



# Poi and Wellbeing

Improving Quality of Life for our Kaumātua



# Our Ageing World

Across the globe our ageing population is growing at an unprecedented rate, with kaumātua expected to outnumber youth for the first time in history by 2025. In Aotearoa, the population aged 65+ will double between now and 2050. Unfortunately, the increase in our life expectancy is moving faster than the increase of our *healthy* life expectancy, meaning many older adults will have poor quality of life in their later years. At SpinPoi, we are passionate about improving the wellbeing of our kaumātua through poi, a precious Māori taonga and a proven way to stay physically, mentally, and emotionally engaged as we age.

“ Practicing poi helps keep the brain alive. It’s stimulating. It’s fun. It requires complex actions that keep the body and mind engaged. Poi just might help delay the onset of diseases that strike in old age like dementia.

- Sir Richard Faull, KNZM FRSNZ, Neuroscientist, Distinguished Professor



# Poi and Health Research

A scientific study conducted at the University of Auckland measured the effects of poi on health for older adults. The double-blind randomised controlled trial found that after just one month of poi practice, participants significantly improved their grip strength, balance, and attention.<sup>1</sup> These are exciting results, especially when thinking about maintaining good quality of life as we age. In addition to the scientific data, participants were asked how they felt while doing poi. The most frequent comments were feeling more loose and relaxed, enjoying the challenge of learning a new skill, and having fun!

1. Riegle van West, K., Stinear, C., & Buck, R. (2019). The Effects of Poi on Physical and Cognitive Function in Healthy Older Adults. *Journal of aging and physical activity*, 27(1), 44-52.



# Poi in Aged Care

In addition to the scientifically proven benefits, poi is a fun, cost effective, accessible way to stay engaged as we age and to share part of Te Ao Māori.



## He Taonga Māori

As a precious taonga, poi gives us an opportunity to engage with and share part of Te Ao Māori in Aotearoa and with the world.



## Adaptable

Poi is easy to integrate into daily life and/or existing exercise programs, and can be easily tailored to suit a wide range of abilities.



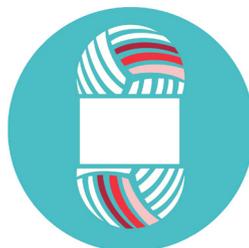
## Cost Effective

Poi doesn't require complex equipment or technology, making it a cost effective solution for keeping fit and staying engaged.



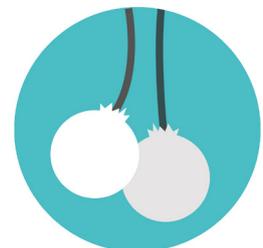
## Social

Group poi classes provide social connections and camaraderie, which are especially important for combating loneliness as we age.



## Creative

There are infinite possibilities for unleashing your creativity through making poi as a craft activity and exploring different poi movements.



## Fun

Fun is an important quality for a therapeutic tool: if something is fun, you just want to do it! Plus play has profound health benefits.

“ Poi could potentially be one of the most affordable and effective interventions globally to alleviate depression, loneliness and isolation in older adults. We have seen our residents smile or laugh out loud, socialize and develop new friendships, and engage both their minds and their bodies despite their age and physical or cognitive abilities.

- Orquidea Tamayo Mortera, National Diversional Therapist for Summerset,  
President of the New Zealand Society of Diversional & Recreational Therapists Inc.

# | Ready to Spin Your Health Around?

SpinPoi's goal is to support individuals and organisations that would like to work with poi to improve wellbeing for our kaumātua.

Our evidence based resources and expertise will ensure you have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to implement sustainable poi/health programs. In addition, SpinPoi is committed to reducing the inequity in Māori health outcomes and to working collaboratively with whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori communities to ensure our products and services are culturally appropriate, responsive to the diverse realities of Māori, and will directly benefit the Māori community.



## Spin Your Health Around

Duration: 1 hour

Discover the science behind how poi is good for your health in this one-hour seminar packed with research, videos, and a hands-on poi experience. Participants will learn about the history of poi and the different styles of poi practiced worldwide, hear results and insights from the first clinical study on poi, plus attempt poi moves to challenge the body and the mind along with moves to simply relax and have fun. This seminar is a great introduction to poi for both older adults and aged care staff.

### Learning outcomes:

1. The origins of poi, the different styles of poi practiced around the globe today, and the health benefits of poi
2. Some fundamental poi movements to get the mind and body working



# Poi in Aged Care: Sit & Spin

Duration: 3-5 hours

This course is for those who would like to facilitate poi sessions for older adults who will primarily stay seated during exercise. Participants will walk away with the knowledge and confidence to implement and lead their own poi program in aged care.

## Learning outcomes:

1. The origins of poi, the different styles of poi practiced around the globe today, and the health benefits of poi
2. How to make Māori style poi which are appropriate and safe for use in aged care
3. The fundamentals of playing poi and how to use those fundamentals to create infinite poi exercises to challenge the body and mind
4. Best practices around preparing for, structuring, and facilitating safe and engaging poi sessions for seniors
5. How to create poi routines to music that will get everyone moving to the beat



# Poi in Aged Care: Up & Spin

Duration: 5 hours

This course is aimed at those who would like to facilitate poi sessions for independently living older adults. Participants will walk away with an understanding of how to do and teach beginner to intermediate poi movements, and how to facilitate poi classes for those who will primarily stand during exercise.

## Learning outcomes:

1. The origins of poi, the different styles of poi practiced around the globe today, and the health benefits of poi
2. What types of poi are appropriate for different populations, and how to make practice sock poi
3. The fundamentals of playing poi and how to use those fundamentals to create infinite poi exercises to challenge the body and mind
4. Intermediate poi moves to further challenge strength, flexibility, balance, and coordination
5. Best practices around preparing for, structuring, and facilitating safe and engaging poi sessions
6. Teaching methods for supporting students through common challenges



# Digital Resources

In addition to our seminars and training courses, SpinPoi offers a variety of digital resources to help you get going. These include videos which showcase accessible poi movements for all ability levels, and guides around how to work with poi in a health context that include printable diagrams and sample lesson plans. We also offer an instructor certification program to provide further support, resources and credibility, which can be completed entirely online.

View our full range of resources at [www.spinpoi.com/resources](http://www.spinpoi.com/resources).



# Our Team



**Paora Sharples**

**Advisor**

Paora is Kaihautu Tikanga (Te reo me ngā tikanga Māori leader) at Ngā Pae o te Māramatangaand, professional teaching fellow in Māori Studies at the University of Auckland, leader of Te Ropū Manutaki.



**Orquidea Tamayo Mortera**

**Advisor**

Orquidea is the National Diversional Therapist for Summerset, President of the New Zealand Society of Diversional & Recreational Therapists Inc., and a registered and qualified Diversional Therapist.



**Cathy Stinear**

**Advisor**

Cathy is the Director of the Brain Research Clinic at the Centre for Brain Research, Director of the Clinical Neuroscience Laboratory, and Professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Auckland.



**Pania Newton**

**Cultural Navigator**

Pania is a lawyer and activist with a degree in law and health sciences, and co-founder of Save Our Unique Landscape.



**Crystal Kire**

**Cultural Navigator**

Crystal is a Māori medium educator, a social entrepreneur, and the first te reo Māori speaking hospital play specialist at the Starship Hospital.



**Shay Wright**

**Advisor**

Shay is a social entrepreneur, speaker, and strategist. He co-founded Te Whare Hukahuka and Nuku Ltd. and helped establish Teach First NZ.



**Kate Riegle van West**

**Founder, Director**

Dr. Riegle van West is an interdisciplinary researcher, artist, and scientist with a passion for play and wellbeing. Kate completed the first scientific research and PhD on the effects of poi on health at the University of Auckland, and received the Future Leader Award from the Royal Society of New Zealand for her work in this field. Kate is passionate about working with poi as a therapeutic tool, and has helped health care and aged care organisations across the globe implement successful poi programs.

# Start Your Poi Journey Today

We would be delighted to discuss how SpinPoi can work together with you and/or your organisation to help improve quality of life for older adults, one orbit at a time. Please don't hesitate to get in touch:

 [info@spinpoi.com](mailto:info@spinpoi.com)

 +64 21 0200 5965

 [www.spinpoi.com](http://www.spinpoi.com)

@spinpoi     



It's time for the world to follow Aotearoa back to the practice of poi, and forward to a healthier future.

**Ka mua, ka muri.**