

## Student Voice: Understanding the Implications

### Developing and maintaining emotional and spiritual success

The students spoke about the importance of developing and maintaining both emotional and spiritual strength.

- Being happy and making sure your well-being is okay; your physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual well-being. You can feel good inside and outside.
- Success is defined by how the individual feels. It's an emotional thing. You have to get your mind in the right place, and that itself is a journey. But mistakes are a good thing as well. Make mistakes, it helps you learn.

This thinking relates to the concept of *Mauri*.

Durie (2016) describes *Mauri* as the “vitality, integrity, and energy within a person, and the nature of relationships in the wider environment”. These aspects are demonstrated by “an enlightened spirit; an alert and inquiring mind; a fit-for-purpose and pain-free body” and importantly “a set of relationships that are nurturing and mutually beneficial” (Durie, 2015). *Successful* Māori students exhibited what has been termed by Mason Durie (2015; 2016) as “Mauri Ora”.

Durie (2015, 2016) also discusses *mauri noho*, a state where the individual is languishing and is restricted by a loss of hope, a clouded mind and “relationships that are dis-empowering and humiliating”.

Māori students were aware that being in a positive and supportive environment would assist them in maintaining their well-being and advancing them on their education journey.

- It's surrounding yourself in the environment that you need to be surrounded in. You don't want to be put, or you don't want to put yourself in a negative area that's not going to help you, not going to support you, take you in the wrong direction and lead you the wrong way, when you know where to go. So you need to put yourself in that position, *te haere tika*.

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In addition, Māori students acknowledged the need to be open to learning, open to the potential to grow and develop.

- Make yourself able to grow, don't limit your thinking. Allow it to expand, and allow people to speak into your life. Listen to it and filter it, 'cause what you listen to grows in you, and you speak it. Just allow people to speak into your life so you can grow and create new paths.

This student cautioned that while others could provide support; ultimately the motivation to succeed was something that came from within.

- I think people can motivate you, but you can only live off other people's motivation for so long. If you really want something you have to own it.

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### **Activating our own agency by engaging others**

*Ka oho te wairua, ka mataora te tinana, he aroha ki te aroha, ka rere te māramatanga.  
When the spirit is awoken, the body alive, affection prominent, enlightenment follows.*

Developing and maintaining emotional and spiritual strength is part of one's holistic well-being. This has always been important to schools and yet national reports by ERO show that while student well-being is considered very important, school leaders and teachers can do more to improve the way they promote and respond to student well-being.

Review the ERO document [Effective Practices to Promote and Respond to Well-being](#) and consider how this document can inform your school's promotion of Māori students' well-being (or in Durie's terms, the mauri ora of your students).

In the video *Making Space for the Community* Ann Butcher says: "We need to know they are going to fall before they fall". Watch this video to see how the school does this, and consider the implications for your own school.

view: the [Making Space for the Community video](#) in the Educationally Powerful Connections video kete

see: [all students comments on this theme](#)

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