

Democratising psychology for Pasifika and beyond

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Pasifika people in Aotearoa New Zealand have higher 12-month prevalence rates of mental illness (25.0%) compared with the general New Zealand population (20.7%), and a teen suicide attempt rate three times higher – yet the lowest access rates to support services across all ethnicities.

The concept of psychology and clinical psychology approaches to supporting people's mental health has for the most part, been perceived as foreign or irrelevant for traditional Pasifika communities in Aotearoa New Zealand and the South Pacific Region. However, with the recent emergence of Pasifika registered psychologists, who have the ability to navigate cultural, clinical and western scientific worlds and the emergence of psychological research that includes Pacific populations, psychological approaches are becoming more relevant, accessible and effective for Pasifika people and their families.

I'll be sharing practical tools, tips and resources that have been co-designed by and for Pasifika people that psychologists may find useful when navigating working with Pasifika families in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Dr Monique Faleafa , DClinPsy MNZM, CEO, Le Va



As CEO of Le Va Monique leads national programmes for New Zealand in suicide prevention, mental health and addiction workforce development, violence prevention, disability support services, public health, cultural competency training and holistic wellbeing.

Monique is a clinical psychologist and has over 20 years' experience in the not-for-profit sector, Pasifika communities, mental health, research and social services. She also contributes at governance levels, currently serving on two crown agencies as Deputy Chair of the Health Promotion Agency, and the Health Research Council of New Zealand. Monique served on the New Zealand Psychologists Board for 9 years, finishing earlier this year, contributes to

Ministry of Health psychology advice, and is a founding member of Pasifikology – New Zealand’s national Pasifika psychology network.

In 2016, Monique was awarded as a Member of the NZ Order of Merit and a finalist in the New Zealand Westpac Women of Influence awards. She has recently featured in leadership books such as [Leaders Like You](#), and [Womankind](#). Internationally she is a mental health advisor to Australia’s National Rugby League, is an Alumni of the commonwealth Emerging Pacific Leaders Dialogue, and an Associate Member of Global Women.

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