BASIC STEPS TO BLESSING YOUR POUNAMU

He Aratohu mō te Manaaki i tō Pounamu



TE MANA O TE POUNAMU

Honouring the story, meaning and blessings of your pounamu

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A collection of contemporary karakia, simple guidance and reflections

He taonga tuku iho — a treasure handed down through generations.

Presented with aroha by Kaia Customs

Welcome

Every piece of pounamu has a story. It may celebrate love, mark a new beginning, honour someone you miss, or remind you of the people and places that matter most.

For Māori, pounamu is a treasured taonga with deep cultural significance. The meaning of a particular piece can also be shaped by its whakapapa, its maker, the person who gifts it and the whānau who care for it.

This booklet offers a gentle introduction to reflecting on and blessing your taonga. You can follow the simple steps, choose one of the contemporary karakia, or use words that are meaningful to you.

Important: Tikanga differs among iwi, hapū and whānau. These pages are not a replacement for guidance from your own kaumātua, whānau or cultural advisers. The prayers here are contemporary compositions, not presented as ancestral or universally prescribed karakia.

How to use this booklet

If you want to bless your pounamu now, go straight to “Your blessing in five simple steps.” Choose a karakia, take a quiet moment, and follow the steps at your own pace.

The later pages explain the meaning behind the experience and offer ways to care for and eventually pass on your taonga.

Your blessing in five simple steps

This is an optional, personal way to mark the moment you receive, wear or gift your pounamu. It is not a formal tikanga ceremony.

1. Find a peaceful place. Sit somewhere comfortable where you will not be interrupted.

2. Hold your pounamu gently. Take a few slow breaths and think about why this taonga matters to you.

3. Choose your intention. You might wish to express gratitude, seek guidance, remember someone, or welcome a new chapter.

4. Say a blessing. Read one of the contemporary karakia in this booklet, say your own words, or reflect quietly.

5. Close with gratitude. Pause for a moment, then wear your taonga or present it to its recipient.

Remember: You do not need special equipment, water, or a particular location for this simple personal reflection. If your whānau follows a specific tikanga, follow that guidance instead.

Understanding your taonga

Pounamu has been treasured in Aotearoa for generations. It can be associated with identity, connection, remembrance and the responsibility of caring for what has been entrusted to us.

A taonga is more than an object we own. Its significance can come from its history, the relationships surrounding it, and the responsibilities that come with holding it.

Think about the story of your own pounamu. Who gave it to you? Why did you choose it? What do you hope it will remind you of?

Preparing your heart

Before your blessing, you might reflect on these questions:

- What does this taonga mean to me?
- Who would I like to honour or remember?
- What values do I want to carry forward?
- What am I grateful for today?

You do not need to answer every question. Even one quiet thought can make the moment personal and meaningful.

1. Karakia of gratitude

Choose this contemporary prayer when you want to give thanks for life, love, whānau and the journey that has brought you here.

Karakia Whakawhetai

E te Atua,
Ka tuku mihi mātou mō tēnei rā.
Mō te ora, mō te aroha,
Mō te whānau me ngā hoa.
Manaakitia tēnei taonga,
Ārahina hoki tō mātou huarahi.
Whakakīia ō mātou ngākau ki te rangimārie,
Ki te ngākau māhaki,
Me te aroha mutunga kore.
Amine.

English rendering

Creator of all things, we give thanks for this day, for life, love, family and friends. Bless this treasured taonga and guide our path. Fill our hearts with peace, humility and endless love. Amen.

Reflect: What is one thing you feel thankful for today?

2. Karakia for protection

Choose this contemporary prayer when you are seeking courage, guidance and peace during uncertain times.

Karakia mō te Whakamaru

E te Atua,
Tiakina ahau i tēnei rā.
Ārahina aku hīkoi,
Whakamāramatia taku huarahi.
Homai te māia,
Te kaha,
Me te whakaaro nui.
Kia noho te rangimārie ki roto i taku ngākau,
Ā, kia tau tō manaakitanga ki runga i ahau me tōku whānau.
Amine.

English rendering

Creator, protect me today. Guide my footsteps and light my path. Grant me courage, strength and wisdom. May peace dwell within my heart, and may your blessing rest upon me and my family. Amen.

Reflect: Where in your life would courage or guidance help you most?

3. Karakia for new beginnings

Choose this contemporary prayer to mark a new chapter, a change, or a fresh start.

Karakia mō ngā Tīmatanga Hou

E te Atua,
Ka tīmata ahau i tēnei huarahi hou.
Manaakitia taku haere.
Whakakīia taku ngākau ki te māia,
Ki te whakapono,
Ki te aroha,
Me te rangimārie.
Ārahina ahau i ngā rā katoa,
Kia noho pono ahau ki aku uara,
Ā, kia whai kaha ahau ki te whakatutuki i aku moemoeā.
Amine.

English rendering

Creator, as I begin this new journey, bless my path. Fill my heart with courage, faith, love and peace. Guide me each day, help me remain true to my values, and give me the strength to pursue my dreams. Amen.

Reflect: What would you like this next chapter of your life to stand for?

An optional water reflection

Some people choose to include water as a symbol of renewal. Practices involving water differ, and this optional reflection should not be confused with a traditional ceremony carried out under particular tikanga.

If you choose to use water, check first that it is suitable for your piece. Keep metal fittings, plated details, adhesives and cords dry unless the maker confirms they are water-safe.

1. Place a little clean water in a bowl.

2. Hold your pounamu near the water, or briefly touch only the stone to the water if it is safe to do so.

3. Think about the new beginning or feeling you want to acknowledge.

4. Dry the stone carefully with a soft cloth if it became wet.

You might say:

> “May this moment remind me to move forward with peace, love and purpose.”

Water is not required for the five-step blessing. You can simply hold your taonga and reflect.

Caring for your pounamu

A little care helps protect your taonga and preserve its story.

- Wipe the stone gently with a soft, clean cloth.
- For plain stone, use a little lukewarm water if needed, then dry it.
- Avoid harsh cleaners, abrasives and strong impacts.
- Check cords, clasps and settings regularly for wear.
- Store it somewhere safe when not being worn.

For jewellery with gold-plated details, metal settings or adhesives: follow the care instructions provided for that specific piece. Do not soak it unless the maker confirms it is suitable.

Passing your taonga on

If you choose to gift your pounamu to someone else, share the story with it. Tell them where it came from, why it matters to you, and what you hope they will remember.

A few spoken words or a handwritten note can help keep that story alive for the next generation.

The values we carry

Aroha — love and compassion. A reminder to care for the people around us.

Mana — dignity, authority and standing. A reminder to act with integrity and respect, while recognising that mana is also connected to relationships and whakapapa.

Whakapapa — genealogy and connection. A reminder of our links to people, places and generations.

Kaitiakitanga — guardianship. A responsibility to care for taonga, whenua, waterways and the world around us.

These are brief introductions to concepts with much deeper meanings. Their interpretation and expression can vary across contexts and communities.

A final reflection

Your pounamu may accompany you through celebrations, difficult days and ordinary moments that later become precious memories.

Whatever your journey holds, may your taonga remind you of the people you love, the values you carry and the story you are still creating.

He taonga tuku iho — a treasure handed down through generations.

He mihi — thank you

Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet and for allowing Kaia Customs to be a small part of your journey.

We hope these contemporary karakia, reflections and simple steps help you approach your pounamu with care, gratitude and confidence.

May your taonga be worn with pride, treated with respect and, if you choose, passed on with its story and aroha intact.

Ngā mihi nui,
The Kaia Customs Team