



# Setting the Scene: Working with Pacific families

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**14<sup>th</sup> August 2015**

# Outline

- Cultural Competency
- Varying Pacific food concepts
- The Kakala Model

1. What is Cultural Competence?
2. Why is Cultural Competence important?

# Cultural competence

- Ability to serve people in an appropriate way:
  - acknowledging who they are
  - dignity
  - value
  - comfortable
  - meets clients, customers standards

# Importance

- effective and relevant as a provider
  - understanding clients - holistic
- bridging “gap” of disparities
- treating people as you would want to be treated

# MYTHS AND PERCEPTIONS



“Pacific people makes it hard for us to help them...”

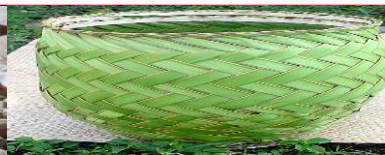
“Pacific people are hard to change...”

“Only Pacific people can do work for Pacific...”

“Hard to communicate with Pacific people...”



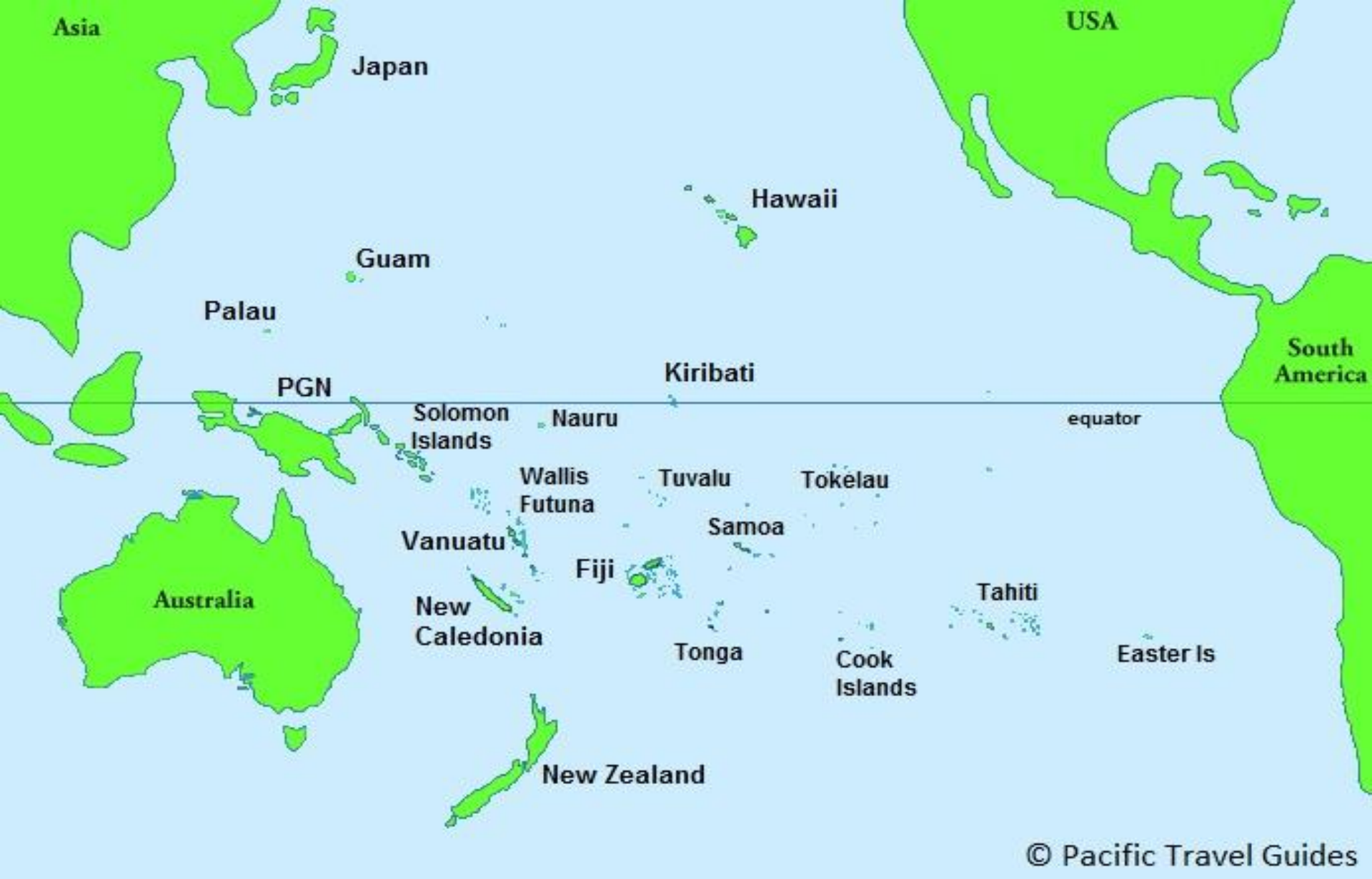
“Typical issues with lower socio economic groups...”



**One of these things is  
not like the other....**









# Pacific Learning Styles

What I hear, I forget **X - auditory**

What I see, I remember **✓ - visual**

What I do, I understand **✓ -kinesthetic**

# Pacific Concepts of Food

- Emphasis on starchy foods & protein as accompaniment

For Tongans:  
starchy food =  
me'akai Tonga

For Samoans:  
starchy food =  
mea 'a'ano



For Tongans:  
accompaniment  
= kiki (protein)

For Samoans:  
accompaniment =  
mea lelei (can be  
coconut cream)

Hau'ofa, Epli. 1977. Corned Beef & Tapioca: a report on the food distribution systems in Tonga. Suva, Fiji.  
Pollock, Nancy. 1992. These Roots Remain: Food Habits in Islands of the Central & Eastern Pacific Since Western Contact.  
Personal comment, Sitaleki Finau & Malkai 'Ofanoa, 20 August 2001

# Varying Pacific Concepts of Food

- “Complete Meals”:

Samoa: taro and coconut cream

Tonga: starch and protein or ‘ufi (yam) on its own

- Kai Lelei & Kai Kovi (Tongans)

- Kai Lelei: starch with protein; eating a high status food eg. ‘ufi (yam). It is good, abundant and status giving.

- Kai Kovi: starch without protein. It is ‘poor’ and unhealthy.

- Oder Tongan participants grew up in Tonga when meat & other fatty foods were considered a treat or delicacy...”...never imagined that “kai kovi” could ever be considered as healthy...”



Moata'ane, Losa N, Muimuiheata, Soana, Guthrie, Barbara E. 1996. Tongan perceptions of diet and diabetes mellitus.

Leota, Moemoelegausia & Jackie-Anne. 1997. Food Project – The Samoan component . In Understanding Food Decisions in NZ.

# Differences in Pacific cuisines

Palusami - Samoa



Lu kapa pulu - Tonga



Taro - Samoa



Yam



# Differences in Pacific cuisines

Takihi - Niue



Cook Is Mayonnaise



Cook Is Poke









# Kakala Model

*Konai Helu-Thaman*

A framework for understanding Pacific clients and a way of connecting with them

# What is Kakala?

- A garland made of flowers and leaves to be worn in special occasions, or presented to a special guest as a sign of *‘ofa* (love) and *faka’apa’apa* (respect)

# The making of *kakala* involves three different processes:

1<sup>st</sup> – Toli

2<sup>nd</sup> – Tui

3<sup>rd</sup> - Luva

# 1<sup>st</sup> Process - Toli

- The gathering and selection of fragrant flowers, fruit, leaves and other fragrant decorative elements required for making the kakala.

# In the process of *toli*, remember the following:

- Flowers are ranked according to their cultural importance
- The gatherer of flowers needs to have skills and expertise in selecting the appropriate flowers that will suit the occasion and the person receiving it
- The availability of the necessary ingredients needed for making the *kakala*

# How does this process apply to you and your role in the community?

*Toli (Pre-engagement): What do I do?*

Analyse your clients in terms of:

- Who they are – gender, age, marital status etc
- How much they know already
- What I have in common with them e.g. experiences, ideas
- What their interests and social standing are e.g. church ministers, chiefs, leaders, sole breadwinners, rugby players,



- What their education level/career background is e.g. teaching, no formal education
- What language limitations, customs, cultural procedures etc, I should know, e.g. leave shoes outside the door
- What subjects to avoid
- Any key people to include in the engagement
- What are the best ways to influence them to accept you and your ideas

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Process - Tui

- the making or weaving of the *kakala* using the fragrant flowers, fruit, leaves and other fragrant and decorative elements gathered

# In the process of *tui*, remember the following:

- The time taken to make the garland depends on the nature and complexity of the garland
- The pattern or style used depends on the occasion and the recipient
- The flowers, fruit and leaves chosen must suit the recipient

# How does *Tui* apply to you and your role in the community?

*Tui* - Organising & Putting your ideas in a way that

- will enable both you and client to achieve the expected outcome(s)

# How do I do that?

## 1. Objective

- What do I want to achieve when meeting my client?
- What do I want my client to be able to do at the end of our session?
- What outcome should result from my session with the client?
- What is the purpose of my session with the client?

# How do I do that?

## 2. Method

- What is the best & most effective way to communicate with my client?
- What is the best way to achieve the objective?
- Do I need to take some resources?
- Do I need to talk all the time?
- Do I need a support person? If yes, then who?
- Should I give him a call or is it best to meet him face to face?



# How do I do that?

## 3. Duration

- How much time do I need?

# How do I do that?

## 4. Scope

- How much information do I need to talk about?
- Do I need to go into much detail or should I concentrate only on what is relevant to my client?

# How do I do that?

## 5. Teaching aids/Resources

- Do I need to take some resources?
- If yes, then what will be the best ones to take?

# How do I do that?

## 6. Assessment/Evaluation

- How do I know my client has achieved the objective/purpose of our session?
- Is there anything I need to change or improve or include or leave out?
- If I meet with my client again, what will I do differently?
- What went really well in the session or what didn't go well?

# How do I do that?

## 7. Venue

- What is the best place to have my one-on-one meeting with my client?
- Will the client be comfortable in my office or should I have the meeting in his home?
- Does the client like the idea of meeting at his home?
- Is the venue big enough for the client and his family?

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Process - Luva

- the giving away of the kakala

# In the process of *luva*, remember the following:

- *Kakala*, the end product, symbolises important values for sharing
- The receiver is expected to pass on his/her *kakala* to someone else
- Appreciation or non-appreciation of the product is conveyed through words or body language

# How does this process apply to you and your role in the community?

*Luva* (Presentation or the Actual engagement with the client)

What to remember: Examples

- Attitude
- Language use (empowering/encouraging)
- Duration of the session
- Cultural protocols to follow
- Focus on client
- Handle questions/comments skilfully





## What you see



- Words
- Tonality
- Body Language
- Gestures

- Deep Structure is
- Beliefs
- Values
- Biases
- Prejudices
- Experiences
- Fears
- Dreams
- Feelings

***Malo 'aupito/Vinaka  
naka Levu***  
**Thank you very much**