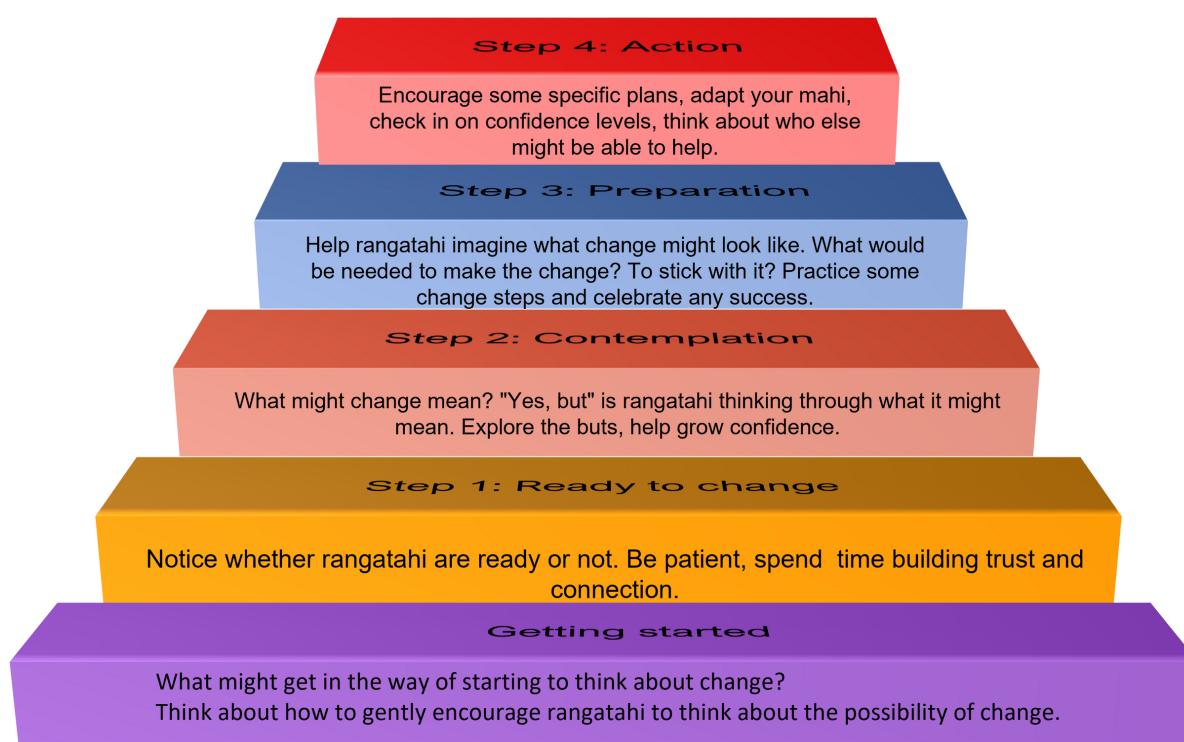


Change steps

It can be helpful to think about change as a set of steps. This helps us recognise where rangatahi are at in their change journeys. We can adapt our work better when we notice what step they may be on. Here is a useful framework to think about change that is based on the work of Hubble, Duncan and Miller (1999) and adapted by kaimahi from Reconnect Services. While it is presented as a series of steps, rangatahi and kaimahi can come back to earlier steps when they need to revisit things, such as spending more time on preparation. The important thing to recognise is that change and maintaining change and outcomes, all take time and rangatahi need to be well supported through these changes.

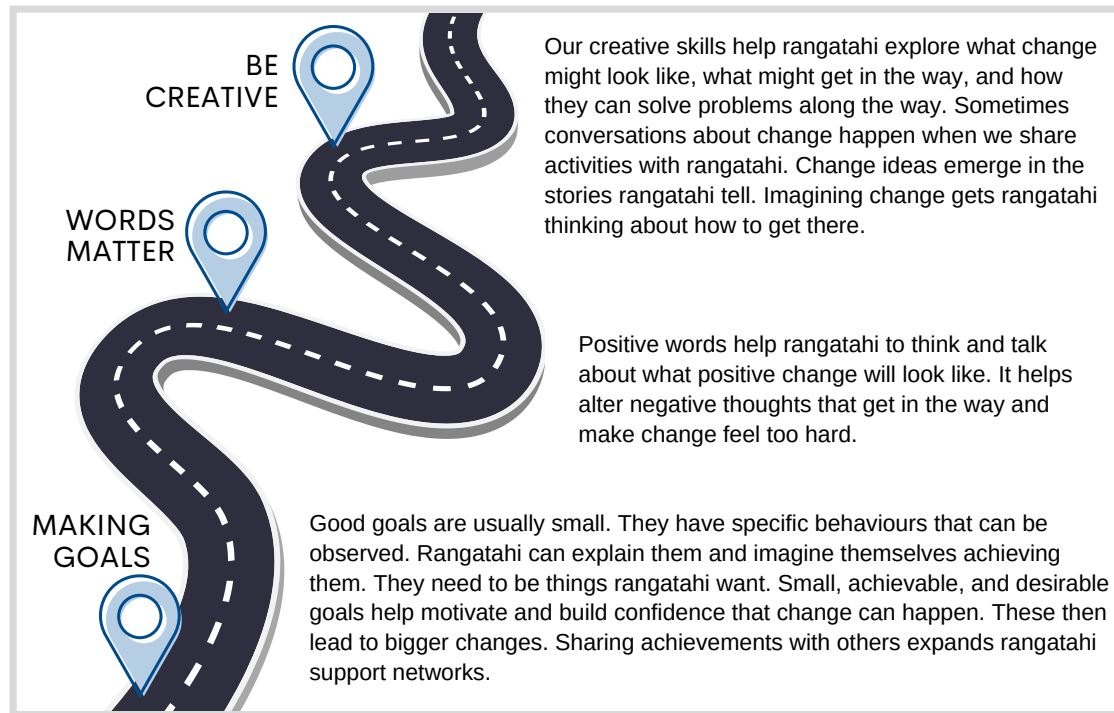
We can think of it like this and at each step we can use RBP practices to help us get the best effects for rangatahi:



Using the language rangatahi use helps us learn about their theory of change. It keeps them in the centre of our thinking, and it shows them we respect their knowledge and expertise (see [Rangatahi are the centre](#); [The helping alliance](#)).



Ways to support change



Support rangatahi to build their own confidence:



Ask direct questions and reflect back what you hear. Tell rangatahi when you notice them working on change or trying to have an effect.

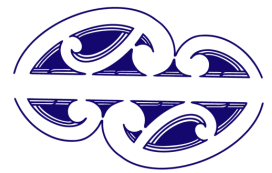
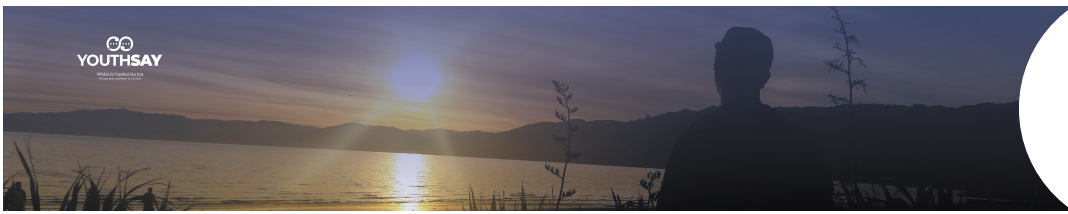
Listen for and then get rangatahi to expand on examples of times they were able to make a change. Encourage them to describe the details.



We can ask rangatahi what their goals are and what ideas they have about how to achieve them. We can use the words rangatahi use when we talk about their goals. This can include asking what they have already tried to do to address their issues.

By listening to them explain their usual ways of coping and their experiences of positive change we pick up clues we can use to adapt our mahi to them (see [Hearing rangatahi; Rangatahi are the centre](#)).



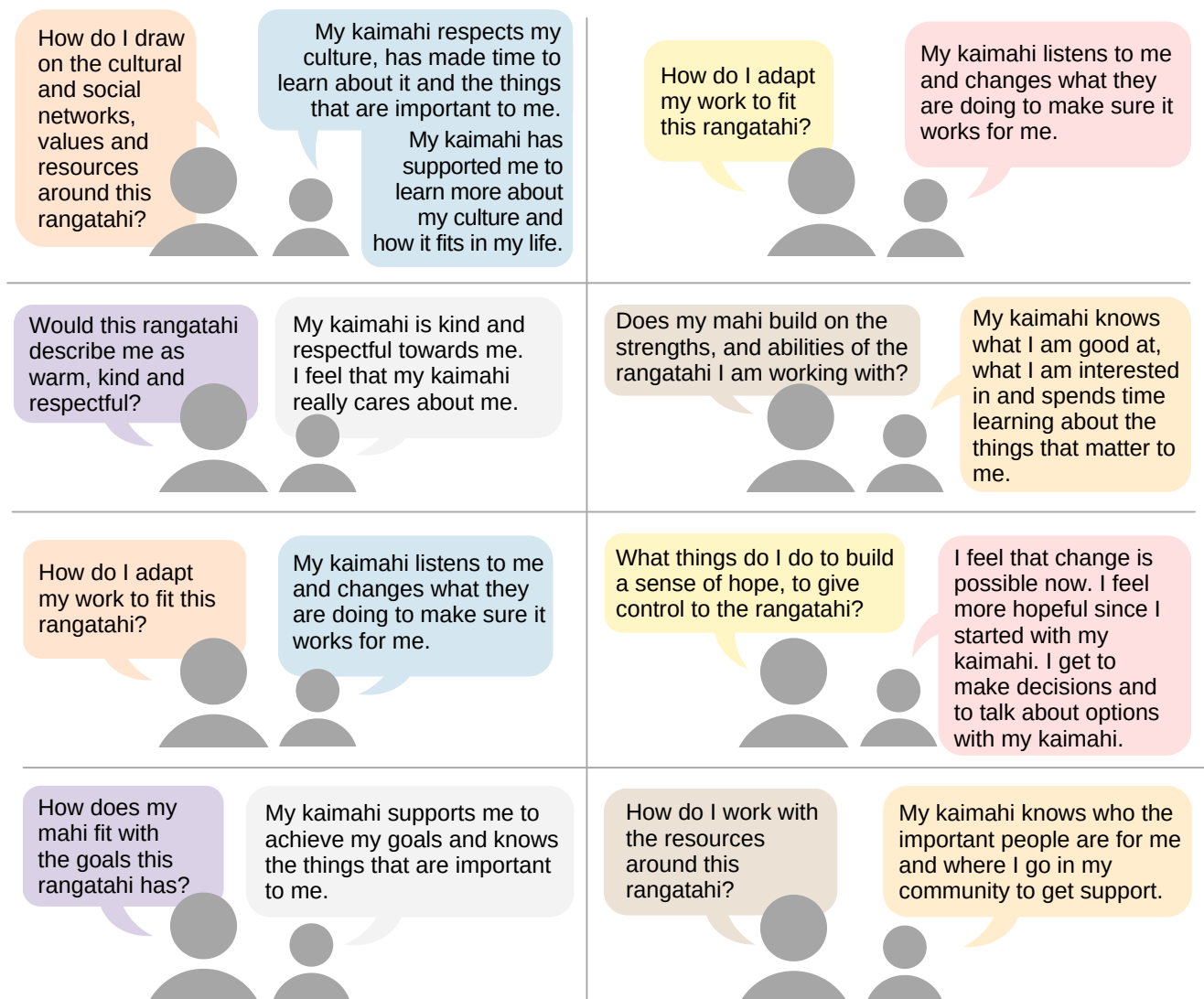


RELATIONAL RESOURCES FOR CHANGE

These conversations help clarify their theory of change and the ways they solve problems. Alongside the changes we support with rangatahi, we can also support wider changes by collaborating with other kaimahi to advocate for resources for rangatahi. For example, we can advocate for learning support so they can return to school, for safe accommodation and material support so they can prepare themselves for learning and employment.

These approaches, when combined with advocacy to meet emotional and practical needs that address immediate issues and long-term challenges, strengthen the capacity of rangatahi to grow and change across their lives (Munford & Sanders, 2019).

Listen for and work with their theory of change



What does this mean for my mahi?

A group of kaimahi from Reconnect Family Services built on the work of Hubble, Duncan & Miller (1999) by talking about what each step looks like for rangatahi, some ideas about conversation starters, and how kaimahi can be with rangatahi at each step.

GETTING STARTED

Kaimahi recognised that there may often be a lot of work to help rangatahi get ready for change, before they can even get to step one. This process involves identifying what may get in the way of being ready to change and then working at the pace of each rangatahi we support. When rangatahi have not had people in their lives who have supported them to manage the challenges they face it can be difficult to imagine that life could be different. Kaimahi need to be aware of the profound impact this can have on rangatahi confidence and work with them with care and respect to build this confidence.



What might this look like for rangatahi?

- Saying 'yes' to things without thinking or questioning
- Not engaging/absconding
- The professionals make all the plans
- Continuing to talk about risky behaviours e.g. offending

What to do and how to be

- Continue to show support and stick with rangatahi
- Built trust and relationships (see [Building trust](#))
- Invest time (See [The importance of time](#); PARTH in practice reflection sheet – [Time](#))
- Be honest
- Understand where rangatahi are coming from and take a wholistic approach

Useful Questions and Conversation Starters

- Finding out about who the rangatahi is, where they are from and what they enjoy
- Understanding their 'back story'
- Asking about rangatahi about their future plans e.g. "Where do you see yourself in five years?"
- Helping rangatahi think about the consequences of their actions and choices and see alternatives



STEP 1: READY TO CHANGE



What might this look like for rangatahi?

- Become more settled and engaged
- Start thinking about their previous actions and experiences
- Encourage others

What to do and how to be

- Encourage and affirm positive behaviours
- Help rangatahi reflect on past experiences and behaviours
- Engage in positive conversations
- Listen to rangatahi needs, goals and aspirations (see [Māori centred approaches, Rangatahi are the centre](#))

Useful questions and conversation starters

- What do you want for yourself?
- What would change look like for you?
- What will be different when the issue is behind you?
- What will be the first sign change is happening?
- Who will notice you have made the change?
- How can I help you with your goals?

STEP 2: CONTEMPLATION



What might this look like for rangatahi?

- They may want to change but are also aware of the barriers, e.g. friends still doing the same things
- May feel fearful about making change
- May say 'yes, but...' when thinking about change

What to do and how to be

- Take rangatahi concerns and barriers seriously (see [Hearing rangatahi, The helping alliance](#)).
- Help rangatahi develop coping strategies to deal with the barriers to change
- Work with others around rangatahi to support change and help them find other supports
- Continue to offer encouragement to move forward and be hopeful and positive
- Offer activities, experiences and things related to their interests to show change is possible and build their confidence e.g. courses they could do

Useful questions and conversation starters

- When have you made changes before and what helped?
- Who will support you to make change?
- How can I help you to make these changes?
- What are the things that will get in the way and how can you deal with them?



STEP 3: PREPARATION



What might this look like for rangatahi?

- Asking more questions about their future
- Self-reflection and a more positive attitude
- May compare their journey to others and see that others are where they used to be, or where they want to be
- Have more involvement in the plan and find their voice
- Recognise the impacts of their actions on self and others

Useful questions and conversation starters

- Questions that help them reflect on how far they have come already and where they want to be
- Questions that help them reflect on the positives of their change for others
“What kind of example are you setting/do you want to be setting?” especially if they have siblings
- Talk about the possible obstacles and plans to overcome them

What to do and how to be

- Positive affirmation
- Continue to focus on pro-social activities that build confidence
- Push them out of their comfort zone to show their potential and what they are capable of
- Be transparent about plans and barriers and honest about your limitations to avoid disappointment and take time to discuss these things
- Celebrate small successes
- Lead by example e.g., when doing new activities
- Let them determine their next move rather than deciding for them (see [Agency and voice](#))
- Offer activities, experiences and things related to their interests to show change is possible and build their confidence e.g. courses they could do



STEP 4: ACTION



What might this look like for rangatahi?

- Gaining independence and voice
- More stability, boundaries and focus
- Pride and confidence
- Connections to whakapapa
- May also get scared and go backwards

Useful questions and conversation starters

- Talk about the barriers and the strategies to deal with them
- How will you know this change is going well?
- What will be the first signs that things are getting difficult and what can you do?
- Who is supporting you to keep this change going?
- How can I help you to make this change?

What to do and how to be

- Be ready for anything to happen and continue to offer time and support
- Help rangatahi prepare for setbacks and provide support and encouragement if they do happen
- Work closely with others who are supporting the change and help them be aware of and prepare for setbacks (see [Working with resistance](#)).
- Help rangatahi remember why they want to make the change and the positives they identified





HOW DO I USE THESE IDEAS IN MY MAHI?

This case example shows how a social worker supported a rangatahi in her change process. It shows that change is an active and intentional process which occurs in a trusting partnership between the rangatahi and kaimahi.

I worked with a young woman who was referred to me for emotional and practical support. She was pregnant and was going to keep the baby with the support of her aunt (her mum had mental health issues, so it was her aunt who supported her during her teenage years). Her partner wanted to be involved as well but was in prison so most of her support came from her aunt. They both came to see me. Ema had left school once she found out she was pregnant but wanted to return to her learning. She knew that her partner was not a positive influence and she didn't want to stay with him, but she wanted him to know their baby. In my supervision I worked with my supervisor on thinking about how I would prepare myself for working with Ema (I needed to find out about pregnancy and parenting support).

The first step in my mahi with Ema, involved taking time getting to know Ema, hearing her 'back story' and what she would like to work on with me. She had been through very difficult times, but she had developed important coping strategies including receiving support and advice from her aunt. She kept focused on her studies because she wanted to be a nurse and this dream kept her going. At the beginning Ema was concerned that given her complex life it was going to be difficult for her to keep her dreams alive. The important focus for me was supporting Ema to believe that she could be both a young parent and also achieve her goals; it might be in a different way, but she could achieve them.

Ema found it very helpful to write down her goals and the tasks she needed to complete along the way so she could tick them off. As part of the preparation for the change process, I kept checking in with my supervisor for support and advice. One of the things that was important for Ema was that her aunt (and her mum when she was available) were part of the process. She also wanted to involve her partner, but she also wanted him to know that given her feelings about the relationship and the things he did she did not want to stay with him.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Ema liked to write down her ideas (she kept a journal) so she devised three change lists that she worked on. One involved all the things she needed to do to have a healthy pregnancy and birth, she joined the young parents group and through our service we helped organise a midwife.

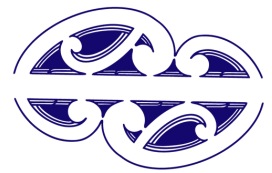
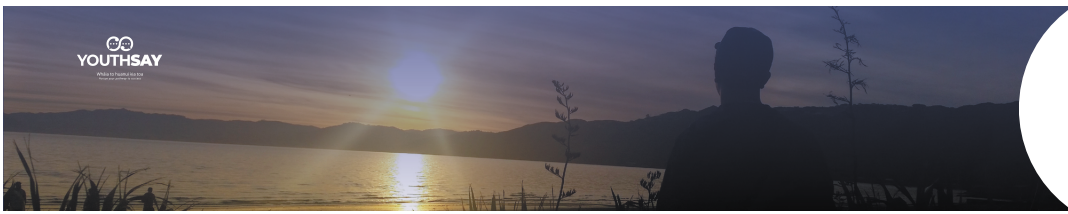
Her second goal was to keep engaged in her education, for this goal she checked out a teenage parents' programme and decided that she would enrol in that programme because they could support her with both her education and parenting.

The final goal was to work through finishing the relationship with her partner. She couldn't do that while he was in prison, but she started to work through the steps she would take once he was released. She had a good relationship with his mum, who became part of the support network to enable this to happen because she understood that Ema did not want a relationship but wanted her and her son in her baby's life.

I supported Ema to weigh up the goals and strategies. In reflecting on the change process with her she said she enjoyed going over her three lists of goals which kept her going. Ema said that when she felt a bit scared about things she went back to the list and the tasks she had ticked off helped her believe that she could keep going. She said it was good to do practical things alongside talking about the emotions because then things did not get too overwhelming as she felt she was achieving things, not just talking about them. We celebrated each goal/task such as her first meeting with the midwife, her positive meeting with her partner's mum and joining the parenting group.

These achievements helped her move to the next task. What I learned from this process is that we need to work at the pace of the rangatahi and to help them believe that their goals can be achieved. We need to be there when things don't work out and support them to keep going. Change and maintaining change takes time and effort and we need to notice and celebrate change. Recording her successes was an important motivation for Ema and helped her have confidence that she could do the difficult stuff and believe that she could have the future she dreamed about.





RELATIONAL RESOURCES FOR CHANGE

Here are some places to look for more information

- DiClemente, C. & Prochaska, J. (1998). Toward a comprehensive, transtheoretical model of change: Stages of change and addictive behaviors. In W. Miller & N. Heather (Eds). Applied Clinical Psychology. Treating Addictive Behaviors. Plenum Press.
<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-1-4613-2191-0>
- Hubble, A., Duncan, B. & Miller, S. (Eds) (1999). The heart and soul of change: What works in therapy. American Psychological Association, USA.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/11132-000>
- Munford, R. & Sanders, J. (2019). Transformative social work practice in community-based organisations'. In R. Munford & K. O'Donoghue (Eds) New theories for social work practice: Ethical practice for working with individuals, families and communities. Jessica Kingsley, London.

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This resource was developed by Professor Jackie Sanders. It was refined with input from kaimahi at Reconnect Family Services, Re Donna MacNicol, Te Aroha Noa Community Services, Justina Webster, Dr Linda Liebenberg, Professor Robyn Munford, Dr Jayne Mercier, Davinia Abbott and the team at Dingwall Trust Launch Programme

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