualities and experience of movement among movement specialists, and suggests that dance is an ideal practice to be involved in to broaden one's movement experience. Variation in movement patterns (instead of the repetitiveness of some sports), the association with music, and dance being an activity in which one can express emotions, may be why dance is becoming an increasingly popular activity (Mulkerrins, 2010; Kaiser, 2009). Dance is now promoted as a medium for participation in fitness activities that boosts physical health, and reduces health care costs caused by inactivity (Ward, 2008b). Kaiser claims:

Dance training helps address the obesity problem currently facing our nation. Children who dance regularly are less likely to be overweight; they improve their metabolisms and burn calories. But perhaps most important, children who dance are less likely to participate in the dangerous behaviours that adversely impact the lives of their peers: teen pregnancy, drug abuse, unprotected sex, etc... It is far cheaper to give a pre-teen dance lessons than it is to treat them for drug abuse to provide care for the children of children, and to treat them for HIV infection. As we search for ways to reduce health care costs, why not think about providing dance training for every child in this country? It is inexpensive, productive, and addresses so many very expensive health care issues (Kaiser, 2009:np).

Kaiser points to the general long-term benefits of participating in regular physical activity. Ward discusses the use of dance in raising awareness and prevention of HIV/Aids in Africa, and goes on to state: 'Kinesthetically [sic] connecting body, mind, and spirit has expanded the worldview of dance to include prevention and management of chronic diseases, mental illnesses, and physical disabilities' (2008b:33). Dance is increasingly recognised as having a greater function than entertainment, and is increasingly touted for psychological benefits (including boosting self-esteem and self-confidence), and for perpetuating and celebrating cultures (Mulkerrins, 2010; Sporton, 2004; Van Meijl, 2006). This adds more depth to the reasons for participating in dance (Zarrilli, 1984). Dance is inherently adapted to the individual to suit body and capabilities (Rose, 1997). Through dance, a person can work on weaknesses and build strengths, increasing the ability of the whole body to move and function effectively (Rose, 1997; Ward, 2008b).

## Dance as Training the Body for Alternate Purposes

In many cases, dancers are in a unique position to express and discuss issues pertaining to the body and its physicality, due to their intimately explored relationships with their own and others' bodies (H'Doubler, 1998). This occurs through training and experience, and constant awareness of what the body is doing in time and space, in relation to other bodies, forces upon and within the body that execute movement, and the image portrayed by the movement (H'Doubler, 1998).

As dance is grounded in physical movement, it can also be used as a training mechanism for the body for other activities (Armstrong, 2005; Henwood, 2007). This is noticeable in the *Māori* culture, where many dances specifically train the body for combat or war, and enhance the oneness of mind and body within an individual and between group members (Armstrong, 2005; Best, 1924; Learning Media Ltd, 2003). In traditional *Māori* culture, many games and pastimes, including song and dance, were used to increase agility, flexibility, hand-eye coordination, and attunement to others (Armstrong, 2005; Best, 1924; Gardiner, 2007).

Because of the safety and welfare of a tribe depended on its military strength the Maori used many of their games to develop quickness of hand and eye, rhythm, anticipation and agility, and they reached a very high level of ability with these skills. With fluent yet controlled movements, and their competitive element, the games were and still are exhilarating to play (Smithells in Zaitz, 2009:100).

The prime and most well known example of using dance as a means for martial arts training in *Māori* culture is the *haka*. The *haka* is a challenge laid down to the opposition, for the opposition to either accept (and participate in the ensuing fight), or reject (and walk away) (Armstrong, 2005; Best, 1924; Gardiner, 2007). Although the *haka* is a preparation for combat, it is also classified as a dance (Armstrong, 2005; Gardiner, 2007; Zaitz, 2009). A great deal of preparation goes into performing a *haka*, and if not performed correctly by the entire group, then some groups will not subsequently engage in combat as the performers are not attuned and their mindset is not one (Armstrong, 2005; Gardiner, 2007; Learning Media Ltd, 2003). This draws on McNeill's (1995) sense of muscular bonding and attuning to others through movement, and Lande's (2007) focus on the shared breath, but the outcomes for not being attuned with others is more significant in this context. The demonstration of martial skill and competence in the *haka* can make the opposition wary of what (and who) it is up against; the *haka* is a dance but also a method of intimidation against enemies (Armstrong, 2005; Gardiner, 2007; Learning Media Ltd, 2003).

Other forms of *haka*, which use weapons such as the *taiaha* (a long, wooden, spear-like weapon) and *patu* (a flat club made from whale bone or *pounamu*, greenstone), are used for training different ways to attack, and increase proficiency in manoeuvres which can be used with those weapons (Armstrong, 2005; Gardiner, 2007). Through continual training while learning and participating in *kapa haka*<sup>58</sup>, participants learn about their own physical capabilities to perform the movements, the history and meaning of the movements, and the accompanying words (Barber, 2010; Learning Media Ltd, 2003). Participants also increase strength, ability, agility and flexibility through the rigorous training of their bodies (Armstrong, 2005; Gardiner, 2007; Henwood, 2007).

Another example of dance as a medium for combat training from the *Māori* culture is the *Poi*, essentially a ball on a string which is twirled and hit in various ways accompanied by song. The *poi* is now generally used as a women's dance to promote grace and fluidity of movement (Armstrong, 2005; Shennan, 1984). Skill with the *Poi* promotes flexibility, agility, and strength in the wrists, which assists in training for men, who later use the same and similar movements with larger weapons (Armstrong, 2005; Best, 1924). The *Poi* is therefore promoted by elders as a physical skill for younger generations to acquire, to build agility in the wrists for when they are strong enough and old enough to progress to the larger *patu* and *taiaha* (Best, 1924; Sheenan, 1984).

## **Dance and the Principles of Physical Fitness**

Learning to dance allows and encourages an awareness of what the body can do, and how to push the boundaries of physical movement (H'Doubler, 1998; Ward, 2008b). Training which leads to the optimal development of the body allows a person to focus on their strengths and weaknesses, and become attuned to the body's abilities (Ward, 2008b). This increases knowledge of oneself, and is

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<sup>58</sup> A *kapa haka* group is the *Aotearoa* New Zealand term for a *Māori* performing arts group, or cultural performance group. *Kapa haka* performances and competitions involve the presentation of songs, chants, *poi* and *waiata-a-ringa* action songs, and *haka* by a group usually dressed in traditional clothing/attire. Performances are not only for competitive means, but *kapa haka* groups usually perform in the *powhiri* or welcoming ceremony for both major events/gatherings in *Aotearoa*, and entry onto a *marae*. *Kapa haka* is the most common way for *Māori* to be involved in and practice their *reo*, language, and cultural heritage (Barber, 2010).

another starting point from which to discover and understand one's identity and sense of self (Morice, 2006; Ward, 2008b).

Exercise uses the muscles to move the bones, which creates movement. Increasing the regular use of the muscles increases the need for blood to supply oxygen and nutrients to the muscles (McArdle, Katch and Katch, 2010). The capillary network surrounding the muscle fibres increases in density, allowing more oxygen and nutrients to be delivered to the muscles, and carbon dioxide and waste products to be removed, so the blood flow to and from the muscles increases, improving effective transportation of nutrients and waste products (McArdle, et.al, 2010). Improved functioning of the muscles also contributes to the skeletal muscle pump system, where the contraction of muscles aids in returning blood to the heart, preventing pooling of the blood in the lower limbs, lowering the risk of varicose veins and reducing pressure on the blood vessels to return blood to the heart, which also reduces blood pressure (McArdle, et.al, 2010). In the lungs, the capillary network also develops, improving the efficiency of the carbon dioxide-oxygen exchange, which increases the uptake of oxygen into the blood, and increases the removal of carbon dioxide from the system via exhalation (McArdle, et.al, 2010). Exercise which uses the whole body and does not just focus on some parts of the body (i.e., cycling and running use mainly the lower body and swimming uses mainly the upper body) is more totally beneficial to improved functioning of all the muscles and increases the supply of blood to all areas of the body, increasing the ability of the whole body to work efficiently and effectively. The physical activity of dance, which promotes whole body motion in a variety of ways, improves the functioning of the prime movers (i.e., the hamstrings, gastrocnemius and quadriceps also used in running), but also muscles such as the psoas and iliopsoas, sartorius, soleus and other 'minor' muscles of the legs (Ward, 2008b). Thus dance is more effective than many activities at working more muscles in more ways, improving functioning of the total body (Ward, 2008b).

Speed is defined as moving from one place to another as fast as possible (McArdle, et.al, 2010). Generally this is measured by running in a straight line, as moving at speed in different directions constitutes as agility. Muscles are made up of groups of muscle fibres and are activated by motor neurones, which cause a muscle to contract or relax (McArdle, et.al, 2010). For a muscle or group of muscles to contract quickly and cause an action to occur at a high speed, recruitment of multiple (if not all) muscle fibres must happen swiftly, through activating more groups of muscle fibres at the

same time, causing a larger and stronger contraction force, moving the two ends of the muscle close together faster – enhancing speed (McArdle, et.al, 2010). As with all principles of physical fitness, this component can be trained for, through focusing on relaxed but fast and efficient movement (as is emphasised in some dance forms such as contemporary) (McArdle, et.al, 2010; Ward, 2008b). Unlike most activities which require speed, dance trains for speed in multiple limb directions through fast and efficient movement performed in many directions; these dance exercises also increase agility (Clippinger, 2007; Ward, 2008b).

Strong and powerful muscles, which are balanced (for example, when the muscles in the front of the leg are not stronger than the muscles in the back of the leg, causing an imbalance in power and inefficient movement), enhance the smooth, easy performance of everyday movement as well as effective use in emergency situations (Brooks, et.al, 2005). Strong, balanced muscles assist in keeping the skeleton in good alignment, and provide support for good posture, which aids proper functioning of internal organs (Brooks, et.al, 2005). Strength training maintains muscle mass and muscular functioning in the elderly: as we age, muscle cells are lost and muscle function decreases (Brooks, et.al, 2005; Weinberg and Gould, 1999). Dance is an activity which improves muscle and joint range of motion, strengthens muscles in most directions, reduces imbalances of power and strength, and increases the body's ability to produce smooth, effective, efficient movement (Clippinger, 2007; Laws, 2002). Dance compares favourably with physical training such as bodybuilding or weightlifting, where specific muscles are focussed upon, often over-developing certain muscles or muscle groups for their visual appeal, and distorting the muscular balance, in turn causing injury, inefficient movement, and undue strain on the joints (Brooks, et.al, 2005).

Endurance is the ability of the muscles to continue functioning over a long period; the longer the time, the greater the muscular endurance (McArdle, et.al, 2010). The same occurs for cardiovascular endurance, which is the effectiveness and length of time that the heart and lungs can deliver sufficient amounts of oxygen to the muscles (McArdle, et.al, 2010). As with any physical training, endurance is enhanced through longer training sessions (not short bursts which train for speed); dance can be included as an activity that builds endurance (Ward, 2008b).

Flexibility is the ability of a joint to move through its full range of motion (Brooks, et.al, 2005). Flexibility is specific to each joint, so flexibility in one joint does not mean flexibility in all joints (Brooks, et.al, 2005). Good flexibility promotes good joint health by preventing joint stiffness (Brooks, et.al, 2005; Clippinger, 2007). Stiffness leads to a reduction in joint fluid, which damages cartilage on the bone ends, due to less fluid lubricating the joint in movement, thus increasing damage to surrounding tendons and ligaments, and increasing the risk of problems such as arthritis (Brooks, et.al, 2005; Hessert, Gugliucci, and Pierce, 2005). Good flexibility in all joints promotes good posture and improves body positioning, allowing the bones to be in correct alignment and reducing undue strain from stiffness on different parts of the body (Brooks, et.al, 2005). For example, inflexible hips joints can tilt the pelvis forward, causing additional stress and strain on the lower back; this alters torso alignment and posture, causing pain and lower back problems throughout life (Brooks, et.al, 2005; Clippinger, 2007). Dance, an activity which promotes flexibility and smooth movement through complete range of joint motion, is an ideal activity for increasing flexibility, aiding and improving posture and body alignment (Clippinger, 2007; Laws, 2002).

Coordination can be broken down into two types, intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic coordination is the synchrony of muscles within the body to perform movement, and can be contralateral such as the oppositional swinging of the arms while walking, or homolateral such as moving the same side of the body's arm and leg at the same time (McArdle, et.al, 2010). Extrinsic coordination involves factors outside of the body, such the hand-eye coordination used in catching a ball – through tracking the path of the ball with the eye, the hand moves into a position to catch the ball (McArdle, et.al, 2010). Both these types of coordination can be practiced and used in dance exercises to increase proficiency in coordinated movement (Cohen, 2008). Agility is the ability to change direction quickly and efficiently, with speed, and involves coordination of the limbs, balance, and quickness of movement (McArdle, et.al, 2010). Dance increases agility through the practice of changing directions, performing movements which require balance and coordination, and increasing the pace of performing such movements which increases the skill needed and gained (Ward, 2008b).

Regular, moderate physical exercise increases the effectiveness and efficient working of the muscles and organs (Brooks, et.al, 2005). Exercise which works the aerobic energy system increases the effectiveness of the body to get oxygen from the lungs and to the muscles via the blood, working

and improving the cardiovascular system (Brooks, et.al, 2005). The heart lowers its resting heart rate, and increases its strength and stroke volume (Brooks, et.al, 2005). In other words, the heart pumps more strongly, pushing more blood out of the heart and around the body in each contraction, lowering how many times per minute it needs to pump (to get the same amount of blood around the body), and improving blood pressure, which reduces the workload on the heart, increasing the amount of time that the heart can work, lengthening life (McArdle, et.al, 2010). Participation in any form of dance which uses the aerobic energy system increases the effective functioning of the heart, lungs and oxygen delivery, lowering the resting heart rate, improving blood pressure, and reducing the risk of contracting cardiovascular disease (Ward, 2008b). This occurs immediately and throughout one's lifetime, and as dance is an activity which can be participated in at any age, the benefits can continue for every person:

Everyone can enjoy the health benefits derived from lifelong dancing. These health benefits include reducing the health risks associated with overweight and obesity and delaying the onset or improving the management of chronic diseases. The versatile nature of dance lends itself to so many settings that it has benefited persons with disabilities or behavioral problems, older adults in residential settings, and persons who are hospitalized. Although dance for health and healing is still in its infancy, its effects are profound and promising (Ward, 2008b:35).

### **Age and Development in Dance**

Dance and dancing is non-exclusive. By this, one could argue that every person can participate in dance in any way, shape or form. This is particularly noticeable in social dances, and community dance, where the elders get up and dance with grandchildren, and parents with children (amongst other groupings) (Buckland, 2006a). Some dance companies (for example, Crow's Feet in NZ) particularly cater for performers who are over a certain age, as the different capabilities and restrictions of their bodies (from the choreographers' perspectives) creates interesting movement.

For an elderly person, dancing may be a means to keep physically active to maintain independence. In dance, age is not a restriction, and neither is ability or body-shape. In the Pacific Islands (namely Fiji, Tonga, and the Cook Islands), being larger in stature shows status as it means the person has wealth and they do not have to work and are able to enjoy more food (Kaepler, 1970).

Consequently, the population is heavier (this is also due to genetics and the higher muscle mass in

their bodies), and dance performers are therefore larger; however their skill in performing is still of high standards (Kaepler, 1970).

Development in this context refers to the changes which occur in the body throughout the lifespan. As the body changes the experience of one's environment also changes (Cohen, 2008; Rowlands, 1999). Dance is a medium in which one explores those changes throughout the different stages in life, and come to terms with the differing abilities of the body in those stages (Cohen, 2008). Dance training throughout life can assist in exploring the changing boundaries and understanding of one's context, aiding holistic development of an individual (Cohen, 2008). As the body changes and develops, dance can increase understanding of what those changes mean within the body (such as weakening of strength as one ages), and provide a medium in which to explore the changing bodily abilities (Buckroyd, 2000).

Improving the functioning of muscles increases and enhances the neural connection of muscles to each other and to the central nervous system (Baars, and Gage, 2010). As mentioned in Chapter Five, the neural pathways work on a 'use-it-or-lose-it' basis. In activities like dance, frequent use of muscles in a manner which promotes effective use and development of muscular ability enhances the neural connections to muscles, bones, connective tissues and organs (Baars, and Gage, 2010). This also increases the knowledge of what the body is feeling (aches, pains, tension), and the awareness of where parts of the body are in relation to each other, and space (which can reduce the occurrence of falls, by improving balance) (Baars, and Gage, 2010; Ward, 2008b). Spatial awareness is improved, as is proprioception knowledge of one's own body, and injury prevention can occur due to enhanced connections to the brain informing what is happening at tissue level (Hagendoorn, 2005; Ward, 2008b).

Similarly, brain and bodily functioning and cohesion for improving the sense of health occur at the hormonal level in dance. Exercise releases endorphins (pleasure-inducing hormones) from the brain (Buckroyd, 2000). Thus exercise can lift moods and increase positive feelings towards oneself,

enhancing self esteem and self worth (Buckroyd, 2000). In dance, where exercise is coupled with social interaction, the mood-enhancing effect is multiplied (Buckroyd, 2000).

By doing, trying and testing the limits of the body's capability, the mind comes to know the body's abilities, and therefore feel a sense of control over the body (Rowlands, 1999; Siegel, 1999).

We forget that action underlies so much of our experience, even our concepts of near, far, high and low – concepts which are modified as our arms and legs grow longer.... We are in the world through our body, and the basis of knowledge lies in sensori-motor experience, the most intimate mode of knowing (Foster, 1976:13).

What this quote emphasises is how it is that one experiences the world. However, the body can supersede what the mind thinks the body is capable of – take for example extreme life-or-death situations, where superhuman strength and resistance permits survival, performing at a higher capacity than the mind thought possible (Pinker, 1998).

### **Embodied Knowledge and the Body as a Living Archive**

As the body is a medium through which to explore the environment, its potential, and one's context, it can become a body of knowledge unlike any other, literally and figuratively. One example of this is called muscle memory, where the muscles 'remember' a movement and way of moving when the mind has 'forgotten' (Cohen, 2008). Foster describes this phenomenon:

It would probably be accepted that certain skills become so much a part of oneself that they are never quite forgotten (e.g., skating, swimming, typing, cycling); they are kinaesthetic patterns and although we may find ourselves out of practice we quickly feel our way back again. We know 'in our bones' what we are about (1976:12).

In this manner, the knowledge is embodied, and can only be released by doing. Trying to do a movement is not the same as embodying and becoming the movement, as shown in the differences between a learner and an experienced mover:

The achievement of mastery-the ability to simply "do the exercise" in the "here and now"- can only be understood by looking beyond the surface level of technique to the interior mental and in-body processes at work in the maturing student. What at first are difficult and mechanical exercises mimicked in a rough, exterior manner eventually become movements so totally "owned" by the

individual that they are effortless and fluid. The student's movements eventually come to originate in the body... The correct "doing of the exercise" is ... "groundedness," earthy fluidity, and undulating, serpentine patterns which are achieved only when each movement originates from this correct, low center. The body is then seen to literally move in "waves" across the earth (Zarrilli, 1984:203-4).

This focus on the intrinsic quality and knowledge in and of the movements enhances the skilful performance of the movement. Furthermore, as this knowledge becomes embedded in the body, it adds to and changes the way in which a person moves, which can be accessed at a later time. Rowe speaks of this phenomenon in Hula dancer Iolani Luahine: 'Her movement is the medium through which a story maintains its vitality, and its meaning is conveyed through her entire body... a living library that archived a host of stories' (2008:39). Rowe also states that:

The bodies of hula dancers hold a body of knowledge, a complete philosophy with its own epistemology, its own vision of reality, and an ethic based of the virtues of sharing, responsibility, reciprocity, and humility. Historically, hula dancers were the moving archives of the cultural knowledge of the Hawaiian people, and today they can help us understand an alternative approach to knowledge and learning that reflects a different concept of enlightenment (2008:37).

Thus the past is inscribed on and embedded in the body. Sometimes this can make a body more 'acceptable' to the community, as it is seen to originate from and present ideas and beliefs which are concordant with the community.

The body is caught up in this operation of power; it is not neutral, non-historical, or non-social, but a site where cultural meanings are inscribed through the way the body moves, through the shape of the body, and through clothing, makeup, and other forms of adornment. The body shows the work done on it both intentionally and unintentionally. Through such markings a body is "constituted as an appropriate, or as the case may be, inappropriate body, for its cultural requirements" (Grosz, 1994:142 in Wright, et.al, 2006:708).

So, how a person moves and how they are trained to move, reinforces ideals, beliefs, and customs.

In the case of traditional *Māori* culture, Otorohanga describes:

But he never for an instant forgot that in all, and above all, he represented in his present person his forefathers' repute of a warrior! Everything had to be subordinated to this passion. When he went abroad he instinctively carried his tomohawk with the handle gripped in his right hand. When on a ramble, and in a narrow path he met a stranger, instinctively also he stepped to the right, and to the higher ground... every motion was watched; causal intonation subjected to mental criticism; every sentence dissected for possible subterfuges; no proposition accepted until the mind had inventoried its value. And why? Because

he is a warrior; and at any moment may cast off his mat and defend his privileges (Otorohanga, 1928).

The same phenomenon occurs in *kapa haka*, Māori performing arts groups, as the students learn the *reo*, language, the customs, and what their ancestors did (Barber, 2010). In this way knowledge from and of the past is increased and becomes embedded in the way in which one moves, increasing one's attachment to place, heritage, ancestors and culture (Barber, 2010). So, being embedded in and living one's culture through participation in everyday activities, the body is inscribed with the effects of that lifestyle.

As dance is a cultural activity and a vehicle for cultural knowledge, regular participation within cultural dance inscribes particular movement patterns within one's movement vocabulary, increasing the likelihood that that style of movement will permeate one's 'regular' or 'normal' way of moving (Rowe, 2008). Furthermore, as dance is a body of knowledge that can only be accessed through participation, performing one's cultural knowledge in a group further binds one to the group, reinforcing cultural bonds and the shared knowledge and history gained. For example, in entering a *marae*, different *iwi* have different protocols, which identifies their distinct heritage; through visually noticing, and physically doing their protocols, knowledge of the others values, beliefs, customs and ancestors occurs (Best, 1924). This reinforces a sense of belonging, as well as a person physically being recognised by others as coming from a different *iwi*, due to the way in which one performs, acts, interacts, and the customs one follows.

## **Conclusion**

The body is a site of knowledge, in which one knows oneself, others, and one's history, context, and environment. Hence, the body should not be excluded while learning about these topics; and dance (as shown), is a medium in which these can be explored and understood. One's ability to move efficiently and effectively is enhanced through dance training, as dance increases joint mobility, flexibility, strength, agility, and cardiovascular efficiency. Exercise activities, like dance also release endorphins which are mood-lifting, and also reduce stress and tension. Similarly, through training in dance and the focussing on the body and how it moves in dance increases knowledge of the body and its abilities as it changes throughout life.

# Chapter Seven: Conclusion

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'Education in dance is fundamental to the education of all students' (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1997:19). This sentence stresses the important functions that dance has in society, education, personal development, and life. By using Durie's *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model of health as a tool to examine dance, I have shown dance's ability as a medium to relate to, inform, and develop oneself, one's body, others, society, the environment, and life. This is due to concepts in dance relating to those in life; consequently participation in dance can assist in gaining knowledge and understanding in life.

Durie's *Te Whare Tapa Wha* model provides a holistic and integrative overview of the various aspects of health, and a framework through which to examine how they interact, support, and rely on each other within an individual, society, culture, surroundings, and environment. The model uses the imagery of a *whare*, house, as a symbol of *hauora*, holistic health and wellbeing. The four walls of the house that contribute to *hauora* are: *taha wairua*, spiritual health; *taha whānau*, social health; *taha hinengaro*, mental and emotional health; and *taha tinana*, physical health. As shown, each of the aspects of health are dependent upon and influence each other, which provides a complex interaction of personal health that fluctuates and changes over time, depending on the needs of the individual. Because of this, Durie emphasises that:

Across the range of conditions that determine health, there needs to be a synergy. No matter whether the focus is on the prevention of ill health and the promotion of well-being, or on treatment and rehabilitation, progress depends on the dynamic interaction of people with each other as well as with wider cultural, social, economic, political and physical environments. Health is the outcome of all these variables acting together (2001:xi).

Factors common to all aspects of health are the self, body, and interaction with others. As the dissertation demonstrates, this is also true in dance. This assists in dance's ability to be a place and medium in which to develop each of these aspects as, while a person is dancing, time can be taken to focus on each aspect of wellbeing either individually or collectively. In *taha wairua*, the spiritual aspect, dance reinforces the connection to the shared breath, encourages attunement to the self and body through attention to the experience of mindful movement, and cultivates the experience of moving in sync with others and the expansiveness of feeling which arises from doing so. Dance

further connects the individual to ancestors, god-figures, and one's history through the embodiment of cultural and historical movement and knowledge, which can stem from performing those movements. As such, dance connects to the spiritual nature of the self, allowing a person to attune to *wairua*, *mauri*, and *hau*, and extend that feeling out (through the shared breath and muscular bonding) to connect with others, the environment, and the spiritual realm. The imagery of the *wharenuī*, meeting house, described as the body of one's ancestors, again reinforces how the self and body has ancestors embedded within. In dance, this is glimpsed through movement, and shows the impact which others have on oneself; one is shaped, moulded, and formed through interaction with others (Manning, 2007).

Dance builds the *taha whānau*, social aspect of health. This happens as rapport is established through moving and breathing in synchrony and harmony with another person, increasing feelings of goodwill and affection towards the other. In this manner, knowledge of how to interact productively and effectively with others, and knowledge of societal structures and practices is fostered, easing relationships with others and affirming one's place within a group. Dance is an activity which brings people together for many reasons, strengthening societal and personal relationships, and can provide a reason for groups to meet. The *taha hinengaro* aspect of health is added to and developed through participation in dance. Dance strengthens the ability to focus and concentrate, which can be transferred to other tasks in life. Dance is a medium in which mental functions (and consequently neural functions and networks) are increased, through practice of mental skills such as analyzing, abstracting, problem-solving, and pattern-making, as in the choreographic process. Emotional topics of identifying and managing one's emotions can also be enhanced through discussions and choreographic processes in the dance-making and rehearsal process. Dance extends the ability to be aware of one's thoughts, feelings and emotions, and provides opportunities to examine, reflect, understand, and communicate these in various non-verbal (via movement) or verbal ways to others.

Physical growth and development, *taha tinana*, is also addressed in dance. Physical fitness and mobility increases; knowledge of how to maintain good body function as the body changes, develops, and ages is amplified through regular participation in dance. In dance, bodies move together with purpose; so, through knowledge of the body in mindful or meaningful movement, a person comes to know the self and others. This enhances life, augments coping skills, and

strengthens the ability to connect with others; in effect, dance teaches how to function in society and fosters historical knowledge through embodiment. Also, development of the processes and functions of the brain and body (such as mirror neurons, and skin knowledge through touch), set up within the body, allow knowledge to be accessed and used; dance is a means to learn, explore and exploit this.

Like the initial picture of the *whare*, house, all aspects of health can be equally developed and focused on in different dance class, exercises, forms, and styles. This depends on what is taught and how, and what the dancer wants to focus on. It is important to remember that each aspect of health is integrated and relies on the other, so developing or neglecting one aspect impacts on the others.

Although the writing in this dissertation seems to have positioned the body as a static entity in each aspect of health, this was merely for the purpose of discussion and analysis. When dancing, one's attention and focus can shift between and within the different aspects of health to assist in the focus on oneself, the body, others, the environment or life, whichever is more relevant at each moment. In this manner, dancers acknowledge that the self and body is, together, a 'thinking body' (Charlesworth, 2000), which can attune to aspects of self that need attention. One can examine the same complexity of self and wholeness in health and dance. For example, the shared breath and muscular bonding are found in the *taha wairua*, *taha whānau*, and *taha tinana* aspects, aiding development of self, and connection to self and others in dance. This reinforces the support and integratedness of *hauora*, holistic health and wellbeing, which also increases the balance and stability of the *whare*, house, body, self, and life.

As shown in this dissertation, dance is a holistic activity which develops the self and body, allowing an individual to focus on any or all aspects of health (which also holistically develops the person). Dance is a place to focus attention on the fluctuating needs of the body and self. In any instant, in any class or time of participation in dance, one's focus can be on which aspect of health is at the forefront of one's consciousness. The next time (or even within the same exercise or routine), one's focus may shift to another aspect needing attention. The interconnected nature of self within dance

allows one to concentrate on aspects one deems important or necessary, or to flicker between various aspects as consciousness warrants. Each of the issues discussed in dance also occurs in life, hence the ability for dance to address and contextualise those occurrences in life. This implies that dance has an important function in maintaining relationships, developing communities, remembering histories, connecting to god-figures and the environment, and enhancing the development of the whole person.

University of Cape Town

# Appendix A: Distinctions Between Religious Types of Dance

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Discussing the different aspects of religious and spiritual dance can be confusing, as many authors and practitioners of this style of dance call their dances by different names (or different dances by the same name), and sometimes do not acknowledge that their movements could be considered dance (Rouget, 1985). Often too, dances pertaining to spiritual possession and contact through embodiment are seen to be 'primitive' or 'tribal' and rarely practiced in 'civilised' societies (Cass, 1993). Because of these issues, the role and form of dance in religious ceremonies is often unacknowledged, undocumented or mis-documented (through anthropologists lack of knowledge of dance and its role and function in society, culture, and spirituality), and referred to as inconsequential to the religious practice (Cass, 1993; Rouget, 1985). However, examples of dance within spirituality, religion, and religious ceremonies have been categorised into religious, ritual, trance, possession, and shamanistic styles of dance. My understanding and distinction between these will be discussed here. Additionally, I have chosen to mainly use the word 'spirit' when referring to trance and the different types of trance. This does not, however, mean that there is only one type of entity which communicates with a person who is in a state of trance. The 'spirits' may be any, or all, of a person's ancestors, a supernatural entity, god figure or ghost. Despite this broad understanding of who may communicate with a person in trance, I have chosen to mainly use the word 'spirit' to aid in understanding the complicated realm of trance dance.

## **Religious Dance**

Religious dance is the umbrella term which usually covers all aspects of spiritual dance in religious ceremonies or forms of worship. In this instance, religious dance is refined to only represent dance which is presented as a performance with religious or spiritual intent. However, religious dance is more than the performance of ritualised movement patterns used in ceremonies or practices to obtain a spiritual connection to or worship gods, god figures, or religious icons. The performance may occur either within a religious setting (e.g., a place of worship or a sacred site), usually with religious themes and messages such as depicting prior events or stories related to the practicing religion, or performances portraying religious icons/gods and their actions (Dunlop-MacTavish, 1997; Rouget, 1985). Generally, these religious dances are celebratory dances, which venerate particular icons/idols within that religion, and as much as they are a performance, they are also recognised

more as a celebration of that particular religion and their beliefs (Dunlop-MacTavish, 1997). Although some performances may be set and passed on through the generations, this type of religious dance has a 'freer' form, as the main aim is to worship and celebrate, not critique the movements or performance aspect of the dance.

### **Ritual Dance:**

Ritual dance is usually seen to be the ritualised series of movements such as kneeling to pray, which are ordered, and have significance, and the overall structure of the 'dance' can be more important than how precisely the movements are performed (Cass, 1993). For example, the Muslim call to prayer, and the sequence of movements, chants and prayer are more important than the performance aspect, in that they are not performed for an audience. Also, ritual dance could be seen to be the movement performed in a ritual which is not necessarily religious based, for example, the motions, and visualisation, that English rugby player Johnny Wilkinson performs before he kicks a goal in a game of rugby, could be considered a ritual dance. Rituals can also have protective functions through honouring the gods or spirits for successful outcomes, such as imitation of animal movements for a hunting 'charm', healing rites for increasing health and funeral rites for safe passage to the underworld and protection of the living, or initiation ceremonies honouring the transition from childhood to adulthood (Cass, 1993; Rouget, 1985).

### **Ecstatic Dance**

Dances which involve the dancer or religious person to enter trance or become 'possessed' by spirits or demons are frequently referred to ecstatic dances (Rouget, 1985). According to Rouget (1985), this is usually because the person in trance is seen to be in an ecstatic state or in ecstasy, which can be likened to a 'fit', as the person ignores their surroundings, and their movements can either be erratic with seemingly little form or highly ritualised through lengthy repetition of specific movement patterns (Rouget, 1985). Furthermore, the trance type of dance may be performed either as an individual communication with the spirits, or as a collective entity and energy; the difference depending on circumstance, situation, and cultural norms.

### **Trance Dance**

Trance dance describes the movement performed as part of a ceremony which allow a person to enter (and recover from) the trance state. A person is said to go into a 'state of trance', in that it is

not a permanent condition, but a different state of being (Cass, 1993; Rouget, 1985). This 'state' is considered a time when the person in trance is functioning on a 'different' level, and has a heightened awareness of their surroundings and their senses. Often an overload of the senses aids the entry into the trance state (Rouget, 1985). Also, being in 'trance' may be said to be when one is either 'taken over' by, or is in communication with, another spirit (Lamp, 2004; Rouget, 1985). The spirit could be a god, spirit, ancestor, or supernatural entity which manifests itself in human or part-human, part-animal form. Under such an expansive notion of what trance dance entails, I have chosen to break this down into two more categories, Shamanistic dance and Possession dance.

### **Shamanistic Trance**

Shamanistic trance is when a person (who is generally responsible for the journey into and out of trance) stays in command of their own spirit, but communicates with others in an 'alternate realm'. In other words, while in trance, the shaman, or person in trance, may meet, talk, and/or go on a journey with beings which are unseen and unheard by other people (Lamp, 2004; Nelson, 1996; Walder, 2009). The person in trance can see, hear, speak with beings (often in an unrecognisable language), in order to get information either for themselves or for the surrounding people (who the shaman has gone into trance for/on behalf of) (Rouget, 1985; Walder, 2009). In such instances, the dance which occurs (and the music which accompanies the dance) may be mechanisms for entering the trance state (Rouget, 1985). Once in the trance state, the 'dance' may either stop during the 'communication' or continue. Therefore, dance may be one of the mechanisms for entering the state of trance, and not necessarily a symptom of being in this type of trance (Rouget, 1985).

### **Possessional Trance**

Possessional trance differs from shamanistic trance in that the person going into the trance state does not communicate with the spirits per se (Lamp, 2004). As the name suggests, possessional trance is where the person in trance is 'taken over', or 'possessed' by another spirit. The possessing spirit may then communicate through the vessel (the body in trance) to the surrounding people (Lamp, 2004; Rouget, 1985). Possessional trance involves virtually a loss of self (Rouget, 1985). When returning from the trance state, the individual may feel 'reborn' into society, making it easier to recover from the trance state, recognising the influence which was both upon the individual, and the surrounding people (Rouget, 1985).

## Appendix B: Glossary of *Māori* Terms

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Before I begin this glossary, it is important to note that I am only referring to words and concepts which are relevant to this dissertation, and I am only going into detail which is necessary to understand the *Māori* words used. For many words the meaning is deeper and more complex than what is written here, however that information I consider not necessary for understanding to occur at the current level of this dissertation. Also, in the *Māori* language, use of the word ‘the’ before words like *Māori* and *mauri* often does not occur, as both terms can be both personalised and generalised. For the ease of reading, and convention of language which I use throughout this dissertation, ‘the’ may or may not occur before some *Māori* words.

- Aotearoa* *Aotearoa* now is synonymous with New Zealand. Originally, *Aotearoa* (which means ‘land of the long white cloud’) was the name for one place in the North Island, but has grown to include all of New Zealand. Both *Māori* and *Pakeha*, non-*Māori*, use either or both words as the country’s name.
- Aro* To face, turn towards, notice, comprehend, or pay attention to. Is one word associated with *hinengaro* and the concept of mind and one’s attention and focus.
- Hā a kui ma a koru ma* Traditional cultural legacy – one aspect of Pere’s *Te Wheke* model of health.
- Haka* Many people have claimed that the word ‘*haka*’ means dance (Best, 1924; Royal, 2004). However, the *haka* is not strictly a dance, but a challenge which is laid down to others (Mead, 2003). The traditional form of the *haka* is not performed to music, and an imperative part of the *haka* is the words which are chanted, with which specific actions are performed that reflect the words. The meaning is carried through both the words and the movements, to convey a total sense of unity in meaning and intention (Keesing, 1928). Traditionally, the *haka* was a war challenge that a group of people would perform before going into battle (Mead, 2003). It was performed to ready the warriors, to put fear into the other group in the hope that that group would leave without a fight; or as part of the challenge to visitors upon entry

to the *marae* to make sure that the visitors' intentions are good, for example, that they would not steal from the *marae* (Mead, 2003).

- Hapū* A larger, extended family, *whānau* grouping, which can have its own *marae*.
- Hau* Vital spirit, vitality of human life, or essence (Mead, 2003), and is one of three main elements of one's spirit which intertwine and depict slightly different aspects of being. *Hau* is an intangible quality which describes the essence of a person, and 'is not located in any organ of the body' (Best, 1922b:32), cannot leave the body, and ceases to exist when the person dies (Best, 1922b; Mead, 2003). The more ordinary meanings of *hau* are breath, wind, and air (Best, 1922b; Mead, 2003), which within a person relates to physical breath.
- Hauora* Total health and wellbeing; it is more likely to mean the wellness and safety of the vital essence, which relates more to the holistic concept of total health and wellbeing
- Hawaiki* *Māori* term for the mythical island from which people are born and return to upon death – it is the resting place of the ancestors (Royal, 2009). In some traditions, *Hawaiki* is the physical place where *Māori* people begun their voyage to *Aotearoa* (Royal, 2009).
- Heke* Rafters of the *whare whakairo*, carved ancestral house, which represent the ribcage of the ancestors who protect the inhabitants.
- Hinengaro* One word which represents what the West call "mind" (Best, 1922b:39). Is one aspect of mental concepts, consciousness, and thinking.
- Iwi* Tribal grouping. Is larger than a *hapū*, extended family, and is often comprised of many *hapū*. An *iwi* can have its own *marae*.
- Kapa haka* A *kapa haka* group is the *Aotearoa* New Zealand term for a *Māori* performing arts group, or cultural performance group. *Kapa haka* performances and competitions involve the presentation of songs, chants, *poi* and *waiata-a-ringa* action songs, and haka by a group usually dressed in traditional clothing/attire. Performances are not only for competitive means,

but *kapa haka* groups usually perform in the *powhiri* or welcoming ceremony for both major events/gatherings in *Aotearoa*, and entry onto a *marae*. *Kapa haka* is the most common way for *Māori* to be involved in and practice their *reo*, language, and cultural heritage (Barber, 2010).

<i>Karakia</i>	Roughly translates to prayers or incantations.
<i>Kaupapa</i>	' <i>Māori</i> ideology, philosophical doctrine, incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of <i>Māori</i> society' (Moorfield, 2010).
<i>Kaumātua</i>	Elders, adults, elderly.
<i>Marae</i>	Before colonisation in <i>Aotearoa</i> New Zealand, the <i>marae</i> was the name for an area of land which was in front of a <i>Māori whare whakairo</i> or carved meeting house within the <i>pā</i> or fortified villages of each <i>Māori iwi</i> or tribal group (Barlow, 2009). Currently (in 2010) the word <i>marae</i> refers to all the buildings and facilities associated within a <i>Māori</i> community which are designated for community use. The buildings usually consist of the <i>whare whakairo</i> (carved meeting house), the <i>wharekai</i> (dining hall and cooking area), and the <i>marae ātea</i> (the sacred space or area in front of the carved meeting house which is used for welcoming ceremonies) (Barlow, 2009).
<i>Marae ātea</i>	The sacred space or area in front of the carved meeting house which is used for welcoming ceremonies (Barlow, 2009).
<i>Maihi</i>	Barge boards of the <i>whare whakairo</i> , carved ancestral house, which represent the arms of the ancestors protecting the inhabitants.
<i>Mana</i>	Power, prestige, charisma, authority, influence.
<i>Mana ake</i>	The uniqueness of the individual in Pere's <i>Te Wheke</i> model of health.
<i>Manaakitia</i>	Capacity to care for <i>whānau</i> , family members, particularly children, elderly, and the less able (Morice, 2006).
<i>Māori</i>	Indigenous people of <i>Aotearoa</i> New Zealand.
<i>Māori tikanga</i>	See <i>tikanga Māori</i> .

<i>Mātauranga</i>	'Education, knowledge, wisdom, understanding, skill' (Moorfield, 2010).
<i>Maui</i>	<i>Maui</i> is one of the main figures in <i>Māori</i> mythology. He is one of the sons of the gods, and many stories of his adventures tell how he shaped <i>Aotearoa</i> New Zealand, as well as how he made man mortal, discovered fire, and so forth. Consequently, there are many stories of <i>Maui</i> which explain the world of one's ancestors, and describe how the current world came into being.
<i>Mauri</i>	Soul or spirit.
<i>Mauriora</i>	Access to <i>Te Ao Māori</i> , the <i>Māori</i> world, in Durie's <i>Te Pau Mahutonga</i> model of health promotion.
<i>Mōteatea</i>	Speeches, traditional chant, lament, or song chanted/sung in a traditional manner.
<i>Ngā Manukura</i>	Effective leadership in Durie's <i>Te Pau Mahutonga</i> model of health promotion.
<i>Ngakau</i>	A word which partly describes the western concept of 'mind' (Best, 1922b), and can refer to the seat of affections, heart, or mind (Moorfield, 2010).
<i>Ora</i>	Life, health, vitality, be alive, well, safe, cured, recovered (Moorfield, 2010).
<i>Pā</i>	Fortified village from traditional, pre- (and immediately post-) colonisation times.
<i>Pakeha</i>	A <i>Māori</i> word for the first European people to colonise <i>Aotearoa</i> New Zealand. Now is generally an accepted term for white, non- <i>Māori</i> people.
<i>Papatūānuku</i>	Father sky.
<i>Patu</i>	Large flat blade or club made from <i>pounamu</i> , wood, or bone.
<i>Poi</i>	A flax ball on a string used in the <i>Māori</i> performing arts and <i>kapa haka</i> performances. Traditionally was a tool to train and increase flexibility and strength in the wrists and forearms for younger people to become proficient in before moving to the larger <i>taiaha</i> and <i>patu</i> .

<i>Pounamu</i>	Greenstone.
<i>Pūkana</i>	The opening and protruding of the eyes in <i>kapa haka</i> performances. Can be the ancestors coming through the individual in performance.
<i>Pupuri taonga</i>	The capacity to provide guardianship.
<i>Ranginui</i>	Mother earth.
<i>Taha hinengaro</i>	The mental and emotional aspect of health in Durie's Te Whare Tapa Wha model of health.
<i>Taha wairua</i>	The spiritual aspect of health in Durie's Te Whare Tapa Wha model of health.
<i>Taha whānau</i>	The social aspect of health in Durie's Te Whare Tapa Wha model of health.
<i>Taha tinana</i>	The physical aspect of health in Durie's Te Whare Tapa Wha model of health.
<i>Tāhuhu</i>	The main ridgepole in a <i>whare whakairo</i> , carved ancestral house, which represents the backbone of the ancestors protecting the inhabitants.
<i>Taiaha</i>	<i>Māori</i> spear, a long wooden or bone shaft.
<i>Tangata whenua</i>	People of the land, or those who belong to the land.
<i>Tapu</i>	The basic translation means sacred. There is more to this word that what is necessary to mean here.
<i>Te Ao Hou</i>	Synthesis of cultural elements from <i>Māori</i> and <i>Pākehā</i> worlds, in the <i>Te Ao Tūtahi</i> model of mental wellness.
<i>Te Ao Māori</i>	The <i>Māori</i> world in Durie's <i>Te Pae Mahutonga</i> model of health promotion.
<i>Te Ao Mārama</i>	The world of light which emerged from the darkness in <i>Māori</i> mythology.
<i>Te Ao Pākehā</i>	Concept of the European world, in the <i>Te Ao Tūtahi</i> model of mental wellness.
<i>Te Ao Tawhito</i>	Concept of the <i>Māori</i> world which has its origins in pre-contact <i>Māori</i> existence, in the <i>Te Ao Tūtahi</i> model of mental wellness.

<i>Te Ao Tūtahi</i>	Model of mental wellness which is used to describe and encompass the ‘complexity of <i>Māori</i> existence’ (McNeill, 2009:96), for use in understanding research on and of <i>Māori</i> people, and how <i>Māori</i> people ‘move effortlessly between different worldviews and realities’ (McNeill, 2009:112).
<i>Te Ao Whakanekeneke</i>	Concept of the global world, in the <i>Te Ao Tūtahi</i> model of mental wellness.
<i>Te Mana Whakahaere</i>	Autonomy of leadership and tasks and roles, in Durie’s <i>Te Pae Mahutonga</i> model of health promotion.
<i>Te Oranga</i>	Participation at all levels of health promotion, in Durie’s <i>Te Pae Mahutonga</i> model of health promotion.
<i>Te Pae Mahutonga</i>	The southern cross. In this case it refers to Durie’s model of health promotion.
<i>Te Pō</i>	The darkness, the beginning of <i>Māori</i> mythology.
<i>Te Whare Tapa Wha</i>	The house of four sides. In this case, it refers to Durie’s model of health.
<i>Te Wheke</i>	The octopus. In this case, it refers to the title of Pere’s model of health.
<i>Teina</i>	Younger sibling, or mentee.
<i>Tīhei Mauri Ora</i>	The sneeze or breath of life.
<i>Tikanga Māori</i>	<i>Tikanga Māori</i> could be described as ‘the correct way of being and doing’. Unfortunately, this description barely begins to scratch the surface on how <i>tikanga Māori</i> is more a way of life that can involve practices, customs, and a value system for how to live.
<i>Tiramaka</i>	Companies of sky fairies, but are active souls.
<i>Tohatohatia</i>	The capacity to share or provide a safety net by distributing money and goods to those in need (Morice, 2006).
<i>Tohunga</i>	The basic understanding of <i>tohunga</i> is a person who is a priest or spiritual leader.

<i>Toiora</i>	Healthy lifestyles aspect of Durie's <i>Te Pae Mahutonga</i> model of health promotion.
<i>Tuakana</i>	Older sibling, or mentor-like person.
<i>Tuakana-Teina</i>	Mentorship-like relationship between a more experienced and less experienced person.
<i>Tupuna</i>	Ancestors, grandparents, or elderly relatives such as great-aunts and great-uncles.
<i>Tūrangawaewae</i>	Connection to land, a place to stand or put the feet, where one is from or belongs to.
<i>Tureha</i>	Mountain or forest fairies.
<i>Waiata-a-ringa</i>	Action song.
<i>Waiora</i>	Environmental aspect of Durie's <i>Te Pae Mahutonga</i> model of health promotion.
<i>Wairua</i>	Soul or spirit.
<i>Wairuatanga</i>	The spiritual aspect of Pere's <i>Te Wheke</i> model of health.
<i>Waka</i>	A <i>waka</i> is often described as a canoe, and can be of various sizes, depending on its need or function. The <i>waka</i> referred to here are the canoes which brought different <i>iwi</i> to <i>Aotearoa</i> New Zealand, from which come all <i>iwi</i> and all <i>Māori</i> people of <i>Aotearoa</i> New Zealand.
<i>Wānanga</i>	<i>Wānanga</i> refers to the baskets of knowledge bought from <i>Hawaiki</i> (the spiritual place where <i>Māori</i> people originated from) with the gods and ancestors who discovered <i>Aotearoa</i> New Zealand (Barlow, 2009). However in contemporary society, <i>Wānanga</i> also refers to the <i>Māori</i> tertiary institution, or a <i>Māori</i> department within a tertiary institution (Mead, 2003). Both meanings of <i>Wānanga</i> rely on, and describe the importance and sacredness of learning in the <i>Māori</i> society. Knowledge is considered <i>tapu</i> , or sacred, and so there are particular procedures to acquiring knowledge,

and definite places of learning – *Whare Wānanga* (Barlow, 2009; Best, 1924; Mead, 1969).

<i>Wehi</i>	Physical reaction to a performance, often through the raising of the hairs on the back of the neck. Is a symbol of a powerful performance.
Whakamana	Capacity to empower, develop human capital and engage in advocacy (Morice, 2006).
<i>Whakapapa</i>	<i>Whakapapa</i> is similar to the concept of genealogy, however there is more to it than just tracing one's ancestors (www.maori.org.nz). Knowledge of one's ancestors names and significant events is open knowledge, however the <i>tapu</i> , sacred matters which was carried with that information is restricted knowledge, and only available to a few <i>kaumātua</i> , elders, or <i>tohunga</i> , the sacred knowledge keepers. Which information and knowledge passed on may be different for each <i>whānau</i> , families, or larger <i>iwi</i> , tribal groupings. However, each story is considered correct as there is more than one version of history which can be passed on. The importance of knowing one's <i>whakapapa</i> is emphasised regularly in <i>tikanga Māori</i> , way of being. A person's <i>whakapapa</i> is spoken at the beginning of <i>mōteatea</i> , speeches, as people introduce themselves through their placement of themselves in context of their history. In other words, one is introduced through one's ancestors and the ancestor's relationship to the people to whom one is introduced.
<i>Whakatakoto</i>	Capacity to plan ahead and provide for the future (Morice, 2006).
<i>Whakatauki</i>	<i>Māori</i> proverb.
<i>Whānau</i>	Family: either nuclear/immediate family; extended family; or a close group which consider themselves as working like a family.
Whānaungatanga	A sense of family or kinship connection. A relationship which has developed through 'shared experiences and working together which provides a sense of belonging. It develops as a result of kinship rights and obligations, which also serve to strengthen each member of the kin group' (Moorfield, 2010).

<i>Whare</i>	House; either physical or metaphorical.
<i>Whare Kohanga</i>	'Building erected for childbirth, maternity ward' (Moorfield, 2010).
<i>Whare Pora</i>	The <i>whare pora</i> describes a specific site for the creative arts (in this case, weaving), emphasises the high place of the arts within <i>Māori</i> society. In some cases, the <i>whare pora</i> was 'not actually a building, but rather it was the collective to weavers old and young who worked within the principles of the house, who protected its traditions and made sure that novices were properly inducted into the <i>tikanga</i> . There was a knowledge base belonging to the house – a <i>mātauranga</i> of weaving – there were procedures for novices to follow, and there was <i>tapu</i> ' (Mead, 2003:256).
<i>Whare Tapere</i>	House of entertainment, storytelling and dance.
<i>Whare Tūpuna</i>	The ancestral house.
<i>Whare Wānanga</i>	A <i>Whare wānanga</i> is the house of learning.
<i>Whare Whakairo</i>	<i>Whare whakairo</i> is the name for a carved ancestral house. In contemporary society, the <i>whare whakairo</i> has come to represent important tribal ancestors, rather than the traditional practice of depicting the nuptial embrace of <i>Ranginui</i> , mother earth, and <i>Papatūānuku</i> , father sky (Barlow, 2009). The internal structure of the house represents an ancestors' body which embraces the people within the house.
<i>Wharekai</i>	The food-house or dining hall.
<i>Wharenuī</i>	The big house: another word for a <i>Māori</i> meeting house. The <i>wharenuī</i> is one of the names used to describe the traditional meeting house which is prominent within the <i>marae</i> ( <i>Māori</i> community of buildings). It can be a general meeting place where issues pertaining to the <i>iwi</i> are discussed, where visitors are met, and where people may sleep (Mead, 2003).
<i>Wharepuni</i>	<i>Māori</i> meeting house.
<i>Whatamanawa</i>	The emotional aspect of Pere's <i>Te Wheke</i> model of health.

<i>Whenua</i>	Earth, land, country, state, or placenta.
<i>Whētero</i>	Protrusion of the tongue in <i>kapa haka</i> performances. Is the ancestors or spirits coming through the performer.

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