



“Korero Mai”

for those interested in the provision of mental health services

WHAT'S ON

providing educational and recreational activities for \$5.00 and under

Whakaaro Pai

for Service Users/Tangata Whaiora by Service Users/Tangata Whaiora

Issue 37 APRIL 2014

Kia ora, Talofa lava, Kia orana, Malo e lelei, Fakalofa lahi atu, Talohani, Bula vinaka, Ni Hao, Namaste, Greetings...



New Manager for Like Minds Taranaki

Trustees have selected Virginia Winder as their new manager.

There was a talented array of people ideally suited for the role and short-listing wasn't easy.

Virginia is very well known and respected in Taranaki and brings with her role a

wealth of professional and personal experience of the mental health sector. As an experienced journalist, Virginia will quickly engender an exciting degree of confidence in promoting mental health, demystifying mental illness and countering stigma and discrimination—in all its various forms.

Like Minds Taranaki, and I am sure, the wider mental health sector warmly welcome Virginia and wish her every success in her new role. *Continued Page 2...*

Stress in our Rural Communities...

Spare a thought for Taranaki's beef, dairy, fibre, and horticulture industries as they struggle to ensure that their stock/plants are able to obtain water and feed—at a price that is not too eye-watering.



It is going to take months, make that years, before pasture returns to normal levels. Meanwhile alternative stockfeed is hard to find and more expensive to get. Stock are having to be sold and will need to be replaced, and refinancing is not always an option.

All farming organisations are stressing the need for rural communities to look after each other, learn more about maintaining mental health—their own, that of their family/Whanau/friends and to look over the fence and check on their neighbours.

On page 2, are details of the Taranaki Rural Support Trust, about farmers helping farmers in these times of stress.

But sometimes more help is required. It is important that all people involved in health, particularly mental health are responsive to those in stress in rural communities and provide that help as soon as and for as long as needed.

Coming Events: APRIL 2013

- Every Wed: Real Arts. 1-4pm at Real Tart
- Every Thur: “Mental Health Matters” Access Radio 104.4FM, 9.30am.
- Thur 4th: NGO Meeting 11am at Progress to Health
- Thur 4th: Suicide Co-ord Gp, 11am, Feats Boardroom, Hawera
- Thur 11th: Peer Support Gp, Stratford Comm. House 10am
- Wed 10th: Focus Group, 10.30am-12pm—at Like Minds
- Wed 17th: Post Natal Support Group, 10-12 noon at NP Womens Centre.
- Thur 18th: Writers Support Group—2pm at Like Minds
- Fri 19th: Term 1 ends
- Wed 24th: Charities Commission Workshop
- Wed 24th: Focus Group—10.30am at Like Minds Taranaki
- Thur 25th: ANZAC Day
- 27-28th: Creativity Conference—NP

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Thought for the Issue...

“In ancient times cats were worshipped as gods; they have never forgotten this.”

Terry Pratchett



Communication is key to breaking down stigmas

Every now and then a job comes along that is a perfect fit for your skills, knowledge, abilities, time of life and passions.

For me, that's the job as manager of Like Minds Taranaki.

Breaking down the stigmas surrounding mental health is something I am passionate about and I believe communication is the key to making a difference.

I take on this role with a strong background in sharing messages, stories and information with people about people. For the past 30 years I have worked as a newspaper and magazine journalist and, intertwined with this, I have taught on the journalism programme at WITT, been a marketing and communications co-ordinator at Puke Ariki and presented a number of radio shows.

Last year, I wrote a blog post about my own tough period of mental unwellness and shared it on Facebook. The response from people was overwhelmingly supportive and it got me thinking about the power of communication to open people's minds about mental health; to help improve the lives of those with long-term and short-term mental illness; to change prejudices and perceptions, open up more employment and educational opportunities; to inspire more compassion for one another, to ask for help and where to get it.

Now, backed by the skills and passions of the Like Minds team, I am incredibly excited about what is possible. And so I embark on a new journey, one empowered by my own personal kaupapa – facing everything and everyone with an “open heart, open mind”.

Virginia Winder

14 Principles for Family/Whanau Members on how to cope...

1. Realise that mental illness is not rare.
2. Learn as much as possible—as soon as possible.
3. Don't blame yourself - it can destroy your chances of coping forever.
4. Seek professional helpers who are effective.
5. Contact a self-help group for families.
6. Accept that mental illness is complex. Our natural instinct can be an unreliable guide. Relatives need educating.
7. Get to know the origins of pressures to which family members are present.
8. Pay special attention to the needs of other members of the family.
9. Remember that unlimited, unconditional self sacrifice on behalf of someone with a mental illness is fatal to effective caring and coping.
10. Be aware that spending massive amounts of time with a person who has a mental illness can make matters worse.
11. Maintain friendships, activities and hobbies, particularly those that will take you outside your home.
12. Set your sights on appropriate independence for your relative and yourself.
13. Don't be surprised to find that the ability to change and look at things differently distinguishes relatives who can cope from those who can't.
14. Take very good care of yourself.

Source: British Columbia Schizophrenia Society.
Reprinted by SF Taranaki.

Congratulations to...

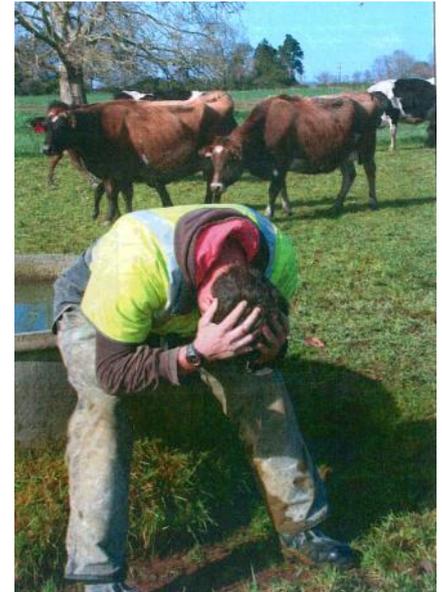
Denise Aylward. Denise has been promoted to General Manager, Midland Region, Pathways—and will remain based in New Plymouth.

Ruth Smithers has been appointed as Business Development Manager for Tui Ora Ltd.

RuralSupport

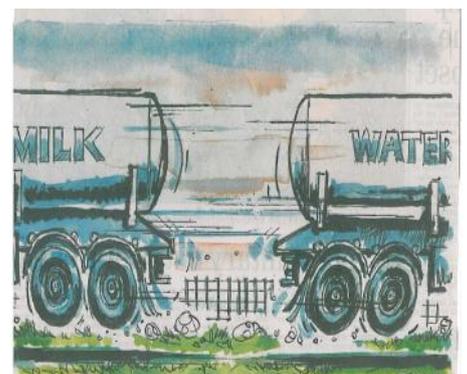
Farmers helping farmers... and doing it well.

“When circumstances beyond your control lead to a rural crisis—be it financial, climatic or personal—The Taranaki Rural Support Trust is ready to assist.”



All trust members are rural people with local knowledge and experience...

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Harvey Leach | 06-764-8333 |
| Derek Gibson | 06-752-7642 |
| John McMurray | 06-756-7099 |
| Graeme Hight | 06-754-4404 |
| Hannah Dent | 06-757-3423 |
| Paul Bourke | 06-761-8895 |
| Blue Read | 06-752-3698 |
| Katrina Knowles | 021-831-944 |
| Dave Hopkins | 06-757-3423 |
| Office: | 06-757-3423 |



Courtesy - Manawatu Evening Standard

In SHAPE

The Problem:

People diagnosed with a serious mental illness have a 2-3 decades shorter life span due to co-morbid health risks: diabetes, cardiovascular disorders, high pulmonary diseases, etc.

The Environmental Context:

Social determinants of health are barriers to positive health status for our constituents:

- **Unemployment:** another crisis – 70%-80%
- **Poverty**
- **Lack of access** to societal resources: healthcare, education, recreation, etc.
- **Housing:** deplorable, often segregated
- **Unsafe environments**

Social Determinants:

STIGMA and DISCRIMINATION...

- Leads to social isolation and marginalization
- Destroys hope and ruins lives
- Reduces potential
- Invited poverty
- Leads to disadvantaged existence
- Promotes ill health (disability, substance abuse, homelessness, etc.)

Prejudice and ignorance about mental illness among healthcare providers, including mental health professionals.

Bottom line: shortens lifespan.

An issue of civil and human rights

The solution:

A Health Paradigm:

Characteristics:

A "whole health" approach: the individual participant and their health team are engaged with one another in an attitude of hope.

Each participant's capacity for self-managing and self directing their health plan is sought and

advanced.

Each participant's personal health vision is connected to their larger life recovery vision.



"We have a moral obligation to act"

"A compelling agenda awaits"

A whole new approach to mental health is needed. One where the individual and their health team are engaged with one another in an open, transparent attitude of hope and involving full social inclusion.

It is more than just empowerment. It is about ensuring people have the necessary social skills and social organisational skills to determine and work towards achieving their optimum wellness.

"Values should guide evidence-based practice development, research and implementation."

In SHAPE Values and Beliefs:

Personal Recovery Principles:

- **Self-determination** (ie choice) each potential participant makes the decision to participate or not
- **Self-directed and self-managed care**
- **empowered decision-making;** participants identify and establish own goals, objectives

In SHAPE Values and Beliefs:

- **Self-management:** participants are responsible for achieving (or not) their goals and changing their In-SHAPE health plan
- **Taking personal responsibility**
- **Building blocks for dignity and self-respect**

In SHAPE Values and Beliefs:

Individualizes, Person-centred approach (eg. A walking group forms, because several individuals have indicated an interest in walking and agreed to do this as a group vs a staff identified group not based on identified participant interest.)

Social Inclusion – build toward societal membership and citizenship

Community Engagement

Integration of health, mental health and substance use services.

Creating Health:

Common Key Elements:

- Physical fitness activities
- Healthy nutrition/healthy eating
- Accessible quality primary healthcare
- A multi-dimensional life
- Spiritual and intellectual stimulation
- Physical and emotional health
- Social and occupational acceptance and engagement

It sounds a big ask—but in reality—we all know that is what is needed and that the only problem we have is how can we achieve it.

Again, thanks to Te Pou, Pathways and Tui Ora Ltd for making this opportunity available to so many in Taranaki—and at no cost!

Dame Susan Devoy...
newly appointed Race Relations Commissioner.
Well done Susan!
Dame Susan has much to offer this position.
The fact that she is such a strong supporter of anti-discrimination and stigma in mental health adds just another strength to her very influential role.



Supported by the TSB Community Trust

WHAT'S ON NGĀ KAUPAPA O TE WĀ

Issue 68—Compiled BY people on limited incomes FOR people on limited incomes...
Please place on a notice board somewhere where people on limited incomes will notice it...

APRIL 2013

- 5th—28th Apr **Govett-Brewster Collection: Word Works**—Percy Thomson Art Gallery—**STRATFORD**—10:30am weekdays and 10:30am—3pm weekends. Words and txt link the diverse artworks in this exhibition. **FREE**
- Thur 4th Apr **'Mental Health Matters' - Access Radio 104.4FM**—9:30-10am. With Lynne Holdem, discussing psychologists, psychotherapists, psychiatrists—what's the difference? **FREE**
- Thur 4th Apr **Crackerjacks: Oakura** - Oakura Library **OAKURA**—9:45-10:15. Get children hooked on books! Come along. Enjoy a crafty and creative storytime for preschoolers once a month. **FREE**
- Fri 5th Apr **Hui-a-toi: Paper bead Making**—Level 1 Puke Ariki Library—10am-12pm. Breathe new life into old magazines by turning your glossy pages into paper beads! No materials needed, come along and see how it's done. **FREE**
- Fri 5th Apr **Age Concern Taranaki Open Day/Social Morning**—28 Young St.—10-12noon. Thinking about volunteering? Know someone who is lonely? Just want to find out what Age Concern does? All welcome, please RSVP for catering purposes 759 9196. **FREE**
- Sat 6th Apr **Feel The Beat**—Te Takapou Whariki, Puke Ariki Museum—2-3:30pm. Join the Puke Ariki drumming circle for a session of rhythmic expression. Bring your own percussion instrument and feel the beat. **FREE**
- Sat 6th Apr **Ride On Lawnmower Racing Derby**—Lepperton Primary School, **LEPPERTON**—10am -7pm. This event is hosted by Lepperton School and clubs from Bay of Plenty and Fielding and there will be some modified mowers to race. Local racers are encouraged to get involved though they will need to check the school website for vehicle rules and the different classes they could race in on www.lepperton.school.nz. There will be activities for the children as well, food for sale and some stalls for parents to look through. A fun-filled family day out which will go ahead regardless of weather. Entertainment with the band 3rd Avenue will be playing from 4-7pm. **FREE**
- Sun 7th Apr **Pukeiti—Explorer Fun Runs—Pukeiti**—10:30am—2pm. Join a range of easy to very challenging fun-runs through beautiful Pukeiti and raise money for the Cameron Clow Trust. **FREE**

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"It's the latest innovation in office safety. When your computer crashes, an air bag is activated so you won't bang your head in frustration."

"What's On" is emailed to almost 300 organisations in Taranaki and sent on to 100s more via their email networks and displayed on many notice boards etc. It has become quite wide-reaching and could be worthwhile for you to consider using it to promote your educational and/or recreation activity – if it is free or \$5 or less.



Support Group—Held at Tui Ora Ltd, 164 Princes Street **HAWERA**—10am-12pm, Monday and meeting fortnightly, this group is for those who suffer or have suffered from anxiety and depression. It's a chance to share and help support others in a relaxed environment. For more information contact Tom Gibson 06 7646417. Tea and coffee provided. This month's meetings are on the 15th and 29th. **GOLD COIN**

Peer Support Group—Community House, 52 Juliet St, **STRATFORD**—Thur 11th & 25th April, 10am-12pm. For people and families with mental health and/or addiction issues. This peer-led group provides an opportunity to meet with other people who have shared similar experiences. Come and talk, listen to each other, have some fun and offer each other coping strategies towards recovery. For further information, please text or phone Mihi at Tui Ora Hawera office 06-278-6603 or Kevin at Tui Ora NP 06-759-4064. **GOLD COIN**

Post-Natal Support Group (Peri-Natal)—1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 10am—12noon. This new group starts up on the 17th of this month and is open to all mothers experiencing post-natal distress. It is to be held in the New Plymouth Women's Centre, Community House, 32 Leach Street (at the end of the car park next to the YMCA) Child care is available. For more information on this group contact Like Minds Taranaki on 759 0966, NP Women's Centre: 758 4957 or TDHB Peri-Natal team: 753 6139. **FREE**

Mon 8th Apr **Chat with Harry**—Puke Ariki - 10-11:30am. Enjoy a cuppa and a chat with Mayor Harry Duynhoven at Puke Ariki. **FREE**

Wed 10th Apr **Puke Ariki Volcano Teacher Workshop**—Puke Ariki Learning Centre—4-5pm. Rob Groat will take you through hands on activities that can be used in the classroom. The focus will be on geology and local Taranaki knowledge. **FREE**

Sat 13th Apr **Paritutu Geological Field Trip**—Paritutu—1pm. Taranaki Geological Society Field Trip to study New Plymouth's oldest visible volcano. Involves a 20-30 minute climb up steps and a wire-roped steep rock face. **FREE**

Wed 17th Apr **Chat with Harry**—Bell Block Library—10-11:30am. Enjoy a cuppa and a chat with Mayor Harry Duynhoven in Bell Block. **FREE**

Sun 21st Apr **Pruning Workshop**—Hollard Gardens, **STRATFORD**—2-4pm. Learn how to prune for form and health as well as for art. **FREE**

Public Holiday: **Good Friday 29th March** **Easter Monday 1st April**
ANZAC Day 25th April
School Term Ends: 19th April and resumes 6th May

School Holidays: Check out your local libraries for events to keep the children happy and occupied over the school holidays. And while you are there don't forget to sign up for a free membership to the library—a great opportunity to become inspired or just soak up the ambience of this wonderful resource. **FREE**



*The mind is like a parachute...
It doesn't work unless it is open...*

Every Mon **Tai Chi for Beginners**—Labour Party Rooms, Tukapa St—10:45-11:15 **\$2**

Every Tue **Tai Chi at the Women's Centre**—Community House 32 Leach St.—1:30pm **\$5**

Every Wed **Real Arts**—1pm-4pm at Real TArt Community Gallery—an opportunity for people with experience of illness to participate in art & craft. Call Gordon on 759 0966. **GOLD COIN**

Every Thur **O2 Project Thursday MTB Rides**—6:30-8:30pm—Lake Mangamahoe. The O2 rides leave every Thursday whatever the weather! The rides alternate between a town ride (meet at the Wind Wand) and a trail ride (meet at Lake Mangamahoe) The rides are relaxed and suitable for all off road riders. Contact 06-753-7389 to confirm where they will be meeting that week. **FREE**

Every Fri **Whizzy Walkers**—Meet at Plunket House at 10am. A walking group specifically for caregivers who would like to join others in a brisk walk with their child and buggy for about an hour. **FREE**

Every Sun **New Plymouth Joggers and Walkers**—Pukekura Park Cricket Pavilion—8:30-9:30. All ages and abilities catered for with the different groups that head out for an hours walk or jog. **FREE**

*This space could be used to promote one of your events, please contact
Stephanie Mapley at Like Minds Taranaki*

*We are very keen to hear of events from Central, Coastal and South Taranaki -
ring us on 0800-454-536 or email us here at Like Minds Taranaki at mental.health@xtra.co.nz*

*The next "What's On" will be in late April for May,
let us know what is different, fun & almost free...*



Te Puna Waiora—smoke free...

The Taranaki District Health Board had the first smoke free day on the 1st February 2013, and this included Te Puna Waiora, the inpatient unit.



So far everything has gone quite well. There are a few hiccups here and there as everyone settles in with the changes, and these are being sorted as they arise. The staff are able to write questions and concerns in a book and they are discussed at staff meetings. People staying in Te Puna Waiora have the opportunity to talk to me about how things are going for them. People aren't finding the situation easy; however overall as consumer advisor, I am very pleased with how it is going.

A procedure for smokefree management in the unit has been developed and is a guideline for staff around the do's and don'ts of smokefree. At present these guidelines are under constant review as it is impossible to think of every eventuality while in the initial phase.

What you and your family and whanau need to know if you require a stay in Te Puna Waiora:

On admission to the unit, smokers receive a Quit Pack. This pack contains, stickers, a tattoo, mints, pen, notebook, quit book, quit cards and other helpful literature about smoking.

You will be asked to hand in all smoking items on admission. Our staff are unable to escort people off the premises to smoke.

Staff will not be buying smoking items on behalf of anyone.

People with unescorted leave are able to leave the premises for a cigarette hourly, everyone leaving and returning at the same time. You only have to ask for tobacco products which are held in the nurse's office. (Smoke

breaks are being facilitated this way so there is some sort of order and staff know where people are).

People with escorted leave can smoke if the person escorting, is happy for them to do so and it is not a DHB staff member.

Those with no leave will be unable to smoke, but will be supported with NRT.

The courtyard area and garden has had a spruce up and it is such a nice environment now there is no smoking and the butts that go with it, lying everywhere. Four square has been painted on to the concrete and a large black board erected for art work, doodling and so on. We continue to work on increasing activities during the day and evening, with the thought of also having a quit group.

A telephone with direct dialling to Quit Line has been installed in the adult area dining room.

NRT is freely available and doesn't rely on a doctor's prescription straight away. The options will be patches, lozenges and inhalers. We are aware of the effect of lower nicotine levels on medication and also making sure a person has enough NRT.

Staff in Te Puna Waiora and in the community are encouraging people to include how they will manage no smoking in the unit in their relapse plans/ management plans.

There is support for when discharged from the unit, for those who want to continue to be smokefree.

I would like to mention that The Taranaki Consumer Advisory Group, with sponsorship and financial support of Like Minds Taranaki, wrote and recorded a radio ad about smokefree that was played during Mental Health Matters. A HUGE thank you to Tony and Gordon from Like Minds Taranaki for making this

happen.

Going smokefree isn't easy, and some of the process will be trial and error which can't be helped.

We are one of the last DHBs to go smokefree and the feedback I have had from other consumer advisors is that it was a lot easier than they thought and they didn't have anywhere near the problems they thought they would have. Yes, there will be some teething problems and there is no way of planning for every possible situation. I think as long as there is constant feedback given from both those staying with us, and staff, and we address any hiccups promptly, then we should be able to make smokefree as painless as possible to everyone.

You can provide feedback to me about smokefree or anything else by telephone, emailing me or by writing.

Taranaki Consumer Advisory Group (TCAG) meetings are held once a month and this group provides advice to me and the MH & A service. If you want to be involved in review and changes of the service or simply want to be informed about what is happening, please contact me for more information. We would love to increase our numbers.

You are also invited to participate via the Mental Health and Addiction Service e-group. This is a group of people who respond via email to my requests for feedback. I also send out various pieces of information such as what is happening with national groups, training and conference opportunities.

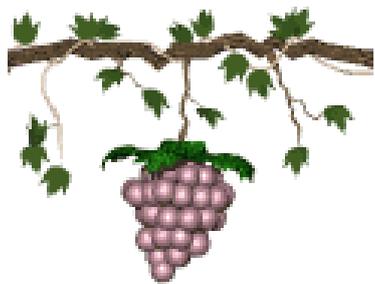
You can contact me at:

Nic Magrath,
MH & A Consumer Advisor,
Taranaki DHB, Private Bag 2016,
New Plymouth
Email nic.magrath@tdhb.org.nz
Or 753-7777 ext 8550.

I look forward to hearing from you.



NEW Wine for Seniors...



Clare Valley vintners in South Australia, which primarily produce Pinot Blanc, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Grigio wines, have developed a new hybrid grape that acts as an anti-diuretic.



It is expected to reduce the number of trips older people have to make to the bathroom during the night.

The new wine will be marketed as **PINO MORE**

Coming Soon on Access Radio...



"Mental Health Matters"
APRIL
Every Thursday 9.30am
Lynne Holdem
"Psychologists,
psychotherapists,
psychiatrists...
what's the difference?"



9.30am
every Thursday of each month

Thought for the Issue:

*More time behind me means less
time ahead of me...
but at least the total always remains
the same.*
Ashleigh Brilliant

Hawera support group:

The venue at Tui Ora Ltd at 164 Princes Street, Hawera, is ideal, if a little cramped... (the down side of success!)

Next meeting—15th April.

Held alternate Mondays 10-12 noon, and ably facilitated by Tom Gibson—06-764-6417. Give him a call...

STRATFORD SUPPORT GROUP...

For people and Families/Whanau with mental health and/or addiction problems.

Every second Thursday (**11th April**) 10am-12pm. Contact Mihi 06-278-6603 or Kevin 06-759-4064.

Held at the Stratford Community House, 52 Juliet St., Stratford.

Employment:

Taking the first step...

A 64 page guidebook for jobseekers with health issues.
Free copies available from Like Minds Taranaki.



Your experience as a mental health consumer has value—you could help improve the quality of care provided not only in Taranaki, but throughout New Zealand.

If you're interested in making a difference, why not join the **Taranaki Consumer Advisory Group?**

Meetings held from 12.30-1.30pm, at room 11, Mental Health Outpatients unit, Taranaki Base Hospital, on the last Thursday of each month.

For more information please email:
tcag@hotmail.co.nz
or call Tony Spencer on:
759 0966

Expressions of Interest...

for
*Self Stigma and
Discrimination*
2 hour workshops...
Contact Cecily Bull at
Like Minds Taranaki
06-759-0966

Mental Wellness Groups

Like Minds Taranaki hosts regular support and discussion groups, where you can share your stories and experiences with others who are also on the journey to recovery. Enjoy a friendly, relaxed atmosphere and speak with complete confidentiality.

You can also benefit from writing and arts groups that allow you to tap into your creative side.

NEW PLYMOUTH GROUP TIMES AND LOCATIONS Contact Like Minds 06-759-0966

Discussion Group:

2nd & 4th Wednesday each month
10.30 am—12 noon

Like Minds Taranaki Office
3rd Floor New Stirling Sports Bldg.
50 Devon Street West

Creative Writing Group:

3rd Thursday each month
2—3 pm

Like Minds Taranaki Office
3rd Floor New Stirling Sports Bldg.
50 Devon Street West

Real Arts Group:

Every Wednesday
1—4.00pm

Real Tart Community Gallery
19 Egmont Street, NP

New Support Group...

Post Natal Support Group (Peri-Natal Support Group)

10-12noon

*1st and 3rd Wednesdays
of each month*

First Meeting: 17th April

At the NP Womens Centre

*This is a supportive non-clinical
group offering support.
Child care available.*

For more information contact:
Like Minds Taranaki 06-759-0966
NP Womens' Centre 06-758-4957
TDHB Peri Natal Team
06-753-9815



Taranaki Kowhaiwhai panel - The Hammerhead shark, Mangopare - 'keep positive, see it through'

The Ultimate Lottery

Most of the time mental illness is seen as a disability. It is expected that people who are living with schizophrenia for example, will not achieve as much in their lives as those living without the illness.

These expectations may in turn be passed down to the people themselves who are experiencing such conditions firsthand.

Depending on its time of onset and its severity, mental health problems can do much to sabotage your life.

It can be hard to look at the lives of others who do not have to carry such a burden, and wonder what you might have achieved in their situation.

People you went to school with may, in later years, get high-paying jobs, raise families, and live what seem from your perspective to be “perfect” lives.

In such a climate it can be tempting not to even try. Mental illness may seem like a millstone hanging around your neck, sometimes making it a struggle to cope let alone thrive.

Most people can relate to physical ailments, but those of the mind are still often mysterious and disturbing.

How can you adequately describe to someone how it feels to have a mental illness? How

can you articulate to psychiatrists and doctors what you're experiencing, when unlike the anatomy of your body, your mind is as individual as your fingerprint?

Your condition is documented and written down in a manual used by psychiatrists. But your own unique identity is something indefinable; you won't find it in any book.

Not only is it a struggle to make others understand, it's a struggle to understand yourself exactly what you're experiencing and why.

The chances of being born the person that you are in the first place were so remote that it was almost impossible. There will never be anyone else on the face of this planet who is exactly like you.

You have already won the ultimate lottery just by existing. Congratulations. Whether you thank genetics and evolution or God, it's still a miracle that you're here.

The odds of having a mental illness at some time during this existence are more similar to those of a coin toss—about 50%

Mental illness—and perhaps more importantly other peoples' attitude towards it—can represent a real hurdle on the path to living a full and satisfying life.

Because of your condition, you may need income support, so

you may be on a benefit. To the welfare system, you may just be a number classified as an invalid.

Depressing, going from being a miracle to ultimately being just a faceless individual; written off as being an invalid? Yes. But it's important to remember that you're more than just an invalid, a number, or a condition.

So often we spend so much time looking at our limitations, that we lose sight of the strengths we possess. We dwell on what might have been, rather than what can be. Looking back doesn't fix anything.

If anything, we should look back to see just how far we have come.

Recovery from mental illness is itself a journey. Sometimes we forget how much willpower and goal setting it took to get to a position of wellness.

With this in mind, it puts the other challenges we face in perspective. It is important not to lose sight of this fact, and not to lose sight of hope.

If you try to do something in life, there is a chance that you won't succeed; if you don't try, failure is guaranteed. Having an illness may mean we have to try harder, but it's no reason not to try at all.

Tony Spencer

HOPE

“Korero Mai” is edited by Gordon Hudson, “What’s On” by Stephanie Mapley and “Whakaaro Pai” by Tony Spencer—all from Like Minds Taranaki. Your news and views are eagerly sought. Like Minds Taranaki, PO Box 5015, New Plymouth, 3rd Floor, Brougham House, Devon Street West, NP, ph 06-759-0966 mental.health@xtra.co.nz. www.likemindstaranaki.org.nz

The May 2013 issue will be distributed in late April. Contributions by Wednesday 17th April 2013 please.