



Jones & Blyde

**PIONEERING PROGRAM TO  
PROFESSIONALISE SUPPORT  
WORKERS**



**Wellington Institute of Technology**  
Te Whare Wānanga o te Awakairangi


**A pioneering teaching  
programme to professionalise  
community support workers**

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## Tena koutou Welcome to our presentation



*Perhaps the essence of community support work is its newness ... A pioneering spirit – which prevents rigidity and promotes growth. This is the very opposite to institutionalisation*

(Roen 1999)

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## Global Change in the ID Sector

- **Globally**– focus in the ID sector moving away from rehabilitation as treatment & care-towards empowering models
- **Globally-- a parallel movement toward professionalising the sector, services providers & support workers – toward a holistic ‘people first’ model of working**
- **The support worker empowered in partnership with the people they work with on a parallel journey toward self-determination**



## The Goal-a new professionalism

**NZ Government recommended that funding be available to professionalise support workers in the disability sector**

**We two tutors at Weltec Polytechnic NZ responded to this call & developed an innovative programme**

**We think our effective educational programme is empowering community support workers to become pioneers of a new professionalism**

**We incorporate new perspectives in a collaborative learning environment where support workers gain insight & new knowledge into work they are already passionate about.....**

**Being professional means we are aware of current knowledge of best practice in supporting people**





**What Philosophy?**  
Teacher as Expert?

Think of teachers you have experienced How did they foster or NOT foster your learning?

## Two Categories of Learners

**Experienced**  
Support Workers  
from various  
care settings

**Inexperienced**  
Students wanting  
to be Support  
Workers



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## Three Points of Concern

- ✘ For some support worker's past educational experiences have been negative - create a barrier to formal learning
- ✘ Other experienced support workers have been in the field for many years - a waste of time being 'told' they have to retrain for a job they are already highly skilled in
- ✘ A significant number of Maori, Pacific Island & migrant people in the support workforce, needs a teaching approach that integrates people's worldviews & learning styles

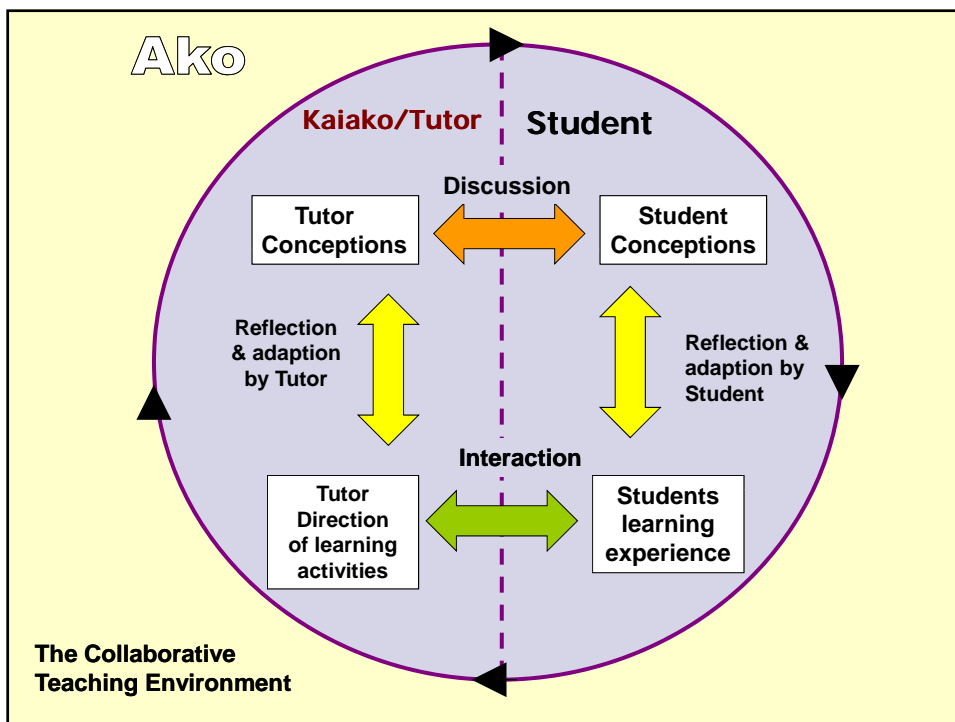
# Ako

The BK model philosophy is built on the Maori concept of Ako

In tertiary education the concept describes the...

**'Teaching & learning relationship as one in an environment that supports the philosophy'**

**Kaiako -Teacher**



## The key aspects of ako



**Ako is grounded in the principle of reciprocity & recognises that the learner & their personal & professional world cannot be separated**

- **Language, identity & culture counts** – we know where students come from & we build on their existing experience & knowledge
- **Productive Partnerships** –students, workplace & educators share knowledge & expertise
- **A personalising learning** approach-every student & their achievement is at the heart of education & recognises that one size does not fit all

**It is about partnerships with individual & group roles & personal & professional responsibilities**



## Environment- Cooperative learning High Intimacy-Low Control

Our tutor delivery (ako)  
motivational, conversation  
collaborative- cooperative



- ✘ interaction
- ✘ participation
- ✘ supportive group environment

**Choice of content, cooperative learning strategies & teaching methods must suit the content**

**The learners' needs lies at the heart of our approach to teaching**

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**Efforts to understand**

- ✘ **The environment**
- ✘ **The aspirations**
- ✘ **The constraints**


**...that face our support worker's**

**So they return to their work environment with the capacity to blend new skills & information & the confidence to apply them**




**Philosophy of Motivational Model**  
Provides a framework for understanding the process of how people change & become motivated to integrate new learning

- ✘ Deals with **intentional** behaviour change
- ✘ Views change/learning as a **process** rather than an event
- ✘ The change process is characterised by a series of **stages of change**
- ✘ To change a behaviour a person typically lowers resistance to new learning & **cycles** through stages of change



Miller, W.R. & Rollnick, S. (2002).

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**Learning styles** & communication  
variety-auditory, visual, kinaesthetic

**Natural humour** is also invaluable for engaging students using humour to communicate the concepts being taught can make them more approachable & more memorable

**Two-minute 'diversions'** discussing a seemingly unrelated concept & circling back to the topic to encourage creative & critical thinking -to encourage curiosity at all levels

**Motivating learners to be ready willing & able**

**Cooperative learning & collaborative group work is like a whanau-family all contribute**


**True multimedia** -attention -PowerPoint, DVD YouTube, whiteboard, role plays creating & presenting posters, case studies, debates, 'mini-seminars' of about six minutes

**Critical thinking** central to our teaching. It is important for students to learn to think & not just learn facts without understanding their application to their work

**Foster** competent & confident learners is to be ready to accept critique from students

**Assignments,**  
Students practice the learning in the workplace observation, written or oral case studies & presentations within the class & workplace setting. This gives the student a sense of achievement & confidence with hands-on experience with a new concept. No deadlines for assessment- end of course complete

**Support workers as learners**



**Learners attend a formal Weltec classroom one day a week**

**Learners have a workbook-and assessment book**

**The leaning material, especially theory, is relevant in solving real work problems & being able to apply new learning to practice, otherwise there is little point in learners investing effort to learn it**

**The experience & knowledge of the learners becomes a constant springboard for debate & discussion**

**Illustrating theory with many case studies stories & examples reinforces the underlying message, & signals the importance of how it fits with support work practice**



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# Summary

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- **Government call for professionalising community support workers**  
**Two tutors developed a programme based on...**
  - **The concept of Ako** means a shift from the traditional view of tutor, as the knowledge expert, and the learner as recipient of this knowledge; this fosters self development & enthusiasm for training.
  - **Cooperative teaching strategies** are used that challenge thinking processes, & current thought in the new approach to working with people with intellectual disabilities
  - **Motivational methods** of teaching, engaging & understanding stages of change
  - The immediate transfer of new practice is achieved as specifically designed assessment tools and further work based training takes place in the support workers workplace

The development of support workers as professionals-  
helps toward professionalisation of the sector

**....the development of human beings as..  
people who are going to live in, & ...  
make a difference to, a diverse &  
complex world....requires far more  
than simply the delivery of instruction  
or...test results.**

**It is a matter of the *heart* as marked by  
the kind of relationships & the sense of  
community that develops over time...  
[between teacher & learner in a  
context].'**

(John O'Brien)



**Tena rawa atu koe - Thank you very much**

## References

### 1. Ako

- Te Whare Ako, (The House of Learning). (2002). Case study: Te Whare Aako. Ponsonby: Auckland: Workbase (*An example of Ako in practice at a workplace to up skill & professionalise*)
- *Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success: The Māori Education Strategy 2008 - 2012*  
Pere, R.R (1982). *Ako: Concepts and learning in the Māori tradition*. Wellington: Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust Board.
- Bishop, R., & Glynn, T. (1999) *Culture Counts: Changing power relations in education*

### 2. Cooperative teaching strategies

- <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Ministry-curriculum-guides/Secondary-middle-leaders/Facilitating-shared-learning/Effective-teaching-and-learning/Classroom-cooperative-learning>

### 3. Our first programme core competency programme we developed as a precursor to the Intellectual Disability training -100% pass rate and retention of learners

- <http://www.welltec.ac.nz/SUBJECTAREAS/SocialServices/CertinCommunitySupportCoreCompetencies.aspx>

### 4. Motivational Process

- Miller, W.R. & Rollnick, S. (2002). *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing people for change* (2nd Ed.) New York: Guilford Press.