



“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 46 FEBRUARY 2014

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

Take the first step...

Summer has been a reluctant visitor, but now it has arrived, it's time to get out there and exercise. Like Minds manager Virginia Winder shares the inspirational story of a man who took that first step – and kept going.

New Plymouth man Shane Martin says he always needs a goal to inspire him to get out of bed. For the past four years his main objectives have been long-distance sports events.

In March last year, the 43-year-old completed his first full ironman at Taupo in 14 hours 43 minutes 54 seconds.

“I said right then and there ‘I’m not doing another one’.”

But he hasn't been idle.

In October last year, he completed the Auckland marathon and continues to train for about an hour each day.

Later this year he's keen to have a go at the Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge, which means riding twice around the lake (320km).

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Endurance: Depression floored Shane Martin for seven years until he got the right medication.

Al-Anon groups a 'priceless gift'

There is strength and hope available for families and friends of problem drinkers, says a Taranaki Al-Anon supporter.

“A big part of the problem is being isolated, alone and feeling like nobody understands and there's no hope,” says Rose, whose surname is left out to protect her identity. That is one of the guidelines of Al-Anon, which enables people to feel safe in support group meetings.

“We go along and talk about the things we are finding difficult and what we can do differently,” she says.

“We often have a topic and the idea is to learn tools to deal with difficulties.” Al-Anon is about personal wellness and growth, Rose says.

“We don't focus on the other person – we work on ourselves.”

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Coming Events: FEBRUARY 2014

- Every Wed: Real Arts at Real TArt, NP, 1-4pm
- Every Thur: “Mental Health Matters” Access Radio 104.4FM, 9.30am
- Every Sat: Thinking Differently, The Most 100.4FM, 10am
- Wed 5&19: Post Natal Support Group at NP Women's Centre, 10am-12 noon
- Thur 13,27: Peer Support Group at Stratford 10am
- Mon 17: Peer Support Group at Hawera 10am-12pm
- Thur 20: Writers' Group at Like Minds, 2pm, new topic: Anything goes.
- Thur 27: Mates Men's Meeting, 15 Dawson St, NP 2-4pm

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Check us out and LIKE us on Facebook [Like Minds Taranaki](#)



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

Getting the right medication changes sportsman's life

From Page 1

In 2011 and 2012, Shane also completed the Super Challenge involving three Taranaki events – the 153km round-the-mountain cycle ride, the 3.6km Flannagan Cup swim and the 42.2km Mountain to Surf marathon.

But these haven't been the only gruelling things in his life.

In 2000, Shane was diagnosed with clinical depression.

That year he also completed the London marathon and kept going, somehow finding the inner strength to train for and complete the Port of Tauranga half ironman twice – in 2001 and 2002.

"Those two half ironmans are probably a bigger achievement than the full ironman because I trained for them and did them when I was depressed," he says.

Then from 2003 to 2010, Shane did little exercise. "In all honesty, it was just too hard to do," he says. "I spent most of those seven years in bed."

During that time, he had counselling, electroconvulsive therapy and many different types of medication.

Then he had two major breakthroughs. The first was in February 2010. "My social worker told me I had to go out walking and so I did – only to get her off my back," he says.

"The first time I went out for a half-hour walk I came home and I was absolutely exhausted. At that time I was really depressed."

Secondly, he finally found a medication that helped lift his depression.

"The only stories you see on the internet are bad stories about medication. You never hear the good stories, but I know for me, medication



Ironman: Shane Martin finishing the gruelling race in Taupo last year.

completely changed my life," Shane says.

"I don't think I would be here if it wasn't for that medication because nothing else worked for me."

Shane says the better he felt the more he wanted to exercise.

He trains an average of 1.5 hours most days, alternating between cycling, swimming and running to keep boredom at bay.

But there are still days that are a struggle.

"Some of my hardest training sessions have been the 30-minute ones," he says. "On any given day I could cycle around the mountain, so to do 12km... mentally, it's very difficult."

Exercise is extremely important for Shane. "It's part of my life now."

In late winter last year, he didn't feel like exercising at all, but kept going. "I don't want to stop because I don't know what will happen, and that scares me."

He isn't certain if it was exercise or medication that was the breakthrough for him. "I think now it's a combination of the two."

Shane has some advice to anyone battling depression or living with a mental illness: "Give exercise a go. It's certainly helped me and other people I know."

The most important thing is to get through the first month of training. "You are OK the first week and then after a month your interest wanes." That's why it's important to have a goal to work towards.

Shane records all his training sessions on a spreadsheet, calculating how many kilometres he clocks up. "I'm motivated by numbers."

Since 1997 when he did his first half ironman, he has clocked up nearly 79,000km, although more than 63,000 km has been cycling. "My goal is to get to 100,000km, which will take me two years."

His next aim is to study computing and information technology at WITT – part-time – because he knows the importance of taking one small step at time.

And that one step can lead on to much bigger things, like an ironman.

During those seven years of debilitating depression, if anybody had suggested that one day he'd complete the endurance triathlon, he would've dismissed them outright.

"I would have said they were dreaming. If you had asked any of my psychiatrists at the time, I don't think they would've believed it either."

People invited to free Taranaki employment support symposium

Workwise is running three free sessions highlighting the importance of employment support for mental wellbeing, recovery and reducing offending.

The sessions are being held in the Education Centre at Taranaki Base Hospital on February 18.

This event is aimed at people working in primary or secondary mental health care, Work and Income, Corrections and NGOs working in health or welfare. "This free symposium will

explore effective methods of supporting people with either mental health or addiction issues, or histories of offending to return to and stay at work," info on the event says. "Hear from international and local experts and practitioners as they share their knowledge, insights, research and tools."

People are welcome to attend one or all of the following free sessions:



10am–12pm: Supporting people with a history of offending into employment.

1pm–3pm: Combining our expertise: effectively integrating employment support and mental health services.

6pm–7.30pm: The science of mental health and employment, an evidence-based alternative to signing sickness certificates.

For more info, contact Workwise team leader Tony Hansen on 06 7573831 and RSVP by February 14 to shona.cameron@workwise.org.nz.



'Invisible disability' often misunderstood

Some of the fallout from New Zealand's drinking culture is unseen, undiagnosed and misunderstood, says New Plymouth woman Claire Gyde (pictured).



That fallout is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), an umbrella term used to describe a range of adverse effects on the development of unborn babies when alcohol is consumed by mothers during pregnancy. Overseas, 3 per cent of live births have the disorder. "We expect that to be higher in New Zealand because of our drinking culture," says Claire, chairperson of FASD-CAN (Care Action Network), a nationwide network established to unite caregivers, strengthen families, support individuals and educate communities about the spectrum disorder.

One of the big problems with this alcohol-caused brain damage is that it goes undiagnosed or mis-diagnosed. "FASD manifests itself in 'behavioural issues' and the normal reaction is to question parenting skills, or worse still, blame the child for a behaviour or reaction which is outside of their control."

FASD is often mis-diagnosed as other disorders, including Attention Deficit Hyper-activity Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Oppositional Defiance Disorder and Attachment Disorder.

Claire says diagnosis is key, following

the mantra of: "If we know better, then we can do better."
"The thing is, undiagnosed children are being labelled bad, naughty or delinquent, where in effect they are dealing with a brain injury and it's not their fault," she says.
"They need some tolerance and acceptance, rather than being made to feel like failures. Continually being in an unsupportive, blaming environment will often see them fail at school and there is evidence of high suspension or expulsion rates."
Statistics overseas show that complications associated with FASD include substance abuse, depression, self-harm and suicide. Of those diagnosed with FASD, 67 per cent end up institutionalised at some stage of their lives. "That includes prison because they have poor impulse control and just do stupid stuff without thinking through the consequences."
FASD was first discovered in 1973 and initially, medical experts thought all those affected presented with distinct facial features. These include

Some signs of FASD include:

- ⇒ Impulsiveness
- ⇒ Being easily distracted
- ⇒ Poor memory
- ⇒ Immaturity with poor emotional regulation
- ⇒ Anger easily
- ⇒ Inconsistent performance
- ⇒ Difficulty understanding and predicting outcomes
- ⇒ An inability to learn from mistakes
- ⇒ Sensory overload

a flat philtrum (the vertical groove in the middle above the lips), thin upper lip and eyes that are slightly narrower.

"Only 10 per cent present with the facial features and 90 per cent are suffering in silence because it's not obvious. For this reason, it is often referred to as the 'invisible disability'," says Claire, who is dedicated to educating others about FASD. Last year, Claire attended and presented at two international conferences on FASD in both Canada and Australia. She feels it is important that people understand what life with FASD is like. She shares her son's struggle with learning, behaviour and mental health and how the lack of understanding and discrimination within our communities impacts the entire family.

Alcohol Healthwatch has done a great job raising awareness and also in training health professionals to increase the diagnostic capacity in New Zealand. There are now assessment teams throughout the North Island, including Taranaki. Assessment for FASD takes a multi-disciplinary team and is a detailed and lengthy process. Claire would like to see greater emphasis put into educating health providers, social services, educators, lawyers and judges so there are adequate supports in the community for individuals and families living with FASD.

For more information, email claire.gyde@fasd-can.org.nz or go to www.fasd-can.org.nz

Al-Anon family groups help people move further out of isolation

From Page 1

Rose, who has been going to Al-Anon family groups for 10 years, has found it extremely helpful. "It has given me a framework to operate from. I grew up in a home affected by drinking."

Others who attend meetings are in the same situation, while some have partners, children and even grandparents with alcohol problems. "We look at it as a family disease," she says.

"Some of us keep coming back even though we aren't in the same situation

any more but we are still affected."

For Rose, some of the long-time effects of living with an alcoholic include being fearful, anxious, depressed, losing sleep, feeling inadequate and guilty. "Shame is a big one because we can feel embarrassed by the drinker's behaviour. All of these things affect mental health."

She found out about Al-Anon through a relative, who recommended going along to a meeting. "Even now, as I continue to go to meetings and hear people share things I have

experienced, I move even further out of isolation. Then I move into belonging and feel like I'm a member of the human race. It's a priceless gift."

◆ Three Al-Anon meetings are held in Taranaki every week. These are: Inglewood Library from 12-1pm on Monday; The Devon Centre, Level 3, 44 Liardet St, New Plymouth from 6.30-7.30pm on Wednesday; and in the Holy Trinity Church Hall, 8 Henui St, Fitzroy, NP, from 12-1pm each Friday. For more info go to: www.al.anon.org.nz





Supported by the TSB Community Trust

WHAT'S ON NGĀ KAUPAPA O TE WĀ

Issue 78—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...

FEBRUARY 2014

* Public Holiday: Waitangi Day: Thurs February 6 *

- Thur 6** **Waitangi Day**—Puke Ariki Landing—11am-1pm. This will be a fun filled event to commemorate, entertain and educate people about the significance of Waitangi Day to New Zealand. Bring a picnic and come down to the Landing and enjoy live entertainment, kids activities, cultural arts and crafts and hear treaty educators. **FREE**
- Fri 7** **Bike Polo**—Puke Ariki land site beside the Wind Wand car park—5:30pm. Polo mallets and ball supplied, just turn up with your bike, no experience needed. **FREE**
- Sat 8** **Friends Event**—Artist talk—Boatshed Lawn Pukekura Park—12pm. Reuben Paterson celebrates the opening of his new outdoor sculpture project at Pukekura Park. All are welcome, bring a rug and a picnic to enjoy—weather permitting. **FREE**
- Sat 8** **Scooter Session**—East End Skate Park—10am-12 noon. Learn from the best! This one day coached session is suited to moderately competent scooter riders wanting to extend their park and street tricks. Own helmet, scooter and shoes please. **FREE**
- Sat 8** **MTB Gals**—Lake Mangamahoe, Plantation Road, SH3, New Plymouth—10am-12 noon. All girl cross country bike ride with Jenn and Jolene. Suitable for all rider abilities. There will be a separate ride to be held at the same time for the MTB dads and kids too. **FREE**
- Sun 9** **Lions Raft Race**—Lake Opunake, **OPUNAKE**—11am., Bring your raft and compete in a challenge up against the Opunake Lions raft—a fun family day at the lake. Spot prizes and BBQ at the boat ramp. Life jackets are compulsory. **FREE**
- Sun 9** **Terrific Te Henui**—Te Henui Walkway sign at East End Reserve—10:30 am—12pm. Take a ramble up Te Henui walkway with Glyn and Valda from the Friends of Te Henui and look at the historic plant collections, native flora and the activities of the Friends of Te Henui. **FREE**
- Sun 9** **Take a Kid Mountain Biking**—Audrey Gale Reserve, Merrilands Domain—10am—12 noon. A qualified coach and experienced club riders will guide the kids through fun, skill building challenges before introducing them to riding through natural terrain and finish with a fun race with prizes. **FREE**
- Wed 12** **Surf Pecha Kucha**—Puke Ariki—6-7:30pm. Hear what the sea and surf mean to members of our Taranaki community. **FREE**
- Fri 14** **Govett-Brewster Seniors @Puke Ariki**—Daily News Café—9:30-11:30am. Puke Ariki are the temporary hosts to the Govett-Brewster Seniors group. Join Helen for a conversation about the art on display. Meet for coffee at 9:30 for a 10am start. Bookings essential: 06 759 6060. **FREE**

- Every Tue** **Active in Age Programme**—TSB Stadium—10am-12pm—Tai Chi session 11-12pm. **\$3**
- Every Tue** **Migrant Women Meet** - Puke Ariki - 11am-12:30pm, Community Lounge on Level 1. **FREE**
- Every Tue** **Rotary Club Walking**—Hawera Tower Grounds —5:30pm. Walk at your own pace and socialise and get some fresh air at the same time, good for mind and body. **FREE**
- Every Fri** **Tai Chi**—Stratford War Memorial Facilities Room, Miranda St, **STRATFORD**—9:30-10:30. **\$5**
- Every Fri** **Whizzy Walkers**— Meet at Plunket House at 10am. A walking group specifically for caregivers who would like a brisk walk with their child and buggy for about an hour. **FREE**

"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.



- Thur 15** **Bells, Stars and Chimes**—Meet at Sir Victor Davies lane carpark area—10-11:30pm. Wear comfortable walking shoes for this walk that will head up Marsland Hill to learn some more about the carillon and to see inside the observatory. The walk will then go past St Mary's Cathedral before concluding at the Clock Tower which will be opened for people to go up. **FREE**
- Sun 16** **Tropfest**—TSB Bowl of Brooklands—6:30pm. Tropfest is the world's largest short film festival. Come along, bring a picnic and enjoy some world-class short New Zealand films which will be screened and then judged by a panel of film industry professionals and personalities. The winner will be announced on the night. **GOLD COIN**
- Mon 17** **Epilepsy Seminar**—Community House, 32 Leach Street—1-3pm. This seminar covers what Epilepsy is, what causes it, recognition of seizure types, first aid for seizures, seizure triggers and many other issues concerning this condition. **FREE**
- Thur 20** **Behind The Scenes**—Taranaki Research Centre, Puke Ariki—11am—11:30am. Find out what it takes to make the 110,000 negatives in the Swainson/Woods Collection available to the community online. Limited places, bookings are essential: 06 759 6060. **FREE**
- Thur 20** **Art to Lunch—Len Lye: Agiagia**—2nd Floor, Brougham House, 50 Devon St West—12:15. Coffee and tea provided, bring your lunch. **FREE**
- Fri 21** **Tea and Topics: Wills and Trusts**—Level 1 Puke Ariki Library—10-11am. Hear Michelle from the Public Trust explain all you need to know about wills and family trusts. **FREE**
- Sat 22** **Balsom Park Family Picnic**—12-2pm. Meet at the William Street entrance of the Park off Mangorei Road, Merrilands. Bring a picnic lunch and a drink. Dogs are welcome but don't forget a doggy-doo bag and lead. Come and explore this hidden gem of a reserve. **FREE**
- Sun 23** **Methanex family fun Ride and Mayoral Challenge**—Ngamotu Beach—9am. Bring your family and join the Mayor on his bike for a fun morning of cycling and prize giveaways. Register at Mitchell Cycles and get a free bike and helmet check anytime over February. Parents accompany your children and don't forget your helmets! **GOLD COIN**
- Sun 23** **Historical Maori Tour**—Te Henui River Mouth, East End Reserve—10:30am-12:30pm. Bookings essential: 06 759 6060. Step back in time to a world before New Plymouth was settled. This tour includes stories that will capture your mind and will help you to visualise how our ancestors once lived more than 160 years ago. **FREE**
- Sun 23** **Crazy about Butterflies Ride**—East End Skating Rink—1:45-4pm. Join the Frocks on Bikes women for a leisurely one hour ride on Te Henui Walkway before sharing an afternoon picnic tea at East End Reserve. Go crazy with your outfit! There will be prizes for the most fun outfit and decorated bike/helmet with a butterfly theme as well as spot prizes. Please bring something for the shared afternoon tea. **FREE**
- Tue 25** **Ratapihipihi Walk and Talk**—Ratapihipihi Reserve (off Cowling Road) 6:30-8:30pm. You will need a water bottle, a jersey and a notebook and pen will be handy. Meet at the Reserve for a walk with a focus on using native plants in your own garden. Wear comfortable shoes. **FREE**
- Thur 27** **Bells, Stars and Chimes**—Meet at Sir Victor Davies lane carpark area—6-7:30pm. (Please see above listing on the Thur 15 Bells, Stars and Chimes walk for details) **FREE**
- Fri 28** **More FM Ride In Movies**—The Hatchery Lawn, Pukekura Park—8:30pm. Cycle powered cinema screening which will start around 9pm. The admission fee is you and your bike as pedal power will be needed for the outdoor screening which will start as soon as it's dark, around 9pm. **FREE**

Peer Support Group—STRATFORD—Every second Thursday, 10am-12pm. This month's meetings to be held on Feb 13 & 27. For people and families with mental health and/or addiction issues. Come and talk, listen and offer each other coping strategies towards recovery. For further details and for the venue please phone Mihi at Tui Ora's Hawera office 06-278-6603 or Kevin at Tui Ora NP 06-759-4064. **GOLD COIN**

MATES Men's Meeting—45 Regent St, **HAWERA** on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month 7-9:30pm and at TDIC, 28 Young St **NP** on the 2nd and last Thursday of the month 7-9:30pm. There is a group aimed at men living with the challenge of mental health issues and held on the last Thursday of every month at Progress To Health, 15 Dawson St, **NP** 2-4pm. **FREE**

Peer Support Group - For people and families/whanau with experience of mental illness. Every second Thursday at Tui Ora's Day Activity Centre, 8 Lynton Street, **NP**—10am—12:30pm. This peer-led group will provide an opportunity to meet with other people who understand - and who share similar experiences. For further information please phone Kevin or Bronwen at Tui Ora Ltd on 759 4064. **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*



Who Loves Ya Baby?

By Nic Magrath – Consumer Advisor,
Mental Health and Addiction Service

Recently I attended a summit in Rotorua for people who use MH & A Services and I spoke about the importance of partnerships with family and friends in recovery from mental illness and addiction.

I dedicated the presentation to Moana Eriwata, a good friend and colleague who passed away recently. In her work as a peer support worker and advocate, Moana truly made a difference.



The following is a summary of my presentation, "Who Loves Ya Baby?"

I am blessed with having a family who have been incredibly supportive.

Considering the things I've done and the things I've said, I am lucky they are still around at all. I make a conscious effort to do everything in my power to make sure that my illness has as little impact on the people I love as possible. Family can be defined as: A person's whānau, extended family, partner, siblings, friends or any other person you nominate.

Families come in all shapes and sizes; they can't be squeezed into neat little boxes, with all the ducks in a row.

It is not okay for people to make judgements about your family and treat them and your support people as part of the problem and not the solution.

My family and I have spent a number of years perfecting our partnership with my bi-polar disorder and we have open and honest conversations about how the illness is affecting me and them. It is the responsibility of services to

proactively involve the friends, family and whanau you choose in your care and treatment.

Services have room for improvement when it comes to working in partnership with people and their families.

Therefore, the family and whanau advisors at TDHB work to educate staff around family-inclusive practice, which is about ensuring your family is involved in your care, if that is your wish.

Remember a family member does not have to be a blood relative.

Sometimes people don't know that they can have their loved one/friend with them at any and all appointments.

Your family should receive information about the service and about your illness and or addiction and be given the opportunity to discuss how this affects the family and what the best things to do to support you are.

Families need to know that even if there are times that you choose not to have them involved that they can still contact the service and relay any concerns.

Relapse prevention plans and Advance Directives are vital tools in building and supporting you and your family to keep you well.

Everyone using Mental Health and Addiction Services should have a relapse prevention plan.

If a relapse prevention plan is done well it can mean the difference between outpatient care and inpatient care.

The most important thing is to discuss your plan with family, friends, support people, work colleagues and the clinical team. The people who love you and know you the best, will know more about your triggers, early warning signs and what works for you than you think!

Bright briefs

How far we have come...

A passage from *The Virgin and the Gipsy* by D.H. Lawrence, published in 1930 reads: "Yvette dared not even suggest to her father that Granny was not perfect. He would have threatened his daughter with the lunatic asylum. That was the threat he always seemed to have up his sleeve: the lunatic asylum. Exactly as if a distaste for Granny and for that horrible house of relatives was in itself a proof of lunacy, dangerous lunacy."

Song remembers the past



Johnny Matteson's song [Rave](#) is now on YouTube. The musician and mental health promoter wrote the song in 1987, following his second stay in a psychiatric hospital. Johnny, who has experience of bipolar disorder and works for the Mental Health Foundation, recorded it in 2002, re-recorded it in 2011 and last year the video went online for the world to see.

Power of reaching out...

Don't stress about stress - that's the message in a possibly life-saving [TED Talk](#) on the much-maligned fight or flight response. In this talk, psychologist Kelly McGonigal urges us to see stress as a positive, and introduces people to an unsung mechanism for stress reduction - reaching out to others.

Welsh actress - 'no shame in seeking help'

Award-winning actress Catherine Zeta-Jones lives with bipolar disorder.

"If my revelation of having bipolar II has encouraged one person to seek help, then it is worth it," says the Welsh star, who won multiple awards for playing murderess Velma Kelly in the 2002 musical movie *Chicago*.

"There is no need to suffer silently and there is no shame in seeking help," says Catherine (pictured).

"I'm not the kind of person who likes to shout out my personal issues from the rooftops, but with my bipolar becoming public, I hope fellow sufferers will know it's completely controllable.

"I hope I can help remove any stigma attached to it, and that those who don't have it under control will seek help with all that is available to treat it."

To hear more about people with experience of mental illness who have made the world better place, tune into



Thinking Differently on 100.4 The Most FM at 10am on Saturday mornings. You'll also hear an uplifting song and some tips on staying well.

Seeking stories



By sharing your mental health story you can make a difference. Like Minds Taranaki manager Virginia Winder is always seeking people to interview for *Mindful Ways*, which appears in the *Taranaki Daily News* every fortnight. If you have an inspiring or empowering story to share, please contact Virginia on 06 759066 or mental.health@xtra.co.nz.



Eating Disorder group offers family support

This is a group providing support and information for families who have a loved one with an eating disorder.

Family members have the opportunity to meet with others and share similar experiences and discuss strategies for strengthening coping skills.

Meetings are held every 1st and 3rd Monday of each month – from 5.30-7.00pm at the TDHB Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services.

For more information – call 06-753-6139 ext:7949 or 027-241-0134

Coming Soon on Access Radio...

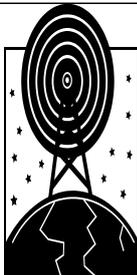


"Mental Health Matters"

FEBRUARY

Every Thursday 9.30am.

This month
"Decluttering your home, life and mind"
with Cecily Bull and Tony Spencer



9.30am
every Thursday of each month

Thought for the issue:

"You don't have to see the whole staircase just take the first step."
- Martin Luther King Jr

Hawera support group:

This month the group is meeting at the entrance to King Edward Park. BYO picnic 10am-12pm. Held alternate Mondays 10-12 noon Meeting —Feb 17, 2014

Contact Mihi 06-278-6603 or Kevin 06-759-4064.

STRATFORD SUPPORT GROUP...

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

Every 2nd Thursday, 10am-12pm. Contact Mihi 06-278-6603 or Kevin 06-759-4064 to check the venue.

This month's meetings: Feb 13 & 27

Employment:

Taking the first step...

A 64-page guidebook for jobseekers with health issues.

Free copies available from Like Minds Taranaki. 06-759-0966

Thinking Differently

Imagine the world without these people: Stephen Fry, Sinead O'Connor, J.K. Rowling, Sir John Kirwan and Vincent van Gogh.

Tune into 100.4 The Most FM every Saturday at 10am for an upbeat dose of



Thinking Differently

about those who people who have contributed to our world by

Thinking Differently!



LifeLine
Taranaki
0800 543 354
www.lifeline.co.nz

COMING SOON!
Self-stigma and Discrimination
2-hour Workshops!
Contact Cecily Bull at Like Minds Taranaki
06 759 0966 or 0800 454 536

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
10.30am—12 noon

Like Minds Taranaki Office
3rd Floor Brougham House
50 Devon Street West

Creative Writing Group:

3rd Thursday each month
2—3pm

Like Minds Taranaki Office
3rd Floor Brougham House.
50 Devon Street West

Real Arts Group:

Every Wednesday
1—4pm

Real TArt Community Gallery
19 Egmont Street, NP

Post-natal Support Group (Peri-natal Support Group)

10am-12noon

1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month

At the NP Women's Centre

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

For more information contact:
Like Minds Taranaki 06-759-0966
NP Women's Centre 06-758-4957
TDHB Peri Natal Team
06-753-7749

Take time to clear out the clutter from life and mind

The Christmas period can often be a double edged sword for me. Receiving gifts is definitely a highlight, but the same can't be said about finding a place to keep them.

Having limited storage space means that my home environment quickly become cluttered.

It's an insidious process, which I realise is born primarily out of procrastination on my part. One thing finds a "temporary home" and is soon joined by other objects, and this patch of disorganisation slowly grows like a colony of bacteria in a Petri dish. It would be interesting to see a time-lapse recording of this clutter building up, but the only lapse seems to be in my attention to my surroundings. I often fail to notice this phenomenon until it's reached critical mass.

There are some places that I don't like having lots of stuff, like my computer desk. When what should have been a pristine expanse started being dominated by things that had no real purpose being there, I decided it was time to act.

This seemed easy enough in principle, until I realised there was no quick and easy place for this stuff to go that wasn't already full of clutter.

That was when it became apparent it was time to take serious action. There was no way to have a tidy desk unless things had a place to go, and this meant creating a space to put them. This triggered a chain reaction, because to clear a space I

realised I'd have to put other things back where they belonged. Some things didn't belong anywhere, full stop.

Miscellaneous items had outlived their usefulness, like old pieces of paper or redundant electronics, and needed to go.

I decided to bring in the big guns; or at least a big black rubbish sack. It was time to begin the purge, and win back my environment from the clutter monster one space at a time.

There are many ways to approach ridding your environment of



clutter, and some great resources can be found on the internet. One approach is to do a little bit every day, about five minutes worth for example. This can break what could otherwise seem like an insurmountable job into manageable chunks.

Another approach I found is more like the one I took, using a rubbish bag and seeing how quickly you can fill it.

When addressing your clutter it's worth remembering that old saying: "One man's trash is another man's treasure."

You may have some perfectly good things you just don't need anymore, which could be given to friends or family, or taken to the op shop to find a good home.

You could also use a system of four boxes - one box you'd like to keep; one to relocate; one to give away; and one to dispose of.

If you need to access any other resources to inspire you in your decluttering mission, remember Google is your friend.

The benefits of decluttering extend beyond having a clean and tidy environment; it can save you time otherwise spent trying to find things. It can also save you money, because you're more likely to question if you really need that new purchase you'll have to find room for.

Most importantly, having an orderly environment where everything is in its place can have a positive effect on the mind. As we bring order to our disorganised surroundings, it is possible that we can address the habits that led to this situation.

Rather than staying on autopilot and letting habit take over, it can really help if you stop and ask yourself if something really belongs where you're about to put it. Ask yourself: "Is this the first place I'll look for this thing when I need it?"

Mindfulness has a part to play in decluttering, because clutter itself has a habit of building up under your nose until it's impossible to ignore any longer.

Paying real attention to the space around you, and how you treat it, can make it easier to keep it organised and tidy.

Whatever method you decide to use, it's important that you stick with it. It's no use creating a pristine space today if tomorrow you're going to fill it with something that doesn't belong there.

Tony Spencer

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