

RĀHINA

MONDAY

Explore whenua

Connection to the land and roots

What is whenua?

Whenua is the place where you stand. It is your connection to the land – a source of life, nourishment and wellbeing for everyone.

Whenua includes soil, rocks, plants, animals and the people inhabiting the land – tangata whenua. We are linked physically and spiritually to the land – it is the earth through which you are connected to your tūpuna/ancestors and all the generations that will come after you.

You can also think about whenua as your place of belonging – that means the spaces where you feel comfortable, safe and able to be yourself, which could be at mahi/work, in a sports team, with your friends, or at home with your whānau.

Why is whenua an important way to wellbeing at work?

In Te Ao Māori, everything has mauri/ life force. When our natural resources are not looked after, this life force is weakened and this directly impacts mental health and wellbeing. If your place of mahi is not safe, welcoming and inclusive, it will also have a huge impact on wellbeing.

Exploring your way to wellbeing at work through whenua

- Get your hoamahi/colleagues together and explore your local maunga/mountain. Getting outdoors helps to re-energise and focus on the tasks ahead.
- Create a green space at your workplace and invite people to bring in an indoor or outdoor plant for everyone to enjoy and look after.
- If you have a dog, see if you can bring it onsite – being around animals is a great way to boost wellbeing.
- Have a lunchtime feast with your hoamahi! Ask people to bring something from the whenua to contribute – the possibilities are endless.
- Challenge yourself and your hoamahi to produce less waste. Turn it into a competition and ask people to come up with initiatives around how to make your workplace more environmentally friendly. It could be anything from using less printer paper, to having a compost bin for food scraps.

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- Invite your hoamahi to head out of their usual workplace environment for an hour to do a clean-up around your local neighbourhood! Even if you work outdoors, it's a great way to get a change of scenery, take a break and spend quality time together outside of your work space.
- Take a break from mahi and go for a walk. See how many [native plants](#) you notice. Can you spot any harakeke/flax, pūriri, tōtara or rengarenga/native lily?
- Create your pepeha and invite your hoamahi to share this at a workplace hui/meeting: <https://pepeha.nz/>
- Learn a karakia, whakataukī/proverb or waiata/song with birds, plants, nature in it. Use it to start a hui. (An example is provided on the following page).

For example:



**KORIHI TE MANU
TĀKIRI MAI I TE ATA
KA AO, KA AO, KA AWATEA
TIHEI MAURI ORA**

THE BIRD SINGS
THE MORNING HAS DAWNED
THE DAY HAS BROKEN
BEHOLD THERE IS LIFE.



REFLECTIONS

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<p>What does whenua mean to you?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>What activities did you try out today?</p>
<p>What made you feel good?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>What didn't work for you?</p>
<p>I'd like to do more of....</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>How did you feel after spending today exploring whenua? Place an emoji sticker here so you can remember how it made you feel:</p>