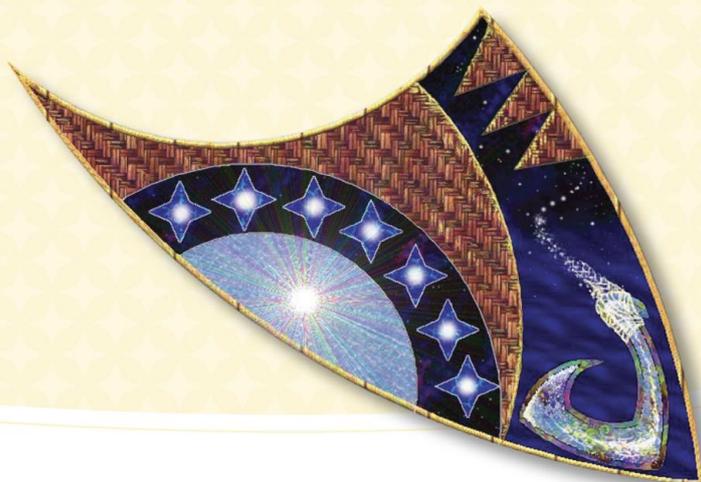




# Koe Fakatupuolamoui he tau Magafaoa Niue

A Niuean Conceptual  
Framework for addressing  
family violence



March 2012

## Guide on the use of Niuean Conceptual Framework

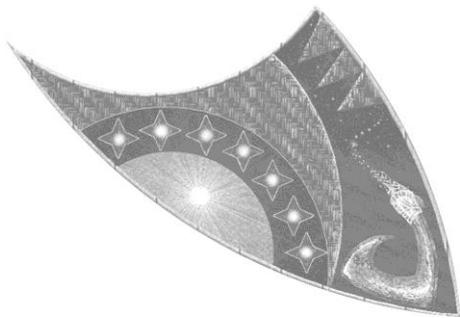
This document was developed by the Niuean Working Group to assist with the development of a training programme for Niuean practitioners and service providers working with victims, perpetrators, and families from our communities who have been affected by family violence.

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### La Tapu (Sacred Sail)

The basic shape is that of a Pacific canoe sail. This represents the vaka/canoe which is important in traditional Pacific navigation and exploring new horizons.

The fishhook represents sustainability as well as traditional knowledge. The fishhook colour shows the colours of the paua shell, which represents our migration to New Zealand and adapting to a new way of life while maintaining our traditions. The fishhook is linked to a spiritual cord which disappears up to the heavens. This represents our link as Pacific Islanders with our creator and the importance of our traditional and contemporary belief system. The background of the fish hook represents the sea which merges into a star filled night sky. These natural elements were the navigator's pathways to new horizons.

The triangular patterns above the fishhook is a common design motif found in all Pacific cultures. I used this pattern to represent a common thread found between the Pacific Islands.

The woven pattern represents the Kaiga (family), as a close knit unit. Each member in the Kaiga has a role and purpose in the same way each strand supports one another.

The seven stars represent the seven Pacific Island nations/groups of; Cook Islands, Niue, Sāmoa, Fiji, Tuvalu, Tonga and Tokelau. Together, they represent a collective star formation which provides support and guidance to the vulnerable. To the left of the arched 7 stars is a lagoon with a radiating light emanating outwards. The lagoon represents a safe and protected environment. The radiating light represents a new life nurtured within this safe environment while surrounded and supported by family, cultural knowledge, belief, and alofa (love).

Tiaki Fati Kirifi – Tokelau.

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# Contents

<b>Foreword</b> .....	5
<b>Executive summary</b> .....	5
The task.....	6
Key findings .....	6
<b>Introduction</b> .....	6
<b>Fakatupuolamoui: a Niuean Conceptual Framework</b> .....	7
Elements of the Framework .....	7
Approach to violence.....	7
<b>Continuum of wellbeing within aga fakaNiue</b> .....	7
<b>Family violence and violations of wellbeing in Niuean families</b> .....	7
<b>Key concepts of wellbeing</b> .....	8
<b>An holistic worldview</b> .....	10
<b>Family as a place of influence</b> .....	10
<b>Kau fakalataha: unity and cooperation</b> .....	11
<b>Vagahau niue – Niuean language</b> .....	11
<b>Fakatapu: sacredness</b> .....	11
<b>Practice imperatives</b> .....	12
<b>Contemporary influences on family in New Zealand</b> .....	12
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	13
References .....	13
Fono .....	14

It is recommended that this document is read in conjunction with '**Falevitu: A literature review on culture and family violence in seven Pacific communities in New Zealand**' and '**Nga vaka o kāiga tapu: A Pacific Conceptual Framework to address family violence in New Zealand**:'

# Foreword

## **Tau kupu folafola hagai ke he gahua nai**

Fakaalofa lahi atu. Ko e tau fakaheke kua tuku atu ke he ha tautolu a Atua mo e haana a tau monuina loga kua foaki mai kia tautolu.

Kua paleko e moui he magafaoa Niue i Niu Sila he falu a magaaho ha ko e falu a tau mahani vale mo e ita kua nakai hagahaga mitaki ki loto he tau magafaoa. Haia e kakano he gahua nai.

Ko e hokotaki nai koe lafilafi he falu a tau manatu he tau tagata Niue i Okalana kua uaiina ke hohoko ke he tau fono he tau 2010 – 2011. Ko lautolu mai ia he tau Fale Gahua kua kitia e vihu moe mamahi ke he tau magafaoa he tau magaaho ka keli poke fakamamahi e tau fanau, hoana, hoa, poko lautolu e tau mamatua/tupuna. Fakaaue lahi.

Kua hakahaka, liogi, tutala mo e kumikumi a lautolu ke he falu a tau puhala ke lagomatai ha tautolu a tau magafaoa Niu. Haia ma tau lilifu e lali ke fakaholahola mo e tuku atu ke he Fakatufono e falu a tau manatu ke lagomatai ha tautolu a tau magafaoa Niue i Niu Sila ke he faahi gahua nai – kua fakahigoa 'Ko e Fakatupuolamou he Magafaoa Niue.'

There are challenges to Niuean families in New Zealand, in particular with issues of family violence.

This is the core reason for the following Conceptual Framework. It stems from consultation of some key Niuean people in Auckland over the period 2010 to 2011. Consultation covered a cross section of Niuean people from various organisations that provides and supports those who are victims of family violence as well as those who provides and supports those who are perpetrators of family violence. We acknowledge that within the context of the New Zealand environment there is a need to remain open to change. The Conceptual Framework is a piece of work that can be further developed.

We acknowledge and thank the Pacific Advisory Group and the Ministry of Social Development for the foresight and opportunity to work together towards reducing family violence within Pacific communities.

Kia fakamonuina mai he Atua e tau gahua ke fakatupuolomou e tau magafaoa Niue.

### **Manogi Tavelia**

*Writer for the Niuean Working Group.*

# Executive summary

## The task

The task of the Niuean Working Group was to develop a Niuean Conceptual Framework for Niuean practitioners and mainstream organisations working with Niuean victims, perpetrators, and *magafaoa* (families) affected by family violence.

The Framework requires ongoing revision to ensure that it is relevant to the diverse experiences of Niuean families and individuals.

## Key findings

1. Violence against family members is not acceptable or a part of *aga fakaNiue*. Family violence in Niuean families is a violation of the wellbeing of the individual, family and wider community.
2. *Magafaoa* is where concepts and conduct that promote wellbeing are learned. Language is an important part of preserving wellbeing in families.

The principles that inform practice are:

- *Vahā loto mahani mitaki*: conduct and behaviour that is good; appropriate; proper
- *Agaaga fakatupuolamoui*: through the proper conduct of one, the spirit of the other is encouraged to grow and flourish developing trust
- *Kau fakalataha*: unity and cooperation
- *Vagahau Niue*: language
- *Fakatapu*: to make sacred and spiritual; forbidden

## Introduction

This document sets out a conceptual framework to address violence within Niuean families and individuals living in New Zealand. The Framework will assist Niuean practitioners and non-Niuean providers working with Niuean families and individuals who have been affected by family violence.

The Framework is named *Fakatupuolamoui*, which means, to thrive vigorously and abundantly. *Fakatupuolamoui* signifies the potential for Niuean families and individuals to achieve wellbeing, and to be strong, thriving, and vibrant.

*Fakatupuolamoui* reflects the Working Group's discussions around the question: What role do Niuean cultural values and beliefs play in promoting the wellbeing of Niuean people and *magafaoa Niue* – families? The task was to identify and explore those concepts and beliefs that promote and maintain family wellbeing.

*Fakatupuolamoui* is a living framework. It provides a foundation for future work in this area to be built on. In order to maintain its relevance, it is responsive to the dynamic changes and diversity of *magafaoa Niue* and their communities.

# Fakatupuolamoui: a Niuean Conceptual Framework

## Elements of the Framework

The vision of the *Fakatupuolamoui* Conceptual Framework is wellbeing, and strong, vibrant and thriving Niuean families and individuals.

1. Aga fakaNiue – concepts to be used in prevention, intervention and restoration approaches to practice include:
  - *Vahā loto mahani mitaki*: conduct and behaviour that is good, appropriate, proper
  - *Agaaga fakatupuolamoui*: through the proper conduct of one, the spirit of the other is encouraged to grow and flourish developing trust
  - *Kau fakalataha*: unity and cooperation
  - *Vagahau Niue*: language
  - *Fakatapu*: to make sacred and spiritual; forbidden
2. Contemporary realities need to be responded to in a manner that is relevant and meaningful to the diverse lived experiences of *magafaoa* and *magafaoa laulahi* (extended family)
3. Transformation occurs when all of the above are practised as interconnected elements<sup>1</sup>

## Approach to violence

Three important processes to address violence and responding to perpetrators of violence are to:

- i. Dispel the collective and individual illusions: that violence and its violations are normal, acceptable and validated within *aga fakaNiue*
- ii. Remove opportunities for violence and violations to be practiced
- iii. Teach transformative practices based on constituents and concepts of *aga fakaNiue*<sup>2</sup>

## Continuum of wellbeing within aga fakaNiue

1. In the Niuean context, the 'ideal state' of wellbeing is understood as the co-existence of complementary concepts. These include: spirituality, environment, relationships, non-violation of roles and responsibilities, and personal mana through adherence to the sanctity of '*fakatapu*' (making something sacred).<sup>3</sup>
2. Violence and violations are breaches of relationships and of wellbeing within *magafaoa* and *magafaoa laulahi*.
3. Processes for healing and reconciliation facilitate and support the restoration of wellbeing to *magafaoa*.

Wellbeing in *magafaoa* and *magafaoa laulahi* is achieved through *vahā loto mahani mitaki*, *agaaga fakatupuolamoui*, *kau fakalataha*, *vagahau Niue*, and *fakatapu*.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Transforming Whanau Violence – A Conceptual Framework* (2004).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Percival et al, 2010.

# Family violence and violations of wellbeing in Niuean families

*Tau mahani 'ita'* describes the forms of violence that violates the wellbeing of Niuean families. In the *aga fakaNiue* there is no specific Niuean word for violence against family members. Family violence is an aberration to the wellbeing and health of Niuean families.

## Terms for violence

The following terms include forms of violence including against children:

<i>akonaki</i>	verbal and physical abuse <sup>4</sup>
<i>amuamu</i>	verbal taunts
<i>eke fakaelea</i>	put down of a person
<i>fahi</i>	to whip or beat
<i>keli</i>	to beat a person to death
<i>vale/mahani vale/aga vale</i>	violent behavior stemming from <i>ita</i> (anger)

Violence can cause:

<i>fakatagi e tau mata mo e agaaga</i>	pain, grief, sorrow
<i>fakama</i>	cause to be shamed
<i>fakamamahi e loto</i>	hurt feelings of another or to another

## Key concepts of wellbeing

### Vahā loto mahani mitaki

***Ko e vahā loto mahani mitaki koe fakaveaga he mafola ko e uho he matutakiaga he taha ke he taha (fakafetuiaga)***

**Good relationships are the foundation of peace, which is precious in connecting one another.**

*Vahā loto mahani mitaki* is a key concept that connects and maintains good relationships between people. It is the foundation for

- i. *Fakaveaga he mafola*, which is adherence to or holding on to peace;
- ii. *Uho he matutakiaga*, which is the preciousness of connecting to one another.

<sup>4</sup> *Akonaki*: dictionary meaning are: to reprove, rebuke, chastise, advise. Fono participants have described situations where there are different levels of *akonaki* from less to extreme severity in verbal and physical forms. Refer below for further explanation.

*Fakafetuiaga* goes to the heart of *vahā loto mitaki*, *fakaveaga he mafola* and *uho he matutakiaga* between people. It refers to the strength of bonds that are created and maintained between people because of their connection to one another. *Fakafetuiaga* becomes a source of collective *fakamalolo* (to strengthen the spirit) of the individual when the individual needs support.

These elements are central to maintaining peaceful relations between family members based on appropriate and proper conduct and behavior towards each other.

Values that are strongly connected to *Vahā loto mahani mitaki* include:

<i>fakaalofa</i>	love, pity, sympathy, empathy, gifting
<i>ole fakamagalo</i>	compassion, cleansing of ill feelings and ill behavior, plea for forgiveness
<i>felagomatai fekapitigaaki fakafeheleaki</i>	helping one another, having friendly relations with one another, sharing
<i>fakalilifu</i>	honouring or glorifying another
<i>leveki/puipuiaga</i>	care of, protecting and sheltering one another
<i>fakafetuiaga</i>	fellowship/relationship

## Agaaga fakatupuolamoui

### *Agaaga ke fakatupuolamoui e mahani mitaki*

**The spirit is encouraged to flourish (because of) good, proper conduct of the other**

It is in the display of one's conduct, nature, habit or custom that one's spirit or soul is made visible and trust is developed.

*Agaaga* (spirit) is crucial in making connections to each other in order to *tupuolamoui* (grow and thrive). It is the spirit of maintaining peaceful relationships through:

<i>agaaga fakalilifu</i>	placing the other's spirit higher than one's own in honour or glory
<i>agaaga foaki</i>	spirit of treating others with honesty
<i>agaaga fakamooli</i>	spirit of giving
<i>agaaga fakafeleheaki</i>	spirit of sharing
<i>agaaga fekapitigaaki</i>	spirit of friendly relations between each other
<i>fakatapu</i>	sacredness of self and others; forbidden

## An holistic worldview

*Aga fakamotu* and *aga fakaNiue* encompass and comprise Niuean values and beliefs, customs, practices, language, heritage, and songs.<sup>5</sup> They describe the essence of what it is to be Niuean.

Niuean people view the world as being holistic and integrated. *Aga fakamotu*, *aga fakaNiue* and *vagahau Niue* (language) express the world of Niuean people as being inter-related. The human dimensions of a person's *moui* (life), for example, cannot be viewed as isolated or separate elements. The physical body, emotions, spirit and mind of a person are interconnected and interdependent. Like the parts of a body, individuals are also inextricably connected to their families.

## Family as a place of influence

Niue's social institutions of *magafaoa* (family) *magafaoa laulahi* (extended family) and *maaga* (village)<sup>6</sup> are important because they provide context to the discussion of the key concepts of Niuean cultural values and beliefs. On a day-to-day practical level, the relationships and dynamics within and between these institutions are central to understanding how *aga fakamotu* is lived out. *Magafaoa* are places where beliefs and practices of *aga fakamotu* are first taught to family members, and then enacted in public.

It is in the home where parents must provide 'guidelines of behaviours' for their children, and that families need to adapt to changes in the New Zealand environment. It was clearly voiced that 'if families don't have rules, the family will break down' and that it was still the central role of the *matua taane* and *matua fifine* to be 'like a court' *'Ko e tau matafakatufono he kaina koe tau matua taane mo e tau matua fifine,'*<sup>7</sup> meaning that the parents are the primary rule setters and arbitrators in the home.

### Parents and children

***Koe puhala ne leveki e tama he tose puhala fakaako.***

**It is the way that the child was cared for when the child was small;  
the way the child was taught**

There is *mokoina e fakaalofa* (deep emotional love) between parents and children. The *leveki* (care and protection) of the children<sup>8</sup> includes explaining to the children what is expected of them at home, and in public forums. It is the responsibility of the *matua fifine* (mother) and the *matua taane* (father) to teach their children *e tau mahani mitaki* (manners of good conduct) and *tau mahani kua lata* (manners that are appropriate). What the children learn at home is also a positive reflection on the parents in public.

In the *aga fakaNiue*, the father is the main provider (of food and income) and the mother tends to the *loto manamanatu* (emotional) and *tau mena ke lata mo e tino he tau fanau* (physical) needs of the children.<sup>9</sup> Wellbeing includes being connected to the *magafaoa laulahi* and *maaga* (the relationships of the individual to the collective). Niuean parents expect their children to help one another, and to grow up close to one another; to be tied by their *fakaalofa* (love) for one another, even when they may be separated by location or marriage. Where one sibling needs help, the other siblings must extend a helping hand through *felagomataiaki* (mutual act of freely giving and receiving), and *fekapitigaaki* (acts of mutual friendly relations). Both strengthen family and village ties.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Group discussions June 2010, and Focus Group Conference Waipuna November 2011.

<sup>6</sup> Includes the village leaders, families, and *akoako/faiifeau* (minister).

<sup>7</sup> Focus Group Conference Waipuna November 2011.

<sup>8</sup> To guard, care for, protect; to make firm, secure.

<sup>9</sup> Conference Waipuna November 2011.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

## Siblings

For *lafu* (siblings), observing *felagomataiaki* and *fekapitigaaki* are ways of honouring parents and *matua tupuna* (grandparents). Acts of *felagomataiaki* are an accepted part of normal family life, and are interconnected to notions of *fakafeleveia* (acts of welcome and acknowledgement to show respect), *fakalilifu* (to honour or to hold another in high regard) and *fekapitigaaki* (acts of maintaining friendly relations with one another). This is particularly the case in the showing of *fakaalofa* in events involving *magafaoa laulahi*, where a family experiences significant life events (such as births or deaths, important birthdays, weddings). The parents hope that when their children are grown they will continue to give, share and have friendly relations with one another.

Dissension in the family causes hurt and *fakamamahi e loto* (pain in the hearts) of the parents. *Fakatagi e tau mata he tau matua* (bring tears to the eyes of the parents) causes serious feelings of hurt to the parents.

## Kau fakalataha: unity and cooperation

*Kau fakalataha* is a key concept in Niuean values and beliefs. It encourages conduct that brings about unity, cooperation, and peaceful relationships between family members. The 'exhortation'<sup>11</sup> to be '*kau fakalataha*' is to encourage the family to be unified. This creates *malolo* (strength) and *fakamalolo* (to strengthen one another). *Kau fakalataha* includes *loto fakamooli* (heart and mind of genuine honesty) *fakamooli he tau kupu vagahau* (genuine honesty of words) and *fakamooli e gahua* (genuine honesty of action to carry out what was said).

To act in *kau fakalataha* is to maintain and *fakamalolo* the *vahā loto mahani mitaki* (space between the 'heart, seat of emotions or the mind' of good conduct between people) and *agaaga ke fakatupuolamoui e mahani mitaki* (vigorous and thriving growth of the spirit because of the proper conduct of the other). *Kau fakalataha* is unity and cooperation that contributes to wellbeing in the *magafaoa*.

The concept of *kau fakalataha* is seen in the daily practices of *magafaoa* and *maaga* such as '*kai fakalataha*' (eating together), *liogi fakalataha* (prayers together before sleeping), *tutala or fono fakalataha* (talking with each other). Sunday lunches were remembered as a 'holy' day for the spirit and body of the family. The custom of Sunday lunch brought everyone together to share a meal. In the spirit of *kau fakalataha*, *momoi* (sharing of food) was extended to the neighbours.

## Vagahau niue – Niuean language

The ability to speak and understand Niuean is crucial to understanding the values and beliefs of Niuean people. It is core to the identity of being a Niuean. The key concepts that are raised have a depth of meaning in the words and feelings of the values and beliefs of Niuean people. Shared meaning can only be understood where there is understanding of the language.

## Fakatapu: sacredness

Prior to Christianity, *fakatapu* of people tended to inhibit violent behaviour. *Fakatapu* recognises that the sacredness of the other is also sacredness of self. The concept of *agaaga* (spirit) permeates the cultural values and beliefs of Niuean people. An example is the meaning of *fakalilifu*, which is the honouring of the other by placing the other before self. This term is commonly translated in English as 'respect' but it has a deeper meaning that is both spiritual and connected to *fakatapu*.

<sup>11</sup> Group discussion notes Pacific Champion Fono June 2010, October 2011, November 2011.

Another value that contributes to achieving wellbeing is *manamanatuaga mitaki* (reasoned use) of: *fakalilifu* (respect), *loto fakaalofa* (sympathy), *loto fakatokolalo* (humility), *loto matala* (common sense), *feofanaki* (caring), *makaka* (ability), *malolo* (strength), and *fakatautonu/taui* (reciprocity).<sup>12</sup>

## Practice imperatives

The meanings behind the Niuean concepts, values and beliefs in this report are intended to protect, dignify, and preserve what is unique to *magafaoa Niue*. We live in changing times and constantly feel the impact of global interests. These have a profound influence on how we choose to respond to new ideas, and new environments through our cultural practices. It is crucial that the deeper meanings of our values and beliefs are not lost in the present or to the future. What is important is that however Niuean people choose to practice our culture, these practices remain faithful to the underlying meanings of our *faka Niue*, our values and beliefs.

Education is important in the work of prevention, intervention and ending family violence. This is the responsibility not only of Niuean practitioners but of all *magafaoa Niue* who make up our communities.

In addressing family violence, Niuean practitioners and non-Niuean providers working with *magafaoa Niue* must:

- Approach with *vahā loto mahani mitaki* (the intention to fill the space between each other with good conduct). This will provide the basis for creating spaces of peace during *fakaveaga he mafola* (healing and restoration of relationships). The transformative processes for changing behaviour and restoration of wellbeing are realized in *uho he matutakiaga* where *vahā loto mahani mitaki* is extended to all members of the *magafaoa Niue*.
- Be seen to act fairly towards victims, perpetrators and their *magafaoa*, and *magafaoa laulahi*. The Niuean practitioner must be able to move fluidly between 'insider-outsider' and 'outsider-insider' roles as circumstances demand. The Niuean practitioner is pivotal in facilitating and encouraging the growth of good conduct between people in order to achieve *fakatu puolamoui*.
- Be knowledgeable in the different dynamics and structures of the *Fale Tapu*, *maaga*, *magafaoa*, *magafaoa laulahi* to work in a *kau fakalataha* way. This may mean the appropriate inclusion of people of influence such as the *akoako/faifeau* (minister), *maaga takitaki* (village leader), *matua tupuna* (grandparents or respected elder person), *magafaoa takitaki* (family leader); and other professionals.
- Be fluent in *vagahau Niue* – Niuean language. The fundamentals of Niuean concepts, values and beliefs are cultural constructs that can be fully understood through *vagahau Niue*. It is imperative that for those who are working with *magafaoa Niue*, respect is shown to *magafaoa* by speaking *vagahau Niue*.
- Be able to communicate effectively with Niuean born people as well as Niuean people born and raised in New Zealand. This is especially the case for young people.

## Contemporary influences on family in New Zealand

Niuean people recognise that migration to New Zealand requires adapting and shifting ways of thinking, and roles within the family. Mothers, for example, have to go to work to help supplement their family income.<sup>13</sup> In New Zealand, the teaching and practice of values and beliefs within families are the responsibility of *tupuna*, *matua taane* and *matua fifine*. *Magafaoa laulahi*, *maaga* and *Fale Tapu* are the places within which *aga fakaNiue* is lived out.

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<sup>12</sup> Percival et al, 2010.

<sup>13</sup> Focus Group Conference Waipuna November 2011.

There is a weakening of values and beliefs that promote strong relationships between Niuean people can in part be due to the environment and culture of New Zealand which is seen as offering 'freedom of choice.' Other lifestyles and beliefs are competing with values and practices of *aga fakaNiue*.

In Niue, the *maaga* or village serves as a meeting place. In New Zealand it is the church community that serves this purpose. All three places: *magafaoa*, *maaga* and *Fale Tapu* are where Niuean families and individuals connect and reconnect with one another.

For many Niuean people, Christianity has been viewed as a positive colonial influence in unifying clans and villages once rife with internal conflict and war. The values and beliefs of Niuean people today are inextricably tied up with Christianity. The church has played a role in building spiritual strength to encourage peaceful relations with one another.

There is little information on young Niuean people, whether they migrated to New Zealand, were born and raised in New Zealand, or are of mixed ethnic genealogies. There needs to be dialogue between this population group and leaders of Niuean families and communities to provide an inclusive space for youth.

## Conclusion

*Tau mahani 'ita'* describes the forms of violence that violate the wellbeing of Niuean individuals, *magafaoa*, and *magafaoa laulahi*. Addressing family violence within Niuean families requires transformative practices based on the positive strengths embedded within Niuean cultural values and beliefs.

Family violence is an aberration to the wellbeing and health of Niuean families. *Fakatupuolamoui* is the Niuean Conceptual Framework which outlines a strengths-based approach towards addressing family violence. Critical to addressing issues of family violence is the building and restoration of connections and relationships *within and between* people. *Fakatupuolamoui* encourages a focus on thriving vibrant growth of relationships within and between families and community. It encourages a holistic approach towards practices that recognises the heart, spirit, emotions and mind of people affected by family violence. Understanding *aga fakaNiue* and the dynamics of its main institutions of influence is pivotal to effective transformative practices.

*Fakatupuolamoui* contains six elements which inter-relate and form the basis for transformative practice when addressing family violence for Niuean families. These are:

1. Ko e vahā loto mahani mitaki koe fakaveaga he mafola ko e uho he matutakiaga he taha ke he taha(fakafetuiaga) – Good relationships are the foundation of peace, which is precious in connecting one another
2. Agaaga ke fakatupuolamoui e mahani mitaki – the spirit to grow vigorously good conduct of the other
3. Kau fakalataha: unity
4. Vagahau Niue – Niuean language
5. Fakatapu – sacredness and spiritual barriers
6. Institutions of influence – *magafaoa*, *maaga* and *Fale Tapu*

Transformational practices need to consider these elements as being interconnected in addressing family violence within Niuean families.

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