

Collision: An opportunity for growth? Māori social workers' collision of their personal, professional, and cultural worlds and the values and ethical challenges within this experience

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Abstract

Reamer (2013a) identifies that the most difficult ethical dilemmas happen for social workers when their personal and professional worlds conflict. Māori (indigenous people to New Zealand) social workers (kaimahi) often live and work in the same area as their whānau (extended family), hapū (sub tribe) and iwi (tribe) and there is a high chance that members of their own whānau will come through the organisation where they work. This is when kaimahi might experience a collision of their personal, professional and cultural worlds. It is the domain where the three different systems have to interact—a professional system, a whānau system, and a cultural system and many values and ethics can conflict.

This article draws upon a research study that involved interviewing seven kaimahi who had experienced collision and explored their encounter of these collisions. A focus area of the research was on the well-being of kaimahi through this collision and how kaimahi values and ethics are impacted by the collision experience.

A key finding from this study reveals that collision is a complex area that requires careful navigation by kaimahi and the organisation they work for. It is imperative that kaimahi and managers discuss

and plan for collision as opposed to waiting until it happens, and organisations should have policies and protocols in place for working with whānau. This research also developed a definition and construction of what collision is in the social services and kaimahi have imparted words of wisdom so that others experiencing collision may find a way forward.

Keywords: collision, kaimahi, whānau, personal, professional.

Introduction

The profession of social work is value-laden, and issues of values, ethics and boundaries underpin social work practice (Reamer 2013a). Banks (2006) informs us that a distinguishing feature of social work is that generally the profession has a code of ethics shaped by a professional body. Social work practitioners in New Zealand are guided by the SWRB Code of Conduct (SWRB, 2016), Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers (ANZASW) Code of Ethics (ANZASW, 2015) and organisational policies and procedures for guidance regarding ethical and boundary issues in social work.

Māori social workers (kaimahi) are consistently faced with conflicting cultural tensions and differences in their practice, and most have

found a way to work effectively in both the Māori and Pākehā (non-indigenous) worlds. Kaimahi have had to grow strength and resilience to achieve this, and at times this may cause challenges and dilemmas for them. Add into this mix, kaimahi own whānau (family) coming through services they work in and there is the potential for a 'smack-bang' collision.

This article presents findings from research on Māori social workers' experiences of collision. First, by exploring what the collision zone in social work is in relation to general literature on ethics and values in social work. Second, the specific challenges, ethical dilemmas and boundary issues faced by kaimahi in their practice are considered (including dual roles and accountability, conflicting cultural tensions, dilemmas of biculturalism in practice and the issue of collusion). Finally, suggestions drawn from the research are presented, including the need for appropriate supervision for kaimahi; reviewing protocols for working with whānau; and appropriate support for kaimahi.

The Collision Zone

The research was titled *Tukia: Mā te hē, ka tika*—Māori social workers' experiences of the collision of their personal, professional and cultural worlds. The study focussed on seven kaimahi who had experienced Tukia (collision) and explored their encounter with Tukia—what helped, what hindered, what could have helped, and words of wisdom they would pass on to others experiencing collision. The methodology utilised Kaupapa Māori, and Pūrākau (stories) to connect the research to Māori Worldviews, and the research framework was guided by Pā Harakeke (flax bush learnings). It is not the intent in this article to unfurl the methodology—this will be done in a future article.

A focus area of the collision research was on the well-being of kaimahi through this collision and how kaimahi values and ethics are impacted by the collision experience. A key message from the perspectives of the participants was that "*Out of the big bang comes the growth*" and that kaimahi

could come out the other side of their collision with it becoming a lived experience that may strengthen and deepen their social work practice.

In this research kaimahi are social workers who identified themselves as Māori, tangata whenua o Aotearoa (indigenous people of New Zealand). This research explored how kaimahi managed the collision experience of their personal, professional and cultural worlds and what factors helped or hindered this process.

What Is Collision? *Whack—the Biggest Mack Truck Ever!*

The collision zone in social work can be likened to the collision zone in rugby—it is hard-hitting, can be unexpected and can leave you winded, or worst still, wounded and sent off the field with an injury! Collision is used to describe the crashing together of a practitioner's personal, professional and cultural worlds. Other words could have been used to describe this such as clash, conflict or tension; however, the word 'collision' was the most accurate to describe a violent crashing together of worlds causing an impact. The cultural dimension of the collision focused on the fact that all the research participants were Māori, may have a Māori worldview, and may also be culturally impacted by the collision, hence the personal-professional-cultural worlds' collision. The Māori word 'tukia' is utilised to describe collision; tukia means to ram and crash into (www.Māoridictionary.co.nz). It can also be used to describe the ramming of a bull's horns (I. Noble, personal communication 25 February 2017). The title of the thesis, *Tukia: Mā te hē, ka tika*, translates to "Collision: Through trial and tribulation and experience, rightness or correctness is achieved, therefore we gain learning through our mistakes and experiences" (I. Noble, personal communication, 25 February 2017). This depicts a view of well-being that underpins my own practice and a belief that even though we can have experiences in life that are challenging and negative, these experiences can lead to our own personal growth and development and eventually a place of wellness and well-being. Underpinning this are western models of resilience

(Ungar, 2012) strengths based perspective (Saleebey 1997, 2002) and Post-Traumatic Growth (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1995; Van Slyke, 2015; Zoellner & Maercker, 2006).

An outcome of this research was the construction of a definition of collision. This is encompassed in the words outlined by kaimahi to describe collision including: “clashes”, “conflict”, “bedlam”, “emotional”, “interface”, “impact”, “big bang”, and “Whack—the biggest Mack truck ever!” Collision was defined as clashes/conflicts between kaimahi and the organisation they work for, the clash of cultures (Māori/Pākehā) and a lack of understanding of cultures, conflict between the genders, the conflict between kaimahi with their own family, and whānau expectations of kaimahi in social work roles. Collision was also defined as being about different perspectives and forming relationships to create a bridging between those differences. The tāne (men) viewed collision quite generally and as not being a ‘big deal’ whereas the women were greatly impacted. Collision was defined personally because of the personal experience of it, and emotionally because of the emotional and internal reaction to it; this sense was conveyed in the following comment:

It's the reaction internally that creates the collision ... I start getting that whole feeling in my puku (stomach) of that dilemma and I feel frozen, not knowing what to do or where to go from here ... It's kind of like the puku, the heart and the head and they all clash.

Collision could also be a “layered, impacting intergenerational trauma,” where there is a whole series of impacts happening at once; and, finally, collision can result in positive growth:

Out of the big bang comes the growth, the realization, the magic, the power of creation ... I like to see it as every collision is purposeful—it's meant to be.

In summary, although collision for kaimahi in social work can be hard-hitting and impacting, and feel like being hit by a big Mack truck, it can eventually lead to positive growth for the kaimahi.

General Literature on Ethics and Values

This section attempts to ground general ethics and values in western worldviews first before introducing ethical and boundary issues specifically faced by kaimahi as Māori social workers.

There is significant literature regarding ethics, professionalism and accountability in general social work (Banks 2006, 2008, 2011; Doel, Allmark, Conway, Cowburn, Flynn, Nelson and Tod, 2010; Hugman (in Davies), 2013; Mattison, 2003; Reamer 2001, Reamer 2013b).

Mattison (2003) affirms that social workers can develop ethical reasoning to assist in preventing errors in judgment and that in addressing ethical dilemmas, social workers often fail to acknowledge and accept that personal values, lived experiences, and other influences, for example, culture and beliefs can impact on professional decisions. Professional boundaries is a complex area that is subject to a range of interpretation (Banks 2006, 2008, 2011; Congress, 1999; Dewane, 2010; Doel et al., 2010; Fine & Teram, 2009; Reamer 2003). For Doel et al., the word ‘boundary’ is full of ambiguities and describes “what is acceptable and unacceptable for a professional to do, both at work and outside of it, and also the boundaries of a professional’s practice” (2010, p.1867). While Reamer (2003) affirms that skillful management of boundary issues can enhance the ethical integrity of social work.

Banks also highlights that for social workers there can be issues around professional roles, boundaries and relationships and suggests that there needs to be “considerations of issues of boundaries between personal, professional and political life” (2006, p. 14). Reamer (2013a) highlights that for social workers the most difficult ethical dilemmas can happen when their personal and professional values conflict. There is a suggestion that a separation of the personal and professional is necessary, however,

this thinking sees the social worker as separate from their private self (Banks, 2006). In social work the practitioner is the tool so the use of self is critical (Weld & Appleton, 2014). Reupert (2009) claims that self-awareness is essential in the helping relationship and that the use of self is not incidental, unconscious and inevitable and that, “There are risks involved in the involvement of self, there are also costs in not involving the self” (2009, p. 775). Weld and Appleton clarify that the personal self is about, “who we are as people, what we bring from our life journey, our socialisation, our families, choices, experiences and personality” (2014, p. 16).

Kaimahi bring their life experiences to their mahi (work) as social workers and often acknowledge and accept that their personal values, lived experiences, and cultural influences may impact on the professional decisions they make. Walsh-Mooney (2009) shares that clinicians should have essential knowledge of self, however that in trying to establish rapport with clients the ‘use of self’ is disputed. She also reveals that, “for Māori the sharing of self starts at the very beginning when whakapapa (family history) is shared and connections are made” (2009, p. 70). This is particularly relevant as in the Māori world it is essential that connections to each other are made.

The next section will consider the ethics and boundary issues specific to kaimahi in the research.

Challenges, Ethical Dilemmas and Boundary Issues Faced by Kaimahi

Several challenges, ethical dilemmas and boundary issues were identified by kaimahi experiencing collision. This section explores dual roles and accountability, conflicting cultural tensions, issues of biculturalism in practice, and the issue of colluding.

Dual Accountability and Roles for Māori —“Which Hat—Professional or Nana Hat?”

Dual accountability and roles for Māori practitioners are outlined by Collins, 2006; Love,

2002; Moyle, 2013; and Wilson and Baker, 2012. Collins (2006) discusses dual accountability for herself as a Māori researcher and a member of a community—the tension being her responsibility and accountability to her community, her iwi (tribal affiliations), and to her research academy. She found that at times her dual roles were “incompatible as they incorporated different contexts and agendas” (2006, p. 31-32). She also discussed the dilemmas of double perspective of insider-outsider dichotomy where as an insider someone is a member and a participant of the group being researched but as an outsider you are a researcher and observer with a set agenda. With the collision research, kaimahi experienced that same tension (i.e., responsibility and accountability to whānau [extended family], hapū [sub-tribe] and iwi [tribal affiliations] and responsibility and accountability to their organization or place of work). Moyle (2013) in her research on challenges faced by Māori social workers within the care and protection system, highlighted issues of dual accountability as well.

Many kaimahi interviewed for this research were working in their whānau, hapū and iwi areas so the chances of their own whānau coming into services was high. O’Leary et al. (2012) discuss dual relationships as social workers requiring a professional relationship as well as social contact. Issues of dual role accountabilities for kaimahi included the dilemma of managing being a professional social worker and being a whānau member. This could also involve being a Child, Youth and Family (CYF—now called Oranga Tamariki) social worker and CYF caregiver at the same time, or supporting whānau going through the CYF system, or being a whānau member in the CYF system, for example, attending a Family Group Conference (FGC) as a whānau member. Other issues included being able to manage working in the same office as the CYF social worker of their mokopuna (grandchild/ren), and being approached in work time to talk about their personal whānau situation. One participant likened it to having two hats—a ‘professional hat’ and a ‘Nana hat’. She went on to explain that she wore both hats and

that the roles cannot be separated because 'you are who you are'. Three kaimahi talked about trying to separate the roles by having clear, defined boundaries between the personal and professional worlds.

Most kaimahi discussed the grey boundary issues and how boundary crossings occurred. This could work two ways (e.g., colleagues crossing boundaries by asking about personal whānau situation during work time, or kaimahi approaching a colleague in their organisation to discuss their personal whānau situation). These were areas that were unclear and obscure at times as often the kaimahi and their workplace were trying to navigate the processes where there were no firm policies regarding managing this. Kaimahi shared that it was important to declare your personal and professional role immediately to your workplace if a referral for a whānau member came into your service. One participant's professionalism was brought into question by CYF when her own mokopuna were involved in a notification to CYF—they questioned whether she would be able to be professional when her own mokopuna were involved.

Another ethical dilemma for kaimahi was to not use privileged position as a social worker to look up information on work databases or approach the police, who kaimahi had a relationship with, to acquire more information. There are challenges in this, particularly if there are unanswered questions for kaimahi and whānau, however this was identified by kaimahi as a clear cut boundary violation (Reamer, 2013a).

The implications for kaimahi and organisations are that this is a complex area that requires careful navigation by the kaimahi experiencing collision and also the organisation that the kaimahi works for. This raises the issue of the importance of managers and social workers in being able to talk about collisions, this would be in the form of sharing that this is an issue for social workers and that inevitably can happen, particularly for Māori social workers. It would also be a matter of appropriate discussion of the term collision and

then appropriate planning for collision, as opposed to waiting until it happens in organisations.

Conflicting Cultural Tensions— “A White House and a Māori Whare”

For kaimahi working in mainstream services conflict was experienced between their cultural values and beliefs and those that were dominant in their workplaces. Some kaimahi shared the challenges of working under Pākehā (non-indigenous) systems and questioned whether some of these systems were tokenistic, for example, the way karakia (incantation/prayer) was implemented in their workplace and some non-Māori colleagues expressed that they did not see the value of karakia and would 'bear' it. Moyle (2013) discussed the difficulties encountered for her participants of walking creatively between two worlds and likened it to walking a tightrope whereby they are attempting to traverse Te Ao Māori (the Māori world) and Te Ao Pākehā (the western world) whilst attempting to manage their own personal and professional identity. One kaimahi in the collision research discussed the conflicting cultural tensions as having two houses—a White house (where the kaimahi works) and a Māori whare (house where the kaimahi lives) and talked about the Māori whare having a consistent tikanga (customary correct and right procedure) being built around respect and all the principles of the Māori whare—Kaitiakitanga (guardianship, stewardship), manaakitanga (the process of showing respect, generosity and care for others), aroha ki te tangata (respect for people). However the white house had procedures and policies that the kaimahi saw getting broken every day—these being the policies that guide the organisation. Another kaimahi discussed this tension as two currents clashing and used the metaphor of fire alarm boxes on a wall and there being two—one is Pākehā and one is Māori, and that some Māori can break the two boxes (i.e., can live in both worlds); however, some Pākehā will always default back to their own system because that is their hidden safety bias. The kaimahi used the analogy of the fire alarms to reiterate that although

kaimahi may be immersed in their Māori world, they have learned how to work in mainstream, sometimes quite effectively, and can move between the two worlds successfully, however this can cause them challenge.

Wilson and Baker's (2012) research findings confirmed that Māori nurses face many conflicting cultural tensions between their Māori cultural perspective and their medical profession. Moyle (2013) reiterates this point stating that Māori practitioners face the dual burden of professional and cultural expectations in organisations as well as from communities. Elder's (2008) research explored Māori cultural identity of Māori psychiatrists and registrars who worked with children and their whānau. The findings of this research was that Māori doctors "work differently" and apply "tikanga Māori working methods" (2008, p. 203) in their work as doctors. This is the experience for many Māori social workers as well. English et al. (2011) discuss how Social Workers in Schools (SWiS) kaimahi go the 'extra mile' when advocating on behalf of the whānau they work alongside. They expressed that at times this may cause professional dilemmas for them such as coming into conflict with other professionals because the kaimahi may advocate for tikanga Māori proceedings to be utilised when working with whānau.

Although kaimahi are consistently faced with conflicting cultural tensions, most have found a way to work effectively in both worlds—Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā; however, this can be a balancing act for them. The implications of this are that there are strong, resilient kaimahi, who may face these conflicting cultural tensions, but are working effectively and successfully in the two worlds. Moyle stated that her participants (Māori social workers), "walked creatively between two worldviews in order to best meet the needs of their own people ... felt over-worked and under-valued" (2014, p. 55). This is an issue facing many kaimahi who are walking between two worlds—the Māori and Pākehā worlds. Participants in Moyle's research talked about having to work twice as hard to get the

job done and work as an in-between. Moyle linked the Māori 'in between role' to Indigenous Australian social workers and stated that Indigenous workers "walk a tightrope between two worldviews whilst at the same time managing their own personal and professional identity" (2014, p. 56). These conflicting cultural tensions can lead to 'Brown Face Burnout'.

Hollis-English (2012, 2016) and Moyle (2014) discuss "brown face burn-out" being the result of Māori social workers being unhappy in their work and being overworked. Hollis-English (2016) outlined that Maori staff have an "additional qualification: being Māori is an attribute that is brought to engagement with Māori clients" (2016, p. 73). Moyle states that this burnout is due to, "cultural expectations and additional responsibilities because of being Māori" (2014, p. 57). Sometimes Māori social workers have expectations put upon them in mainstream services and this can lead to cultural burn-out for kaimahi Māori.

Biculturalism in Practice—*"You Are a Whakapapa Emancipation of a Paepae That Has Dual Culture on It!"*

The above quote came from a kaimahi in the collision research and talks about the history of Aotearoa (New Zealand) and how this includes having a dual culture—Māori and Pākehā, and that contemporary Māori are a product of this. Kaimahi observed that some people can sit in the middle ground and speak two worldviews and become the people that knit the two worldviews together. These are the people who can '*meet at the border*'. Kaimahi ascertain that some Pākehā colleagues are '*allies*' and keen to learn and embrace biculturalism, can work Māori principles into their practice, and are working effectively with whānau Māori. Finding this middle ground allows for Māori and non-Māori to move forward. Munford and Sanders (2011) explored how Māori frameworks have influenced mainstream social work practice. Their findings confirmed that Te Aō Māori constructs have influenced, strengthened and affirmed mainstream

social work practice in Aotearoa and brought “vibrancy” to practice and “shaped” mainstream practice.

In mainstream services kaimahi are utilising Te Ao Māori concepts in their practice and have much to contribute to the social work profession. It would be beneficial for all to see these utilised in mainstream practice, particularly in organisations that have significantly high Māori participation. However, three kaimahi had concerns with trying to fit Māori culture into a non-Māori workplace because their experience was that Pākehā will often have expectations of Māori within mainstream, will try to tell Māori to do Māori things in a Pākehā way, and that Pākehā control Māori processes in mainstream. To utilise Te Ao Māori effectively in mainstream will require Māori spearheading and monitoring this process.

Another challenge faced by kaimahi is the dilemma of possible colluding.

Colluding—“What’s That Word? We’re Colluding”

At times whānau placed expectations onto kaimahi and assumed that because kaimahi worked in the social work field, they would be fine and would know what to do next. Kaimahi admitted that at times they would freeze and not know the best way to proceed. Albert’s (2013) study explored social work practice development by Māori women and noted that one participant found that she had challenges from dealing with her own whānau who had expectations that she would ‘collude’ with them. In the collision research, when discussing boundary issues, one kaimahi shared that she did not want the father of her mokopuna (grandchild) to accuse her of ‘colluding’ because of her professional role at CYF so she took clear steps to not cross boundaries by not discussing her case with her colleagues and Police. Another kaimahi shared that with her collision the mother of her mokopuna made a complaint to the kaimahi service stating that she (kaimahi) had broken confidentiality and there were possible issues of collusion. One kaimahi shared that Māori social workers have embedded Māori

principles into their practice but may have ‘hidden’ this because, “from a mainstream view they consider it wrong, they consider it, what’s the word? We’re colluding”. Another element to colluding is raised in Hollis-English’s (2012) research in that some Māori social workers viewed other Māori social workers as contributing to colluding with the organisation they worked for and that these workers were “not rowing in the same direction in terms of Māori development or strategic planning or forward planning for Māori” (2012, p. 174). In the collision research colluding seemed to be a concept that kaimahi felt their own whānau might expect them to do, their mainstream organisation may expect that they are already doing, some of their Māori peers may already be doing within organisations that they work in, and kaimahi are worried that they will be expected to do this or be accused of doing this. A question raised from the collision research is how do kaimahi manage this issue of colluding? This is another dilemma for kaimahi.

Suggestions From the Collision Research

The research findings from the collision research suggests that organisations need to have specific protocols for working with own family, there needs to be appropriate supervision for kaimahi, and collision needs to be discussed and planned for, and appropriate support for kaimahi be provided.

Review Protocols for Working With Own Family—“Are You Asking Me as a Social Worker for CYF or as a Whānau Member?”

Five of the seven kaimahi were working for or had worked for CYF in the past. Three kaimahi shared that they did not support the CYF belief/policy that social worker’s judgement is compromised when their own family are involved in cases, which has resulted in social workers being excluded from working with their own family (immediate or extended). The rationale presented by kaimahi was that they have inside information

of their own whānau, know what is going on, and can get to the 'true' issues more effectively than an outsider who has no knowledge of the whānau whakapapa (family history) and dynamics. A kaimahi who worked for CYF when her collision experience happened did not feel she was treated respectfully by CYF in the process, particularly as numerous ethical and boundary issues were crossed, even with the existing policies surrounding working with their own family.

The kaimahi stated that there needed to be better communication and clearer boundaries in terms of when and what should be discussed by management and peers with kaimahi during work time. These are complex issues as one of the reasons for excluding workers from being involved with their own family is about protecting the worker, the client and the agency. These areas were obscure for the kaimahi and their whānau, and may also be so for the social workers, supervisors, and managers in terms of how to manage the dynamics effectively. This raises the question 'Is there a better way to manage this process for all concerned?' Kaimahi in the research suggested that CYF should have new protocols for working with own whānau, and having protocols in place for when working with own whānau would be beneficial for practitioners and the organisations they work in. There needs to be clear communication and clear boundaries in terms of when and what should be discussed by management and kaimahi during work time.

**Appropriate Supervision
for Kaimahi—*"They're Not
Supervisors Because They're Good
Supervisors ... You Know the
Grandad Stuff the Longer You've
Been There, You Move Up"***

Social workers work with and within complexity and require effective systems to process their work—the system that assists this process is supervision (O'Donoghue 2003; O'Donoghue & Tsui 2013). Kaimahi affirmed that supervision has to be good to help them manage this complexity. Supervision gives kaimahi the time to stop and

reflect on what they have or have not done. Effective supervision helped some kaimahi to manage their collision experiences; however a lack of appropriate and quality supervision definitely hindered the process for others. One participant stated that supervisors in CYF were often not adequate to meet social workers needs because they lacked practice wisdom and were often thrown into the roles. This kaimahi also stated that there is a tendency to promote social workers very quickly therefore they may not have yet developed sufficient knowledge, skills and practice wisdom to take on the supervision role. ANZASW (2015) and SWRB (2016) clearly state in their Supervision Expectations and Supervision Policies, Māori social workers' supervision should be underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi) and Māori cultural worldview. This is a challenge for those who supervise kaimahi as interpretation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and worldview are viewed differently, particularly between Māori and non-Māori. One kaimahi reported on supervision that was culturally appropriate and beneficial to her because her supervisor was Māori and had knowledge and understanding of the concepts of Mauri ora (a workforce development programme based on cultural imperatives when working alongside whānau from a place of kahupo (state of disease) to toiora (state of total well-being) (www.tekorowaiaroa.org). This supervisor had training from Te Korowai Aroha (an Indigenous Education and Training Institution) who educate practitioners on Mauri ora. This was a good 'fit' for her supervision needs and she reported the supervision experience as significantly beneficial, particularly through her collision experience.

O'Donoghue and Tsui (2012) identified the need for indigenous models of supervision and appropriate cultural training for supervisors. They also reported that the supervision literature in Aotearoa (New Zealand) was monocultural, revealing the dominant Pākehā culture, and that bicultural and Māori supervision models were not well understood by Pākehā (2012). Walsh-Tapiata and Webster also assert that the supervision experience for Māori social workers is based in a,

“western mono-cultural framework” (2004, p. 15). Bradley, Jacob and Bradley identified that Māori worldview should be the base for supervision for Māori. “Maori have a set of key cultural values and principles ... that underpins Māori practice methods, and therefore workers need supervisors who are conversant and confident with these values” (1999, p. 3).

There is emerging literature on supervision for kaimahi Māori showcasing that supervision models need to be more embracing of Māori worldview (Eketone, 2012; Elkington, 2014; Eruera, 2005, 2012; King, 2014; Lipsham, 2012; Murray, 2012). Studies have also noted the benefits for Māori workers of Kaupapa Māori supervision as a safe, professional approach to supervision utilising a Māori worldview, values and beliefs in practice and a ‘by Māori for Māori’ approach (Eruera, 2005, Elkington, 2014, and Walsh-Tapiata & Webster, 2004). Elkington further highlights that non-Māori need to be aware of “mono-cultural values and their contribution to ineffective social service delivery particularly when faced by the high statistics of Māori service use” (2014, p. 72). Eketone (2012) explored ‘culturally effective supervision’ in Aotearoa and disclosed that Māori workers believed that there was no valuing of cultural supervision, and that organisations did not understand that workers live and exist in their Māori communities. One worker found their agency’s attitude to cultural supervision left them in a dilemma because they were accountable to a tauwi system that told them how to be accountable to Māori (Eketone, 2012).

As the emerging literature confirms there is a need and a place for Māori models of supervision and supervisors need knowledge and experience of Te Aō Māori, an understanding of the practice implications of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and an understanding of monocultural biases and how these can impede practice.

Discussion and Appropriate Planning for Collision

Kaimahi and the organisations they work for generally do not talk about or have plans for

managing collisions of personal, professional and cultural worlds. For kaimahi working in their tribal areas these collisions may be inevitable. Another suggestion from the collision research is that discussion and appropriate planning for collision occur between kaimahi and their organisations before collisions actually happen—the same way that kaimahi are encouraged to have a self-care plan (as opposed until waiting until one is necessary and needed). There should be discussions regarding the possibility of collision for kaimahi if their own whānau come through the service they work in, and organisations should have processes and/or protocols in terms of how to best manage these collisions. These should include details of ethical/boundary issues to consider, cultural issues and how the organisation may seek help and support to address these (i.e., kaimahi having access to culturally appropriate supervisors). Other avenues of cultural support for kaimahi need to be discussed and made available (i.e., Tautoko [support] from whānau, access to kuia/kaumātua [cultural elders] and/or tohunga [skilled person with cultural expertise]), allowing kaimahi time to replenish themselves by returning to their significant cultural places and landmarks (i.e., their mountain, river, sea, forest etc. in their tribal areas). Organisational support also needs to be offered in the form of appropriate supervision, counselling, Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), making sure the relationship is declared right from the beginning (when whānau come through service), and clearly defining the boundaries for kaimahi and organisation e.g. what can and cannot be discussed in the kaimahi work time.

Conclusion/Summary

This article has presented findings from research on collision, provided a definition of collision, and explained the collision zone in social work. Specific challenges, ethical dilemmas and boundary issues facing kaimahi in practice were explored. These included managing dual roles and accountabilities, conflicting cultural tensions, biculturalism in practice and the issue of

colluding. Suggested ways forward discussed from the collision research outlined that organisations should review their protocols for working with kaimahi and their whānau, that kaimahi and organisations should discuss and plan for collision, and appropriate support be provided for kaimahi including appropriate supervision.

A key message from the collision research is that “*Out of the big bang comes the growth*” and that kaimahi could come out the other side of their collision with it becoming a lived experience that may strengthen and deepen their social work practice. For social workers to win in the collision zone there needs to be more kōrero (discussion) about what collision actually is, how it can be managed, and what tangible supports are necessary to help social workers manage a way through.

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