

‘Conflict’: Moving from the *rākau* to the *ngākau*

Half-day workshop, 1.30pm-5.00pm

“There are various levels of knowing. The strongest form of knowing comes about when we have had a suitable experience of something. This kind of knowing is coded inside us in a felt, compacted, living, tacit form, and is part of our total mental structure. With some effort, we can sometimes make this kind of knowledge conscious and think about it verbally” (Sotto)

In this workshop, participants will interact with some key ideas relating to the notion of ‘conflict’ and ‘resilience’ and its psychological implications as a result of various experiences that humans encounter. It is suggested that by acquiring a greater understanding of how ‘conflict’ impacts on indigenous people’s lived experiences, psychological practice will most likely move from the *rākau* (surface understanding) to the *ngākau* (deeper and more meaningful understanding).

Session One:

We will explore some of the realms of ‘human conflict’ from general and historical perspectives, and consider how these may be understood and expressed in the Aotearoa New Zealand context. We will dig more deeply into how conflict is manifested in general, psychological and cultural terms. A range of culturally grounded models will be introduced. An interactive human development quiz that explores our knowledge of some generally accepted theories about human development will be offered. Participants will have an opportunity to share their own *rākau* and *ngākau* examples.

Session Two:

The impacts of ‘unexpected conflict’ on people will be explored in more detail with a particular focus on how ‘resilience’ may or may not be expressed. A blending of thinking will be explored. Participants will interact in a range of scenarios in order to explore some common conflicts that exist for many people in our society, and will explore both *rākau* and *ngākau* positionings. A Cultural Enhancement Framework, based on a marae analogy, will be shared. Participants will finally consider how particular notions about conflict might impact on, and inform, psychological theory and practice that is positioned in the *ngākau*.

Sonja Herahine Macfarlane, PhD, (Ngāti Waewae; Ngāi Tahu) is an Associate Professor (Senior



Research Fellow), and Co-Director of Te Rū Rangahau, the Māori Research Laboratory at the University of Canterbury (UC). Her research and teaching focus on culturally responsive evidence-based approaches in education, psychology, counselling and human development. Her research has been widely published in leading research journals, both nationally and internationally. In 2017, Sonja received New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) *Tohu Pae Tawhiti Award* for her contributions to Māori research over many years. In 2017, she was the member of a team that received the UC College of Education, Health and Human Development *Research Team Award*. In 2015, she was a co-recipient of the CLNZ Education Award “*Best Resource in Higher Education*”, and in 2014 received a UC *Research Excellence Award*. Sonja is a member of the New Zealand Psychological Society, as is a research and advisory member on several ministerial-funded projects.