

Kia ora e tama, Piripi,

Now that's the first thing. Right now, you're ashamed of your Māori name, believe me, you'll get over it. At 10 years old, life looks scary and you've already had your fair share of shit. Trust me, there's lots, lots more to come – and you'll be giving out your own fair bit of shit as well. A looooooot of shit.

Being Māori though and proud of it will become your absolute super-power.

Right now, you're skinny and pretty gullible, that means you'll be accepting of a looooooot of people's bullshit while you start believing lots of your own. All while you wish you weren't so skinny. (Later in life, you'll get really, really fat ... really fat and then skinny again. Believe me, skinny isn't so bad once you've been really, really fat.)

Next, get used to being broke. You've come up that way and it will stay with you for a long time. Wish I could say you'll get over it quickly, but you won't. Don't worry, you'll experience lots of rich stuff on the way, including people, places and experiences and eventually, you will get rich, but it will be a marathon rather than a sprint. And you'll work out which end you like best!

The growth will be that you realise wealth is actually found in how you think, not what you have. What you have is a bi-product of how you think. And you'll begin to see that relationships and people is where the real wealth can be found. It's nice to have nice things, because I know you know what lack looks like. But believe me, things can change like the wind, what's cool will run out of coolness. But people, and relationships are eternal. Which reminds me, the whānau you love, get with them whenever you can. They won't always be there.

Your whānau rocks, Jerry, James and your brother Tui, will always be there for you. Your brother Tui especially will become very, very close. Right now, you hardly know each other and that's not your fault. Circumstances out of your hands caused that. Later when you get bigger, you'll fix that; So, just know, you two will get to share and enjoy being brothers in the true sense of the word along with his beautiful kids, a boy and a girl. They are just really, really good kids. Jerry you will always love and be grateful for. He is your tuakana, your big Whaingaroa (Raglan) brother and always will be. James is your other bro', your every-day guy in Te Kuiti. They will always be your life-time rocks.

You need to wake up too about two key truths. You're not dumb and you're not ugly. That was some shit you got from others growing up who should have known better. Still, once again you're just a little guy so you'll believe what they say like it was written in stone for a long time. You will carry some of those scars for a long time as a result, then you'll find they weren't yours to carry. You'll come out ok though.

In fact, you'll be surprised at just how 'not-dumb' and how 'not ugly' you are. Others who matter will see that too. Don't worry though, you will still do some very dumb-arse bat-shit stuff, actually lots of it. The key though is how you see you. It will always come to that. You don't have to be anything for anyone when you know you're being everything you can be, for you.

The scared little boy doesn't need to become the scared man, so you don't have to try and be brave because truthfully e tama, you always have been. You'll find despite some slips; you'll often stand amongst the bravest. Oh and because of this, how you see brave will also change.

You will also kick off some demons. Some stuff you will do though, that just needs to be done.

You're going to really envy a lot of people for a lot of reasons. Some good, some not so good, some will stay, others will change over time. You'll make lots and lots of friends, but few really close ones.

Now, you're going to romanticise lots about finding the perfect girlfriend. I know you're already looking in that direction. Unfortunately, or fortunately, depending on where you're looking, you're going to have quite a few before you find the one that sticks around. She will be the love of your life and will help you to face all your demons. That's saying something because by the time you find her, you'll have burned a lot of relationships and be unloading a lot of baggage which she doesn't deserve to

see or be around. She does stay though and that is one of the reasons why she's the one. Make sure you look after her and keep her.

The good news is that you will have six, yes six of the most talented, loving and just really nice kids. 3 girls and 3 boys who will each become way, way better versions of you. Then they'll have kids who will come into a world of love and light that you would just love. You can be happy in knowing this, they are all truly beautiful and will make your own world a much bigger and better place.

You'll also learn lots more about your mum, things will be a lot clearer about her life and the things she has lived that sum up why and how she is. And you will love her more clearly because of it. The place your koro, your Narn has in your life will show you why you do what you do and why you think like you do. You will become the best of him. Your uncle Hop and aunty Darlin are the other rocks. Their quality lives will stay with you as knowing what being the best of the best really looks like.

Then there's your deceased dad who you're named after. You will come to know his side of the whānau at last and it will become your greatest treasure. They will truly love you and yours and you will truly love them back. You will make up for lost time together like there was no lost time at all. And you will give as much as you get. Being there will complete you and you will add huge value. Your dad would be very proud of you.

You will travel the world and do some very amazing things with some amazing people. You will excel in sports and competitive excellence will always drive you, even into old age. You will also love the arts, music, singing, writing, drama, dance, poetry and all the performing arts and be good at it. By the way, you might like to do something in that singing lane. You're more than good at it. Oh, and fighting, you've been fighting all your life. You're really good at it too, but you need to channel it better so you can get over that. It takes real courage to choose peace.

Finally, your heart will always guide you to what is right. You will always be loyal to the ones you love and care about those that are close and in addition, to people in general. Your love of animals will always be with you, especially horses, cats and dogs. Finally, your ultra-super power and joy will be in helping others. You will become someone who leads in your work as a successful business owner and also for your whānau, hapū and iwi.

There are things you do that will change the lives of lots and lots of people in Aotearoa and around the world.

The impact and change will come out of you being Māori. Truly Māori. Right now, you won't really understand what mana is all about, but you will learn and find how that works for you and those whose lives you touch.

So, keep going e tama. Keep your eyes wide open.

When you dream, dream big. Look at the stars, they'll always be there, especially Pūanga. Pūanga is the star Rigel and is the brightest star in the Orion constellation. Always look to it. It is your constellation and kaitiaki guardian.

Mostly just know, you are special and in knowing that, know that you will be alright. You will be alright. Remember too, you come from humble beginnings that will lead to noble outcomes.

Always hold to kindness, that is your best part. It will always serve you and others. It won't always be easy though as you go about what you do, depending on who you meet. Always remember kindness though and empathy. It's who you truly are and what makes you happy.

Ngā mihi, I love you.



George Wikio, Te Whiu Anderson, Piripi Waretini, Lesly Wehi.  
Centennial Park School, Te Kuiti, Circa 1960's.