

The background of the slide is a traditional Tongan pattern, likely a 'tapa' cloth. It features a grid of squares, each containing different motifs. These include stylized leaves, flowers, and circular designs with internal patterns. The colors are primarily dark brown and black on a lighter, textured tan background.

# **Gifted and Talented Tongan Students in New Zealand**

**Presented by Lesieli MacIntyre  
and Ingrid Frengley-Vaipuna**

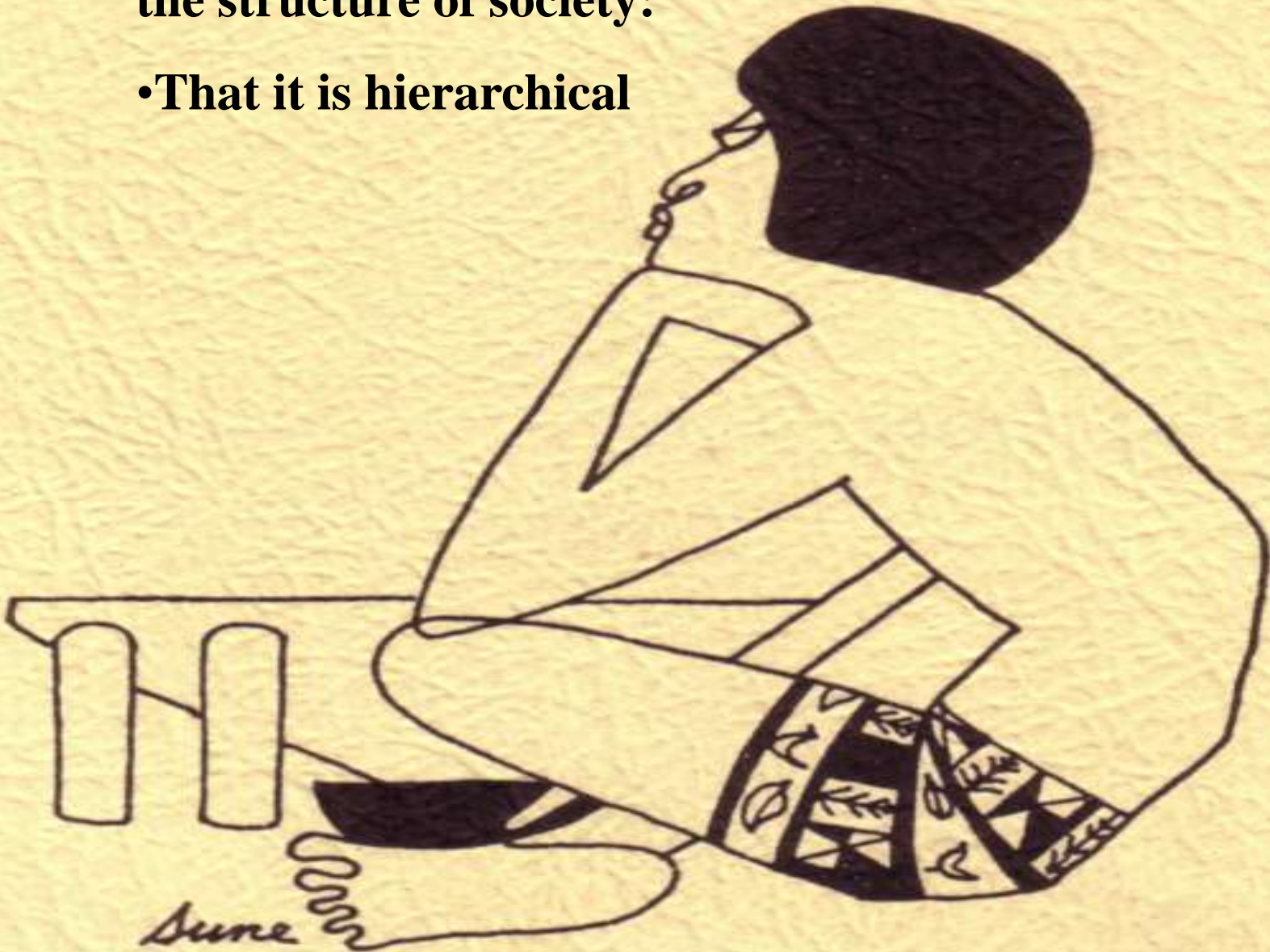
**It is likely that Tongan students in New Zealand will reflect the beliefs of their parents and kainga (extended family). These may include definite views about:**

- Social structure**
- Learning and teaching - ako, 'ilo and poto**
- Social values**

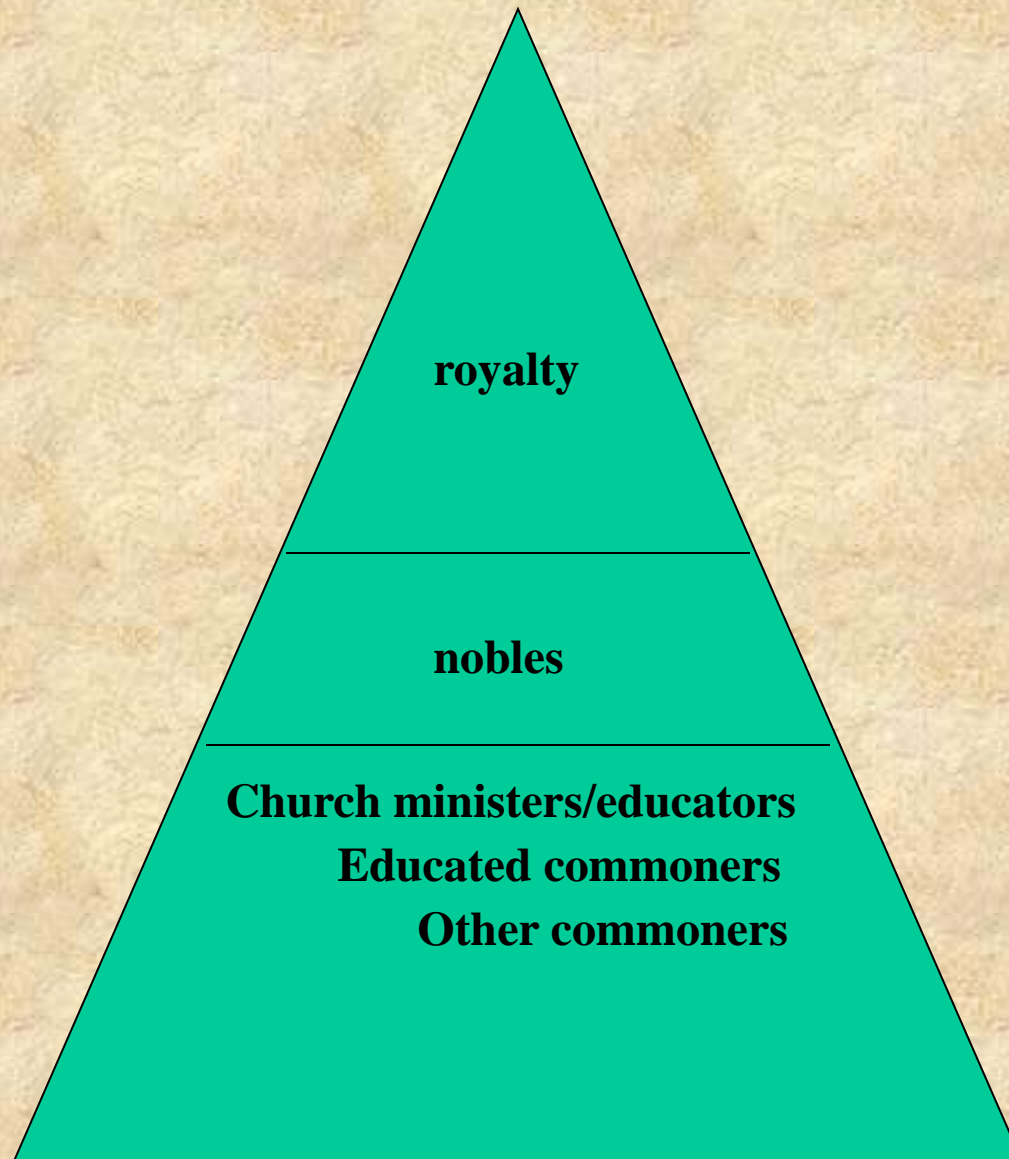


**Tongans have particular traditional views about the structure of society:**

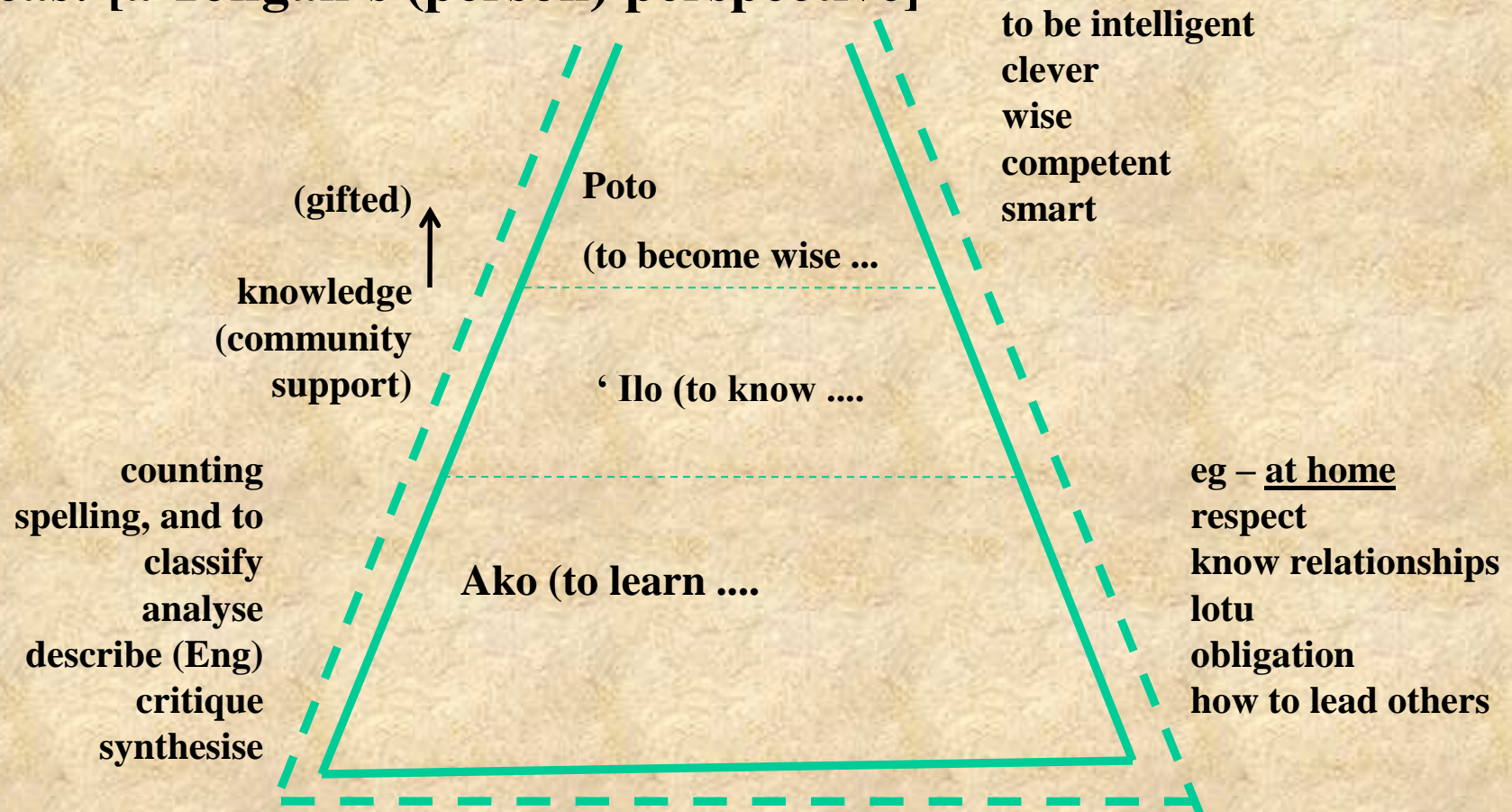
- **That it is hierarchical**



- **And this influences all activities/doings....**



# ideas: [a Tongan's (person) perspective]

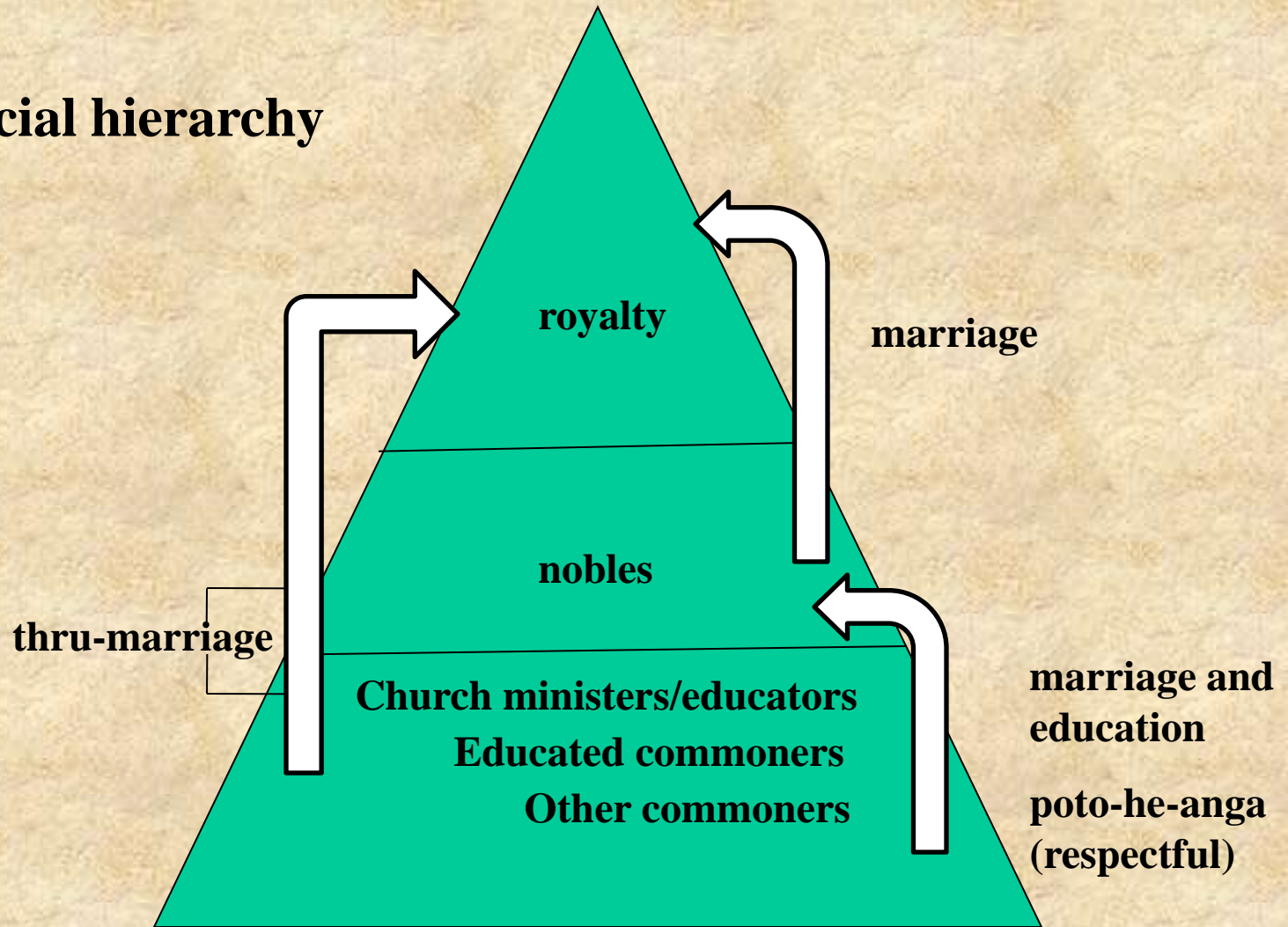


✓ [accepted by the community]  
x [not accepted by the community]

- both parents and offsprings are driven by:
  - family's social status and expectations
  - family's own beliefs and values
  - parent's dreams, wishes, ambitions



## **Social hierarchy**



### **Changes in traditional hierarchical order**

- language – for commoners, chiefly, royals
- social position(s) in family/community

# ideas:

- **ako (n.)** – *learning, education, training, school, rehearsal, practice*
- **ako (v.)** – *to learn, to study, to receive education, to train*
- **‘ilo (n.)** – *knowledge*
- **‘ilo (v.)** – *to see, espy, glimpse, notice, perceive, to find, discover, to be concious or aware of, to recognise, to know*
- **poto (adj.)** – *clever, wise, able to, can, socially competent*
- **poto (n.)** – *wisdom, intelligence*

**•For individuals Tongan culture exists within particular and unique environmental contexts**

**•traditions and customs such as music, dance, song, poetry, oratory, ta'ovala, kakala, koloa, language, rituals, religion, carving, buildings etc. are affected by that context**

**•They are based on Tongan values such as faka'apa'apa, feohi, fakaongo, talangofua, fetokoni'aki, lototo and tauhi vaha'a**

**•At the core is 'ofa**

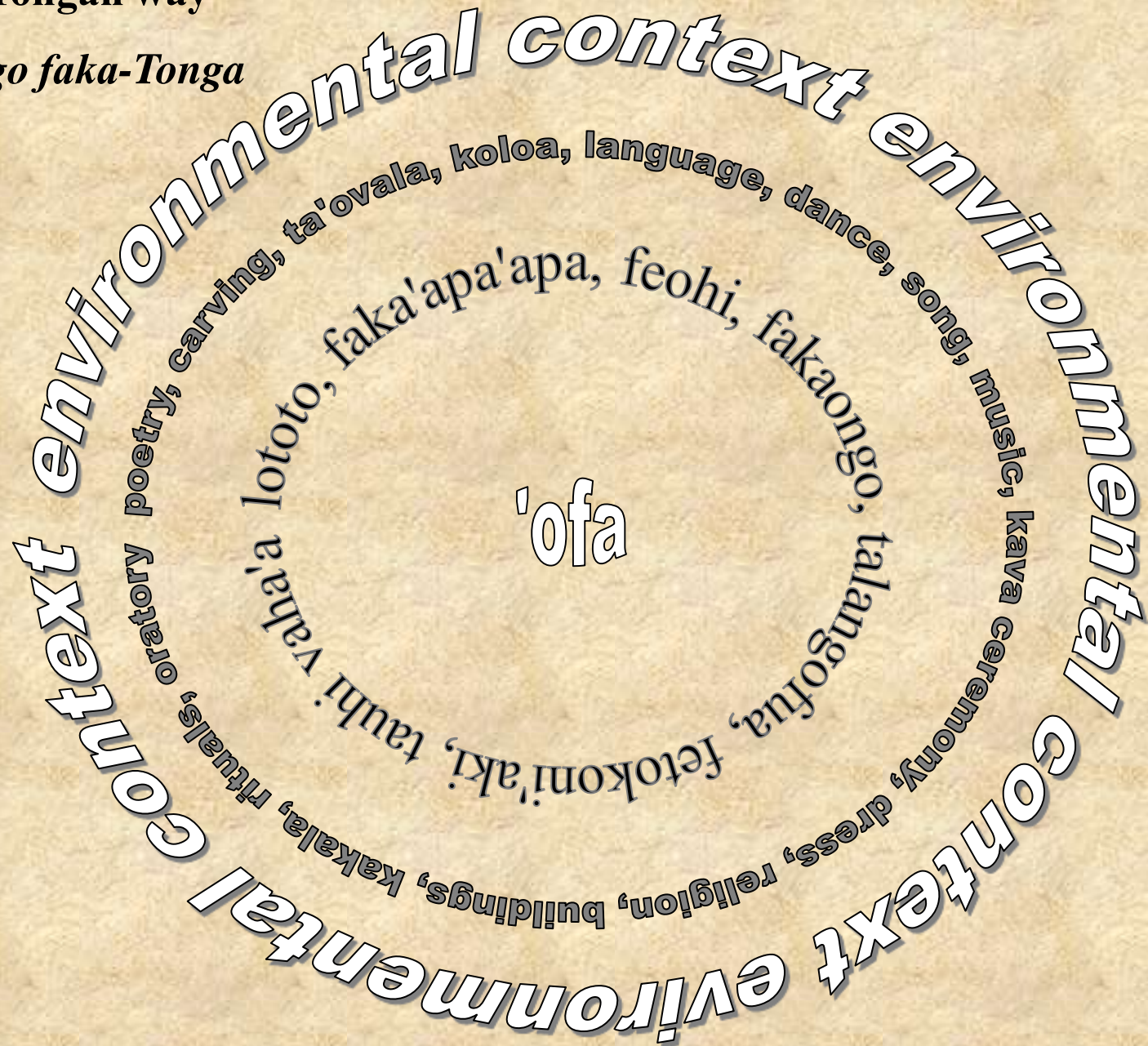


## Identifying giftedness

<b>“Palangi way”</b>	<b>“Tongan way”</b>
Test scores – records;	Specialised, acknowledged skills;
Recognised leadership;	Social status within a group;
Being different/odd/unique/exceptional;	(possesses) a worthwhile knowledge;
Exhibiting talent thru product of performance;	Good/effective leadership quality;
Sense of humour;	Ability to teach/exhibit to/practise with/for others;
Multiple intelligences;	Has followers/believers in what he is gifted in/and what he does.
Good memory/photographic memory;	Has ‘mystical power.
Very creative.	Sometimes – the gifts/talents he has, belong to the family – so he is only ‘gifted’ outside his family.

The “Tongan way”

*To’ongo faka-Tonga*



# Identifying giftedness

## The “palangi way”

- Test scores
- Good/photographic memory
- Exceptional compared to others of the same age
- Teacher nomination
- Recognised leadership
- Being odd/different/unique/creative
- Exhibiting talent through product or performance
- Sense of humour
- Multiple intelligences

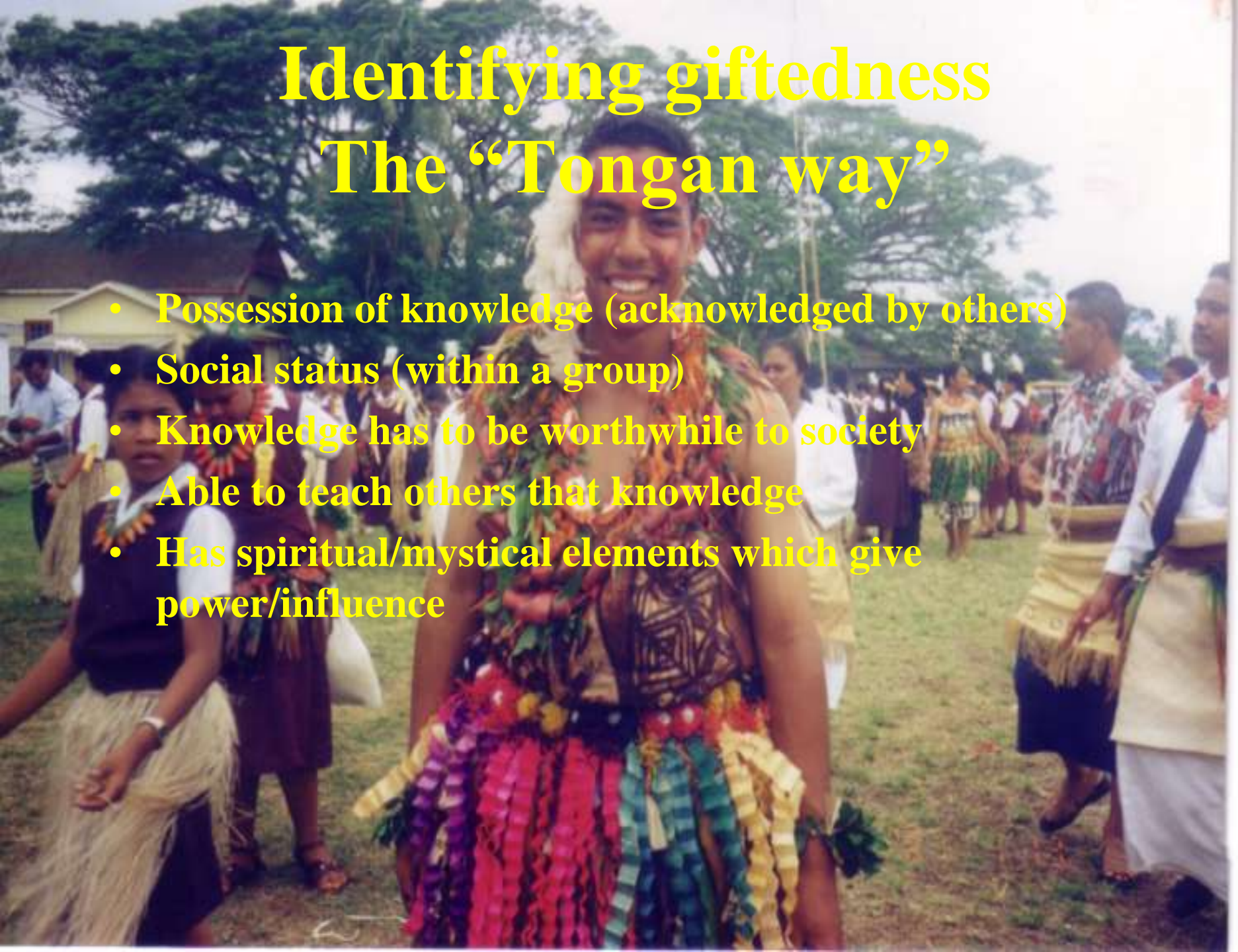




# Identifying giftedness

## The “Tongan way”

- Possession of knowledge (acknowledged by others)
- Social status (within a group)
- Knowledge has to be worthwhile to society
- Able to teach others that knowledge
- Has spiritual/mystical elements which give power/influence



# The research:

- **Avoided the ‘deficit model’**
- **Case studies – schools nominated students**
- **Ethical considerations – Pasifika research guidelines**
- **Data collection: 2005**
- **Konai Helu Thaman’s *kakala* framework – *toli, tui, luva***





Who did the research involve??



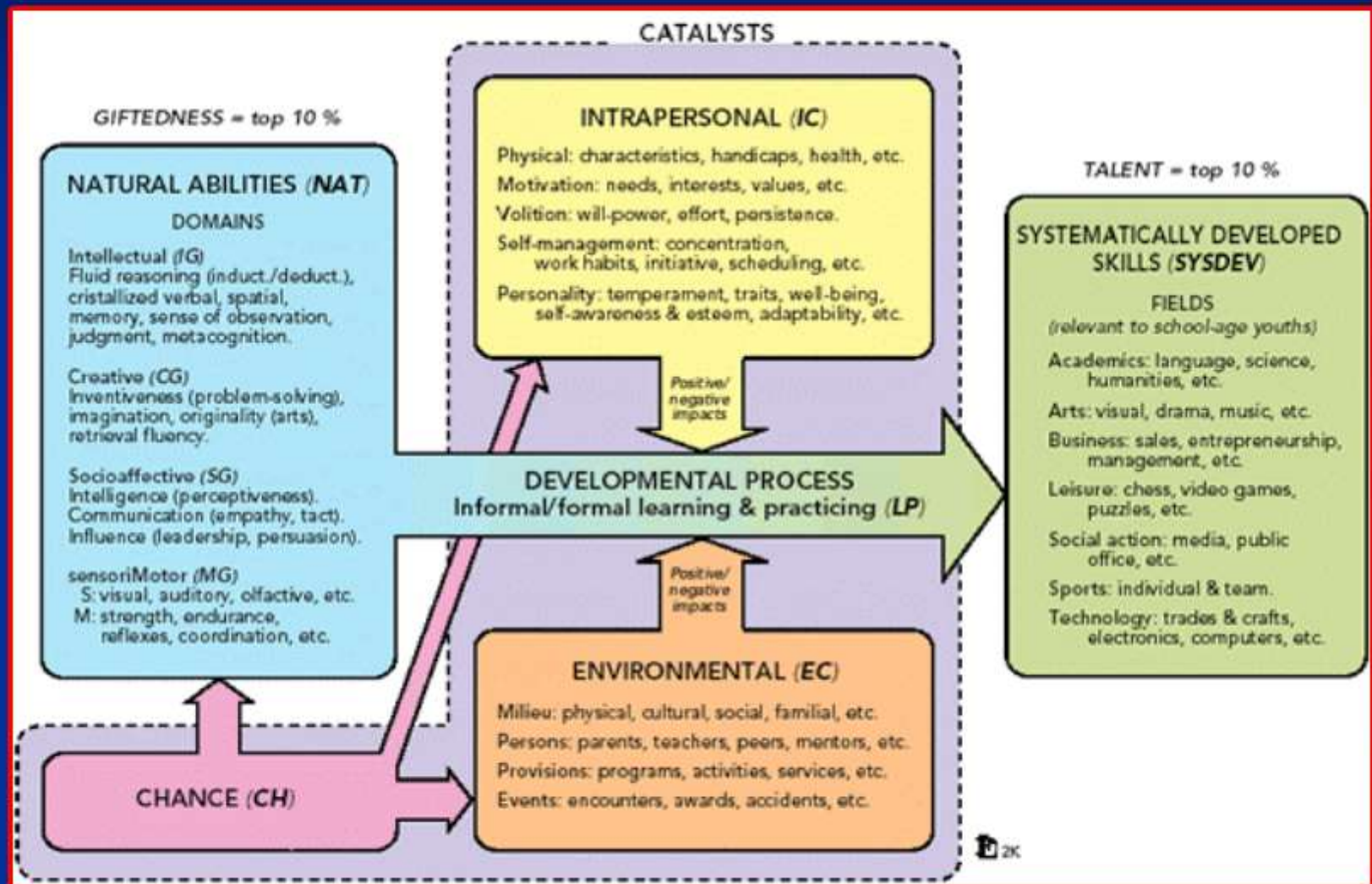
# Julia

- 17
- Migrated to NZ when 4
- Eldest daughter – older brother, 3 younger siblings
- Catholic family very involved in church activities (Tongan language and cultural performances part of their faith community)
- Catholic girls' school – Year 13, prefect
- Lives in an extended family, grandparents in Tonga, more family in other parts of NZ
- Father: bus driver (was a policeman in Tonga), mother: elder care
- Family own their own home in large urban area
- Had music lessons, father is her music mentor
- Bilingual, speaks Tongan at home
- Involved in sport – netball, rugby, dragon boating
- Accomplished orator using Tongan language
- Successful musician and Tongan dancer

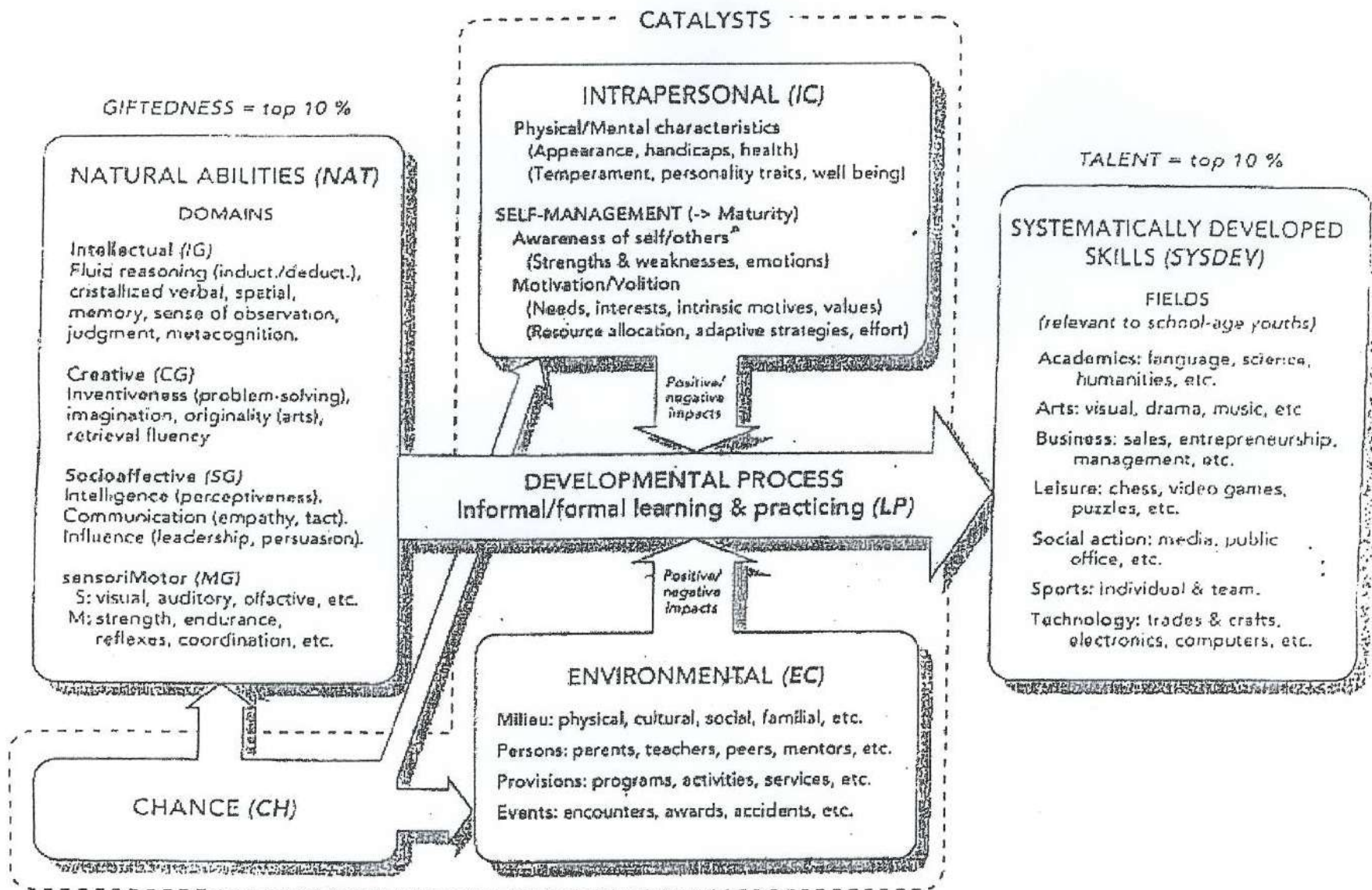
# Seini

- **17**
- **Born in New Zealand**
- **Eldest of two children – 1 younger brother**
- **Attended “palangi methodist” church, very religious mother**
- **Co-ed Methodist boarding school (year 11 & 12), attended two decile 10 girls’ schools prior to this. Year 13, prefect**
- **Nuclear family with grandparents living in the same city**
- **Parents migrated to NZ as students, both have university degrees**
- **Some understanding of Tongan language, speaks English at home**
- **Involved in sport – basketball, rugby**
- **Accomplished orator using English language**
- **Successful academic and Tongan dancer**

# Differentiated Model - Gagné







Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT.US.2003)

# **Intrapersonal catalysts school:**

## **Seini:**

- **boarding enhanced self management skills**
- **sport kept her fit**
- **NCEA suited her competitiveness and good organisational skills.**

## **Julia:**

- **poor self management skills and literacy problems were recognised but not addressed**
- **sport kept her fit**
- **over commitment to extra curricular activities detracted from academic performance**

# **Intrapersonal catalysts other influences:**

- **motivated by high parental expectations**
- **intrinsically motivated by competitive natures and perfectionism**
- **Sound nutrition - good health and an attractive appearance**
- **Spiritual awareness/belief in God**
- **Self awareness/Tongan identity**
- **Internalised Tongan values**
- **A desire to make the best of opportunities provided in New Zealand**
- **Responsibility for younger siblings**



# **Environmental catalysts**

## **School:**

### **Seini:**

- opportunities to be involved in a Tongan culture group
- sports teams and speaking competitions
- Pasifika teachers
- Many other Tongan students proficient in Tongan language
- Christian dimension

### **Julia:**

- opportunities to be involved in a Tongan culture group
- Tongan speaking competitions
- a variety of musical and sporting opportunities
- Large group of Pasifika students
- Christian dimension

•For both, being made a prefect developed leadership skills

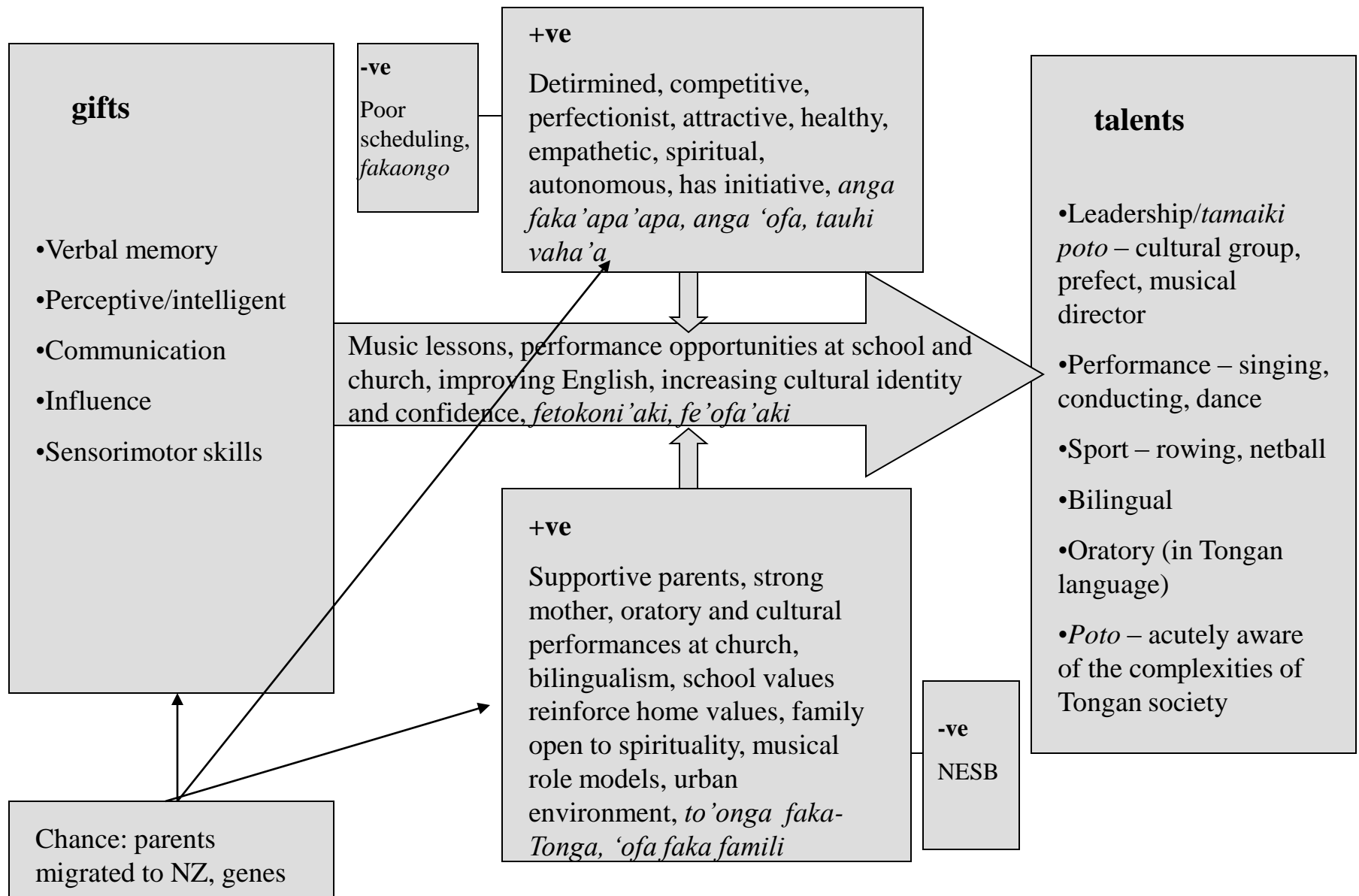
# **Environmental catalysts other influences:**

## **Seini:**

- many English language opportunities
- highly literate family
- trips to Tonga
- some church activities
- parents who encouraged open discussion of issues
- supportive, loving parents and extended family
- taught Tongan dancing in family context

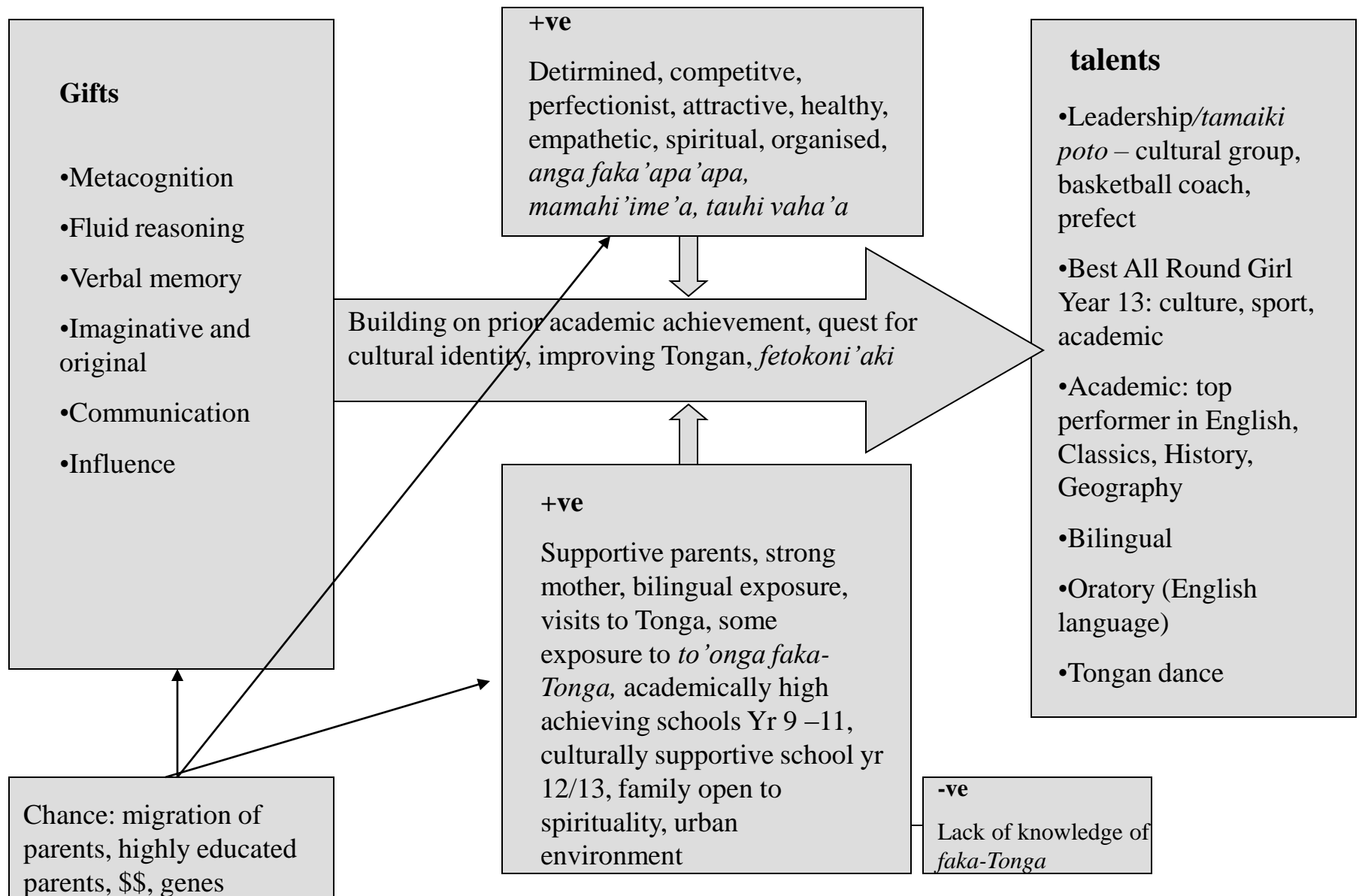
## **Julia:**

- opportunities through church to develop Tongan music, oratory and dance skills
- music lessons
- father as music mentor
- firm adherence to the “Tongan way” in the family
- close, loving, supportive parents and extended family



The DMGT model and Julia





## The DMGT model and Seini

# **Developing talent in schools (culturally inclusive practice)**

- **Names**
- **Resources**
- **Performance and leadership opportunities**
- **Value traditional knowledge**
- **Oral rather than written responses**
- **The classroom environment**
- **Relationships first**
- **Links with homes/communities/churches**
- **Awareness of *to'onga faka-Tonga***
- **“Walk the talk”**

# **The ideal teacher:**

- **Empathy**
- **Caring**
- **Respect**
- **Going the extra mile**
- **Passion to enthuse/motivate**
- **Patience and perseverance**
- **Belief in and understanding of student ability**

*Hawk, Cowley, Hill and Sutherland, 2001*





**If I can do it, so can you!!**