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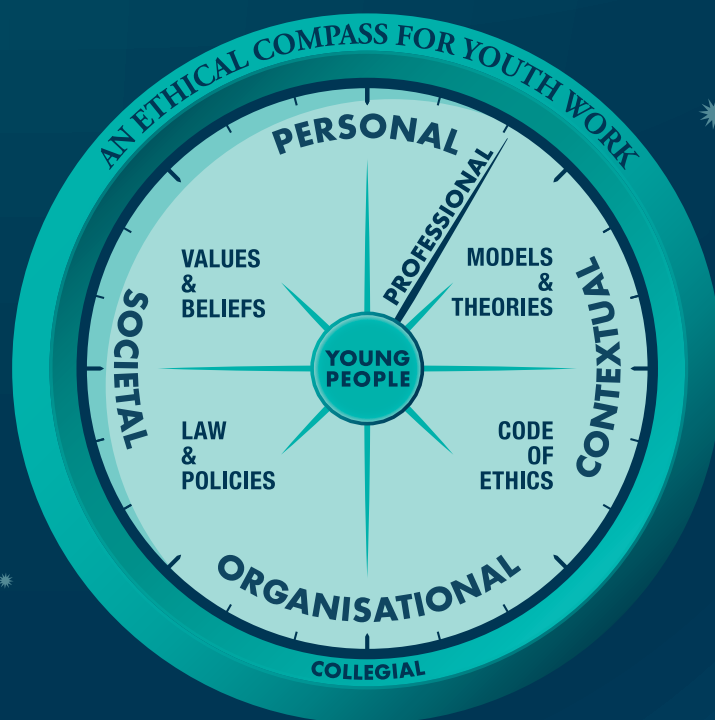
Celebrating trailblazers: 20 years of
youth workers exploring ethics in Aotearoa

A COLLECTION OF REFLECTIONS

AN ETHICAL COMPASS FOR YOUTH WORK

PERSONAL

PROFESSIONAL

VALUES
&
BELIEFS

MODELS
&
THEORIES

SOCIETAL

YOUNG
PEOPLE

CONTEXTUAL

LAW
&
POLICIES

CODE
OF
ETHICS

ORGANISATIONAL

COLLEGIAL

Edited by **Rod Baxter** and **Anya Satyanand**

Kaiparahuarahi

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Contents

Dedication

This publication is an expression of our collective gratitude as youth workers to **John Harrington** and **Jane Zintl** who have invested an immeasurable volume of time into developing youth work ethics across Aotearoa New Zealand.

In addition to the voices within this collection, we have also invited their respective families to contribute a few words…

Jane Zintl: Ethical Superstar

I do have the privilege of being married to Jane. It is common knowledge that she is rather astute when it comes to the matter of ethics. Her lawyer prowess comes out a desire not to be "right" but to genuinely help people.

Jane and I actually were introduced when she lectured on Health and Safety. How could one not be taken back by her group games, discussion times and ethical dilemmas! Such was the nature of her training that I had to learn more about the subject that was Jane… yes indeed I wanted to marry my teacher. Years into the future I love that I now am married to an ethical "superstar". Jane has helped shape the ethical practice through countless organisations that do quality youth work throughout Aotearoa.

Jane, your family are incredibly proud of everything that you have done. You champion youth work in Aotearoa in a way that we could not really understand not even now. Thank you for being constantly faithful, honest and packed filled with integrity. We love you so much. God bless!

Christoph Zintl, on behalf of Matteus, Nathaniel and Lucy Zintl

John Harrington

As the youth sector celebrates 20 years of the Code of Ethics of Youth Work, we as a family recognise John's commitment and passion for the development of youth work and all that this incorporates in NZ.

Being part of John's family means that we see first hand the struggles and joys that developing youth work brings for John. While John is away regularly, he still fits in time for all of us and family life ticks along.

I know John is hugely thankful for the many great working relationships he has with so many of you in the sector – and the support he gleans from these.

We know John will always be passionate about seeing the best outcomes for youth work and young people in our nation and that in itself speaks volumes to us as a family. It is an honour having a husband and Dad so passionate about bringing positive change to the Youth Sector. Congratulations John, Jane and the rest of the team.

Vicki, Dan, Yasmin and Jacob Harrington

Editorial

It's time to celebrate!

During the Code of Ethics Champions workshop series, we realised that Jane Zintl and John Harrington kicked youth work ethics into high gear with Canterbury Youth Workers Collective in 1997. The somewhat mythical story started when John Harrington handed Jane Zintl three scraps of paper and these became the first Code of Ethics for Youth Work. Rapidly, youth workers all over Aotearoa became extremely interested in understanding ethics and a national conversation united the diverse contexts of our practice.

Here we are in 2017, twenty years later and youth work has evolved significantly. This publication celebrates two decades of ethical exploration in youth work, via vignettes and experiences of a dozen youth workers. It seems appropriate to mark this milestone and measure how we've grown. Back in 2012, we all seemingly forgot to celebrate the 10th birthday of the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (YDSA). We acknowledged the decade after the Real Work report was launched in 2006, however we didn't have the resource or capacity to conduct a survey of our youth work community to the same scale as *Real Work*. We won't forget to celebrate twenty years of ethics! Youth work can be a tough job; we need a few more parties!

Let's express our collective gratitude for these two kaiparahuarahi, John and Jane, and the other youth workers that have joined in on ethical exploration and development. This concept, kaiparahuarahi, was first introduced to Ara Taiohi wānanga at Tapu Te Ranga Marae by kaumatua

Bruce Stewart. Matua Bruce described kaiparahuarahi as trailblazers, those who create a new path where there has not been a way before. This totally sounds like Jane and John!

There are actually innumerous youth workers around Aotearoa who have grappled with the complexities of ethical practice. Our sense is both this complexity and youth work as a distinct practice have evolved significantly over the past two decades. This journal is a 'collection of reflections' that hopes to capture just a few of these voices. Our aspiration as editors has been to reflect the diversity of our youth work sector. We extended an invitation to a bunch of practitioners, and are grateful to those that have accepted the challenge.

The contributing youth workers in this journal present a range of experiences in the field; some of these practitioners have been around for decades themselves, others bring fresh new perspectives. We'll hear from tangata whenua, tagata Pasifika, faith-based and rainbow practitioners. We've included youth workers working in paid and voluntary organisations, urban and rural communities, with and without formal qualifications. We consider where we've come from, how things have changed for youth workers and young people alike, and we indicate where we may be heading. A handful of unpublished theories and ideas, commonly orally shared in ethics workshops, are recorded here on paper for the first time.

Youth development practitioners across Aotearoa have longed for a local journal for years. We decided it was time to stop talking about it and

make something happen. This meant our invitation had severe limitations. There has been no time; we all pulled this together in a couple of months (some actually only had mere days to gather their thoughts!). There has been no money; we've all contributed to this voluntarily. There is no word limit and no style guide; we haven't censored any voices and allowed absolute freedom of speech.

Any publication like this will have limitations and we are acutely aware of the voices that are as yet unheard in this journal. We hope to see future versions of this journal that could enhance our understanding of matauranga Māori and youth work ethics, ethics in resettlement of young former-refugees, and ethics with mixed (dis)ability, to name but a few populations. We'd also appreciate comparison with our neighbours in Australia, who have wrestled with youth work ethics, particularly the emphasis on rights-based perspectives. With the emergence of youth work ethics internationally, it would be useful to locate ourselves globally and discern the commonalities in our practice across the world.

Finally, thanks to you, for caring enough about young people to explore ethics at a deeper level. We hope you discover some kind of epiphany in the wisdom of our contributing colleagues. Without further adieu, have a read of the incredible things they have to say!

Arohanui,
Rod Baxter and **Anya Satyanand**
May 2017

20ish questions for 20ish years

An interview with John Harrington

Rod Baxter

Locating the evolution of youth work ethics from 1997 to 2017
We recognise that ethics started before 1997. We want to go right back to understand: Where have we come from? Where are we at? Where are we going?

Rod: Let's start with you, John. What was youth work like when you started?

John: When I started youth work, I started as a volunteer. I was involved in Youth for Christ (YFC) who trained leaders and also gave you opportunities to practice – even at young ages. So I was thrown into running a youth club called Campus Life at the age of 18, with the support of some older people who were experienced. They just said, "you can do this John" so I was leading this group of about 96 young people.

R: Whoa!

J: They trusted me to lead them. I didn't have a lot of leadership experience except I'd been involved in Boys Brigade. They sort of saw potential in you and let you go and try. They'd debrief with you afterwards and give you some feedback. So that was my introduction as a leader, as a volunteer… I guess as a youth worker, although I wouldn't have even called myself a youth worker back then, I would've just said, "I'm a youth leader".

R: When did you first call yourself a youth worker?

J: I made a conscious decision to apply for an YFC internship that trained you on the theory and practice of youth work. You could either do an internship with Campus Life or through Te Hau Ora (which is now Te Ora Hou) and I wanted to work with young people that no one saw potential in and didn't have the same opportunities as others. I wanted to

work with those young people, I was really passionate about that.

I was turned down the first time I applied; they thought I was too young and needed some more experience. They weren't convinced I was the right person. I had to wait a year but I was really determined. I asked if I could go and work with Stanmore Boys Home once a week voluntarily. I sat and had meals with the boys and played basketball with them. It was really informal youth work, you could say, in an institution. I actually ended up doing that for three years. I was asked to run a programme on life skills, but it was the worst thing I did.

R: Really?

J: Yeah, because of the informal nature of having a meal with the young people, having casual conversations after dinner or as we played basketball or pool; it was a really good way to form a relationship with them. I got to know them really well. Once I started running a programme with them it had to become structured. I had kids running off. It was a different thing, it was just different.

R: So when the youth work relationship shifted from being informal to more formalised?

J: Yeah it changed the nature of that work. I still had the relationship with them though, because in institutions like that you've got young people coming-and-going and you soon work out it's the same young people. It's the same young people getting in trouble and in front of court.

With this experience, I applied to do the internship again; I was accepted and sent to Ōtara, in 1983 – to be trained as a youth worker. The training was to stay there, and whenever I was ready, to set up Te Hau Ora in Christchurch. I was 22 years old.

My training was vast, from hands-on youth work to running camps, and we started running clubs. It wasn't hard to get referrals, a lot of it was just engaging with young people in the neighbourhoods where we were living. The way we set the whole programme up was through camps. We had so many young people we had to split into not just one, but two camps. So we took the young people out of Ōtara to get to know them in a camp environment, which was the best way to do it. It allowed us to form a relationship with these young people and when we were back in Ōtara it allowed us the privilege of going to see them in their homes.

Most of the young people we were working with didn't have telephones and we actually had to go and visit them. It's a part of youth work that I see is missing now. You met their whānau, you met their dog, and you went into their house and you saw where they lived. The challenge for me, being a Pākehā, going into Pacific Island and Māori homes, was there was no trust with Pākehā. The Pākehā they usually saw were either the Police knocking on their door or a social worker coming to see them.

I can vividly remember turning up to a house, knocking on the door and they'd see me and they wouldn't answer the door – because I was a Pākehā. I made the mistake of having a clipboard with me [laughs]. I had a few flyers and I needed them clipped down so they wouldn't fly away but I soon learned not to do that. The only thing that would get me in the house was when the young person I was coming to see would see me and would tell their family, "it's John! It's alright!"

R: The telephone and unannounced home visits are good examples of aspects of youth work that have changed. What other things were amazing about youth work in the 1990s that we might have lost now?

J: We used to run a lot of activities that… [sighs] It's hard 'cos I don't want to sound like we didn't care about young people's safety, because we certainly did. I can remember on a camp we ran in Ōtara, on a farm, we had go-karts and motorbikes and trail bikes and these kids had never ridden motorbikes in their life. They'd get on and they'd fall off and it was hilarious. A kid, who'd never ridden a go-kart before, would get on and all the other kids would chase the go-kart around the paddock. They were so excited! And it was fine. Fortunately no one was hurt.

A lot of the youth work we did back then, we did things on the spur of the moment. There was a lot of gang tension in Ōtara when I was there. Lots of the young people we were working with were in street gangs. There were so many street gangs. Quite often they'd have organised fights, and we'd hear about them because the young people we were working with would tell us. As youth workers, we'd jump in a van and we'd go down to the town centre. We'd try get weapons off young people and get them in the van. The Police would turn up and there would be a standoff between the Police and these young people. And we're talking about a hundred young people.

So we'd go over to the Police and let them know what we were trying to do. I remember this one policewoman looking at me and going "what are you doing here?" I said, "well, I'm a

youth worker" and she asked "what difference are you making?" I replied, "Oh, here, I've got a few knives that I got off some young people and I'd better give them to you, because I don't want to be walking around with them." She was in total shock and asked, "how'd you get those?" and I said, "they gave them to me."

We had a relationship with these young people and they trusted us. We could say things like "look, if you hang around here, you're going to end up in trouble and we don't want to have to end up supporting you in court. You just don't wanna go there." We'd get them in the van and we'd go for a ride. It's dark. We'd go to the beach, we'd have some towels with us, and they'd go for a swim. They were really pumped in the van when we were going there because they wanted to be in town where the action was. But by the time we got to the beach (it took a wee while to get there), by the time we'd gone for a swim and come back, they were totally different. We'd have a feed of fish and chips and take them home.

What we didn't do was think about things like kids swimming in the sea with jeans on. But back in the 80's that was youth work practice – and it worked. It got them off the street. It got them away from a potential situation where they would could end up getting arrested. That was our way of intervening. It was crisis intervention.

Looking back, would you do that now? Ethically? You wouldn't. Too many risks. First, we're taking young people to the beach in the dark and we're letting them swim in their jeans. We could've lost them. We wouldn't have seen anyone if they'd drowned.

R: These are amazing stories. What other things happened back then that would not happen now?

J: We used to engage with young people through activities. We were trying to have lots of fun, stretch their confidence and take some risks. So we used to play games that you wouldn't play now, like 'Bullrush', 'Storm the Heights', (dare I say it) 'Fire Soccer', 'Bonnet Riding' where you'd get an old bonnet with a curve in it, tie it behind a car, in a paddock,

kids spinning out… Young people loved it. We used to play 'Fridge box races' where you'd put a big fridge box over your body and run into each other and kids would get hurt, even though the boxes gave you some protection. These activities were really fun! Young people used to come to our programmes because of those activities. You can't do those things now.

R: One of the things I remember you talking about in ethics workshops is youth workers rewarding young people with cigarettes, can you tell us about that?

J: Yeah so, some context… Back in the '80s and late '70s, a lot of youth workers smoked. A lot of social workers and people in the caring professions smoked. The majority of youth workers smoked when I got into youth work, even in faith-based organisations. It wasn't seen as a bad thing to be seen smoking around kids, or even with them.

When I was volunteering at Stanmore Boys Home, young people would have to hand over their cigarettes when they came in. They were told that, for good behaviour, they'd be allowed to go and have a smoke with the staff. In the context, it wasn't seen as unethical practice, it wasn't challenged. And to be honest, y'know, youth workers formed really good relationships with young people when they shared a smoke with them. Standing outside the youth centre, or even inside back then, the conversation was quite different. It was more relaxed, cigarettes seem to relax people. You were seen as a good youth worker if you gave them to a young person that couldn't afford their own. They'd even share cigarettes.

R: In those days, did youth workers ever discuss ethics?

J: We certainly discussed safety. Reflecting back, we did put safety plans in place for those activities. There was always a first aid kit available. We realised that, in these activities, some young people might end up getting hurt, so what would we put in place? The thing we didn't have at our fingertips were cellphones; if something did go wrong, you couldn't get help straight away.

But, yeah, youth workers didn't want to see young people getting hurt. We didn't intentionally go out to run activities like that. It wasn't, y'know "they've gotta toughen up", it wasn't like that. Not at all.

Ethics… I guess we started talking about things like "should you do that?" and whether it was "right or wrong?" But the word "ethics" was not something you heard a lot. Even with the training I had at YFC, we never discussed ethics. We talked about how to be a good leader.

R: When do you first recall conversations about ethics?

J: 1995. I don't know if it was the first time. There was a hui in Ngaruawahia for the purposes of the sector coming together and talking about forming a national body because the Industry Training Organisation (ITO) wanted to consult about the qualifications they were starting to write. The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) funded and organised the hui, after the ITO asked the sector to run the hui and DIA supported that. One of the things that came up at the hui was "who's driving the waka?" around setting up a national body.

On the programme there was a discussion on 'youth work ethics'. I'm not even sure who put that on the programme. Maybe it was part of talking about a national body, because the thing that's common with such bodies is they have a code of ethics. There were about 100 people at the Hui and there were maybe 20 at the Ethics Workshop. There was a discussion about what sort of clause headings should be in a code of ethics for youth workers. And if you look at our Code of Ethics today, most of those are in there. So they came up with the obvious things like: youth workers will not beat up a young person, will not sell them drugs, will not have sex with them. The things that people know are common sense. And there were things like

confidentiality, empowering young people, not taking advantage of them…

So that workshop presented back to the wider hui. One of the clauses they'd written created a huge discussion and controversy. It said: "youth workers will not use mind-altering drugs within the hours of their work". When do the hours of youth work finish? Some believed what a youth worker does in their personal life is their private business; so long as it doesn't impinge on our professional life, we can do what we like. So you're saying that it's OK to smoke dope or do whatever so long as it doesn't affect your work? Well, it does actually affect your work.

Unfortunately it split the hui into those who smoked dope and those who didn't. In some ways it was good that this discussion happened because it was the reality, it was where the sector was at that time. But at the same time it took away from the really good work that group had done on those ethics clauses.

The National Youth Council, back in the 1970s, I don't know if they had discussions about ethics, but they certainly had discussions about organisations collaborating together, supporting each other and sharing resources. They'd done research into the needs of young people at the time and actually written a book about it. You can't disregard all the work that had happened beforehand, to lead up to this hui in Ngaruawahia.

I don't think the sector was ready to set up a national body. We weren't unified enough. We weren't ready for it. We were sort of forced into it because the ITO was writing qualifications for us anyhow. So the Aotearoa Youth Workers Collective (AYWC) was formed in 1997 and it didn't last long; it went down in 2001, because there wasn't support from the wider sector.

R: So what happened after the 1995 hui?

J: After Ngaruawahia we ran a South Island Youth Workers Hui and we covered the same issues, we ran the same programme.

R: And how did ethics go there?

J: Yeah that was a much better conversation. We still had a conversation about that clause on mind-altering substances, but that was where Canterbury probably became really serious about ethics. Canterbury was actually given the mandate to write the constitution for the AYWC and ethics sort of sat with that. Other regions had other responsibilities – Wellington had 'membership' I think.

R: So there was 'ethical interest' in Canterbury?

J: Yeah, definitely. But it didn't go anywhere for a while because of capacity. It wasn't until I started actually working full-time for the CYWC in 1997, and this is probably where the journey started.

R: So how was the Canterbury Youth Workers Collective formed?

J: In 1990 I got involved in the Canterbury Youth Workers Training Forum, originally set up by DIA under Muldoon's Government, which eventually became the Canterbury Youth Workers Collective. I really valued the networking. We got to know each other really well. There weren't many of us to start with.

R: And how did Canterbury decide to create a Code of Ethics?

J: I was personally very passionate about ethics for a couple of reasons. Firstly, I was trained by a person who was a paedophile with young people he worked with including some of the youth I was working with in Ōtara. Secondly, there was another high profile sexual abuse case in a residential house; there used to be lots of these houses for street kids, run by well-meaning people, but lots of stuff went down in those houses.

In Christchurch, there was a tragedy in 1996 in the 'House of Hope'. Seven street kids were killed by a fire, in what they called the 'snake pit', where they were inhaling glue. One of them accidentally set fire to some of the

“Would you give a young person cash, if they asked you for cash to get on the bus?”

glue and the whole place just blew up. They were killed instantly. There was an inquiry and youth workers, social workers, people… were just trying to blame each other.

There were several cases of youth workers taking advantage of young people, including sexual abuse, and it was just tragic. It marred our practice. I was determined to do something about that.

The first day I started working for the CYWC, I wrote this long letter to the Minister of Youth Affairs at the time, Deborah Morris. The letter was about the state of youth work in our country and it included these events that were happening. Basically even if these people went to prison, they could get out and they could just carry on as youth workers. There was nothing in place, nobody to hold them accountable; they couldn't be stripped of their profession. There was evidence of this actually happening.

When Deborah Morris came to Christchurch and met with me, she asked what we were going to do about it. And I told her I wanted to write some ethical standards that our sector agrees to. We've had some discussion and youth workers already say that it's not ok to beat young people up or have sex with them or sell them drugs. Deborah encouraged me to work with the Ministry of Youth Affairs. Harry Tam was working for the Ministry then and he had the portfolio for 'youth work training'. They actually had someone in the Ministry back then who held that portfolio. I expressed to Harry that I didn't really have the mandate to write a code of ethics but I'd love to be involved. Harry said to me, "John, just do it. Just do it. Who else is going to do it, John? No one. So just do it."

I thought "Oh crap – I can't write a code of ethics!" But I remembered I had people around me in Canterbury who could help, so I committed to writing a draft.

Around that time I was off to a conference in Australia. There were lots of workshops about youth work as a profession. It was really interesting, a totally different perspective from what we'd been discussing. They were way ahead. I went to a workshop on ethics led by Howard Sercombe. In Western Australia he'd facilitated a workshop called 'herding the cats' with youth workers, a bit like what probably happened at Ngaruawahia, and they wrote a code of ethics. It was short bullet points on three pages. I went to Howard after the workshop and I asked if I could take it back to New Zealand.

R: How was the first edition of Canterbury's COE created? And received?

J: I met with the CYWC management team and showed them Sercombe's starting point. I mentioned how I thought we could develop it, including some bicultural stuff and references to the Treaty. We established a working group and wrote a draft. There was a group of about five of us and Jane Zintl was one of those. Because Jane had a legal background, she very kindly wrote some policies to sit alongside the code. She spent an incredible amount of time writing those, and it was all voluntarily. To her credit, she was really passionate about it.

We worked on the code in 1997 and during 1998 we held consultation around it. We consulted with Māori, we asked youth workers what they thought about it and we ran several workshops. We made amendments and finally launched it in 1999. It was quite a long process.

R: Was there much resistance?

J: No. I don't think so. Back then the sector was much smaller and we had good relationships with each other. And CYWC had grown hugely in 1997, we had more members and we engaged more widely. It was no longer just about those who were working with young people "at risk". Our goal was to represent the diversity of youth work being carried out in our region.

R: What was the first complaint like?

J: I can remember it vividly. We had two complaints officers in place, one of whom was Jane, our most experienced person, and she was actually away at the time. So it was handled by the other person, who was pretty inexperienced and unfortunately the process wasn't followed through our policies. It was a real learning curve for us. It could have potentially turned to custard for us.

R: What was the nature of the complaint, broadly?

J: Oh it was about a youth worker who had believed they'd seen another youth worker manhandling a young person in a public place.

R: What was the outcome?

J: We ended up bringing the two parties together for some restorative process. To get to that point was quite a drama. There was a challenge back from the person who had been complained about, and their manager, and rightly so. The best thing about all of this was that it enabled us to get it right the next time. We certainly learned from our mistakes. But it wasn't the best way to start! The outcome was that the complaint was dropped after mediation.

R: How many complaints has the CYWC had in total?

J: There were probably four that were followed through with the Ethics Committee between 1999 and 2005. They were varying degrees. A young person put a complaint forward and they decided to drop the complaint.

This is one of the things we learnt about our complaints process, even though we tried to make it as supportive as possible for young people to make complaints if they needed to, at the end of the day, the process is very much an adult one. It's just really hard for a young person to go through that and feel supported, or free from the threat that the youth worker in question will know who it is. In this case, it was unfortunate because the young person had a valid complaint and it's unfortunate it wasn't carried through.

The other thing to note is that we could only take complaints from people who were members of the Collective. So if they weren't a member, we couldn't do anything about the situation. Other than encourage the complainant to approach the youth worker's employer.

The complaints officers got lots of phone calls. After they'd tease it out, and clarify the written component of the process, it often wouldn't go any further. There were definitely a significant number of complaints received by the complaints officers

that never went any further, simply because they were asked to write it down. We would put it out to our sector that the whole point of this was to stop gossiping and backstabbing. If you've got a real issue with a youth worker's practice, then make a complaint and deal with it professionally through that process. Some people would ring up and discover that their complaint didn't actually breach the CYWC Code of Ethics.

R: What was it like monitoring the Canterbury Code every two years?

J: We reviewed the Code every two years by taking submissions from our members. We had some really interesting submissions that made changes to our Code. I can talk about two in particular.

One was around smoking. With the new legislation and 'smoke free' policy, an increased awareness about health impacts and the banning of smoking cigarettes in public places, a discussion was created about "where does this fit with youth work?" In particular in youth centres and places where young people hang out, and engage with youth workers who smoke. The submission said, "youth workers should not smoke with young people." The decision was unanimous. If a youth worker wants to have a cigarette, they need to go away and do that somewhere else, away from where young people are.

The other part of this submission was, "youth workers should not give young people cigarettes." And this created a huge response from those people who worked in mental health, in residence and with young people who were really strung out or suicidal. These youth workers said that if they were with a young person in a crisis state and they asked for a cigarette, they'd give it to them. The person who made the submission had not actually thought this through. It raised a big question and several organisations proclaimed "we cannot sign up to this code of ethics".

Then someone asked if a young person wanted a joint, would you give them a joint? Or if a young person wants to go to McDonald's and eat twenty Big Macs cos they're strung out? It was a good discussion, in the context of our societal views on smoking and where we sat with it in the caring profession, working with young people? It informed the CYWC code and the national code.

The second memorable submission that was made was about a specific clause in our code. Roughly it said, "youth workers will not take advantage of young people by swaying them to their religious views". This came from an organisation that worked with young people after they'd felt proselytised and they needed support for how that affected them. The outcome of the discussion was that this shouldn't just be about evangelism, but it should be about any of our political, cultural, personal views and not swaying young people to believe what we believe. It was actually a faith-based organisation that volunteered to rewrite the clause based on feedback.

The best thing about the process was discussion. It brought the sector together. We took submissions at our AGM. Submissions were distributed in advance and people came with ideas. It was hard for the person facilitating, because discussions got pretty heated!

R: So inspiring! It's a shame this doesn't happen anymore.

J: Yeah, it's like that earlier conversation we were having about how youth work has changed. You're right, the national code, as it is now, it probably is time to look at what has changed. That was the reason why Canterbury wanted to revise it every two years because we realise, youth work practice changes. We published several editions. Seven, I think. At least four... five? Check with Jane.

R: So how did we go from a Canterbury code to a national code?

J: It was natural in many ways. CYWC had been asked to share the code with other regions. Jane and I were invited to Tauranga, the West Coast, Nelson, Whanganui... There were youth work networks there, they were interested in ethics and they even wanted to adopt the code. We formed relationships with people who were on the same page.

R: When, how and why was the National Youth Workers Network Aotearoa formed?

I decided we could do better than just visit and talk about the code. Since we'd formed relationships, we could stay connected. Telephone conference calls started in 2002 with a group of passionate youth workers around the country who wanted to see youth work develop. This was the shaping of the National Youth Workers Network, and a big part of that was the code of ethics.

Canterbury weren't precious about their code actually and were prepared to support the development of youth work nationally. But we didn't think it was a good idea just to adopt the CYWC code because it needed to be owned by the sector nationally.

R: How was the first national COE written?

J: We travelled to as many regions as we could around New Zealand. We did a roadshow in 2007 throughout the country, 'Let's Not Be UnCode'. We'd just become incorporated as the National Youth Workers Network Aotearoa. [John transitioned from his role with CYWC after several years to establish NYWNA]. We went to Kaitaia and to Invercargill and virtually everywhere in between. We covered lots of regions, as much of the country as possible.

We basically ran a workshop asking two questions: "do you think we should have a national code of ethics?" There was certainly a unanimous decision about that. And then, "ok, if we're going to have a national code, what should it look like?" We didn't even take the CYWC Code with us and we didn't show an example. People knew there was a Canterbury code, but we said "we want this to be open, a blank page, so we're starting from scratch." We did it a bit like they did at the Ngaruawahia hui.

We invited youth workers to imagine what clause headings would need to be included in a national code. We saved the detail under each clause heading for later. Then we asked people to consider all the varied contexts youth work is carried out in. We threw some ethical scenarios around. For example, some youth

workers in New Zealand actually have young people come into their houses for pyjama parties. In contrast, some youth work in New Zealand includes casework, and they'd never do that. The first youth workers would ask the caseworkers, "how on earth do you form a relationship with young people if you're not spending time with them? If they don't even know where you live?"

These scenarios prompted debate, and people didn't even realise, but we were starting to define our practice. If you say it's unethical to hold pyjama parties at a youth group leader's house, then you're basically saying "well that's not youth work. We don't accept that." Is that what we're saying?

Other scenarios included giving your personal phone numbers and visiting a young person in their house without anyone else home. So yeah we were thinking about ethical dilemmas but we were also acknowledging that this happens in youth work. It's the reality of our practice. Would you give a young person cash, if they asked you for cash to get on the bus? We know that happens, but is it ethical practice to do that as a youth worker? Let's have some ethical discussion around that.

We talked about how the nature of youth work means there are lots of young people involved; we've got lots of younger youth workers. What impact does that have on ethical practice? We've got people living in rural communities. We've got Māori and Pasifika, should that make a difference to our ethical practice, how they work and how Pākehā work? All these questions emerged and it was all collated. If I remember rightly, we ended up with about 120 clause headings.

So when the NYWNA set up the COE working group, it was strategically put together. We wanted to ensure that we covered as many of the contexts of youth work as we could. We covered the voluntary sector, the LGBT/rainbow sector, we were totally committed to our bicultural partnership and had tangata whenua representation, we included real grassroots youth work, faith-based, adventure based learning (ABL), disabilities, Pasifika… Believe it or not, we managed to pull it off.

We first met in December 2007 and had the Code completed by May 2008.

Initially we set an open time frame to write the Code. We needed funding

to publish it. The Ministry of Youth Development offered funding as long as we completed the code ready for the Involve Conference to be held in June that year where the Minister could launch it.

It just changed the whole thing. We had to rush the process. To the credit of the group, we worked our butts off, meeting monthly then twice a month. We were all doing work outside the meetings, emailing each other, sending through our thoughts on different clauses as we were writing and rewriting and writing and rewriting! It was a really interesting process to be involved in. There was obviously huge debate, robust discussion, and in fact, looking back, I don't know how we pulled it off!

It was an amazing effort by an incredible group and I feel privileged to be a part of that group. They were all so dedicated to making it happen. We got to know each other so well because we were talking about our practice, which was dear to us.

This interview was conducted on 28 March 2017. Rod could have listened to John tell stories all day long.

. . . .

*The **National Youth Workers Network Aotearoa** launched the first edition of the **Code of Ethics for Youth Work in Aotearoa New Zealand** in 2008 at the **Involve 08:Relate** conference in Wellington, along with a submissions booklet seeking feedback immediately. Submissions were incorporated into the second edition, which was delayed after **Ara Taiohi** was launched at **Involve 2010** in Auckland. In fact it was Ara Taiohi's inaugural AGM on 22 February 2011 that the second COE was launched, the same day as the earthquake in Canterbury.*

Since early 2011, we've seen the impacts of earthquakes and other natural disasters on youth work. Hundreds of youth workers have been directly involved in disaster response and recovery. Resilience holds a different meaning than a decade prior. We've also seen the rise of social media permeate the lives of young people and youth workers are wrestling with ethics in digital/online spaces. Government funding contracts are seeking new levels of data and becoming more individually prescriptive, notably with the NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) service.

Continue John's story for yourself. Consider what's happened since the COE was released…

- *What changes have happened in society and in our culture?*
- *What changes have happened in youth work practice itself?*
- *What are youth workers facing today that the COE doesn't address?*
- *How have legal changes e.g. Vulnerable Children's Act, Health and Safety impacted youth work?*
- *And what's next? Where's youth work ethics heading in Aotearoa?*

Developing ethics with fellow youth workers in workshops

Reflections 20 years on

Jane Zintl

It is hard not to get nostalgic looking back at a 20 year journey. I have strong memories, a few months into my new role as a youth solicitor at the Christchurch Community Law Centre, of John Harrington asking me to help write a "Code of Ethics for Youth Work". John had been the youth work representative on my interview panel for the role and I recall feeling like 'I owed him' so had better say yes. To be honest I don't know that either of us anticipated how the journey would develop from that place – and that is probably just as well!

Since that day I have lost count of how many youth workers I have had the privilege of training in the Code of Ethics. I estimate between 10 and 20 trainings a year averaging 20 youth workers in each training, for the last 18 years. That is well over 5000 youth workers trained on our Code of Ethics. Each youth worker is unique – and each group has been a pleasure to train (some more than others!).

Over the years we have developed as a profession, as we have needed to in our ever-changing and super-diverse social climate. We no longer see it as normal to reward young people with cigarettes. We currently need to adapt and innovate our ethical framework to the fast-moving world of social media. However there have been very few changes to the core of our ethical framework, that is, how we form genuine, safe and authentic relationships with young people.

Here are some of the learnings that have developed over the last 20 years, and now form regular parts of our trainings.

1. When people think of ethics they usually think of the 'big stuff' – don't sleep with young people, don't beat them up or give them drugs. Youth workers do not need to be trained to not do these things. They are a necessary part of our Code of Ethics as if (or when) they happen we need to hold youth workers accountable. However, ethics are equally as relevant in the small decisions we make every day. It can be as simple as I have six young people and only five seatbelts – what will I do? When it comes to little ethical decisions here are some interesting observations. Firstly, it is the same ethical process in making small decisions as the big ones. Essentially, when you manage a small ethical dilemma well, you are training and equipping yourself for handling the big ones. Secondly, very few big ethical dilemmas start that way; they usually start little and get a bit off course. Then like a ship that goes a little off course, if it continues on that trajectory the problem gets bigger and bigger over time.

2. What makes youth work ethics unique is it is based on our youth development framework. For us ethics is as much about how we could, or possibly should proceed, as it is about what we cannot do. By putting our COE under the YDSA (refer to Glossary) framework we have started to define what it is to be an ethical youth worker. If you are working with a young person and ignoring the connections around them – you are not working ethically. If you are only looking at what is wrong with a young person and not what is right with them you are not working ethically as a youth worker. If you are not forming a quality relationship with a young person you are not working as an ethical youth worker. You might be working ethically – but not ethically as a youth worker.

3. People often say to me that ethics are common sense; to which I will always reply, "common sense is not quite as common as it used to be!" I actually believe that when we say ethics are common sense we undermine the complexity of the decisions youth workers are required to make on a daily basis. It takes a high level of skill to engage ethically on these issues.

Glossary

YDSA = Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa. You can read and download at **www.myd.govt.nz**

4. Youth Workers are often looking for the 'right' answer in an ethical situation – but rarely are things quite so black and white. The following diagram has been developed over the last decade to highlight this. In making an ethical decision there are a number of things you can't do; this is black and white. However, there are a number of things you can do and the reality is some of them are better than others. Some ways we respond as youth workers bring more life, light and hope into the lives of young people and their whānau – and some don't. We must acknowledge that we are human and make decisions in real time, so we cannot be perfect. It is our responsibility to be proactive and ensure, as much as possible, that we position ourselves as youth workers to make the best decisions possible for young people. Experience is one important part of this equation – one we can't short circuit. Nevertheless, whatever our levels of experience there are a number of things we can be intentional about to support us to make the best decisions possible. These include training (both formal and informal), self care, supervision, and getting advice from colleagues or other professionals. Our hope as always been that the Code of Ethics would be one of these tools to equip and support youth workers to when making these challenging ethical decisions.

If I could write a Code of Ethics that would stop bad things happening to young people I would sit in my office all day, every day writing Codes! Unfortunately, the existence of a Code of Ethics does not prevent this. What it does do is give us a professional standard that we can point to and hold each other accountable as youth workers. The vast majority of youth workers do not fall into this category. Our hope is that the Code is equally (if not *more*) relevant to them, supporting them to make the challenging decisions they face on a daily basis.

As my nostalgia comes to an end I cannot help but look forward. As a profession we are at the cusp of the next significant stage in our development. We have a growing number of COE champions and are moving towards accrediting youth workers to train others in our COE. This will allow us to proactively meet the needs of the sector rather than the reactive way John and I (and others) have previously be able to respond to these needs. Like all change this has elements of excitement tinged with sadness. Every COE training I have run has challenged me in some way. Every youth worker who has participated in a training has impacted in some way on who I am as a person. Part of me doesn't want to share this, even though I know it is long past due. Many thanks to the thousands of youth workers who have chosen to take responsibility for their practice and been on this journey with me.

The fine line

Things you can't do | Things you can do (Some better than others)

A CONTINUUM OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

Other people's children

Contribution to the memories

Anni Watkin, YCD (Youth & Cultural Development), Ōtautahi

It was 1978 when I entered the world of youth work. These were the days of piling into a van with 15 young people and two of us "youth workers/community workers" heading off to Banks Penninsula for a swim. No RAMS form, no consent, no seatbelts, no training, heaps of good will, no accountability and no code of conduct. Only by the grace of a higher power did we all return in one piece.

Fast forward to 1997, I meet this guy, the guru of youth work I hear, John Harrington. My role is managing and developing a team of youth workers who are somewhat rough around the edges but again well meaning and committed to the kaupapa. There is the establishment of the Canterbury Youth Workers Collective (CYWC), led by John. I join the Board of Trustees and learn of the development of "some sort of Code of Ethics for Youth Work". As a new manager of a three year old youth centre I was excited but wary. What is this going to mean for us? What it meant for me was support for YCD[1] to become a great youth work service for young people.

John and Jane started putting this document together that triggered our thinking about some areas of our work that we hadn't really placed a lot of importance on and in fact hadn't even considered. Having children myself, the expectation as a parent was that anyone providing youth work support for my kids would ensure they were always safe and well cared for, and I always knew where they were and what they were doing.

> "We no longer had to assume we were doing ok."

That was an assumption not an assurance. Most parents would be the same.

The Code of Ethics (COE) gave youth workers a 'manual' for good youth work practice. With the COE came the need for a process to ensure youth workers were practicing accountably and there was a fair and just process if or when they were not. Therefore, a complaints process was developed alongside the COE. I was appointed as Complaints Officer for the CYWC. The guide to best practice document gave me the reference point to support my thinking around whether youth work practice was breached.

Over the years there have been very few complaints received in Canterbury. There have been however several requests for guidance as to how to deal with a youth worker who may have crossed a line and the reference document has been the Code of Ethics. We no longer had to assume we were doing ok, we were able to refer to a well written Code of Ethics that was consulted on and has been revised over the years to improve how we work with other people's children.

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Editor's note:

Big data and the cliff

Rediscovering a policy tool

Mental Models developed by David Hanna for the Whole Child / Youth Development Policy Tool in 2004. (Re)Introduced by Anya Satyanand

It is 13 years since David Hanna wrote this piece but it could have been written last week. There is a profound message for youth workers here which echoes the other contributions and stories contained within these pages. Hanna's encouragement to value paradox and hold tension is something special that I think he brings from his background in ethical youth work practice. Youth workers find this tension in the world, embrace it within the young people they work with and within themselves as practitioners.

Despite how relevant 'valuing paradox' still feels at practice level, the 'mental models' which sit behind current policy have shifted enormously since 2004. Most current policy discourse frames children and young people in terms of their vulnerability and disadvantage. In 2004 youth were considered "*at risk*". In 2017 young people are no longer "*at risk*"– young people have become the risk itself, measured in terms of potential cost to the state.

For policy makers in 2017, the cliff in policy makers' minds is made up of the 761,900 New Zealanders who are between 12 and 24. At times it seems impossible to discern any sense of positive potential in this policy discourse, any focus on the acquisition of competencies through effective support mechanisms (like youth work).

Big data and social investment has become the driving methodology across New Zealand government, the silver bullet, the key to the next level for policy makers. There seems to be a belief that once government departments in Wellington can identify the individuals across the country who most need help – those who are sleeping under bridges or in cars, who are turning up to school with bruises, who are not tracking well towards employment – that the problems these people pose to the state will be solved.

Fundamentally though, social investment doesn't answer the question of 'so what'. When politicians talk about predictive risk modelling and why New Zealand needs it, they invoke a policy problem that positions young people as potential cost and risk. Once the young person is identified, and the earliest and cheapest intervention is purchased for them by the state, the state's responsibility ends. This is an incredibly deficit, mechanistic, Minority Report version of reality that is utterly at odds with the principles of youth development.

Luckily the 20% of New Zealand who are between 12 and 24 give us much more cause for hope than our policy making demographic. Young people are becoming superdiverse at a faster rate than any other demographic in Aotearoa, and the reality is that their strengths and active participation are amongst the only factors that potentially can uphold and uplift our communities, redefine our economy and revitalise our democracy in order to take Aotearoa into a different, more hopeful future. Our young people's cultural capability, volunteerism, commitment to social, economic and environmental justice is cause for celebration and amazement given the deficit ways in which they are spoken of.

In order to create the conditions where young people are encouraged and empowered to thrive we need investment in the professions who work with young people. We need the value of this work to be better understood and integrated into policy approaches. And we need the rights and strengths of our incredible young people to be part of our national discourse.

"Young people are becoming superdiverse at a faster rate than any other demographic in Aotearoa."

# Mental models for child and youth development

David Hanna

All people have some form of mental model or understanding (or world view) of the issue they are working on. These mental models may consist of fragmented and sketchy hunches or assumptions, or be detailed and comprehensive frameworks. These models are essential to project the outcomes of options being considered in the policy process. Frequently these mental models are not made explicit in the policy process – and yet the questions and observations that are shaped by them are a key feature of the policy related discussions.

This section helps policy analysts to consider a mental model that is informed by a whole child/youth development approach. This aids the translation of implicit understandings into more explicit mental models.

The Cliff – Stopping Falling and Helping to Climb – Vulnerability and Potential

The metaphor of a cliff is a common metaphor in discussions about children and young people. This exercise will present a mental model based on a cliff metaphor. To encourage a holistic approach, this model integrates two versions of the cliff metaphor – neither is right or wrong. Both are important to inform policy advice that reflects a more holistic child and youth development approach. The final section suggests steps for how the model can inform the policy process.
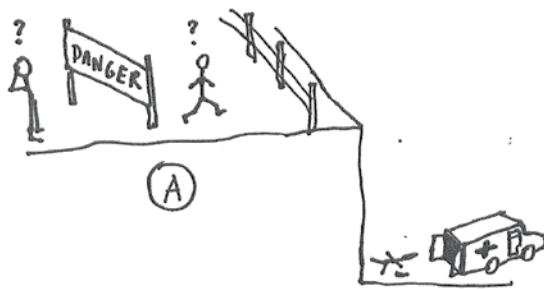
Aspect A – Prevention of Falling Down Cliffs

This aspect of the mental model is about stopping children and young people from falling down cliffs and causing harm to themselves and others. References to 'ambulances at the bottom of the cliff' or 'falling through the cracks' and the need for better earlier intervention are linked to this aspect of the mental model. The following headings unpack key aspects of this aspect of the cliff mental model.

Principal Focus

The **content** or type of activity or intervention to help children and young people grow into healthy adults.

Principal Objective

This aspect of the model is concerned with the protection of child and young people from harm/negative outcomes (to themselves or others). It highlights the vulnerability of children and young people.

Underlying Assumptions

*   Adult community has an active role to prevent child/young people from harming themselves
*   Risk is negative and should be avoided.

Messages about a Successful Life

*   A successful life is one that avoids risk and the possible negative consequences that go with it.

Key Themes

Vulnerability, risk, prevention, early-interventions, tertiary intervention.

Possible Policy Applications and Implications

*   Applicable to addressing a specific child or youth problem
*   Promotes a graduated series of interventions to reduce the numbers of young people reaching a crisis stage
*   Helps make rationalising decisions around the mix of services government should provide
*   Early interventions tend to be more universal and cheaper but with a less robust evidence base
*   Conversely tertiary interventions are targeted as the child/young person who already has a defined problem. These are more expensive to deliver and tend to have a stronger evidence base
*   Common debate as to where on the continuum to make the investments (the relative investment mix)
*   Due to more robust levels of evidence on the positive impact of more intensive targeted interventions there is a tendency for more investment at this end
*   Tends to promote a focus on interventions, programmes and experts as opposed to the role of family, whānau, peers and community.
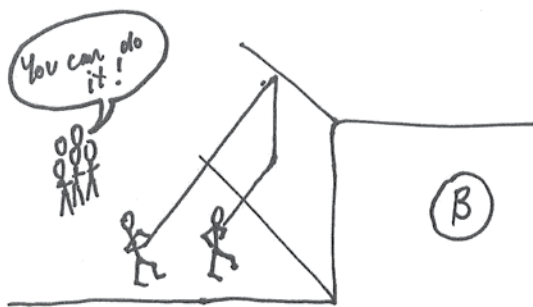
Aspect B – Learning to Climb Cliffs

The aspect of the model is about helping children and young people acquire skills and attitudes to increase their contribution as citizens. Reference to the importance of the family and peers, and strengths-based approaches reflect this aspect of the mental model.

Principal Focus

The process of contributing to healthy child and youth development.

Principal Objective

This aspect of the model is about supporting all children and young people to develop the skills and attitudes to contribute to society now and in the future.

Underlying Assumptions

- All children and young people need support, encouragement, teaching, to learn from life's challenges
- All children and young people are capable, with the right supports, of increasing their potential and contributions
- The adult community in partnership with children and young people have a role to play in realising their potential. It is not possible to pull a child up a cliff!
- Some risk is positive, if the supports are in place.

Messages about a Successful Life

- A successful life is achieved by collective support and individual effort
- A successful life is about being extended and growing your potential.

Key Themes

Potential, competency acquisition, effective support mechanisms, development opportunities.

Possible Policy Applications and Implications

- Promoting opportunities for development and skill acquisition
- Identifying supports needed to achieve outcomes and goals
- Highlight the process aspects (as opposed to content of programmes) that need to be factored into policies (e.g. skills of staff, strengths based practice)
- Highlights the contribution of family, whānau, peers to child and youth development.

Applying the Cliff Model to the Policy Process – A Discussion

Valuing Paradoxes…

Vulnerability and potential are two states that are paradoxically inter-related and essential to understand in relation to child and youth development. Both are givens in all children and young people's lives. A whole child and youth development approach to policy encourages the holding of these two states/attributes in tension throughout the policy process. This represents a shift away from a linear 'either/or' approach to a more organic 'both/and' approach to policy. Risk and potential (development) are inextricably linked. For example, just as we need adult directed initiative for children and young people, we also need space for children and young people to make decisions and take action. The two policy options are not mutually exclusive.

Danger of Addressing Only Half the Equation…

A policy process that only focuses on one state (eg vulnerability/risk) is likely to be of lesser quality than a process that understands the role of both states. The insights that result from the creative tension of both aspects is lost and there is an increased likelihood that a set of prescriptive and narrow policy options will result. Historically different streams of government policies have addressed the different aspect s of this model in relative isolation. Welfare, justice and health policies have concentrated on the risk and vulnerability aspects of children and young people, while education and labour market policies have concentrated on their capability and potential aspects. The resulting fragmented approach is the core problem that this policy tool seeks to address.

But What Is the Role of the State?

A key related question in the public policy process is "should the state intervene?" This question highlights

the boundary between private citizens and the State. From a whole child and youth development perspective this dichotomy is not as important. To expand – a policy approach that is predominantly concerned with risk and vulnerability (falling down cliffs aspect) usually has a key action or incident that triggers the direct intervention by the state. For example a crime is committed or a high-risk behaviour displayed. This thinking assumes that if the child or young person doesn't activate the trigger then the State is not intervening (this tends to ignore the other omnipresent roles of the State in relation to the laws and maintaining cultural norms). The policy focus is around reducing this child or youth problem, and only intervening when there is a problem, or likely to be a problem.

However policy approaches like sustainable development and whole child/youth development, require a wider understanding of the role of the State. Under these policy approaches, it is acknowledged that a wide range of factors (climate systems, economic systems, land use patterns) interact together and have cumulative impacts on the total population, some of which will result in consequences for generations of people not yet born. This more holistic, systems perspective makes it hard to determine a clear boundary between the individual and the State – the two are closer interconnected and interdependent. Under this policy understanding a simple division between citizen and the State is not as useful and potentially misses the more important considerations. For example, what is the common understanding of the desired outcome/environment, and what are the factors that contribute to these successful outcomes/environment?

A Quote…

"The lens of risk that we have traditionally viewed young people through is based on a medical model which has a pathological grounding. Harm inflicted on young people is to a victim without the ability to help themselves. This starts a vicious cycle where pathology is laid over pathology. This cycle prevents clinicians from viewing a holistic view of young people. Within the development or resiliency paradigm harm inflicted on young people has a paradoxical effect of causing strength and weakness at the same time. The challenges of young people's lives require them to respond actively and creatively and build resiliency. A common misconception is that risk and development paradigms exist in a binary or oppositional fashion. The emergence of the development paradigm does not replace the risk paradigm but represents a deepening of our view of young people. A responsible clinical approach must take into account both sets of factors."

Wolin, S. and S.J. Wolin, "Shifting Paradigms: Easier Said Than Done," *Resiliency in Action*, Fall 1997.

A Practical Approach

As suggested in the introduction, working to make explicit the mental models in relation to children and young people is important. The following questions or prompts use the model outlined to help analysts.

The policy problem definition is the most important stage that sets the scene for the resulting policy process. Study the policy problem definition in relation to both aspects of the cliff model.

- Does it tend to emphasise one aspect of the model?
- Which one? Why?
- How could the policy problem be redrafted to include both aspects of the cliffs model?

"Vulnerability and potential are two states that are paradoxically inter-related and essential to understand in relation to child and youth development."

Matauranga, Te Ao Māori and learning about the Code

Matt Renata, Coordinator, Te Awakairangi Youth Development Network

Ko Matt Renata toku ingoa

Ki te taha o toku papa

Ko Tuhoe me Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi oku iwi

Ki te taha o toku mama

No India oku tupuna

Ko Gujarat te iwi o tera rohe

Engari, no Te Awakairangi ahau inaianei

Tena koutou katoa

Te Timata

My journey as an urbanised Maori started in the suburban community of Lower Hutt. I was born, raised and have spent most of my life in the Hutt. My story continues in the Hutt, but with a new and fresh perspective. Instead of being from a dull sounding Lower Hutt, I choose to be from the land known as Te Awakairangi. It's still the same place and the same land, but with a name that transforms the whole understanding and meaning of this area.

Stick with me here. Te Awakairangi is the original name given to the river by Ngai Tara, the first people known to settle this area. Te Awakairangi, like other Maori kupu, is difficult to lock into a direct English translation. Te Awakairangi was the name given to the river that flows through the valley. As a result, people also used that name to refer to the land and area surrounding it. Te Awakairangi means esteemed, of great value, in abundance of and of beauty. A river that brought life with its precious water to the valley and area that surrounded it. It drew in birdlife from all over and provided the perfect environment for all types of creatures and critters too.

I discovered that the original British settlers in 1839 who colonised that land and people gave the English name for Lower Hutt. They decided it would be better to give a name to the valley after the director of the New Zealand Company Sir William Hutt, a British Liberal politician who

was heavily involved in the colonisation of New Zealand. Mr Hutt never actually set foot in this country; regardless they thought it was a good way to honour him for his efforts. A very monocultural way of operating.

The more I knew, the more I understood. Along my journey, I have learnt many things and grown in understanding of matters both far and close to home. What we know and understand as people, affects the way we see the world and how we operate in it. For everything that has breath, has an understanding and will follow the system it knows to be true. This is where I would like to begin my reflection.

Youth Development

I was on my path as a residential builder until God interjected my course and sent me into youth development in 2008. I will be forever thankful to Him. I had finally discovered my calling in life to work with people. During that chapter in my life, I fell into the hands of Praxis New Zealand, a youth development training institution. I studied with Praxis about what it really means to be a youth worker. I encountered some amazing teaching through them, teaching that literally changed my life. This teaching helped identify my strengths and giftings, but also made me super aware of the crap I needed to sort out in my own life in order to be the best youth worker I could. I will always be thankful.

Some of my favourites were the self-discovery papers, theological papers and Te Tiriti O Waitangi assignments. These papers opened up my world and have really affected the journey I am on, but I'll save those reflections for another time. The first time I had ever heard about the Code of Ethics was in 2009. I remember hearing that we were going to be doing a CoE workshop at the next Praxis block course held in South Auckland. There were a whole lot of us student youth workers dreading this CoE workshop for no particular reason at

> **"For everything that has breath, has an understanding and will follow the system it knows to be true."**

all; apart from thinking it might be boring and a waste of our time. Little did we know we were going to be in for a treat. During this workshop, we experienced the complete opposite of what we thought we were in for.

We walked into the room and a pakeha woman was there to teach us. She had kind eyes and went by the name of Jane Zintl. Jane had superpowers that drew us into the kaupapa of Code of Ethics and sparked our interest. She blew our minds by expanding the way we saw the world and then explained how an ethical approach is applied in our own context.

Finding it relevant, fun and intriguing, I remember thinking, "Flip! The world isn't just black and white." I came to understand that there were grey areas when it came to ethics and making decisions. Not only in youth work but also in everyday life. Decisions need to be made on a regular basis and our values, morals and ethics contribute to this.

The things I absolutely loved about the way Jane presented the Code of Ethics, was her respect towards newborn youth workers such as myself, towards Maori and to the diversity of youth workers in the room. It was an easy pill to swallow and an interesting concept to comprehend.

Te Ao Maori

One of the many things I love about the Ara Taiohi Code of Ethics resource (especially the second edition), was the inclusiveness of Te Ao Maori and Matauranga Maori throughout it. The indigenous aspect to ethics wasn't a nice simple little clause or section in the back of the book, where Maori become just another insert. Instead, I could see that the taonga of tikanga Maori threaded throughout the entire Code. I could see and feel that the team putting the ethics together made an effort to hold the Tiriti O Waitangi as a core value.

I'd like to refer back to the story about my turangawaewae; Te Awakairangi vs Lower Hutt and make some comparisons to this ethics narrative. All of a sudden, we have a fresh and a new perspective on an ethical Code. An ethical Code that has a whakapapa and history weaved into it. One that tells a fuller story and that doesn't cancel out one or the other. How epic!

I ask myself the question, "Has a youth worker Code of Ethics of such substance ever happened elsewhere in the world?" The bi-cultural nature of the CoE brings much flavour and richness to the content. Instead of an ethical framework that could have potentially been very clichéd,

monocultural and somewhat boring, we now have a resource that is potential gold. The team putting the CoE together performed an act that should be modelled throughout our country.

For a young urbanised Maori guy like myself who is discovering my identity as an indigenous person living in this land, this ethical Code speaks volumes to me. The same way I see Lower Hutt transferred into an invigorated Te Awakairangi, I also see the Ara Taiohi Code of Ethics transferred into a pioneering kawa for the whare of youth development across Aotearoa. This Code is one that can evolve and be added to over time. It will mirror where our bi-cultural and multi-cultural relations are at in the youth development sector nationally.

Covered

This kawa called the Ara Taiohi Code of Ethics is one I can trust and know that it will protect me and the people I work with. Not because of the way it is structured or how flash it looks or even the way it is worded, but because of the heart that is behind the kawa. I know that the people who created the Code, in a roundabout way, care about me and Maori people. This includes the many young people and whanau that I work with too. If they really care for Maori people, then surely that means they care for all people and cultures living in Aotearoa New Zealand as well. It is safe to say we are covered.

Some would probably say that there is room for improvement when it comes to the CoE, but I would say that nobody is perfect. Be happy with what we do have. I believe that the heart and effort behind the Code is noble. The quality of the content is incredible. So then, what more could we ask for.

When our youth development gurus and practitioners come up with a resource like this, I am reminded that, that is what puts us up there as leaders in youth development sector across the globe. No doubt in my mind.

In Closing

The more we know, the more we understand. It influences the way we see the world. As I came to know the story and history of Te Awakairangi, I saw the land in a completely different way. As I came to know and understand the Code of Ethics, its story, its contents and its relevance, I now see youth development in a new way. Instead of seeing the Code as a means to restrict and trap, I see it as safe guard and a means of protection. It helps me grow and become the best I can be as a youth worker. It encourages the people I work alongside to become the best youth workers we can be as well. Onwards and upwards.

Mauri ora!

The awesomest learning journey

Dancing into a degree

Rae Marsters, Whai Marama, Te Rūnanga Ō Kirikiriroa

I have a wonderful loving partner, four awesome sons and a beautiful moko! Born in Kumeu, raised in Rotorua and now living in the Waikato where I call home. I have been working with rangatahi in dance, song, music and performance since I was a teenager. This has been my vehicle for youth work.

I was volunteering for 23 years in different capacities of youth work, from faith-based, through schools, I even coached a rugby team once… Not bad for someone who didn't know the 'rules'. ☺ But my passion has always been for the dance sector – specifically hip hop and street. So during the days I volunteered and I would be gigging with bands or hosting shows or working at nights to make ends meet. ☺

I applied for a few youth worker jobs over time and kept getting rejected, so I decided to bite the bullet and enrol in WelTec's Bachelor of Youth Development (BYD) program. This I where I learnt about the Code of Ethics.

I was certainly challenged around my behaviour and what I thought was the 'right thing' to do as opposed to what was ethical and safe. See, I would take any kids into my home if they needed a place to stay and 'rescue' kids without understanding that actually sometimes I could be hindering their progress and it could be potentially 'unsafe'.

As I learnt, I began to understand and apply the COE more and more into my practice. I have been able to make decisions based on being informed and I have been able to 'back myself' and justify my reasoning for my practice. It's a really good feeling to work in this capacity.

I still have a great deal to learn. Yes I still struggle with some of the things that I think are morally right as opposed to what is ethically right, but am coming to a place where my practice, my engagement with young people, comes from a place of striving to hold them in the highest esteem possible. When policy or ethics doesn't easily fit into my practice or is contradictory to my thoughts, I have been able to stand back look in the mirror, reflect and come to a place of 'ethical peace' (Baxter & Zintl, 2017) ensuring that my intentions are always youth-centred with their consent to act. This has been my awesomest learning journey.

I have my first ever paid employment working with young people and at first it felt criminal taking a wage doing I was always striving to do voluntarily. But I love my job and through the Code of Ethics I have also come to really value supervision. Which is something I never thought was important. ☺

So, here I am today a QUALIFIED youth worker who still has the same heart as 23 years ago, but much better in my practice. My colleagues have just been through the Code of Ethics training recently and it was the best feeling knowing that we can all walk this same walk together and I'm pretty excited knowing that we have some common ground around safe practices working with our rangatahi. So that's an added bonus.

I am grateful for two awesome human beings who designed a practice of safety and ethics coming from three bits of scrap paper and developing it to what it is now.

I am a better practitioner for it.
Thanks heaps!

References

Baxter, R. & Zintl, J. (2017). *Navigating Ethical Maturity* – read more later in this publication!

> "I have been able to stand back, look in the mirror, reflect and come to a place of ethical peace."

Fa'a Samoa and youth work in the promise land

Saulo Suamasi, Youth Workers in Secondary Schools, Ōtara

My parents migrated from Samoa to New Zealand in 1973. They moved here with very limited English and very limited knowledge about living in New Zealand. Their motivation and drive to move to the 'land of milk and honey', was to give their children a better life, better than what they had experienced growing up in Samoa. They had no idea what they were getting themselves into, however, it was never about them. It was about me and my three older siblings.

My parents are hard workers. When I was younger, I remember my parents were like vampires. They would leave for work in the early hours of the morning, when it was still dark, and return home from work after dark. To get to work, both mum and dad had to catch three buses and travel for over an hour. They were rarely late. They often struggled with the conflict of applying their family, cultural and traditional values while living in this western, 'palagi' society. The struggle was definitely real. But with the struggle came perseverance, with perseverance came resilience and with resilience, came grounding.

At the end of 2016, my tamā (dad) was forced to retire and after 44 years of living, working and contributing to New Zealand society. My matua (parents) have decided to return home to Samoa, to live out the rest of their days. My dad returned to Samoa in January 2017 to build their 'dream home', not the home that they had always dreamed of, but to build a home in the place they always dreamed of returning to, Fagali'i-Uta (Our village), in Samoa. In April of this year, I had the privilege of accompanying my tina back to Samoa to be with my Tama and to see for the first time, their new home.

On this trip, I got to observe my parents in the environment they they were brought up in. I got to see 'where' my parents learned their family, cultural and traditional values. I got to see where their work ethic came from. They would wake up early in the morning, while it was still dark, and tend to the maumaga (plantation). They would return back to the house after dark. When visitors came to visit, they would treat them with the utmost respect. They taught me to give, without the expectation of getting anything in return. Both my parents would remind me as they worked in the maumaga, to always try and do the right thing. Look after your family. Look after those around you. Be faithful and loyal to your work. They reminded me that this was part of their Fa'a Samoa, the Samoan way.

After 44 years in New Zealand, my matua parents just slipped back into the Samoa way of life like they had never left. Hard Work. The struggle is still real, but rewarding. My parents are 70 years old this year. They are older, but their values remain the same.

The values that my parents have instilled in me and my siblings, make up the foundation on the kind of person that I am today. The evolution of 'ethics' in my practice as a youth worker is built on top of this solid foundation laid by my matua. For this, I am forever grateful.

I was born, raised, married the most amazing woman from and currently still live in this place we call 'the promise land', Ōtara. Of the 21 years that I have worked as a youth worker, 15 of those years have been in Ōtara. I consider myself a staunch youth worker. I'm so staunch, that I was accepted into the social work school at Auckland University, but as I was driving to the induction day, I turned around and went home. I wanted to be a youth worker, not a social worker practicing youth work.

I had amazing youth work mentors who are still in the game and who are still there for me when I need their support. My first taste of youth work was as a Sunday School teacher and church youth leader. The biblical principles that I learned while

"I wanted to be a youth worker, not a social worker practicing youth work."

with the Ōtara Church of the Good Shepherd also makes up the foundation of who I am today and how I practice as a youth worker.

I learned my trade from those who put up their hands to lead, no qualifications, no models, no theories, no parental consent forms, just a deep passion and purpose to support the young people of Ōtara.

Over the years, I have learned more and more about safety and boundaries. Thorough organizations that I have worked for, NZ Police, Otara Blue Light, TYLA Otara Youth Development Trust, Child, Youth & Family and Otara Scorpions Rugby League, I have become a safer and more professional youth worker. In 2008, I attended the *Involve* conference in Wellington, where the first Code of Ethics for Youth Work in Aotearoa was released. Seven years on, the Code of Ethics is the document that I use as a guideline for my practice.

In the late 1990s, in Ōtara, a well-known Christian Ministry closed down after revelations that the leader had been sexually abusing young boys. He was charged and spent time in jail. Nothing compared to the lifetime damage that he had done to all the boys that he abused.

I also remember in the early 2000s a youth provider who was contracted by CYF, picked up a boy in Ōtara and took him on a camp. At the camp, the boy smoked some weed, went for a walk, fell down a cliff and sadly died. This youth provider was also shut down, all because they did not get written parental consent for the young boy to attend the camp.

These are prime examples of why a Code of Ethics for youth workers is necessary. These are prime examples of why I use the Code of Ethics for Youth Work in Aotearoa New Zealand as a guideline to practicing safe youth work. The Code of Ethics has no ethnicity, no context; it has no bias, no gender. It is a guideline for anyone who is working with young people across any youth context.

The Code of Ethics helps me to stay accountable for the work that I do. It contributes to being a safe and professional youth worker. My parents laid my foundation with their traditional, cultural and family values from Samoa. On top of this foundation lies the Code of Ethics for Youth Work.

Talofa Lava. My name is Saulo Suamasi. I am Samoan.

'I am over 3000 years old. I am a continuum and extension of my mother, grand-mother, great-grandmother, my great-great grandmother, my ancestors and my nation' (Samoan artist Ioane Ioane often introduces himself in this way)

I was born, raised, still live and practice the majority of my youth work in this place we call 'the promise land': Ōtara, South Auckland.

Honouring our history

Dr Fiona Beals, WelTec and Wainuiomata

I write this reflection on our Code of Ethics after talking to a group of Masters students at Victoria University of Wellington. I was asked to share how informal education (like youth work) transforms society. Like all good youth workers, I turned a lecture into an interactive workshop. Of course this meant starting with some form of active activity. In the case of this workshop, I asked the students 'what does a youth worker do in your eyes?'

I went into the workshop expecting the wrong answers. I expected to hear about games, enjoyment, and being friends with young people. I was wrong to expect this; instead, I heard answers like 'enabling young people,' 'journeying with young people as opposed to journeying ahead or pushing young people into places they don't want to go,' 'seeing their job as a vocation, not an income,' and 'working incredibly long hours for little pay because they care.' I was blown away, this is how far we have come as a sector here in Aotearoa since we started to talk about good practice and ethical practice in the 1990s.

In fact, in our journey to professionalisation as a sector, we have often have reflected on the past and the present but struggled to see just how far we have come. And, how important milestones like the Code of Ethics are to this current stop over. Back in the 1980s and 1990s, we could have never dreamed that our children could become youth workers through practical applied university level study. While this should never be the only path to youth work, it is a valid one and many young people choose it. It is now a career option.

As a youth worker and a tutor in a programme developed and informed by best practice in our sector, I am only in my position because of the footsteps and hard work of others that went into asking the first question of any professional journey – how do we ensure that what we are doing is right and safe? The creation of the first Code of Ethics by the National Youth Workers Network Aotearoa came after a long conversation. It gave us all living document which could inform and guide us in our practice. It gave us breath as a workforce; it brought us together.

The Code of Ethics also gave us a point of difference. This is something I personally observe in my teaching in the Bachelor of Youth Development here at WelTec. We have no single course that is dedicated to the Code of Ethics. It is woven into all courses; particularly the first year courses. And where the point of difference comes through is our Te Tiriti course. In this course, our students are often with counselling and addictions students. As a complete cohort, students are required to read and analyse the Codes of Ethics of all three discipline areas and reflect on how these standards align and enable bicultural practice.

It is in this context, the context of Te Tiriti, that our sector's Code shines. Across all three disciplines of youth development, addictions and counselling, students discuss the historical story of Te Tiriti and how Te Tiriti can be incorporated strongly in our day to day professional practice. In these discussions, students discover how our own Code of Ethics is entrenched and grounded in te reo. Te reo is not a mere translation of English, it holds its own space; it has a voice that is more than a smaller text in brackets under the main heading.

However, it is in the *Kia tupu te whakawhanaungatanga* section (context) that the code reminds us how deeply our sector is connected to this whenua. In reviewing the Code of Ethics, our students stand strong as the counselling and addictions students note, at times, an absence of context, history and an acknowledgement of what came before Pākehā tikanga. The sections by Manu Caddie and John Harrington ground us as a sector and remind us

> "We would have never dreamed that our children could become youth workers through practical applied university level study."

of both the people and the practices that came before. Many would argue that these sections are not needed in a Code of Ethics. Codes of Ethics are about informing our practice in the current present climate. In fact, in most codes, you might have a brief mention of context or purpose, but to expect to be reading history is, by far, the unexpected normal.

Our Code of Ethics tells us: "ethics are principles based in values" (p.13). Our opening pages tell us and the world that we value our history. We understand and honour the bi-cultural nature of our country. We remember those who have gone before us. We honour them and their work and our mahi will honour them by standing on core values and principles. This is huge. This point of difference strikes out and makes a point of difference and challenges all other professions working with peoples and communities – do you know your history?

Our Code of Ethics goes on to say in the same paragraph: "ethics guide our behaviour." By acknowledging that our Code has a history,

our sector and Code of Ethics challenge us to know our history, and use that history to work professionally to make a difference. This is not just about inequality and our broken history as a nation. Our Code reminds us that our history is rich! So, if we are prepared to grow from the rich soils of our history, then we can expect to reach the heights of Tane. We can expect to see our taiohi thrive.

While I am not qualified to speak into the Code of Ethics as a bicultural document, I can speak for our students as they journey with the Code in a number of courses. It is a discussion starter on professional codes of ethics and the acknowledgement of history, whakapapa, past practice and the things that came before us to inform the values that we have and the behaviours that we engage in.

Inā kei te mohio koe ko wai koe, I anga mai koe i hea, kei te mohio koe. Kei te anga atu ki hea.

If you know who you are and where you are from, then you will know where you are going.

Worlds collide

The ethics of compassion

Mark Barnard, Unitec and Urban Vision

Growing up in the Church has provided me with a rich well of stories about ethics. Unfortunately, too many of them fall into the 'what not to do' category. I laugh and sometimes cringe when I recall various occurrences in our church youth groups, camps, and events that were questionable at best, downright dangerous and unethical at worst. In our defence, it was the 80's (and 90's) and everyone seemed a little untamed back then.

The Christian community has a long and proud history when it comes to youth work and youth development. An exploration of the Western roots of our sector finds its way back to early industrial England and compassionate Christians wanting to care for the needs of outcast young people (Smith 2013). So to paint faith-based youth work as naively unethical would be a little unfair. But twenty years on it does seem a good opportunity to pause and reflect on how faith-based youth work has evolved in relation to ethical guidelines or if we are still hovering somewhere around the mid-nineties.

It would require an exhaustive project to drill deep on the actual impact of the Code of Ethics for Youth Work in Aotearoa New Zealand (Ara Taiohi, 2011) and its previous incarnations, on the Christian youth work sector (perhaps a worthwhile task for a Masters student?). Anecdotally, my observation would be that most managers of Christian youth work organisations and leaders of denominational bodies are familiar with the COE. An increasing number of trained Christian youth workers are guided by it. I can't give you numbers, but it is at the very least a part of the lexicon. In spite of this there are still gaps; youth workers, who proclaim, "My boss needs to come to this training!" or "I didn't even know this existed." There is work to do.

The intention of this piece is by no means to solve this challenge, however over the course of this reflection I hope to articulate some shifts that have occurred in my understanding over the last twenty years as I've developed a greater appreciation for ethical practice and its place in the Christian youth work space.

Caring Well: Ethics as Sacred

"Isn't it just about loving people?" This question was asked of me recently at a theological college, during a lecture I was giving on 'Youth Work in Your Community'. It seems a fair enough question, but perhaps something deeper lies underneath it, other than just a genuine intention to 'get out there and spread the love.' My five year old loves his mum, which goes without saying. That doesn't mean he always does so entirely appropriately. When he enters our bed in the middle of the night for a cuddle, I can be assured of two things, a bad night's sleep and uncomfortable kicks to various parts of my body. All in the name of loving and needing his mum. His desire to share the love requires some further growth and development. Likewise, our well-intentioned desire to 'love people' if not guided in a 'better way' may end up experienced as disruption rather than comfort to those on the receiving end. And this is where ethics enter the picture; they appropriately guide our good intentions. But just where are our good intentions headed? As the well-known proverb reminds, 'the road to hell is paved with them…'

As people of a Book, Christian youth workers would do well to remember that '*the Book*' contains a fair amount of ethical guidance. The 'Torah' or Law, makes up roughly a third of the Hebrew Scriptures, a large chunk of the Bible Jesus read. His entire ethical framework is developed in reference to this central part of his Hebrew tradition. Jesus states in his famous Sermon on the Mount, that he hasn't come to do away with the law, but on the contrary to fulfil it (Matt 5:17). It is however interesting to note that when

"Isn't it just about loving people?"

pressed by his detractors, Jesus points out that there is a clear hierarchy of ethics;

> Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"
>
> Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Matt 22:34–40, New International Version).

Two points stand out as instructive from this story. Firstly, in the Christian tradition, ethical guidelines are important. In fact correctly understood, they frame a Christian understanding of true engagement with God and neighbour. This, according to Jesus, is what his ethical tradition is actually about: holistic engagement with God and humanity.

Secondly, love is at the top of this framework, the most important aspect. Ethical guides without love lack something essential. Jesus understands the religious temptation toward empty observance and bureaucratic fixation. So he puts love at the top.

Ethical guides are important. And so too is love. It is in fact the pinnacle of ethical action. When applied in such a light our ethics become a holy encounter. When acting ethically with young people, we are saying something akin to, "You are sacred and so I will treat you as such."

So my student who asked the question, wasn't entirely off the mark. If of course he was meaning something like, "If when working ethically and safely with young people, in ways which prioritise

their needs as sacred, do we need to also remember that love is central."

Yes, I would think so.

Our well intentioned love requires ethical guidance. The two go hand in hand. In my time as a youth work trainer, I've seen how good youth workers have become great youth workers by grasping this fact. The more seriously they take their 'Duty of Care' and 'Ethical Practice' the more it seems they treat the young people in their care with dignity, respect and ultimately love. This is not to say that ethical guidelines don't at times highlight dilemma and conflict, they can and they will. It simply says that if we care enough to work with young people we'll care enough to do it well.

Given its fundamentally relational nature there is a unique complexity which accompanies youth work. The COE provides essential guidelines which help us to untangle these areas. This is by no means achieved in isolation. A reflective supervisory relationship in which youth workers can become increasingly aware of their abilities and limitations is central to ethical practice (Baxter & Mayor, 2008). Which brings me to my next reflection.

Caring Sustainably: God is God, we are not.

Some years ago a wise mentor, while speaking at a gathering I was at, was asked something along the lines of, "How we do keep caring for people who have such great challenges and not burn out?" His answer, "We remember that God is God and we are not." To unpack that a little more, his challenge to the group was to be deeply aware of our God complexes. Those in the caring professions, paid or voluntary, run the risk of playing God. We have a desire to make things right, to fix, to heal, all things that are often out of our control. Ethical guidelines remind us that

there is a line where our responsibility stops and another's (perhaps God's) begins. As Henri Nouwen (1997) describes eloquently it is our role to 'care' more than it is to 'cure'. But how can we know the difference?

It is no small coincidence that the growth and awareness of the COE has emerged alongside the strengthening and recognition of the importance of reflective practice and supervision. These practices and conversations have fed into each other. Youth workers and their practice benefit immensely from being involved in these crucial activities. In a sense they activate the COE within practice, especially when the supervisor has a strong awareness of ethical practice.

I've been encouraged by the uptake of supervision by Christian youth workers over the last decade. I'm regularly asked to either supervise or recommend supervisors to people. Christian youth workers are taking this practice seriously. It would be interesting and instructive to see how much the percentage of youth workers regularly engaged in supervision has risen (or not) since the publication of Lloyd Martin's *Real Work* in 2006, which had the number at 55% (Perhaps a task for another Masters student?).

Ultimately it will be young people who benefit as those committed to journeying with them realise their own strengths and weaknesses, their potentials and limitations. Again this strongly suggests to me that ethical practice is taking root in the Christian youth work sector. The need for this will only increase with the advent of the Vulnerable Children's Act (2014) and the current momentum around the youth worker professionalisation process. The best way to be equipped for these is to proactively engage, not reactively withdraw.

Practicing What We Preach

If the Christian youth work sector is to continue to take seriously the role of youth development and the duty of care it requires, what are some practical applications from these reflections?

- Get Familiar – get trained. Christian youth work organisations need to ensure that their paid and voluntary Youth Workers are familiar with the COE and are accessing appropriate training in it. We need to know who the resource people in the sector are get connected to them. It also will be important to upskill key people within organisations to ensure that they stay current and aware of developments in policy and legislation.

- Get Supervision. This central practice needs to be in place for all paid Christian youth workers. Those who volunteer should also be, at the very least involved in some form of regular group supervision. We can't afford to have 'lone rangers' in charge of youth groups and programmes.

- Get Connected. Christian youth work organisations have much to learn from other areas of Youth Development practice. Networking and learning from other organisations in the sector is invaluable. Visiting and building relationships across the sector will serve to strengthen the reflective ability of Christian groups by seeing how others practice.

Giving Our Best

The Christian tradition is underpinned by a belief that all people are bearers of the Imago Dei, the image of God. Our encounters with others hold such sacred potential. But too often we take this task lightly. We forget that we hold such a belief as central to our understanding of the other. If the Christian youth work sector is to grasp this truth the implications for ethical practice are profound; we will do no less than give our very best.

How else would you treat another, made in the image of God?

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Being the person I needed

Rainbow, rangatahi and resourced

Morgan Butler, RainbowYOUTH – as told to Elizabeth Kerekere, Tīwhanawhana Trust

When I was growing up, I didn't have the support I needed to come out and finding out who I was, so I thought, "why not be the person who I needed?"

I am 23 years old now and I have been Support Manager at RainbowYOUTH since I was 20. I manage two staff members and provide training and supervision for about 30 volunteers. I oversee 10 youth groups in Auckland, Whangarei and Tauranga and my volunteers facilitate them. I also have an active caseload of young people to whom I provide direct support.

I bring my Māori cultural values and morals to the role and the organisation. Examples include using karakia, having volunteer trainings at marae and contributing to the Takatāpui resource: *Growing Up Takatāpui: Whānau Journeys*. RainbowYOUTH collaborated with Tīwhanawhana Trust to produce the resource to help whānau who were struggling with their rangatahi coming out or transitioning. I worked with Toni Duder (RainbowYOUTH) and Elizabeth Kerekere (Tīwhanawhana) to ensure rangatahi and their whānau had a voice throughout the project. I helped select and coordinate interviews, edit the resource and gain approval from rangatahi and whānau for their images and quotes. Even before we launched the resource, the number of back orders was overwhelming. This showed the great need for such a resource and really validated the hard work we put in.

"So I thought, why not be the person who I needed?"

TO HELL WITH YOU!

Young people 'coming out' in church contexts

Andy Hickman, Youth Pastor, Anglican Diocese of Wellington

At 14 years of age, David was comical, sensitive and creative. As his youth pastor I had got to know him quite well over the previous couple of years and I always enjoyed interacting with him at youth group. I would phone his house, pick him up after school and we would go hang out and eat hot chips and drink Coke. On one occasion he was unusually fidgety until he said, "I've been wanting to tell you something, Andy… I'm gay!"

This paper addresses the ethical challenges that have arisen when significant cultural changes confront youth workers and even conflict with the deeply entrenched beliefs of churches and religious organisations.

The outline of my presentation will be:

- Reflections on my own journey
- The anguish experienced by LGBT people
- Navigating Christian beliefs
- Four ethical responses to youth 'coming out'
- David's story
- You're a youth leader and you care for people.

Reflections on my own journey

The term LGBT refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. A longer list is sometimes employed, such as LGBTQIA+ which adds the terms queer, inter-sex and asexual. I will be using the terms gay, queer and LGBT interchangeably to be all inclusive of the diverse identities.

In my early twenties I had read numerous books by high-profile Christian authors from the 1970s and 80s about *"The Gay Invasion"*

and *"The Unhappy Gays"* and other fear-based printed material "... exposing the secret agenda of homosexuals to destroy the Church and society." Certainly in my Pentecostal church at the time the sin of homosexuality was the ultimate abomination. I even contributed to Matthew's banishment from church (more about this later).

As time went by I got to hear the stories of more and more people who had been shunned and rejected by church leaders and congregation members because someone they loved had been discriminated against for not conforming to the prevailing heterosexual norm. Several gay people that I knew had at various times in their life been told "to HELL with you." The pain of such injustice and discrimination at the arrogant elitism of the perpetrators had conversely precipitated the aggressive response back to the Church, "to hell with YOU!"

A few years ago I began to see genuine authenticity and a high regard for spiritual truths in the lives of those who identified as 'gay' or 'queer' or somewhere else along the spectrum. I couldn't deny seeing the 'Imago Dei' in these precious people (a Latin term for 'the image of God').

As a youth pastor I felt an increasing inner turmoil about the ethical conflict between traditional Christian doctrine and the sexual orientation of my gay friends. I was living in tension between honouring my Christian faith and validating the humanity of those whom the church considered 'others'. The 'us' versus 'them' dichotomy was causing a moral division within my own heart and mind. My theological ideal of binary distinctions and black and white categories were under threat. I found myself floundering in the grey. I could no longer tolerate the derogatory slander that was casually spoken by Christians. It grieved me immensely but to challenge their prejudiced world-views would imply that I had turned liberal

> **"I felt an increasing inner turmoil about the ethical conflict between traditional Christian doctrine and the sexual orientation of my gay friends."**

and abandoned my faith and my church. It was the most intense personal dilemma I had ever faced.

During this time I recalled a childhood memory of reading Mark Twain's classic novel, *"The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," (1884)* a fictional story about young Huck traveling down the Mississippi River with a runaway slave named Jim. At a critical point in the story Huck is informed by good, law-abiding church folk that the authorities are searching for the fugitive slave who had violated the law by running away and leaving his Christian owners bereft of their investment. Huck is reminded that withholding information as to a runaway's whereabouts is not only illegal but a breach of Christian ethics. Wilful lying or denial of truth is a terminal sin guaranteeing banishment to hell.

> *"People that acts as I'd been acting about Jim,"* he'd been told, *"goes to everlasting fire."* After all, the Bible – when taken out of context from it's genre and cultural intent – clearly says: *"Slaves obey your earthly masters" (Ephesians 6:5).*

Wanting to reform and become a good Christian boy Huck writes a letter to Jim's owners informing them where he is hiding. But as writes he reflects on how loyal a friend Jim has been to Huck. He remembers the multiple occasions when Jim has been generously kind and even saved his life.

> *"But I didn't do it straight off, but laid the paper down and set there thinking – thinking how good it was all this happened so, and how near I come to being lost and going to hell. And went on thinking. And got to thinking over our trip down the river; and I see Jim before me, all the time; in the day, and in the night-time, sometimes moonlight, sometimes storms, and we a floating along, talking, and singing, and laughing. But somehow I couldn't seem to strike no places to harden me against him, but only the other kind.*

> *I'd see him standing my watch on top of his'n, stead of calling me, so I could go on sleeping... and do everything he could think of for me, and how good he always was… and he was so grateful, and said I was the best friend old Jim ever had in the world, and the only one he's got now; and then I happened to look around, and see that paper."*

It would break Jim's heart if Huck were to betray his trust. In a moment of high tension facing the biggest ethical challenge of his life Huck makes a courageous decision.

> *"It was a close place. I took it up, and held it in my hand. I was a trembling, because I'd got to decide, forever, betwixt two things, and I knowed it. I studied a minute, sort of holding my breath, and then says to myself: **'All right, then, I'll go to hell'** – and tore it up."*

From our 21st century perspective we know how atrociously unjust and immoral slavery was but to challenge that in the 19th century American south was indeed a radical cultural shift. I saw parallels to our own modern context involving the social stigma of gays and the church.

Eventually I felt I had to make a stand on what I believed. I made a public statement declaring my support of LGBTQI people, "I love gay people, or as I sometimes call them, people." Rather than denying what the Bible says or compromising my Christian beliefs I detailed how my new understanding was *because* of my Christian faith and based on my renewed interpretation of the Bible. My observations of Jesus' behaviour as recorded in the Gospel narratives revealed the inclusive nature of Jesus in acknowledging and validating the humanity of the outsider and the social outcasts. The feedback I received revealed a monumental clash of perceived ethical and moral values. It was a watershed moment in my life.

"I found myself floundering in the grey."

It changed almost every friendship that I had, losing many, gaining more. It became apparent that central to the debate was the pre-eminent issue of the ethics of how we might live in conjunction with others in our mixed multi-cultural society.

The anguish experienced by LGBT people

Anyone who has worked with young people will know the shocking statistics of bullying, self-harm, abuse and suicide among LGBT youth. The hatred and discrimination targeted against them is one of the most outrageous injustices of our time. The bitter irony is that with few exceptions the global Church has been the driving force behind such prejudice.

The foremost Christian ethicist in the USA and author of the best-selling manual *'Kingdom Ethics'*, David Gushee, shocked the evangelical Christian world in 2015 when he reversed his views to accept and celebrate the LGBT community. On the pain inflicted by the Church he says, "This is a human suffering problem within the very heart of the Church. And many of those sufferers are very young. They are adolescents and young adults just now coming to terms with their sexuality. They are very badly wounded. Their suffering should matter to anyone with a shred of compassion for the suffering of the young. Which ought to include the Church." (Gushee, *'Changing Our Mind'* [2015], p15).

I've come to know first-hand of young people who have been 'outed' for having same-sex attraction and banished from their family homes by parents who have disowned them as ever having been their children. Gushee continues, "When families reject their own children, whether punitively or non-punitively, it remains hugely damaging, as many heartrending accounts of family-exiled gay teenagers and gay suicides indicate. It says something really terrible when the least safe place to deal with sexual orientation and identity issues is Christian family and church." (p35)

Many are leaving the Church over the LGBT issue. According to Public Religion Research, 70 percent of America's most unchurched generation, the Millennials, say that "religious groups are alienating young people by being too judgmental about gay and lesbian issues," and 31 percent of those Millennials who have left the Church say this was an important factor in why they left. (see PublicReligion.org)

This week here in Wellington I asked my mid-week youth group how their non-church friends view the church's attitude towards queer youth:

- "My friends think that God hates gays." – Kathryn (aged 14)
- "Because of past experiences they have such a negative view of the church that they literally do not want to go near a church." – Ian (17)
- "My Year 12 class mates don't have an issue with anyone's romantic orientation. It's just not an issue for us. However, adults at church seem to have a cognitive disconnect. They are not willing to admit that they personally do not understand nor even like gays but they justify their hate by pinning it to religion." (Dani 16)

Churches have contributed greatly to the marginalisation of LGBT families and it's paramount that youth pastors be courageous and compassionate enough to speak up, apologise and take action to reverse the horrific ostracisation of our misunderstood youth. We simply cannot avoid this any longer.

Navigating Christian beliefs

So how do youth workers maintain ethical integrity when working within church contexts whose traditional view of sexuality is seemingly incongruent with our support for LGBTQI rights?

I'm aware that many of you who are reading this publication are not working in the religious sector and therefore much of what I'm saying is not directly applicable. So for the sake of brevity let me just say that for me as a 'straight ally' and ordained pastor I am delighted that some churches have studied the biblical texts and Christian tradition in light of contemporary realities and have arrived at the conclusion that the heterosexual-only stance needs to be revised.

Those who hold to a literalist reading of the Bible are encouraged to reframe their perceived categorisations. *Normally* gender identity is clearly male and female, and that *normally* gender identity matches gender assignment and that *normally* sexual orientation is heterosexual. Differences exist in every facet of the human family. That's just how it is. Therefore rather than dogmatically defending our doctrines we should be looking forward rather than backward when thinking theologically-ethically about the LGBT issue.

As Gushee concludes, "By adjusting our expectations of what romantic-sexual commitments are we can at least demonstrate the capacity to live in community with each other even if we find full agreement impossible on this question. ... That small minority of people whose gender identity and sexual orientation turn out to be something different than the majority ought to be able to be accepted for who they are, and assisted, where necessary, in the ways most congruent with their overall well-being. This

better reflects the spirit of Christ's ministry than demanding an impossible uniformity and rejecting those who do not achieve it." (Gushee, p18, 94)

One further point worth mentioning is that accepting the existence and intrinsic value of LGBT young people does not require that you weaken your high standard of sexual ethics norm. By this I mean when couples are in a relationship it is appropriate to advocate an ethic of mutual consent and loving respect. Additionally, Christianity has historically said that God's plan for sexual ethics requires making a binding lifetime marriage covenant with each other and to remain faithful to the promises of that covenant, including fidelity and exclusivity, until one partner dies a natural death. So by supporting a biblical affirmation of gay people and therefore all people's longing for meaningful relationships doesn't mean you need to compromise the sexual ethic that you already perceive beneficial to existing heterosexual couples.

Having said that, in my opinion it is unreasonable to insist gay and lesbian couples enter a legal marriage convent with each other (before God, church and civil society) whilst the culture at large has negative opinions about their marriage to each other. Some couples who live in a domestic relationship do not yet feel safe to 'come out' publicly because of stigma and misunderstanding likely to eventuate from work colleagues, family and loved ones who still don't get it. Those with public profiles still have a lot to lose. Especially those who are engaged in church-based ministries where being public is likely to ruin their careers and income.

Summing up, young people need to feel supported as they figure out who they are. Our understanding of gender identity is changing fast and our youth ministry policies and practices in Aotearoa New Zealand need to get up to speed and lead the way in protecting and promoting the holistic well-being – mental, physical, emotional, spiritual and relational – of the generation whom we have pledged to empower. In my opinion, God's character and nature is not about biology but essentially love and our duty of care to each other and with the earth.

Four ethical responses to youth 'coming out'

So let us return to the central purpose of this discussion. Those of us who are faith-based youth workers have a duty of care to conduct ourselves with the highest standards of ethical behaviour. Here are my suggested ethical parameters that you can take today to support LGBTQ youth 'coming out' in church contexts:

(#1) Listen to LGBTQ youth.

The best way to understand how to help is to take the time to listen and learn from LGBTQ youth. Each one is unique, complicated and diverse and their stories will amaze you. Read narratives of LGBT people, as well as reputable work in contemporary psychology. Get to know gay Christians and ex-Christians. With this comes the utmost importance of preserving confidentiality. This is a deal breaker!

The smash-hit song *'Demons'* by the contemporary rock band Imagine Dragons poetically portrays the risk involved in young people sharing their innermost fears and desires.

Don't wanna let you down
But I am hell bound
Though this is all for you
Don't wanna hide the truth

Your eyes, they shine so bright
I wanna save that light
I can't escape this now
Unless you show me how

Don't get too close
It's dark inside
It's where my demons hide.
It's where my demons hide.

Some of the young people that I mentor tell me:

- "Confidentiality is essential. It's their story to tell and they're trusting you enough to share it with you." (Mick, 17).

- "When listening don't judge or presume. Wait until you hear their whole journey and even then don't assume that you know exactly how they are feeling." (Ellie, 16)

- "When somebody trusts you enough to share and you listen it should not be implied that you are now obligated to give directional advice. Nobody should be pressured to make a decision. You may offer advice but never insist on any particular course of action. Especially do not insist that they 'come out' to others until they feel it is the right time to do so." (Teresa, 14)

- "Don't treat LGBT youth specially, but equally. Don't make an issue out of the issue." (Danni, 15)

"It's paramount that youth pastors be courageous and compassionate enough to speak up, apologise and take action."

(#2) Be a role model for kindness and inclusion.

Show young people that they can be authentic around you. Almost all LGBTQ youth have felt the need to mute their self-expression. Speak up if any homophobic or transphobic comments are made. Don't tolerate any kind of hateful speech. Make a commitment never to accept derogatory speech or any form of bullying or mistreatment of LGBT people in your presence.

Become aware that in any room with 20 or more people, the likelihood is that at least one is LGBT in orientation and/or identity, in addition to the fact that most people will have a queer family member (and if they think they don't it's likely because that family member has not yet felt safe to come out).

I believe that intentionally welcoming others and offering generous 'manaakitanga' hospitality is what makes Wairua Tapu (God's Spirit) manifest and present among us.

(#3) Take action to create safe spaces.

Many years ago my friend Matt Goodall shared with a trusted church member that he was gay. Rather than respecting Matt's trust this person told church leadership who then confronted Matt for not only being "a sinful homosexual" but for lying and deceptively withholding this information from the church. Matt was forced to leave the church and people whom he grew up with and loved. To my shame I did nothing to help Matt and I even sided with those who rejected Matt. I've since apologised and reconciled with Matt and it's to his credit that he has no hard feelings towards those who inflicted such pain, but has turned his experience into a deep empathy and practical encouragement to others.

- "A youth group becomes a safe place when the youth leader is standing up for them and being willing to put the safety and privacy of young people higher than the leader's own status as a youth pastor. Young people don't always know how to respond to difficult adults and sometimes an advocate is needed to take the flack." Rebecca (15)

- "At my previous youth group I asked the youth pastor if we could have an open discussion about the LGBT issue. He responded saying, 'No, we don't talk about stuff like that here.' So I left and came to your youth group." Sally (17)

We can no longer avoid this. Failure to engage in the contemporary topics of our generation will make us irrelevant and isolated.

Become an advocate for the welcoming of LGBT Christians in your congregation to the maximal point theologically possible in your setting. Even if you are still struggling with comprehending the nuances, or the place of marriage equality in Aotearoa since August 2013, consider how you can make your youth group and church show demonstrable practical support.

All the LGBTQ youth that I know are more motivated than ever to help others. Facilitate discussions with them for creative ways in which to make them feel empowered to do so.

(#4) Help parents respond in constructive ways when their children come out.

When a teenager tells their parent that they are gay or lesbian or even express questions about their sexuality this evokes a whole range of concerns about the possible outcomes and the life-changing consequences.

The following question was asked during our recent youth group discussion, "Why do you think Andy's generation and older have been unaccepting of LGBT people?"

- "They grew up accepting that it was against the law. So it must be bad." (Mick 16)

- "They are used to seeing men and women in love. Not same-sex couples. They haven't taken the time to understand what key words mean. For example, the term 'queer' stills implies 'strange, different, weird' and they associate queers with that old definition." (Katrina 14)

- "They think that marriage should be only be between a male and female in order to have children. But if a married couple don't have any kids why are a gay or lesbian couple treated so differently?" (Kelly, 14)

- "Because gay couples don't come to their church and closeted gays leave the church. So church people are only aware of extreme stereotypes and therefore never actually get to know that gays are real people too who are just the same as them – human beings – only different in one aspect of their lives, just as all people have a diversity of likes, hobbies, hopes, creative gifts, careers and friendships." (Bruce 16)

- "They always assume that being gay means doing dirty sex. That's a load of rubbish. None of my gay friends are hooking up or having sex at all. They're just trying to get good grades, figuring out what to do in life, how to fit-in when they feel the odd ones out, and get through life without being hassled. It's my straight friends who boast about their sexual exploits, and most of them are full of crap anyway. At least my gay friends are honest… Maybe these worried parents watched porn when they were our age so they assume that's what we do. Gross." (Dani & Rosemary)

The mums and dads that I know are not bad people. They want the very best for their children. But they have been taught things that suggest

> ❝All the LGBTQ youth that I know are more motivated than ever to help others.❞

they have failed as parents if their child is gay. It is easy to take sides or to inadvertently reinforce the divisive nature of this sensitive topic. Working to ensure that families remain intact and in communication with each other is a delicate task. It is critical that we engage in the "ministry of reconciliation" as expected of youth leaders. (2 Corinthians 5:18).

The best way to illustrate the value of helping parents is to share my recent experience. For several weeks Alex (15) *[*not her real name]* had been coming to me mentioning that she had a friend who thinks she might be bisexual. I suspected that she may have been referring to herself but was unsure of my reaction. I took her at face value and continued to offer my support for her friend in any way I could.

Soon after I was given a letter from Alex. She had trusted me enough to come out to me and expressed her fear that her parents might be upset. She asked that I keep this information confidential. Unfortunately, without Alex knowing, her mother Rachel *[*not her real name]* had searched her room and found the letter prior to me receiving it. When this was revealed it caused a tremendous strain on their relationship as both were deeply hurt with each other's behaviour.

I met with both of them and listened to what they had to say. Rachel was struggling with her daughter's assumed identity and her own Christian beliefs about homosexuality being sinful. She requested that I not say anything to her daughter that was contrary to her beliefs. This posed an interesting dilemma for me as I respected the fact that Rachel was Alex's mother, whilst wanting to support Alex and avoid any conflict between the two.

I discerned that the primary factor driving this scenario was fear. My job was to alleviate uncertainty and establish trust and assurance that things will be okay. In Alex's presence I told Rachel that I believed her daughter and that I felt she was old enough to know who she is and that her willingness in coming out showed tremendous courage at the risk of losing so much. I proposed that Alex be welcome to come to me anytime and share whatever she wished and that I'd preserve her trust by keeping what she said confidential. Likewise I acknowledged Rachel's genuine parental love and concern for her daughter and that I would honour her wishes. I promised that whatever advice or supportive material I shared with her daughter I'd make available to her also.

It's been several months since that time. I'm delighted to say that although there has been no admission of changed beliefs the three of us have formed a sense of trust and there is no longer a concern about what is discussed. I'm optimistic about the ongoing loving relationship between Rachel and Alex.

One final thought for those who are queer youth. The coming-out process is equally difficult for parents. What if others find out? How do I respond to my friends questions of "Has he got a girlfriend?" and "When is she going to get married?"

How do you handle the opinions, advice and criticism from fellow parents in your social network? Robin's family had been long time members of a traditional church. When one of her teenage daughters came out as 'not straight' it really rocked her. She knew that her and her husband had been good parents, strict but fair, and that all their kids were trustworthy responsible young adults. However many of her close friends were not able to see 'the person' but instead focused only on 'the issue'. Robin tells me that what she needed most from her friends and fellow parents was the support to come to terms with having a gay child. But the ongoing scrutiny made that impossible. In the end, her family made the challenging and painful decision to move and transition to another church where they could have the mental and emotional space to process it all and come to terms with the theological, social, and relational aspects of having a gay child.

Robin's advice to parents of an LGBT teenager is, "Insist that others respect you and your point of view. We need to accept each other's differences. We are all on a journey of some sort and coming to terms with having a gay child is only one part of the journey. I'd insist that family and friends continue to show the mutual respect that has been part of the friendship all along. If they can't do that then you may need to effectively change your proximity to them. You have the right to get the space you need to think it through."

Finally, being prepared in advance with comeback comments to difficult questions will help empower parents and reduce anxiety. "My daughter trusts me and shares honestly with me. It's going to be okay, thank you." "Together we are doing our research and talking with others who are in the same situation. There are a lot more supportive people out there than what I expected." Practice what you might say by going for a walk or looking in the mirror and saying out loud, "I have a lesbian daughter," (… and saying it with pride).

> ❝Be a role model for kindness and inclusion, so that they can be authentic around you.❞

My advice is that you learn about the changing attitudes within medical, psychiatric, religious, professional and political circles. I have added a bibliography of references that I found helpful. You may well get some insensitive or negative or rejecting comments from others but you'll probably be surprised by how few they actually are. And think of all the new wonderful people that will soon become part of your ongoing network of friends and supporters. Oh by the way – ask your child for advice. They've travelled down this road long before you have.

David's Story

I introduced this topical discussion with a reflection on the moment when that 14-year-old boy 'came out'. That was almost 20 years ago. Since then my friendship with David Marris has been preserved and deepened because of his willingness to love others as himself, to freely forgive and to see the best in others. He has taught me and my family much about humility, gentleness, grace and hope, non-judgmental acceptance of others, and covering one another's weaknesses rather than exposing them – attributes that we would consider personified in Jesus Christ.

During our most recent family meal together I asked him why he told me and revealed such a personal aspect of his life with me. "I wanted to be heard. I wanted to be known, known for the real me. To be known is to have the chance to be liked or disliked, to be accepted as a person by another person, or be rejected as an 'other'. Being gay was something I'd come to recognise about myself. But I felt it had become a big secret, a secret I wanted to tell so that I could be authentic."

"But I was naïve to expose myself to others in the church. Their fear-driven indoctrination became their condemnation of me. All the while their attitudes were disguised as 'love'. The result was that 'love' has become a redundant word. Their mantra of 'love the sinner, hate the sinner' meant that all they saw was my supposed 'sin'. This reinforced my sense of inferiority and I always felt like I was a second-class citizen, not good enough to be able to become 'normal' repeatedly asking myself, 'Why can't I be more like …?'"

"My painful experiences have helped me become empathetic towards post-church gays and non-church people. I want to embrace them and demonstrate care. You are a 'have', not a 'have-not'.

To me, honest relationships and mental health well-being are more valuable to me than conforming to non-personal rigid rules that lead to death."

I asked David what ethics he would expect of a youth pastor when a teenager comes out. "When somebody comes out it's because they've been brave enough to risk everything. They'll need to have it reinforced that they are accepted unconditionally as a human being with dignity and are a value to their community. They want to hear, 'I've seen the real you. I still like you.' Also, it's crucial that the youth leader does not insist on the young person having to come out to anybody else, not even parents. LGBT youth know when the moment is right for doing that. The relevant advice that I wish I had been given was that we live in a world that is prejudiced, and there remains stigma and prejudice against gays at school, at church, and at work."

Clearly we as youth workers need the moral courage to put the value of the young people we minister to above our own reputations or ideologies, and – dare I say it – above the antiquated ecclesiastical short-sightedness of our churches.

You're a youth leader and you care for people

David and I enjoy watching the British TV program *"Doctor Who"*. Science-fiction stories provide us with many opportunities to debate situational ethics. In one particular episode 'The Girl Who Died' the Doctor (actually a Time Lord alien who has taken on a human form) faces his greatest ethical dilemma. A young girl has died. The Doctor has the necessary technology (and compassion) to revive her. However he is bound by the laws and doctrines of the Time Lord governance. This assembly of fellow Time Lords reside in the furthest stratosphere but their omnipotence allows them to oversee all activities in the universe. They ensure that the law is upheld which forbids a Time Lord to intervene in human affairs lest historical time-lines are catastrophically altered. The Doctor's empathy for the dead girl causes an exasperated internal frustration. He knows he needs to "tread softly, making ripples in time, but not tidal waves." He faces an extreme ethical crisis of choice.

As he contemplates who he is, why he is present, and for what purpose he identifies with humanity the Doctor has what can only be described as an epiphany.

CLARA: You did your best. She died. There's nothing you can do.

DOCTOR: I can do *anything*. There's nothing I can't do. Nothing. But I'm not supposed to. Ripples, tidal waves, rules. I'm not supposed to. Oh. Oh!

(He looks at his reflection in the water and sees his distinctly human face)

CLARA: What? What's wrong?

DOCTOR: My face.

CLARA: Doctor, what's wrong with your face?

DOCTOR: I think I know why I chose it. It's like I'm trying to tell myself something. I think I know what I'm trying to say. I know where I got this face, and I know what it's for.

CLARA: Okay, what's it for?

DOCTOR: To remind me. To hold me to the mark. I'M THE DOCTOR, AND I SAVE PEOPLE.

(He shouts at the sky towards the Time Lords)

DOCTOR: And if anyone happens to be listening, and you've got any kind of a problem with that, TO HELL WITH YOU!

You may be cool, but you'll never come up with a cooler declaration than that! This illustration continues to be a significant inspiration for me to put the holistic health of young people ahead of sub-cultural expectations.

As professing followers of Jesus the most important part of being identified as Christian is that we love God by loving our neighbour as ourselves (Matthew 12:31). Surely that is the epitome of inter-personal relational ethics. Jesus happily allowed himself to be slandered as one who "hangs out with sinners and eats with them." (Mark 2:17)

A beautiful Māori proverb that I think we all should learn says:

He aha te mea nui o te ao
What is the most important thing
in the world?
He tangata, he tangata, he tangata
It is the people, it is the people,
it is the people.

So, let's get stuck in and go for it.

1. Listen to the voices LGBTQ youth.

2. Be a role model for kindness and inclusion, so that they can be authentic around you.

3. Take action to create safe spaces by becoming an advocate.

4. And help support parents and families be informed, assured and equipped to handle any adjustments that will be needed to keep loved ones together.

Whatever title we may use – youth pastor, youth liaison officer, youth worker, youth co-ordinator, mentor or coach – let us remember why we chose this vocational role and what it's for. To remind us. To hold us to the mark. We are youth leaders and we care for people. And if anyone happens to be judging, and they've got any kind of a problem with that, to hell with them!

Arohanui
Andy

....

Recommended resources available at Wellington City Libraries

Ethics:

Alice, Lynne. *"Queer in Aotearoa New Zealand."* (2004)

Belge, Kathy and Marke Bieschke. *"Queer: The Ultimate LGBT Guide for Teens"* (2011)

Edman, Rev. Elizabeth. *"Queer Virtue: What LGBTQ People Know About Life and Love and How It Can Revitalize Christianity"* (2016)

Harris, Robie H. and Michael Emberley, *"Let's Talk About Sex"* (2009)

Fiction:

Berman, Steve (ed). *"Speaking Out: Stories of Overcoming Adversity and Experiencing Life After Coming Out."* (2011)

Additional resources:

Daughtry, Phil, and Stuart Devenish. *"Spirituality for Youth-Work"* (2016)

Gushee, David. *"Changing Our Mind"* (2015)

Michaelson, Jay. *"God vs. Gay? The Religious Case for Equality"* (2011)

Orchard, Sam. *"Family Portraits: New Zealanders Talking About Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities."* (2014)

Sharpe, Keith. *"The Gay Gospels: Good News for LGBT People"* (2011)

Smith, Rachelle Lee. *"Speaking Out: Queer Youth in Focus."* (2014)

Norman, Charity. *"The Secret Life and Luke Livingstone"* (2015)

Doctor Who – Season 9 DVD set (BBC, 2015)

Hooper-Hodson, Alex. *"52 Teen Girl Problems and How to Solve Them"* (2014)

Ethical issues for rainbow youth workers

Neill Ballantyne, Vibe

A nervous young man is welcomed into the office of his senior pastor. He has already shared his story with his assistant pastor and pastor. They didn't know how to react to him. His senior pastor listens attentively. When the young man finishes his story the senior pastor sits back and says, "thanks for sharing with me today. I have been studying sexuality for many years now and have discovered that there are two types of gays in the world, those who were born gay and those who were made gay because they were abused as children… so which are you?"

That young man was me, seven years ago, sitting nervously across from a man I respected and admired. With one conversation he lost my respect and trust, leaving me feeling unsafe and unsupported in my faith community. That moment was a significant learning opportunity as I realised how easily people in positions of power and authority can cause harm to those they seek to support. Often this harm is unintended as it is based on ignorance or fear.

I have a personal interest in ethics having grown up in a community where being gay was seen as wrong or bad. I became fascinated by how people come to conclusions about what is right or wrong and why. This interest was kindled by studying political philosophy and theology at the University of Otago. I have put this into practice as a youth worker in a variety of settings but especially with the LGBTIAQ/ rainbow/ queer community[1].

I will therefore use this opportunity to set out some ethical issues I have encountered as a youth worker especially is relation to age and size of rainbow communities, the radical/ sexual nature of rainbow support and the lack of clarity in roles. I will conclude by giving some recommendations which could address some of these concerns at a sector-wide level.

Age and size of community

When I started working as the Queer Support Coordinator at the University of Otago I had only recently finished my undergraduate degree and was 21 years old. I had only recently 'come out' to close family and friends and was still processing this experience while leaning into life as my authentic self. I had little formal education as a youth worker and knew nothing about the YDSA or the Code of Ethics for youth workers. In many ways I was flying blind.

Within this context I was expected to train university staff as part of our queer-friendly support network and I was expected to train up a group of students as peer supporters for other LGBTIAQ students to turn to. More worryingly I was the main support person on campus for people to get advice and support from as they figured out their sexuality or gender identity. I was often working with young people with complex mental health needs or students who were scared they would lose family or friends if they revealed their true selves.

Looking back I was highly underqualified and under-supported for this role. Despite this it was the nature of the queer community which primarily led to ethical issues for my practice. The first being that my age was either the same as, or close to the majority of people I was supporting. This meant that the boundary between supporter and supportee was sometimes blurred. This was compounded by the small size of the Dunedin rainbow community with most people only having one degree of separation. If I went to a party I would often find that other partygoers included some of my peer-support volunteers, someone I was giving regular pastoral support to, an ex-boyfriend, as well as the usual friends and strangers.

Within this context external supervision was incredibly important as a space for reflection and development as I learned to be clear with people about how I related to them (personally or professionally)and what 'hat' I was wearing at any time.

> **"I quickly discovered that having clear boundaries was of utmost importance."**

The sexual/radical nature of rainbow support

When working in this space I find that discussions with young people often have a sexual nature. This might be in terms of consent, pleasure, desire, experiences, abuse, romance, safety, health and so on. This is both an opportunity to build strong relationships between the supporter/supportee as well as a risk that boundaries could be crossed and emotions triggered.

These risks are unique as young queer communities are often places when boundaries are pushed and assumptions challenged. We already find ourselves outside of traditional norms in terms of gender and sexuality. Indeed we often find it necessary to deconstruct these norms in order to create safer spaces which are more inclusive of our diverse whānau. As such it isn't rare for support groups to talk about the value of polyamory and the tyranny of monogamous marriage one week, and the following week discuss the role of consent in fetish communities.

I quickly discovered that having clear boundaries was of utmost importance. Those boundaries need to be clearly established at the beginning of the support relationship, and reaffirmed whenever either party feels the need to do so. Secondly I realised that a sex-positive and non-judgmental approach was integral to maintaining relationships with the young people. The more I demonstrated this, the more comfortable they were in sharing during conversations. Having colleagues to refer young people to is also important if you are concerned there is a risk of boundaries being crossed during these important discussions.

The multifarious nature of support roles

Related to this is the lack of clarity in the support role; you often end up being all things to all people. This might range from mentor, coach, counsellor, sex therapist, peer-support, social worker, youth worker and so on. The young people we work with often don't understand the difference between what a youth worker is expected to offer and what a counsellor can offer. This was further blurred as I worked closely with student health counsellors and received direct referrals from them.

I have experienced this same issue in a number of different contexts and it shows that youth work in New Zealand is still not well understood. This can often lead to vague job descriptions and extra pressure being placed on youth workers to undertake work they are not qualified for or supported to achieve. As the professional association for youth workers in Aotearoa continues to develop, this should help clarify to both youth workers and their employers what is expected of them.

Some dream outcomes

In order to address some of these issues I believe there needs to be sector-wide structural change. It is encouraging to see that Ara Taiohi has started some work to produce national competencies for youth workers on rainbow issues. This is a great opportunity to set standards which all youth workers need to reach no matter what context they work within.

There needs to be a more coordinated approach for support people who specifically work with rainbow communities. I recommend that a national network is created to allow for specific training opportunities, networking and national hui. This can help professionalise rainbow support and show the importance of specific support to this key minority group. It will also allow space for best practice to be fostered throughout the network and more opportunity for peer support amongst support professionals.

If these strategies could be put in place then rainbow support people would have better guidance on best practice, greater support from their peers and therefore greater capacity to support rainbow people in a safe and ethical way.

Face-offs, fall outs & f*ck-ups

Emerging ethics in Facebook

Andy Hickman, Youth Pastor, Anglican Diocese of Wellington

Social media, ah, the place where youth worker reputations go to die. It has been known to happen. So, let's have an informal chat – as in Facebook messenger chat – about some ethical parameters for youth workers engaging with Facebook and other social media. As my title suggests I'll be sharing some of the things I have learnt … the hard way. I hope that you find this helpful and – at my own expense – humorous.

Party Invite

Facebook is a social space with a relaxed and friendly vibe. An allusion might be that of a party where people show up dressed casually and wanting to have some relaxed fun. You wouldn't turn up wearing a business suit. So enjoy your interactions, be warm and use a friendly spoken 'voice'. Let your dialogue be informal, congenial, live and spontaneous. Like any conversation be sure to preserve confidentiality if someone shares personal stuff. You wouldn't stop the party music to yell to everyone what your acquaintance just told you at the snack counter.

Speaking of business suits, I like what one colleague said to me, "Facebook is not LinkedIn." So avoid trying to sell your product or yourself. Bandwagons and pulpits on social media usually turn people off and as in any setting remember (wish I had listened to my own advice) religion and politics always polarise people because everyone has an opinion.

Who's Line Is It Anyway?

This is the title of an improvisational comedy TV show that has some hilarious impromptu acting. It's a fun show, not to be taken too seriously, in fact, not seriously at all. This leads me to a fundamental question: Who's Facebook page is it anyway?

It's your Facebook page and profile. Yep, it's yours. No one has the right to coerce you into doing anything that you don't want to do. It's a basic tenet of our free society. And yet our actions and attitudes impact our relationships with other people. You should not feel any obligation to accept anyone's Friend request. Likewise, if there's somebody out there in the world that you don't want cyber-stalking you and gazing at your profile then you have the right to 'block' them. This doesn't guarantee that they won't get access some other way (they might set up another Facebook page to do the same thing) but the point is you are in control of YOUR Facebook account.

Where is the line between personal life and your professional role? IS there a line?

As much as we would like to make a clear distinction between the two the fact is that our world is such that it is impossible to keep the two planets in separate orbits. So, should you Friend your boss? What about clients? Allow me to share an illustration.

Multiplicity?

This is the title of the 1996 American science fiction comedy film starring Michael Keaton and Andie MacDowell. The main character faces the tension of needing to be at home with his family whilst doing the extra work hours his boss demands of him. He accepts an offer from a scientist to spawn a clone of himself …. and then another … and another. His duplicate selves require impossible management skills. It's a comical farce.

I'll get back to the point in a minute. First let me tell you about one of my initial experiences with this form of social media. Back in the early days of Facebook I knew of several fellow youth workers who tried to duplicate themselves by getting into the trend of having separate distinct Facebook accounts – one for family and friends and one for the people in their vocational work context, such as parents, youth, sponsors, employers, etc. The reason was simple and genuine

> **"I knew of several fellow youth workers who tried to duplicate themselves by having separate distinct Facebook accounts."**

enough – "I have a private life and a professional life." However this created a number of problems.

The following are a list of why I suggest you don't have multiple Facebook accounts:

- It is cumbersome to frequently toggle between the two (or more) accounts, each with its own email link. It all takes time and frankly we all are pushed for time in our daily activities and engagements.

- It is easy to forget which one is meant for which group of people and make a mistake. I remember Amber feeling mortified when in her haste she posted a photo of her at a friend's wedding on her 'work' Facebook page. The several empty bottles of wine in the foreground were not hers – but they sure looked like they were! What a great role model to pre-teen girls she is! Oops.

- If you have multiple accounts how do people know that these are actually yours and not somebody else or even somebody's false account trying to get your friends to accept them? And how do people know that you even have separate categories of friends and which category they fit in and which of 'you' do they send a Friend request to?

- What do you do if a young person messages or Friend requests the 'other' account of yours? Do you not accept, or do you block them? Not only is this scenario confusing for you and everybody else but it can inadvertently cause hurt at being rejected and perceived as 'not a friend.'

Am I being a hypocrite? Am I projecting multiple personalities of myself?

These were the next questions that arose among my peers. Am I a different person when I'm around different people? More importantly, as one who's integrity and credibility is essential when working with young people and their families and

friends, what are you up to on that other page, what are you hiding? What are you saying about me that I don't know about? You can see that it gets murky. So, in my experience and observation over the past decade I recommend you just have the one personal Facebook page.

Having said that, initially my wife and I shared the same Facebook account with both our names on it. Since we had only the one laptop it also made sense to log on once. We kept our Friends list to family members and we didn't make a big deal of it. After a couple of years, however, it was mainly me who was using it. If I made a comment I had to state that it was me who said it and not necessarily both of us. My take on things is not always the same as my wife's view. Furthermore, as my own social network and vocational ties expanded it felt odd to be accepting Friend requests from people that my wife had no idea who they were. So it made sense to create a Facebook page that was clearly mine outright. To clarify the distinction we changed our joint account to her name only whilst keeping all previously uploaded photos and videos.

So I have my own Facebook page just as you most likely do. But we still come back to how then do we relate to all the people in our life? Quite simply, in the 'real world' (if it is even possible to distinguish between our online and physical-proximity interactions) we have differing levels of intimacy with a whole bunch of people in various contexts involving a broad range of topics and purposes and agendas. How I relate to my spouse, to my children, to my colleagues, to parents of youth, and to strangers is different in each case because my relationship with each person is different. The conversations that happen between a parent of a youth in my mid-week group are not relayed to my wife and visa versa. I am not a different person in each scenario or context. I am not a hypocrite because I vary my engagement in differing scenarios. It's just that my

context and relational status is different for each person and therefore so too the agreed boundaries of confidentiality and trust that are key components of any relationship. It sounds complex but really it's not.

So, let's broaden the original question:

Who do I accept as friends?

My suggestion is that you think of your Facebook profile as an extension of the same persona you already use to socialise with people in your profession.

Since Facebook is not my only medium for connecting with people (I know that this might be a shocking revelation to some people) I have friends beyond the Facebook universe, so I don't have a problem NOT having some people as my Facebook friends. So it's up to you. By all means accept Friend requests from your boss, co-workers, youth and their parents, etc. No problem.

How then do I recognise and maintain my relational parameters so that they are distinct in nature to all other friendships?

The majority of what I personally post is to a public audience. The content is such that I'm happy for all my friends to see it. Obviously this also means that anyone public can also see it. I don't have a problem with that. This way I keep my posts transparent and a reminder to me to be conscious of what I post. After all, whatever you post might come back to bite you. So don't be an idiot.

There is also a setting called 'Restricted' audience. This means that if you tick the status of any of your friends they can only see what the public see anyway. My personal suggestion to other youth workers is that anyone in your vocational circle of influence – that is, your youth group related friends – and (as a principle) any person who is under 18 years of age be on 'restricted'. The reason for this is that my posts are transparent enough for parents and caregivers who go looking on my page can see what I communicate to their young people and the world. I also do this to be consistent with that entire demographic so that nobody feels they're out of the loop or part of the "in crowd".

This way when I post to a specific audience – usually those who I consider family or friends from childhood – it gets seen by the people I intend it to. Again, not that I'm secretly hiding anything, but that the content is not for everyone.

I suggest that you simply have a couple of customised audience categories that suit. For my extended family I go to each person's page and where our status is 'friend' I go to the drop-down menu and click 'family'. This means they can see family-related posts in addition to whatever other posts I make available (Google any of this if you need to know how). My kids want their aunty in

Australia to see their latest drawings but they don't want the guy that I met at a conference having an opinion on their artistic skills. As much as I think my kids' creativity is amazing I'm guessing that you'd be okay not having your newsfeed bombed with elongated images of super heroes.

Someone once told me, "Andy, nobody cares about your obsession." I felt a bit offended by this statement until I figured out that what they meant was that although I might be a huge fan of something – a movie, or book series, or sports team, or ideology or political issue – many of my friends aren't. We've all had that friend who is constantly posting their 'thing' and to the rest of us it gets rather tedious to see. You can always make a distinct audience group for those who also share your passion and then let rip!

When someone posts on my Facebook page or tags me in their post.

My suggestion is that when someone tags you or posts to your page have your settings already established to 'Only Me' (again, Google how to do this). This way, if one of your cheeky young people or crazy uncles does something embarrassing then only you know about it. This way you can filter any funny business.

Before I knew to do this Stefan plastered a photo of a soaking wet feral cat wrapped in a star-spangled banner and wearing a pink tutu with a look of disdain on its face. It was freaky. My cat-loving friends were not impressed. Neither was I. Young people find it hilarious (in fact, some older people too, for that matter) to do such pranks. However, as with most pranks, they are not always appreciated by others. And unless you are the president of "Fight for Feline Freedom" and this is your thing that you're really passionate about and want the world to become aware of, well, you can probably do without the extra drama in your life.

I have a couple of uncles who are a bit … rugged! They love nothing more than being shit-stirrers. If you were to meet them in person you'd see that deep down they are soft-hearted genuine blokes (if you can get past the pong of perspiration and diesel fumes). But on Facebook they are total jerks. They'll randomly make posts that are racist, sexist, xenophobic and crude. They are Trump supporters for crying out loud! They think it's funny to tag me in all their outrageous posts. I don't really want to 'unfriend' or 'block' them, but neither do I want them ruining my life by association. So by adjusting my settings I've mitigated a whole heap of trouble for me.

When the wrong people see what you don't want them to see.

Even your personal posts can be viewed by other people on someone else's devices. This is something to consider when you have Facebook friends who live in the same house or socialise in the same group of friends.

"Whatever you post might come back to bite you. So don't be an idiot."

We can't control what others post about us on their own pages. Back when I was working in a restaurant a customer whom I'd never seen before came up to the counter and informed me that they knew who I was, who my family members are (names and faces), where I was the weekend before and even what I ate. This freaked me out and they knew it, thinking themselves very clever indeed. Turns out that one of my friends posted a group photo at a social event and listed a heap of information. This customer was a Facebook acquaintance of my friend so they had access to all this information that I considered personal and private. I requested that my friend be respectful enough to remove the content. He refused. Not the end of the world but it certainly breached trust and made me cautious around him.

Another example was last year on St Patrick's Day a bunch of my work colleagues visited the local sports bar. One of the guys placed his Guinness beer in front of me whilst I was wearing an oversized green leprechaun hat (hey, don't judge me okay). Unbeknownst to me the photo was badly timed and my face looked to be contorted in a glazed cross-eyed grin. Just a bit of harmless fun. But when the photographer posted the image a mutual friend left his laptop open on the kitchen table and his teenage son walked past and asked if I had been drunk. Again, not the end of the world, just required his father to explain the situation (which, I might at, he cheekily didn't).

Last Summer I took our youth group to Plimmerton beach for hot chips. At the local park one of our guys took a photo of me. All good. However, once again without me knowing at the time, the concrete building behind me had a sign "Women's Toilets". No big deal, but questions were asked... again!

A school friend posted a photo of a polaroid from our university days. It was a fancy dress gig to celebrate the screening "Priscilla Queen of the Desert." I won't say any more.

When your online correspondence gets leaked to the media!

Well, most of us aren't going to have that happen. But what about when someone takes a screenshot of something you typed or posted? Well, this is always a possibility. I just wanted to have this paragraph because I know it caught your attention.

Using Facebook Messenger to communicate.

I make phone calls, leave phone messages, text folks, post on our youth group Facebook page and STILL some of my young people don't get the important information I send out. Most youth use Facebook Messenger to communicate so this is a good option. The only issue with this is that you are effectively bypassing more transparent mediums so it's critical you remain aware that what is said may be taken out of context (more on this later).

The time of day should also considered. If you are messaging a young person at 3am, well, it's going to arouse questions as to why you're interacting online at an unusual hour. Be aware that some parents would find this unsettling.

Context

I have found that many times at events I'm having a verbal one-on-one chat or a group conversation that gets interrupted and therefore not yet effectively finished. If this conversation is continued by transferring to Facebook or any other social media forum I have learned to be conscious of the fact that any new observers to the content are going to read things that are out of context.

For three years I had a youth group that spanned an age range from 11 year olds to 18 year olds. At a point when it was logistically untenable we had to decide how to make a change to two groups. Lots of ideas and opinions were shared by some people in the group but many others either felt too shy to speak up or where not present. So I had the bright idea of continuing what I'd offered via Facebook Messenger. I assumed everyone was on the same page. Some didn't like my suggestions and in their disappointment showed parents and my co-workers. What they read was not the complete story. Before I knew it I was inundated with phone calls demanding explanations. A disciplinary meeting involving a range of people was arranged. It was a bloody mess. All because the background information and the open conversations were not made available to everyone who saw what I posted and messaged.

Hunny, I'll be home late

Another time I was late getting home from a mid-week youth event. I knew I had to get the discussed "to-do list" sent out asap and that my next few days were booked with appointments. So by the time I got to message the leadership team it was after midnight. The next day I had a parent of one of my team complain that I was undermining her parenting. I couldn't believe it and had no idea what she meant. She said that she insisted her son go to bed at a certain time but my message to him made his phone beep with the notification, so he

got up and stayed up. I hadn't considered that some people keep their Facebook active 24/7 and that notifications would be made known instantly. We sure have come along way since checking the letter box by the front gate once a day!

Excuse me, your attitude is showing!

Road rage is a nasty phenomena. The slightest error or inconsideration by other drivers can easily be misinterpreted as an act of intentional aggression. Our buttons get pressed and BOOM! ... we overreact.

It's easy to tell when people say they are angry or sad or excited if they insert an emoji to their message or comment. But at other times, not so much. Even face-to-face communication can be misunderstood. So watch out that you don't get riled up or tick somebody else off because you were lazy, hasty or angry when you typed your words.

When reading what other people post I try to:

- Assume good intentions.
- Acknowledge that I have my own unconscious biases.
- Don't assume that I know how that person is feeling or meaning.
- Take a chill-pill and a loooong breath. Sticky-taped to my desk right in front of me I have an A4 print out of a quote from *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, "DON'T PANIC." It's a good reminder,
- When in doubt, don't post.

Difficult Conversations.

Sometimes you have to deal with awkward situations that require direct assertive confrontation. To do this well with the desired outcome of a positive change in behaviour or reconciliation and mutual respect means you should NEVER rebuke or discipline anyone online. Always do it in person, or if otherwise impossible, over the phone. However, do follow up with a typed letter, or email, or PDF that records the incident addressed and the follow-up ensures accurate safe-keeping of information.

Now I look like a dick!

Ever been left stranded somewhere? Like the time I turned up to a party themed as "That 70s Show" only to find that although the party went ahead the theme had been dropped. Somehow I didn't get the memo. The Facebook equivalent of that is typing a response that addresses somebody else's comment. I've done that, only to find out much later that the other person's original comment had since been deleted leaving my response left hanging there for all to see without observers knowing the background, making me look like a right old goose.

Personality differences.

Try to be sensitive to your friends' feelings. My wife is a very private person. I can be a bit of an exhibitionist. Some people love drawing attention to a selfie of themselves wearing a new pair of speedos prancing on a beach. Most don't. Don't assume that your social circle want the world to know that you accompanied them on their Vegas trip. Whatever happens in Vegas...

Should I set up a Facebook page for our Team or Youth Group?

This is a fun way of sharing important information, group photos and relevant articles.

What about photos of Youth Group?

When it comes to photos or contact details of people in our youth work never post publicly anyone's contact details without their express permission.

What about posting to the team page photos of our youth events?

Yep, I do but I aim to be discreet. Most young people love an opportunity to be in a photo, especially when they're having a great time with their friends.

When our group attends a combined sports events dressed up as ninjas or pirates or "Where's Wally?" characters, or our youth group are doing a certain task that we are focused on, e.g. Tree planting or a team-building challenge, then I'm taking a group photo and posting it onto our group page. If somebody doesn't want to be in the photo then

> **"I don't need the drama of making people upset over a photo."**

obviously that's fine, I let them take the initiative to step back or hide behind Tall Timmy.

Basically if someone tells you that they don't want their picture taken then don't be a jerk, acknowledge that they've been brave enough to tell you and honour their preference. No big deal. Who cares if you think that could have been a contender for the National Geographic Photograph of the Century. People are more important than your missed opportunity to show the world the amazing stuff your group gets up to.

What if an attendee starts taking photos?

Often when we do an outing some of the gymnast girls in our group love taking photos of themselves doing handstands and cartwheels silhouetted against the setting sun. That's awesome (the handstands I mean, I've never been able to do stuff like that). Young people love capturing the moment by photographing themselves with their friends. However, if it's a closed environment and other acquaintances or youth are present then this requires parameters. Rarely is there any sinister motive, just over zealous enthusiastic inconsideration. In those moments I discreetly approach the young person and ask them to be courteous enough to not take photos but that I as the group leader am happy to make available any appropriate photos of the event that are taken by the authorised photographer.

What if parents want to take photos of their youth during a group event?

Yeah, this can be a lot more awkward because you are basically telling them that you are taking the higher ground and that they are not to photograph their own offspring – which is

exactly what you're doing. I simply repeat what I said in the previous paragraph when addressing youth. Our group policy is that only authorised team leaders are permitted to take photographs (which is usually me) and that I'm happy to send them any relevant photos. This is assuming that there is no objection from any other person who is also in the photo.

What about when a youth permits a photo be taken but their parent or caregiver does not?

This has happened a few times. Again, whatever the parent and their youth agree on (or disagree on) is their gig, not mine. I have no control over what happens in their family dynamics outside the youth group environment, but, again, I don't need the drama of making people upset over a photograph, so I'll honour the wish of the parent, the youth or both. Simple really.

There may be occasions when something unexpected happens and one of the above policies is breached without any fault of your own. Hopefully it won't be a big deal. Like all stuff ups in youth work, simply do your best to sort it out but don't quit your job over it.

So there you go!

Don't be paranoid, we're not politicians or celebrities being stalked by hired paparazzi trailing our every online move, scanning the internet, or rummaging through our rubbish bins looking for any dirt our envious opponents can drag up about us... but I'll probably have a look over at your profile.

Enjoy the technology available to us, maximise its usage and stay connected.

See you online!
Andy

Connecting to clauses in the Code

Jane Zintl

In the last few articles we have heard voices and opinions (without censure) with the focus on the intersection between the LGBTIQ and faith communities. This korero is one facet of a broader ethical issues that we all face at some level or another.

Andy asked the question 'how do youth workers maintain ethical integrity when working within church contexts whose traditional view of sexuality is seemingly incongruent with our support of LGBTQI rights'?

I would like to broaden this question to one that each of us must ask ourselves:

> *'How do youth workers maintain ethical integrity when working in any context that is seemingly incongruent with our understanding of rights, our world view or belief system'.*

Whether it is political beliefs (it is always interesting to see how Trump supporters are responded to in Aotearoa), challenging personal issues (such as abortion), or ethical beliefs (for example the legalisation or decriminalisation of marijuana) we all at some level or another need to grapple with the intersection of who we are and our rights, with the rights of others (young people, our organisations, wider culture etc.). Sometimes these clashes are deeply rooted in our culture or our religion. Sometimes this tension is felt acutely and is deeply personal.

Here are some clauses in the COE that can be used as a framework as we each look to answer this question.

1. Legality:

Clause 22 (Oou Tikanga/Rights and Responsibilities) outlines a number of legislative frameworks we need to be aware of and comply with. Whatever the incongruence we are grappling with we need to explore the underlying legislative framework. Often this will relate to the Human Rights Act 1993 and our responsibility not to unlawfully discriminate. This legislation has a number of exceptions that youth workers who experience incongruence in this context need to fully explore. The legality of any incongruence is a significant piece, and possibly the start point in our considerations.

Key question where there is an incongruence: Is the incongruence moral/ethical or is it legal?

2. Respect:

19.3 (Matatau/Personal Awareness): Youth workers will approach differences in others with respect.

10.2 (Utu Painga Personal Agendas): Youth workers may agree with others beliefs, values, priorities and behaviour, they will treat all people with respect and dignity.

12.1 (Aaua me te Oranga/diversity and cultural safety): The youth work relationship is one of mutual respect.

Respect of the person is (in particular the young person) is a key ethic at every stage. Respect can be an overused and therefore at times not fully understood concept. It includes concepts such as consideration, thoughtfulness, politeness, courtesy and civility. Many of these words are old fashioned – however essential to maintaining an authentic, genuine relationship.

Key question where there is an incongruence: How am I showing respect and dignity to others in this space?

3. Personal circumstances:

19.2 (Matatau/Personal Awareness) Youth workers will be aware of any physical or personal circumstances that may affect their ability to work safely and effectively

We can make an assumption that incongruence is all about what we believe or our world view.

> “We all at some level or another need to grapple with the intersection of who we are and our rights, with the rights of others.”

Sometimes our personal or physical circumstances unrelated to our world view create the incongruence. For example, a youth worker whose partner has had an abortion without their knowledge may struggle to support a young person who is looking at abortion as an option. This experience in and of itself is not the thing that affects our role with the young person, but how we have processed this and how healthy we are in this journey.

Key question where there is an incongruence: Are there any physical or personal circumstances that affect my ability to work safely with young people?

4. Transparency:

4.2 Puatatanga/Being transparent): Where a programme and/or organisation operates from a particular values basis, this will be clearly stated.

It is essential that a young person and their whanau understand any particular values basis you operate from. We all have values that underpin our actions. Organisations such as faith based organisations with a clearly defined values basis in some ways find it easier to adhere to this clause.

Key question where there is an incongruence: What is the values basis my organisation operates from and how is the communicated to young people?

5. Informed consent:

5.2 (Whakaae Tika/Obtaining informed consent): It is important to obtain informed consent to participate in youth work and this may need to be written.

When young people are aware of the values basis of an organisation they are able to choose whether or not they consent to participate in this youth work context. It is important that this consent is informed (directly relating to principle 6 of the YDSA (good information)). For example: how a youth worker responds in a church may differ

(in some respects) to how they can respond in a school, which may in turn differ (in some respects) to how they can respond in an ABL context, which may in turn differ (in some respects) from a marae, or a rainbow group, or the deaf community (the list goes on). Notes these differences are limited as core relational ethics relating to respect and dignity of the person are universal.

Key question where there is an incongruence: Have young people been given the opportunity to genuinely give informed consent to youth work in the context you operate from?

6. Culture:

12.2 (Aaua me te Oranga/Diversity and cultural safety): defines cultural contexts as geographical (e.g., marae or church), identity or whakapapa based (eg., ethnicity or sexuality) and communities of interest (e.g., skateboarding).

12.4: Where a conflict exists between the cultures of the youth worker and the young person, the youth worker will do everything in their power to ensure the most appropriate people and/or organisations are involved. Youth workers will ensure their practice remains equitable and effective.

12.6 Youth workers will allow young people to express their identity freely and safely with consideration to family, whanau, and their social environment.

The broad definition of culture in our COE challenges us to ensure our practice remains equitable in many different contexts. At times clashes are created. For example, I was recently challenged that in some cultures children being 'seen but not heard' is a cultural norm relating to respect. How does this affect us as we work towards full youth participation (and look to comply with articles 11 and 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child relating to young people's rights to be heard)? Working

with others, in particular respected people from the culture concerned, allows us to navigate these tensions in a way consistent with the diverse culture in question.

Key question where there is an incongruence: What is the nature of the young person's culture and what advice do I need to fully understand and maintain equitable and effective practice?

7. Personal Agendas

10.3 (Utu Painga Personal Agendas): Youth workers will not abuse their position to manipulate young people to their political, religious, ethnic or cultural beliefs, or to specific communities.

I want to honour both faith based and the LGBTIQ youth work communities who have proactively taken responsibility in this regard. The origins of this clause come from Christchurch where faith based youth workers acknowledged the spiritual abuse that had occurred when positions of power had been abused to manipulate young people. When our national code was developed the LGBTIQ community similarly identified this potential for abuse/manipulation in their context and the addition of 'or to specific communities' was included.

Key question where there is an incongruence: If I am being truly honest with myself have I abused my position to manipulate a young person?

8. Personal Awareness

19.4 (Matatau/Personal Awareness): Youth workers will understand and reflect on the impact their own culture, values attitudes and beliefs have on young people. Where there is a conflict, a youth worker may refer the young person to a more appropriate support person, however this relationship should (must) be maintained during this process.

To the best of my knowledge this clause is unique to youth work. We are acutely aware that the broadly defined culture, values attitudes and beliefs of a youth worker are the primary motivators (rather than financial) in us choosing our vocation. Some professions force youth workers to act contrary to these. We do not. We do, however, require:

1. youth workers to ensure young people are appropriately supported by other professionals (including other youth workers if appropriate), and

2. that the relationship with the young person is maintained. I have added the word 'must' to clause 19.4 as it is my belief this is essential.

Key questions where there is an incongruence: Does the incongruence affect me to such an extent that I need to refer the young person to someone else? Who is that appropriate person? How can I do everything in my power to maintain the relationship with the young person?

9. Empowerment

21.3 (Hakamanatia/Empowerment) Youth workers will encourage young people to exercise genuine power to consider risk, make decisions, follow them through and take responsibility for their consequences.

Key questions where there is an incongruence: How can I ensure that the power genuinely sits with the young person?

The key questions identified above are merely a start point. There are many other clauses in the COE that relate (I was running out of space!). The article 'navigating ethical maturity' contains a model of ethical maturity and an ethical compass for youth work that should you be grappling with an ethical incongruence provide a lens for your reflections. Supervision is a key tool in our kete – and if an incongruence unsettling you I encourage you to raise this with your supervisor.

> **❝We are acutely aware that the broadly defined culture, values, attitudes and beliefs of a youth worker are the primary motivators (rather than financial) in us choosing our vocation.❞**

Navigating ethical maturity

Pack your tools for ethical adventures in youth work

Rod Baxter & Jane Zintl

Our journey thus far

One of the enduring legacies of the National Youth Workers Network Aotearoa is surely the network itself, a bunch of youth workers, like us, who met through national projects and discovered the benefits of remaining connected in this mahi (work). We, like many youth workers around the country, have relied on each other in times of ethical confusion. Even though we've lived in different cities (in fact different islands – until recently!), we've both felt comfortable to pick up the phone and call each other to debrief, consult and take action on ethical issues that seem beyond the Code of Ethics. These days, when facilitating workshops, we often look around the room at new friends and wonder if some of these youth workers will do the same for each other in times of need.

Let's start this ethical exploration with a story from Jane.

Keeping secrets

In the early Code of Ethics (COE) days, around the time the first draft of the Canterbury Code was released, my husband Christoph and I were doing youth work together in a very community oriented context. One of the young people we were working with came from a particularly challenging set of circumstances (involving losing their dad to terminal illness, a remarriage in a very short timeframe, adapting to a new step family and significant mental health issues – understandably!). Expectations from their mum and stepdad on us were high and inconsistent. Once they asked that we would babysit their child and new step-sibling for a week while they went on holiday! Not long after clarifying our role and saying no to this request they demanded a secret meeting with us – and at all costs their child was not to know.

Having just written the COE I was in a huge dilemma. On the surface this is not the 'biggest' ethical issue I had faced, having supported young people through challenges of abuse, suicide and other heavy situations. However in many ways the 'bigger' issues were easier ethically to deal with; when a young person is being sexually abused or threatening to kill themselves you know you need to do something. This case created a different kind of challenge; it may not have been life or death, but it contained complexities and lots of shades-of-grey in determining a direction.

Here's the dilemma: to have a secret meeting would clearly contradict COE Clause 4 (Puatatanga/Transparency), and also Clauses 1 (Arahitanga/Primary client) and 5 (Whakaae Tika/Obtaining Informed Consent). However, we knew that if we refused they would withdraw their teenager from our youth work context and the teen would lose one of the only consistent supports in their life. This was later confirmed to be the truth by the parents. If we did agree, we were very afraid the meeting would have been seen by either the young person, or one of their friends, and this would affect our trust relations not only with this young person but all the young people in our community. It felt like we couldn't win. There was no option that did not have a downside – some of which were potentially considerable.

We'll revisit this story later on.

Discovering new direction

The two of us (Rod and Jane) have needed to discover some new frameworks for processing tough situations together. We'd like to present two of these ideas to you in this article.

The first idea is inspired by the work of Michael Carroll and Elisabeth Shaw (2012), who have gifted some specificity to the concept of 'ethical maturity'. We feel this translates well for youth workers in many ways, certainly as a process for measuring ethical reflection and action. We've found ourselves using this language often in recent years, and hope it influences dialogue nationwide amongst youth workers.

The second idea is symbolic; we offer to you an ethical compass for youth work. This symbol appeared through a quest for guidance and direction, acknowledging the various tensions we hold in ethical decision making. We've tentatively introduced this compass in workshops with youth workers and it's been rebuilt significantly through their collective input.

Pause

Take this moment to pause. Before you read any further…

- Reflect on the toughest ethical situation you've experienced as a youth worker.

- Ask yourself how you're feeling about it now.

- Think about how you're making sense of it, after however much time has passed.

- Contemplate about the action you've taken and the things you might still need to do.

- Imagine you have a time machine (Jane's son and Rod both read lots of comics, so this is entirely possible!) and you're able to jump back in time to give your past self some advice, what would you say?

As you read through the rest of this article, apply these ideas to your own practical circumstances. We're questioning, agonising and reflecting alongside you, interested in whatever helps us all become even better youth workers.

Six Components of Ethical Maturity for Youth Workers

In *Ethical Maturity for the Helping Professions*, Carroll and Shaw (2012) outline six components of ethical maturity. They're careful to point out that this model is not sequential, but rather an interconnected and interwoven process with a sense of chronology (Carroll and Shaw, 2012, p137). Carroll and Shaw also emphasise that the six components are not necessarily equal and our own personal struggles or interests will influence our focus.

We've fallen in love with this framework over and over again, especially the latter half, which feels like it charts new territory for youth workers to explore ethics in Aotearoa. The first three components may be familiar to most youth workers, however there remains a need to map these also. We've renamed and reworked a few of these concepts, not out of disrespect to these pioneers, but rather to honour their thinking and ensure it is most readily available in our South Pacific youth work context.

Ethical **Peace**

Ethical **Growth**

Ethical **Conversation**

SIX COMPONENTS OF
ETHICAL MATURITY

Ethical **Awareness**

Ethical **Action**

Ethical **Decision**

Component 1: Ethical awareness

Youth workers become sensitive to ethics and develop "ethical antennae that alert us to the presence of ethical issues/dilemmas" (Carroll, 2001, p12).

- *How sensitive, alert and vigilant are you to ethical issues?*
- *What are your standards of excellent youth work practice?*
- *What motivates you to behave morally and ethically?*

Ethical awareness involves all of us becoming increasingly conscious about our work with young people and ourselves as youth workers. This requires a greater understanding of potential risks, harms and consequences of making, or not making, decisions. All facets of youth work include an ethical dimension. Every action we take, every behaviour we demonstrate, has an ethical edge. Our challenge is to become more aware of ethics in our regular youth work adventures. It's actually a form of sensitivity, sensing ethics in youth work.

In the many years of training ethics we have observed a significant trend. Most youth workers do not enter our profession (either voluntarily or paid) for the money (surprising for many we know!). Most youth workers have the heart to make a difference in the lives of some young people. What excites us about this fact is that the heart of youth work cannot be taught. This is core to our identity. However, the awareness that youth workers entering our profession have about ethics is varied. They can and do make good judgements ethically –

completely unaware that there is an ethical framework underpinning their decisions.

The first component in ethical maturity is becoming aware that the day-to-day actions of youth workers have an ethical element to them. There are moral principles that govern our decisions. Whether it is transporting young people in a vehicle with only has five seatbelts, and a sixth young person turns up, or dealing with suspected child abuse, these judgment calls, while often intuitive, have multiple layers of complexity – and ethics help us to understand these and inform our decisions. Without awareness or sensitivity there can be no ethical maturity. If you are not aware of these ethics you cannot sharpen your intuition. You cannot support others to make good ethical decisions. Awareness is compulsory to engage in any of the following components of ethical maturity.

Some methods for developing ethical awareness:

- Reflecting deeply and honestly
- Participating fully in supervision
- Recognising personal values
- Clarifying motivation – why we do what we do
- Measuring power – with or over others
- Practicing self-care and balancing hauora
- Identifying the ethical responsibility and accountability that comes with being ethically sensitive.
  (Adapted from a more comprehensive list by Carroll and Shaw, 2012, pp151–153)

Component 2: Ethical decision

Youth workers are making decisions every day, intuitively and intentionally, and many of these decisions include an ethical edge.

- *How do you reflect on your work and identify when an ethical decision is needed?*
- *What processes do you follow for problem-solving and/or making decisions?*
- *What knowledge do you access? Including the Code of Ethics for Youth Work, ethical theories, policies and your own beliefs?*

In Component 1 we've acknowledged the significance of decision-making in applying youth work ethics. Building upon ethical awareness, the process of making ethical decisions can be both conscious and unconscious. Throughout our lifetime as youth workers,

we accumulate experience, knowledge, skills and resources that can help us make great decisions. Later in this article we'll introduce an 'ethical compass' with factors that influence our decision-making. Before that however, we need to use our developed ethical awareness to clarify our conscious and intentional ethical discernment.

When confronted with an ethical dilemma, we can usually identify some instinct about what to do. Many youth workers call this 'common sense' and assume it's the same for everyone. It's not. When we can't sense what to do, we often know to consult with our manager, supervisor, experienced colleague or some other source of mana and/or authority. Imagine that these two influences are ends of a continuum: internal 'common sense' at one end and external 'authority' at the other. Within this continuum there are other decision-making

methods, which we'll name and acknowledge the inherent limitations of each approach.

We can choose to be methodical and work through dilemmas logically, although this is challenging when we're confused and overwhelmed with complex situations. Alternatively we may choose to listen to our emotions and trust we'll make a decision based on feelings, although that may leave us open to extreme vulnerability. We could consult with youth work literature and theory to take an academic and scientific approach, although that may detach us from young people if we're overly clinical. We could listen deeply to our intuition, based on our experience over the years, although that may be difficult for us to articulate and describe to others if we need to justify our actions. Even though each of these decision-making approaches has limitations, they are all equally valid. Surely a combination of approaches is the best for resolving most ethical issues.

To summarise, ethical decision-making is resourced with a range of dichotomous approaches:

Some practical suggestions for making ethical decisions:

- Listen to your intuition and 'hunches' about what is challenging and what may be needed
- Ask other youth workers about their experience in similar situations
- Clarify your preferred decision-making or problem-solving process and be aware of the strengths and limitations of this
- Consult with your support network, especially your manager and external supervision
- Refer to the Code of Ethics and other relevant resources.

A continuum for making ethical decisions					
External authority	Theoretically	Logically	Emotionally	Intuitively	Internal common sense

Inspired by Carroll, 2011, pp15–16.

Component 3: Ethical action

Youth workers respond to ethical dilemmas and implement decisions that have been made.

- *What do you need to implement ethical decisions?*
- *What might hold you back from resolving an ethical dilemma?*
- *What other ethical issues might emerge as you take action?*

It may seem obvious that once we've made a decision in response to an ethical dilemma, some form of action would surely follow, however this is not necessarily a given. When we've thoroughly explored an ethical situation, we may feel paralysed about the action we need to take. During the execution of an ethical decision, we need to consider how we translate the decision into something tangible and meaningful.

In Aotearoa, we have a strong collective ethic about caring for our environment. If you see someone blatantly throwing rubbish on the ground, you might do something about it. You could either verbally ask the litterer to improve their behaviour, or you could pick up

their trash and throw it away for them. I (Rod) aspire to be a careful recycler and composter. I've collected many books about sustainable living and I feel well informed. My system at home however is woefully complicated and this means I sometimes put paper in the general rubbish bin. This might not seem like the greatest ethical crime, however every time I see videos in my Facebook feed about saints who live 'waste-free' lives, I feel incredibly guilty. Even about that one receipt I threw away yesterday. My point here is that even when we have developed an ethical awareness and contemplated ethical decisions, it can be difficult to apply in ethical action.

So what helps us break potential barriers and translate ethical decisions into action? It seems to us that relationships are key. In particular, relationships of accountability ensure action. When I betray my beliefs and discard plastic recklessly at home, my faithful partner is sure to give me feedback and remind me of my previous commitments. For youth workers, we have colleagues, managers, governance bodies and supervision to help us remain accountable.

Component 4: Ethical conversation

Youth workers need to debrief and explain to others the reasons why ethical decisions were made and implemented.

- *How do you describe the most challenging ethical decisions you've made?*
- *If your work featured in the media, would you be proud or ashamed?*
- *Can you clearly and honestly explain ethical decisions to whānau?*

Many practitioners do not move beyond ethical action – as day to day youth work happens at such a fast rate. However, growing in our ethical maturity requires us to move beyond the awareness/decision/action cycle. After we've made an ethical decision and taken ethical action, we must think carefully about how we describe and defend our choices. Ethical conversation is about accountability – publicly and privately. This is also about whom we choose to debrief ethics with and how our colleagues can collide, collude or collaborate with us. Or, in other words, are we retelling stories with 'spin' (Carroll and Shaw, 2012, p242) and justification to make ourselves look good? Or are we truly engaging in robust conversation that helps clarify and illuminate?

We were reflecting on what a 'conversation' actually is and so consulted the popular source of wisdom, Google, who defined a conversation as: *a talk, especially an informal one, between two or more people, in which news and ideas are exchanged.* We like this definition for youth work because it suggests that an ethical conversation can be informal. It takes place, within the bounds of confidentiality, with colleagues or supervisors, and the youth worker is able to unpack their actions. Unpacking means youth workers can articulate the 'why' and the 'why not' of their actions. In the context of the conversation is it most helpful if practitioners are able to move from a defensive position to one of openness, curiosity and honesty. True ethical conversation requires great courage and integrity.

Ethical tensions usually arise where there are competing ethical dimensions, and there is not a simple, clear solution. Engaging in ethical conversations involves exploring these tensions along with the rationale for the direction that has ultimately been taken. The definition above also allows for new ideas to be introduced into the practitioner's thinking. The components of ethical maturity are not always neatly ordered. It is possible that ethical conversation may contribute to the ethical action or future actions that are taken, assuming there is time to allow for this to occur.

Component 5: Ethical peace

Youth workers need to find closure about the ethical dilemma, even if we're not happy with the results, or are unsure if we made the 'best' decision.

- *Do you find yourself losing sleep, worrying and obsessing about ethical dilemmas in youth work?*
- *How do you deal with anxiety and let go of dilemmas?*
- *What personal and professional support is available for the consequences of your decisions and actions?*

Ethical peace means we can live with the ambiguity of having made a decision (Carroll and Gilbert, 2011, p192). There's that cliché that says "hindsight is a wonderful thing" but actually hindsight can be haunting.

Through the years the ethical issues that have kept us up at night have been the ones where there has been no ideal solution. The story at the start of this article is a good example of this. The clash of ethical values meant that I (Jane) needed to find the best possible solution for the young person – even if that left some discontent for myself personally in the situation. Ethical conversation was a key step in this process.

A lengthy phone conversation with youth work guru John Harrington helped me to clarify what I already knew: acting in the best interests and maintaining relationship with the young person is paramount. This was a pre-curser to me discovering ethical peace. How do we learn not just to live with our ethical decisions, but to find a place of peace? The Hebrew concept of shalom (meaning peace, harmony, wholeness, completeness, prosperity, welfare and tranquillity) guides us in this area. When we find ethical peace it affects not only ourselves but our relationships with young people. Concepts such as harmony, prosperity and welfare are fulfilled in a relational context.

Finding ethical peace is not always easy. In our experience, the first step is usually acknowledging there is rarely an 'ideal solution'. There is no perfect route.

Some suggestions for ethical peace and sustainability:

- Be compassionate and self-accepting – know we are dealing with issues that often have no right answer and we have limited control over
- Use strategies that assist us to avoid self-rumination: mediation, prayer, exercise, pets, journaling, painting, gardening, DIY, reading comics…

- Identify appropriate places to speak about issues and get support

- Let it go and, at times, apologise and/or forgive

- Formulate learning from the experience

- Use personal and professional support to live with the consequences of the decision. *(Adapted from Carroll, 2011, p22 and Carroll & Gilbert, 2011, p 192)*

Component 6: Ethical growth

Youth workers learn from every ethical encounter and use our own experiential learning to become better practitioners.

- *What have you learnt as a result of your ethical experiences?*

- *What would you do similarly or differently in future situations?*

- *How are you becoming an even better youth worker?*

At any gathering of youth workers, you'll hear a retelling of stories from the field. Such stories are usually received with intense listening, plenty of laughter and a story in return. We love sharing stories, especially about what we're learning and how we're growing in our practice. As we're developing our personal ethical maturity, we need to consider how these stories, our experiences, have reshaped our practice ethically and made us more competent. This is the final component, ethical growth.

In the story at the start of this paper, these conversations led to ethical peace for me (Jane) as I continued to walk with the young person. A greater sense of ethical growth came for me years later when the young person was training in youth work. We were able to transparently talk about what had happened all those years afterwards.

As youth work is fundamentally relationally, it makes sense that our own ethical growth reaches out and enables growth in others. Our practice is strengthened reciprocally. There have been many times when I (Rod) have reconnected with a young person years later and we've reflected on our journey together. I'm always surprised at the insights young people share about the work.

It is at this point that we realise youth work ethics are embedded in us. We've moved beyond what is 'right' and 'wrong', embracing uncertainty with a staunch commitment to excellence. As Carroll suggests, "ethical maturity is not a 'done deal', or a definitive end-point in a journey, but it is an ever-unfolding process. It is not a destination to be arrived at, but is a continual lifelong learning" (2011, p13).

Contextualising the compass

Perhaps these six components of ethical maturity offer a pathway for us to explore, but what else do we have to guide us? We need a tool to navigate the most complex of ethical confusion, and this is where we discovered the compass.

Carroll (2011), we discovered whilst researching his evolution of ethical reflectivity, has also identified the compass as a useful ethical symbol. Similarly, Stephen Covey employs the compass as an icon of personal leadership, contrasting with the clock. The clock represents how we manage our time; the compass represents what we feel is important and how we lead our lives (Covey, Merrill & Merrill, 1994, p19).

Our emerging compass also has a story of its own: Rod had a late night epiphany whilst packing for a workshop at the 2015 South Island Youth Workers Hui. More than a dozen youth workers received an initial draft and discussed ethical scenarios in light of the compass. Rod debriefed this experience with Jane and the two of us applied our Maximiser talents (Rath, 2007) to sharpen the model. We reorganised at the last minute, more late night ideas with a series of tensions and a sense of flow. This secondary version was presented at the national Anglican event 'The Abbey' in August 2015. Jane subsequently travelled with Ara Taiohi for a series of 'Code of Ethics Champions' workshops and the compass regularly made an appearance. We both knew we needed to polish it one more time and met for breakfast at Floridita's on Cuba St (the site of many great youth work developments!) to organise our thoughts. We acknowledged a lack of bicultural competency in the initial thinking and began reflecting on equivalent concepts for Māori.

Whilst we, as Pākehā, may resonate with these symbols, we're acutely aware the magnetic compass is a colonial instrument, employed in the thirst to conquer Aotearoa in the late 1700s. The first people to discover this land, tangata whenua, did not have nor need compasses as they were masters of oceanic astral navigation (Spiller, Barclay-Kerr & Panoho, 2015). We begin by acknowledging this bicultural tension. The wisdom of matauranga Māori is the infinite backdrop and foundation for this model. Our compass therefore is human, flawed and fallible. We invite you to embrace this model lightly as we dissect each part and uncover some new ethical enquiry.

"A compass can go wrong. The stars, never." Tongan cutter (cited in Spiller, Barclay-Kerr & Panoho, 2015).

An Ethical Compass for Youth Work

Here's an explanation of the Ethical Compass, starting with some reflective questions and then describing each of the twelve parts of the model. Recall the toughest ethical situation we asked you to reflect on earlier. Use this compass image and proceeding questions to help you consider the situation from various perspectives.

An ethical question arises in your work. What direction do you take? What guides you?

Atmosphere: Cultural

The infinite atmosphere and location of our work with people sits within a cultural context.

- What greater wisdom do you connect and relate to?
- What did tipuna do in similar situations?
- What tikanga do you follow?
- How did you arrive at this place and how will you move on?

Stars are a global and universal symbol. One bright star guided three wise men to Bethlehem. Matariki represented a significant seasonal shift for iwi (Matamua, 2017). The stars guided the first iwi on their waka to discover Aotearoa. In fact, it wasn't just the stars, it was a highly skilled navigator who tuned into the stars and the surrounding natural ecosystem and guided the people to their ultimate destination; we're told it was both the journey and the goal that were important to these early explorers (Spiller, Barclay-Kerr & Panoho, 2015).

The same is true for us as youth workers exploring ethics. We must tune into our surrounding environment, be humble and be guided. We must refine our skills to read the situation fully and adapt as it naturally shifts. We must hold process and purpose in balance. The night sky and stars are a daily reminder of indigenous wisdom that is much bigger than this situation and yet has something to offer. Connect authentically with kaumatua, kuia and fellow kaimahi in your quest to understand the greater world we live in.

North: Personal

Our personal identity is intrinsically linked to who we are as youth workers.

- What formative life experiences have shaped who you are?
- What work experiences are influencing you?
- What are your strengths?
- How do you describe your culture?

Our culture, relationships, whakapapa, experience (both good and bad), and strengths all contribute to who we are and where we stand – and they all influence ethical decision making.

We often comment on the tools of youth work. Unlike other professions who have physical tools (hammers for builders, scalpels for surgeons, you get the idea) that need to be understood and cared for to ensure good practice, in youth work we are our main tool. We need to understand and care for ourselves – for the benefit of young people. This is why the clauses relating to personal care, supervision and personal awareness are placed under the strengths-based section in our COE (Ara Taiohi, 2011). When we consider an ethical situation, we need to be aware of what is happening for us personally. Are there any tensions that are affecting our wairua? What expectations are we putting on ourselves and where do these come from? How does our personal reaction to the situation affect our actions and our relationships?

East: Contextual

Youth work in Aotearoa occurs in incredibly varied and diverse contexts.

- What contexts does your work sit in?
- How do you describe your youth work?
- What specific youth development themes do you tend to focus on?
- What communities does your organisation associate with?

Our COE contains a long non-exhaustive list of the contexts of youth work in Aotearoa and seeks to encompass and value activities that are carried out in all youth development contexts, as long as they are promoting positive youth development (Ara Taiohi, 2011, p17).

In workshops we commonly debate the ethics having a young person in your home to highlight the affect context has on our ethical decisions. Youth workers working with young people in residence argue it is never appropriate to bring young people to your personal home; to do so breaches boundaries. If we are not careful this can be projected onto other contexts. However, in a more presence-based youth work context (such as a voluntary church youth group) this may well be appropriate, and these youth workers will argue that it is essential to build an authentic meaningful relationship with young people.

Whatever your context, underlying concerns that are expressed from other contexts need to be considered. How are youth workers in the first context building authentic genuine relationships with young people given their (appropriate) limitations? How are youth workers in the second context ensuring there are boundaries in place for their (appropriate) invitation for young people to enter their home world?

South: Organisational

Youth work organisations establish systems to ensure young people are safe and to help us achieve our purpose.

- What is your organisation's kaupapa?
- What are your vision, mission and goals?
- What does your governance body say about this?
- What does your manager say about this?

My (Rod) first paid job in youth work was with an organisation that positioned me physically in community centre on the other side of town. I worked alone (in a cupboard) initially and it was really tough. One night I was working on

AN ETHICAL COMPASS FOR YOUTH WORK

PERSONAL

PROFESSIONAL

VALUES & BELIEFS

MODELS & THEORIES

SOCIETAL

CONTEXTUAL

YOUNG PEOPLE

LAW & POLICIES

CODE OF ETHICS

ORGANISATIONAL

COLLEGIAL

a project with four Year 13 guys, who were only a year or two younger than me, and they started asking me invasive personal questions. I didn't know how to respond and I instantly knew I needed support. Soon after, I found the support I needed when the organisation became insolvent and a couple of us joined the team at BGI.

Youth workers thrive in teams. Youth workers working in isolation may be viewed suspiciously as 'lone rangers'. Similarly the only youth worker in a multi-disciplinary situation may struggle to advocate for the value of youth work, or even the specific needs of young people. Working

with organisations helps us clarify our focus, purpose, limitations and boundaries. Youth workers may help create such systems or struggle against them, depending on how the needs of young people are assessed (Sercombe, 2010; McCulloch & Tett, 2010).

West: Societal

A societal structure is composed of commonly understood (and not always spoken) behaviours, rules and traditions that organise human identity and relationships.

- What social norms influence the decisions you make at work?

- How is Te Tiriti o Waitangi relevant to this situation?

- What's happening in your local community and how does that influence you?

- What would a random member of the public say about your work?

Our society, both domestically in Aotearoa and also globally, has an evolving set of customs and practices that are, and are not, socially acceptable. Society at large has an opinion about young people and their capacity in public life, and therefore this implicates youth workers.

Recently, we've seen plenty of public debate about the Netflix show *13 Reasons Why* (Mulligan, 2017), exploring the subject of suicide and how this may influence the behaviour of impressionable or highly vulnerable young people. As youth workers, we need to be aware of these events and decide whether or not we engage in the subject of contention. Young people have recently disclosed to me (Rod) that they've stayed awake until the early hours of the morning watching *13 Reasons Why* and it's been distressing, interrupted regular sleep and impeded alertness at school. How wide does my ethical responsibility reach? I can engage in reflective conversation with these young people, yet do I also have an ethical duty to inform their parents of the associated risks? If I participated in media interviews and disclosed my professional opinions of the show, how might young people and their parents receive this?

The Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (YDSA) presents six principles, the first of which exclaims that youth development is shaped by the 'big picture' (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002, p15). The 'big picture' in 2002 defined our social, cultural and economic context, acknowledged Te Tiriti o Waitangi, noted values and beliefs (but more about that soon) and indicated international obligations. 15 years later, we'd expect the 'big picture' to also include the impacts of globalisation, including social media, increased inequalities (Heathfield and Fusco, 2016) and governmental policies that have not consistently met the needs of young people, to name a few.

North-East: Models and Theories

Youth workers learn about models and theories to reshape our thinking about young people and youth work.

- What are your favourite youth work models?

- What other literature informs your work?

- How do you explain the work you do to other youth workers?

- How do you explain youth work to your family?

Youth workers in Aotearoa have embraced models and theories such as Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 1998), the Circle of Courage (Brendtro, Brokenleg & Van Bockern, 2002), Developmental Assets (Scales & Leffert, 1999), Positive Youth Development (WFCT YAG, 2011), Adventure Based Learning (Rohnke, 1984; Collard, 2008) and the YDSA (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002). All of these conceptual frameworks include a hidden ethical dimension that tests us when we're trying to rigidly uphold a theoretical principle and the practical situation is complex.

Even within theoretical frameworks we are confronted with ethical conundrums. With the Circle of Courage, for example, do we allow young people to express 'independence' at the expense of 'belonging' to our group? Or more specifically, if a member of your youth leadership team chooses, at the last minute, to study for an exam and can no longer facilitate a programme with you, how do you reconcile your application of the Circle of Courage?

Essentially models and theories provide a useful additional language when formulating an ethical decision. We do need to be aware of our inclinations towards a select few theories, and actively broaden the theoretical underpinnings to our practice.

South-East: Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics for Youth Work in Aotearoa New Zealand defines the key values and standards for youth workers in our country (Ara Taiohi, 2011, p4).

- How is the Code of Ethics applied for you?

- Which other codes of ethics from other professions are you aware of?

- How do you practically express ethical clauses in your behaviour?

- What other ethical resources do you use?

"A sign of advancement and 'coming of age' for a profession [like youth work] is the development of a code of ethics that supports and guides practitioners to do what is good, and to avoid what is harmful in their work" (Carroll, 2011, p12). Our Code of Ethics was developed by youth workers for youth workers. It contains the wisdom of many experienced practitioners who understand youth development in Aotearoa. It is also based on internationally recognised theory and models and reflects our bi-cultural practice.

The Code of Ethics sits at South East on our compass – not at North. This is was originally an unintentional but we've decided it actually makes sense to locate the Code of Ethics there. A code of ethics doesn't result in automatic ethical behaviour. However, a common understanding of agreed ethical standards can impact our actions. Using our Code of Ethics in our supervision and within organisations overtly informs and guides our interactions with young people.

South-West: Laws and Policies

The legislative framework, and resulting policy framework we operate under, are further factors for consideration.

- What laws are relevant to your work?

- What policies / procedures do you follow?

Within the wider legal system, a number of key pieces of law form the legislative framework youth workers operate from. Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the CYPF (Oranga Tamariki) legislation, the Health and Safety in Work Act, the Vulnerable Children's Act, the Privacy Act, the Human Rights Act and the Education Act all directly affect our youth work. These legal requirements result in policy development in key areas.

What is our awareness of these laws as they apply to youth work and young people? How can, or do, we use legal systems to benefit, support and ultimately empower our young people? When the legal system creates inherent injustice for our young people what is our responsibility as youth workers?

North-West: Values and beliefs

Our values and beliefs are core motivators for most youth workers in their work.

- How do you describe your beliefs?
- What are your values?
- How do they influence the work you do and the relationships you have?
- How are your values and beliefs influenced by your youth work experience?

On the compass, 'values and beliefs' rest between 'personal' and 'societal' and there are links to both. While we sit united with our commitment to positive youth development, the diversity of our sector is also reflected in the diversity of values and beliefs that inspire and attract us to our profession. Awareness, expression and regulation of these values and beliefs must be considered when we make decisions that affect young people.

My kids (Jane) go to schools that would consider themselves to be relatively values 'neutral' (and certainly schools that value diversity and inclusivity). I was shocked during the American presidential election when my 12 year old was coming home terrified about what would happen if Donald Trump won the election. While it is unlikely I would have disagreed with the opinions that were expressed through the school, I was interested that they had come through so strongly, and had such an effect on my child. No youth worker is entirely values-neutral. We all need to reflect on how what we believe interacts with the young people we work with.

Centre: Young People

Young people are ostensibly at the centre of all of our work as youth workers!

- What are the needs of the specific young person/people?
- What's happened with other young people in the past that might inform your decision-making?
- What would young people say about this situation?
- How are young people better off as a result of your work?

We have a duty of care as youth workers, to keep young people safe whilst providing challenges that enable them to grow and develop. This is a tension in itself! Youth participation frameworks (notably: Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001; Wierenga, 2003), underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) and the YDSA, stipulate that we have an obligation to include young people in decisions that affect them. This might feel inappropriate in many ethical decision making processes, including Jane's story at the start of this article.

I (Rod) was walking along Dixon St one night when I encountered a 14 year old that I knew well; he was with his father and some gang-related mates. After chatting for a few minutes, the father asked if he could see what I was holding. I handed him an expensive permanent marker (of course I'd just been stationery shopping for our legal graffiti mural group!) and he pocketed this pen right in front of me, and his posse. It was a challenge and I felt intimidated. I seem to recall the sun setting rapidly and as it got darker my face got redder.

Later, when I was debriefing this with my boss, I wondered how the son made sense of this. What did my response teach him? How could I involve him in a restorative process that ultimately empowered him? This is a story less about me as a victim of theft and more about how easy it might be to forget that young people are always the centre of our ethical decision making processes, especially in the heat of the moment.

Outer rim: Collegial

Youth workers need colleagues who have experience and understanding.

- Who are the people that support you?
- How do you use super-vision?
- Who do you debrief with?
- How teachable and open are you?

As we've already noted, great youth workers are part of teams with other youth workers. You may be lucky enough to work with several other talented youth workers within the

same organisation, and/or you may form close connections with other youth workers in the networks you're a part of. These are often a powerful source of ethical reflection. The aforementioned components of ethical maturity also signalled conversation as before, during and after ethical action, so it makes sense that other youth workers sit around the perimeter of the ethical compass.

This is also the position of quality super-vision (Baxter & Mayor, 2008), helping you see how 'super' your ethical perspective is and can be. A skilled supervisor will support you to explore all the dimensions of the ethical compass, which is another reason why the 'collegial' element sits around the outer rim, inclusive of all within.

Needle: Professional

Being truly professional means we 'profess' (Sercombe, 2010) to young people that we will act in a way that considers all aspects of the compass and navigates the best possible path with them.

- What do you profess to young people
- What factors guide your professional identity?
- What direction are you heading in?
- What is your 'true north'?

The word professional is one that we hold carefully in youth work. For many it implies wearing a suit and paperwork, and an inability to do what we have always done well – engage in meaningful, genuine relationships with young people. For youth work, operating professionally means that young people experience both care and safety. We can't have one without the other. Ara Taiohi's 'Pathways to Professionalisation' journey is all about youth workers defining what it looks like to be professional. In this context the needle of being professional is the point in the journey we determine or change direction, as the terrain changes, we adapt.

Applying the compass to Jane's 'Keeping Secrets' story

ATMOSPHERE	**CULTURAL**	As a Pākehā embracing a Te Ao Māori perspective of whānau, hapu and iwi, I was working with a Pākehā family that did not do the same. However I can still see young people within the context of their family and consider my responsibilities to all relationships.
N	**PERSONAL**	My experience of having parents live through cancer was something I needed high awareness of. Being involved in writing the COE for Christchurch similarly affected my responses.
E	**CONTEXTUAL**	We operated in a faith-based community content – my actions needed to reflect the wider needs of this context.
S	**ORGANISATIONAL**	I consulted with my 'manager' for advice and support. The matter has too much operational detail for governance to be involved.
W	**SOCIETAL**	What does society say about the relationship between professionals and parents? I mentioned (in passing) the parents responded negatively when we declined to care for the children for 10 days while they went away.
NE	**MODELS & THEORIES**	Principle 4 of the YDSA and the need for a quality relationship with the young person was in tension with principle 2 (connectedness) and the need to support with the young person's relationship with their parents.
SE	**CODE OF ETHICS**	As previously discussed clauses 1, 4 and 5 (primary relationship and transparency) were directly relevant.
SW	**LAW & POLICIES**	The Privacy Act and the Care of Children Act were especially relevant.
NW	**VALUES & BELIEFS**	My personal values of integrity in relationship were challenged.
IN THE CENTRE	**YOUNG PEOPLE**	This was the most challenged. I was concerned what the young person would think, and also how I would be able to have an ongoing relationship with the young person.
OUTER RIM	**COLLEGIAL**	The views of experienced youth work practitioners were sought.
MAGNETIC NEEDLE	**PROFESSIONAL**	In this case my 'true north' was what is best for the young person – long term. Our continued and ongoing relationship was most important.

Using the compass practically

One of the challenges with the compass model is that youth workers look for the one point of the compass to determine the direction to be taken. It is rare for the compass to be used in this way. Ethical dilemmas usually arise because of competing point in the compass. The compass is a tool to understand why we are feeling pulled in multiple different directions. Understanding these pulls enables us to determine how we can move forward despite (or because of) these tensions.

Let's apply the compass to the story we have reflected on throughout this journey (of the parents requesting the 'secret' meeting).

The decision was made to meet with the parents without the young person knowing. The meeting took place. We had a moment of panic. This model did not exist when we (Christoph and I) made the decision to meet with the young person's parents without the young person's knowledge. It is ironic that years (even decades) later this was the situation that came to mind to reflect upon for this article.

Conclusion

Firstly, thanks for reading this far! We've attempted to share with you two new frameworks to enhance your ethical maturity and expand your ethical decision making. Our hope is that we cross paths with you at some stage in our collective exploration of youth work ethics and we help each other refine our practice. After all, that's what this has all been about.

Thanks for being such a reflective, committed, ethical and incredible youth worker!

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The heart of a profession

Howard Sercombe, International Youth Work Ethics Adventurer

Apparently, I'm a hard person to track down these days. After some trying, Rod finally got hold of me a couple of days ago: with this manuscript due to go off to the printers the day after tomorrow. And us in the middle of packing up house to move back to that end of the world, having been in Glasgow for the last ten years.

So I will need to be brief.

My story begins back at the beginning. I was lecturing in the youth work studies programme at Edith Cowan University in Perth, and had inherited (in 1991) a unit on ethics for youth workers, which I loved. Teaching teaches you, and over the course of three or four years, I became more and more convinced that talking about ethics wasn't just another of the academic ingredients to a youth work degree, but that there was something much deeper, much more fundamental here. Then, I had the opportunity for a one-semester sabbatical. I decided that I wanted the space to think about ethics, and to do that not in some cloistered environment but to have a desk in the corner of a youth service, reading, talking, writing, eavesdropping and interacting with youth workers as they moved through their day.

I didn't get much writing done that semester. But I read a lot, and listened a lot. The threshold moment came in a perhaps unlikely guise: a book by an American philosopher of law on the nature of the professions. The writer was Daryl Koehn, the book *The Ground of Professional Ethics*. In an analytic philosopher's oddly formal way, Koehn worked through the puzzle of what makes a profession, considering this candidate and that, until she finally comes to the conclusion that it is ethics that makes a profession. In other words, the *ethics* is not something a profession *has*. It is something a profession *is*.

Koehn has probably never heard of youth work. But her proposition that a profession is constituted by an ethical commitment to a particular group of people in order to promote a particular kind of transformation changed my whole conception of what a profession was, and what youth work was. Youth work could not be anything other than a profession, whether we knew it or not. All the elements of Koehn's analysis were there: the other-directedness, the limited nature of the relationship, the way in which working towards the transformation of the world for young people also transforms the world for us. It was that clarity, that inspiration, that resulted in me writing *Youth Work Ethics* in 2010.

I can't remember if the Code of Ethics thing happened before that semester, or after: it must have been before. I do remember how it happened. I was chair of the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia at the time (1997), and we were organising the first youth work conference in WA for a while. Ethics was one of the themes: I was asked to do a keynote, which might propose a draft for a Code of Ethics for youth work in Western Australia, and a workshop at the same conference to talk it around. The text came quickly, flowing out of the teaching, and fell into a frame of thirteen clauses and a prologue. Unusually (I have since discovered) it wasn't based on drafts from other professions, though we had obviously considered them in the course. I don't remember how, but I remember thinking it was important for it to fit onto one sheet of paper.

There was a lot of energy, a lot of feedback, a lot of corrections (strangely, people didn't like "Chastity" as the heading for the clause on sexual

> **"The ethics is not something a profession has. It is something a profession is."**

propriety, and "Fidelity" didn't work for people either). Progress was slow because in the absence of a professional association, there wasn't anyone to drive it, but at each conference after that the Code came back for another look. I was asked also to run workshops in Queensland, in the Australian Capital Territory and in New South Wales. In each of those people offered their suggestions and criticisms, the ideas and words were refined and we got closer to something that we could share. At the 2002 Western Australian Youth Affairs Conference, we put aside a two hour session to formally approve the final draft. It was adopted unanimously on the floor of the Conference in seven minutes.

I think it was at the Sydney gig that I met John Harrington. Quiet and unassuming, the man clearly had an energy and a vision for what youth work could be. I was glad to be able to offer some words that enabled him and friends in New Zealand to move forward. Since then, similar things have happened in South Africa, Zambia, Scotland, England and in several States in Australia.

But nowhere have youth workers got the ethics thing like in NZ, not at national level anyway. New Zealand was there a little later than some places, but pursued it more wholeheartedly and without some of the neurosis about whether a Code might one day stop you doing something that you wanted to do or the pseudo-radical protests about a Code being a thin end of the wedge towards political conservatism. It was helped in this process by support from the Ministry, but the energy came from the sector. I came to Wellington for a few days in early 2006 to help with the launch of *Real Work*, Lloyd Martin's (and others') excellent survey of the sector but really to spend time talking about ideas. It was a joy to be among such intelligent and committed youth work minds: people with a big idea of what youth work could be in New Zealand. At the time, this was also happening without the resources and support that an academic programme can provide: academics provided most of the wordsmithing for Codes of Ethics in the UK and in Australia.

So where are we now?

The 1997 Western Australian draft has travelled a long way. As well as providing some bones for the Canterbury draft, it has also become the basis for Codes of Ethics in South Africa, Zambia, Scotland and now England. The Commonwealth Secretariat has been pursuing the professionalization of youth work with some energy, and its early drafts for a Commonwealth code of ethics for youth workers were also based on the 1997 WA bones. There are a couple of other candidates as well: Malta's Code is based on the earlier English draft put together by the National Youth Agency also around 1997. Child and Youth Care professionals in North America settled on a code around 1995. But both of these were derived from social work codes: and I think it shows.

New Zealand's differs from the others largely in the amount of elaboration. Our strategy was to keep the Code to a single A4 page, so that people would stick it up on the wall rather than keep it in the drawer, and to use supporting documents to elaborate on particular clauses, to clarify questions, and to provide worked examples. There was room also for organisations or particular sectors to provide more detail as they saw fit. Ara Taiohi's document runs to 66 pages. I get why, but there is also something to be said for a shorter form that youth workers pretty much know off by heart and can pull up the clauses on the run in a difficult situation.

There is also the commitment in New Zealand to Positive Youth Development approaches. I like Lerner's work, but my own perspective was to avoid particular theoretical identifications both because they can go out of date and because there may be individual youth workers who have an objection to a particular theory but would still want to sign up to a Code of Ethics. (The Brits hate PYD with a passion). It is important, I think, for the Code to be ideologically open, so that you can still find a home in it if you are conservative or radical, faith-based or secular, volunteer or paid, on the left of politics or otherwise.

One of the unintended consequences of the fact that most codes globally are based on the 1997 WA draft is that it provides a stock of shared meaning about what youth work is and what is important to youth workers. I have always argued that a Code of Ethics is much more an identity statement, a manifesto, than a list of rules and regulations. The existence of parallel codes across the world

means that youth workers from Aberdeen to Auckland share the same language and the same core commitment. The common form of the Code means that it shouldn't be too hard to come to some agreement about what an international Code of Ethics for youth work might look like. I've done some work after suggestions at the International Youth Studies conference at Maynooth, Ireland, in 2012. The problem is the same one we faced in Western Australia twenty years ago: who is going to convene the conversation? In a way, the ethics conversation creates the organisations that are likely to host the ethics conversation, so there is a bit of a Catch 22 problem. Usually what happens is somebody just takes leadership, regardless of their mandate or lack of it.

The potential for the internationalisation of youth work does excite me. It is happening: alongside the Commonwealth Secretariat's efforts, there has also been consistent support through the Council of Europe's Youth Work History conferences and publications, under the tenacious leadership of Howard Williamson and others. The sixth volume of national youth work histories is out now, and this body of work provides the possibility for deep understanding and synthesis across our national traditions. But these movements aren't connected up well. And they don't touch the burgeoning youth populations of China and South America. I have argued elsewhere (Sercombe, 2015) that the penetration of modernity across the globe places a whole new population of young people under the structures for control of young people already practiced in the West: with similar consequences.

Youth workers in China or Brazil could use our support, and we certainly have a great deal to learn from them. Currently, we haven't made the kinds of organisations that would allow us to create an international federation of youth workers. That does sound good…

Meanwhile, however, developments across our sector over the last twenty years have been profound. When I started teaching youth work at university level in 1986, there was basically one book published about youth work: Jeffs and Smith. Now there are dozens, and new ones being published all the time. In 1986, nobody was talking about ethics. Now there is a serious international conversation.

All of that, however, comes to nothing unless ethics has a living, breathing life at the heart of our practice, at the heart of our relationship with young people. It is that that I find inspiring about the example of New Zealand. Without much in the way of resources, with a sector dominated by volunteers, without the support of an academic establishment, youth work in Aotearoa New Zealand has made ethics the core of its identity, the measure of its theory, the master discourse that governs other conversations about outcomes or efficiency or competence. A profession is not made by its status, its claims for official support, its legal recognition, its capacity to impose a monopoly of practice. A profession is made by the clarity and quality of its ethical commitment to the people it serves and to the transformations that the relationship facilitates. In that, the professional credentials of youth work in Aotearoa New Zealand are unimpeachable.

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Ethical Issues in Youth Work

8 curly questions

1   It's election time. Should a youth worker promote a political party on their Facebook page?

2   You finish work late, it's raining heavily and your family is waiting for you for dinner. When you reach your car, you notice Josiah waiting for the bus. Should you offer Josiah a lift home?

3   A parent has phoned you up and offered you money to thank you for everything you've done for his daughter. You politely decline, however a few weeks later you discover someone has established a $50 tab at the café you regularly go to. What to do?

4   Phillip and his mates turn up to your birthday party at 11pm. How do you respond?

5   Merinda is part of your Year 12 youth leadership team. You've just found out she's been bullying your niece at school and online. What to do?

6   A youth court advocate/lawyer phones you for an informal chat. She's acting for a boy you've known for two years. What do you say?

7   A student is selling drugs at school. What do you feel/do?

8   Esther is suicidal and refuses to be referred. She only wants to talk to you. What can you do?

Youth Work Ethics BINGO!

Find someone who…

See if you can find someone different for each of the statements below. When you have, get their signature inside the box. You cannot have the same person twice. First one finished wins!

Has had a speeding fine…	Is awesome at self-care…	Is usually late to work…	Praises young people every week…
Checks Facebook daily…	Has broken confidentiality	Has their full drivers license…	Has read the Code of Ethics…
Has had a challenging chat with a parent…	Participates in regular supervision…	Has talked with young people about drugs…	Goes to church…
Knows one really awesome teacher…	Has been drunk this year…	Speaks some Te Reo Māori…	Has received a gift from a young person…

Code of Ethics Scenarios

What is the ethical issue?

Where does the Code of Ethics talk about this?

1 Last night Jacinta and her friends were at the pub sharing work stories. Jacinta freely shared details about some of the kids and families she had been working with the most because her friends seemed very interested. At one point the conversation was interrupted by a woman who claimed to be the aunty of one of the kids. She was furious that her family was being described so negatively.

2 Jenni has just joined your team. She's of Malaysian descent and believes strongly in treating young people equally. As you work with a lot of rangatahi, you're attempting to tell her about tikanga but she's simply not interested.

3 Dylan has been volunteering with you for three years. On Sunday he dropped you home after camp and you were horrified to discover his 1990 Prelude doesn't have seatbelts, has no WOF or registration and is generally a bucket of rust. When you asked Dylan if this was the same car he was transporting young people in he became really defensive and said he didn't need a license from the government to prove he was a good driver.

4 Ngahuia, a girl from your Year 12 leadership group sends you this txt at 10:30pm: "My 'rents r farked. Ive had a gutsful nd wana move out. HELP!!" She's been hinting all year that she would rather live at your flat, but you've avoided the conversation because you're not sure of the rules.

5 Your new 20yr old co-worker Ani has just finished the Certificate in Youth Work and joined your team. She's helping you with a transition group of boys who have left school and are searching for careers. One of the guys, 18yr old Raz, has clearly taken a shining to Ani and regularly brings her presents.

6 At your cousin's 30th birthday party on Friday night your nephew Nixon took heaps of photos. In some of the photos you look quite drunk. Nixon posted most of these images on Facebook straight away and young people are commenting how wasted you look.

7 Last week Trev grabbed a knife from the kitchen and started threatening Alex with it. Frustrated at yet another outburst by this guy, you tried yelling at Trev to stop but it didn't work and he cut Alex. You felt like you had no choice so you restrained Trev by holding his arms behind his back and eventually sitting on him until he cried and gave up. You've never done this before and it's really been bugging you.

8 This Saturday night your leadership team is farewelling a long-serving volunteer by having a few quiet drinks at your flat. All of you are over 18 except Jackson who's 16. He's really mature, responsible and apparently been drinking with mates from school for ages. What's the best course of action?

9 You've been working with a group of young guys for a while now. Recently they've been tagging around the local shops. You also have a strong relationship with the Police and the local Community Constable has emailed you some photos of some tags you think have been done by these same guys. What do you do?

10 Kat has been working part-time with you for six months and during that time she's been trying to cut down on how much weed she smokes. Her boyfriend Greg is one of the key organizers of a public protest to legalise cannabis this Saturday. Kat really wants to go and argues that even if she's stoned on the day and young people see her, she'll be role modelling responsible political participation.

Managing boundaries

Apply Jane Zintl's continuum of ethical behaviour (refer to page 11)
to each of these areas of youth work.

The fine line

✗ ✗ ✗ ┊ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

| Things you can't do | Things you can do (Some better than others) |

✗ ✓

1. Location meeting place and time:

- Where are appropriate places to meet young people?
- At a café, home, kitchen, bedroom?
- What are the risks and limits?
- Is it OK to meet in evenings, weekends
  and in your personal time?
- How about the duration and frequency of contact?
- What could be young people's interpretation
  and the implications of this?

2. Language:

- Is it OK to use the kind of language young people use?
- Swearing?
- How affectionate can our language be?
- Is it ok to say "I like you", "I love you",
  "I'll always be there for you"?

3. Self-Disclosure:

- What is appropriate to reveal about yourself, you
  personal life and circumstance? How come?
- Is it possible to form a professional youth work
  relationship without any self-disclosure?
- How about unintended or non-verbal self-disclosure?
- What could young people know about
  you without you knowing?
- When you find yourself having strong feelings (positive or
  negative) towards a young person, how do you respond?
- Is it OK to have pictures of your family in your office?
- Could it be that young people are not
  interested in your personal life?

4. Touch:

- What kind of touch? Hands on shoulder? Hugs?
- How frequently?
- Should you ask young people first?
  Could that be coercive?
- Who initiates and requests?
- What if a young person requests a hug, asks to be held?
- Do youth workers have a 'license to
  touch'? What professions do?
- What about during ABL?
- Can you help people without touching?
- How will you know how young
  people interpret your touch?

5. Gifts:

- What and when do you give?
- What and when do you receive?
- What occasions are inappropriate?
- Does the dollar value make a difference?
- Consider the difference between giving a present
  to one young person versus all young people?
- What's the difference between receiving a gift from
  oneself versus the organisation or programme?
- What if someone brings you that really yummy
  Lewis Rd Whittakers chocolate milk?

6. Lending and Borrowing:

- What's OK to lend to young people? What
  property? Money? How much and how often?
- Is it OK to borrow from young people? Their family?
- What are the criteria?
- Are there organisational policies?

7. Business Transactions:

- Is it ok to pay young people to do a job for you?
- Wash your car? Rent your house?
- How about 'barter' arrangements such as
  a young person stuffs envelopes or cleans
  your office in exchange for mentoring?

8. Socialising:

- What type of socialising with young
  people is appropriate?
- What is off limits?
- Does it matter if young people are a certain age?
- Could you have a beer with a young
  person? Or in front of them?

The birth of a new Association for Youth Workers in Aotearoa New Zealand

Anya Satyanand

"Tuitui tangata, tuitui korowai"
Bringing a group of people together requires the same level care employed in weaving a beautiful garment.

A new step in a long history of youth work

Youth work in Aotearoa has a rich history, a strong present and an exciting future. In 2017, we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the first code of ethics, a significant milestone that the profession is marking by launching a professional association for youth workers.

Youth work is a community in Aotearoa that has strong foundations, built through the contribution and leadership of many people, networks and organisations. Youth workers are currently working collectively to build an association that genuinely reflects the aspirations and needs of this very important part of the youth development ecosystem.

Building on the work of our parent organisation, the National Youth Workers Network Aotearoa, in 2016 Ara Taiohi (the peak body for youth development) launched a pilot association and extended an open invitation to youth workers across the sector to participate in the design of the association. More than 240 youth workers have become founding members, more than 6 times the number we originally anticipated in a process that has been marked by the enthusiasm of people who have offered their insights, help and energy.

In te reo Māori, the word "rangatiratanga" means leadership – literally the weaving of people together. The work of constructing this association has been like weaving – many different perspectives and different voices have taken form in the membership and resolution processes using the skills of many people.

Why a Professional Association?

Youth workers form a critical part of the workforce needed to support positive youth development for our young people in Aotearoa New Zealand. This professional association will empower youth workers to determine the competencies and ethics that underpin their practice, and to have input into the systems that will enable the profession to grow and develop. We fundamentally believe that youth workers should define the competencies and philosophy that sit beneath the practice of youth work in Aotearoa, rather than a minister or ministry.

International evidence tells us that having a strong national voice on professional issues affecting youth workers is a critical part of a positive youth development ecosystem, along with good policy on young people and decent resourcing to the sector.

In 2017, youth workers working with young people across Aotearoa are more qualified than ever before, but despite this, rates of pay for paid youth workers have declined against the national average wage in the last 10 years. Law changes affecting youth workers and youth development organisations have had significant impacts on youth workers. Youth workers recognize the need for a strong voice to advocate and shape the learning area of youth work and qualifications that sit alongside these.

Philosophy and models

The philosophy, models and practice of contemporary youth work in New Zealand has been influenced and shaped by Māori practices and knowledge, Pasifika cultures, recreation and outdoor education, and positive youth development models which have been hugely influential.

Youth work in Aotearoa is diverse: from work in schools based on academic and adventure based learning, to support for gender and sexuality diverse young people, through recreation and culturally based programmes through to church based programmes and services. These wide ranging contexts create richness, and despite the broadness of the spectrum, the common ground is a consistent commitment to positive youth development and ethical practice. Youth work as a profession has embraced this spectrum, and in launching this organization we recognize the tension held between the diversity of our profession and the need for an inclusive collective framework. Our Code of Ethics for Youth Work provides this inclusive framework which aspires to hold youth workers who work in a way that is ethical and focused on positive youth development, in relationship with each other.

Te aho tapu, the first and main thread of the korowai, weaves the whenu (warp) and aho (weft) of the korowai together. Te aho tapu of this professional association is dedicated to ngā taiohi o Aotearoa – all the young people of this country.

The whenu and aho are the strands of community, learning and growth that make up our association.

Naming of Korowai Tupu

Full name

Korowai Tupu o Ara Taiohi: Te Tōpūtanga o Ngā Kaimahi Whanaketanga

Full name translation

Korowai Tupu o Ara Taiohi: The Professional Association of Youth Workers in Aotearoa

Conceptual meaning

Cloak of growth

Key words translated

Korowai = Cloak (connects to Ara Taiohi whatu raranga or strategic framework)

Tupu = (noun) Growth, development, seedling; (verb) prosper, originate, increase; (modifier) real, genuine, ancestral

Kaimahi = Worker

Tōpūtanga = Association, collective, grouping, organisation. Could be used to describe what kind of group we are but not who
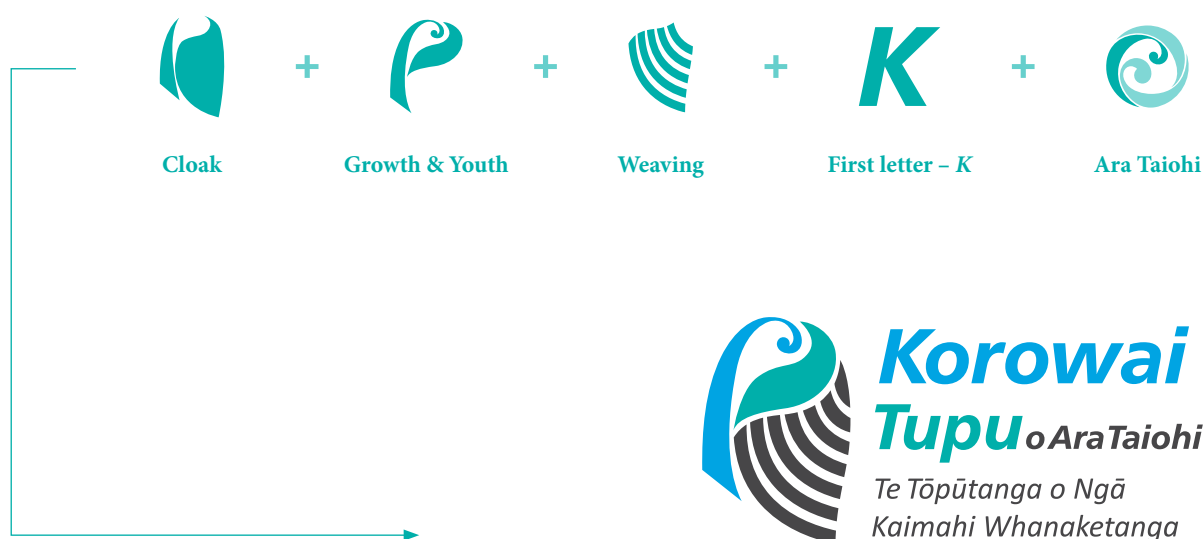
Whanaketanga = Youth development (connects to use in COE)

Aotearoa = Used when working internationally

Thirty-six suggestions for the name and values a name would need to embody were gathered through the Starfish focus groups and online survey. A sub-group of representatives from the Pathways to Professionalisation group and Ngā Kaihoe met to work through the list. Through this process many of the suggestions were woven together into one. The suggested name went through a process with our Kaihautu and was circulated to the Māori founding members for input.

Cloak   +   Growth & Youth   +   Weaving   +   First letter – *K*   +   Ara Taiohi

Korowai Tupu o Ara Taiohi

Te Tōpūtanga o Ngā Kaimahi Whanaketanga

John Harrington and Jane Zintl have consistently pioneered the development of youth work ethics in Aotearoa over the past two decades. This publication hopes to celebrate and affirm their significant contribution to the progression of our profession.

The collective voices within these pages are incredibly talented and committed youth workers from a range of contexts. We also wish to acknowledge their journeys and input into the evolution of ethics. We also must remember the mana and wellbeing of the many young people who are explicitly and implicitly referred to in these stories; thank you for what you've taught us.

This may also be the first issue of an ongoing periodical journal for youth work and youth development in New Zealand. Watch this space!