



“Korero Mai” **WHAT's ON** **Whakaaro Pai**

for those interested in the provision of mental health services

providing educational and recreational activities for \$5.00 and under

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

Issue 49 MAY 2014

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

Legal high...moral low



KEEP CALM
And say
NO
to
LEGAL HIGHS

According to the Canterbury DHB Chief of Psychiatry, Sue Nightingale, side effects can include "anxiety, vomiting, chest pain, headaches, as well as recent cases of kidney failure, seizures, psychosis and heart attacks" she said.

"We are sitting on a time bomb with these synthetic drugs" says Leo Sharp, from the National Poisons Centre.

The Psychoactive substances Act 2013, hailed by many as a solution to regulating the sale of recreational drugs, has proven inadequate to say the least. The legislation, enacted in July last year, left loopholes that neither Central nor Local Government were able to overcome.

It has been largely left to concerned citizens of the nation's communities to highlight the disaster of the legislation itself that has enabled retailers to sell these dangerous products - products far more dangerous than any other mind-altering drug on the market.

Rallying to the cause of banning synthetic drugs had been our local media, DHB and some City Councillors.

Contd. page 2

It was time to put a stop to the insanity of legal synthetic drugs...
It was a no-brainer - literally. A no brainer for the users, not just for the adverse acute effects, but for the long-term psychological effects. Family and whanau must despair at the wasted space their loved ones live in. The negative impact on the wider community will only increase in the long term. Many of today's young users are likely to be a huge burden on the state - now and possibly, for the rest of their lives.

Rural depression given a voice...



"Research shows that suicide rates amongst our rural communities are higher than urban areas. In recent years male suicide rates have been up to 67 per cent higher in rural areas compared to men living in towns and cities, states Associate Health Minister Jo Goodhew.

"That's why we're expanding the National Depression Initiative (NDI) website to include personal stories from rural New Zealanders discussing their experiences, including the difficulties they have faced and sharing tips about how they now stay well.

"Farmers are generally a stoic bunch with a self-sufficient mentality which can stop them seeking help. By giving rural depression a stronger voice we're hoping to highlight the issue and encourage more people to speak up and seek help"

Contd. Page 2

Coming Events: MAY 2014

Every Wed:	Real Arts at Real TArt, NP, 1-4pm
Every Thur:	"Mental Health Matters" Access Radio 104.4FM, 9.30am
Wed 7&21:	Post Natal Support Group at NP Women's Centre, 10am-12 noon
Thur 8,22:	Peer Support Group at Stratford 10am
Mon 12,26:	Peer Support Group at Hawera 10am-12pm
Thur 15:	Writers' Group at Like Minds, 2pm, new topic:
Thur 29:	Mates Men's Meeting, 15 Dawson St, NP 2-4pm

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Time for some updates...

After a year of being at the helm of the Like Minds Taranaki crew Virginia Winder has resigned.



In a very short space of time Virginia has made an enormous difference in the field keeping mental health very much out in front of the public eye with her wonderful stories of the journeys of our tangata whaiora. She has led some wonderful projects with the very popular Human Library event held at last year's Mental Health Awareness Week being just one of them and has made a huge difference in many people's lives. We know that she will continue to do so. The team here at the office will miss her colour and vibrancy and we do wish her all the best in her future endeavours. In the meanwhile it's business as usual for the Like Minds Team.

Letter from Virginia Winder, Ex-Manager of Like Minds Taranaki

"Kia ora Everyone, This is to let you know I have resigned from the position of Like Minds Taranaki manager. Thank you to all you wonderful tangata whaiora, who have been a pleasure to meet and work with. The same goes for all of you working in the mental health field and associated organisations - wow, you are making such a huge difference to people's lives. I have met amazing people, heard uplifting stories and been inspired by you all in some way. Thank you all for your kindness and support, especially in regards to Mental Health Awareness Week.

Kindest thoughts, Virginia"



PATHWAYS

Pathways services remain busy with staff continuing to support people over the Easter break. Respite services have been well utilised recently with people enjoying the lovely new home that we moved into on the 18th of March. If you haven't had a chance to view the new house for Adult Planned and Crisis please call 06 753 2080 and arrange a time.



SOCIAL HOUSING
keys

Keys Social Housing have been extremely busy in the last 2 months, with a very high number of referrals coming in from all sectors of the community. Keys are currently working with 39 people supporting them to find safe, warm, affordable housing.

The current rental prices are continuing to rise in the New Plymouth region, making it increasingly difficult to find affordable homes, although in the last six weeks, we have housed 20 people into new accommodation.



Contd. from front page

As an interim measure Central Government have introduced legislation that bans the sale of such drugs at any time until they can be proven to be safe in the hands of the vulnerable.

Gordon Hudson
Rural and Elderly Co-ordinator
Like Minds Taranaki

An invitation ...

New Plymouth Mayor Andrew Judd is urging all people keen to see such a ban, to attend the Council meeting at 4.30pm on Tuesday the 6th of May in their debating chamber to come and support the Council in sending a very strong message to the Government that enough is enough - that the current laws are indeed Inadequate.

Rural Community representatives to meet with the Taranaki DHB



In a bid to set up an avenue for real dialogue and ongoing ability to work closely together, the Taranaki rural community have sought a preliminary meeting with the Taranaki DHB CEO and senior staff.

High on the agenda will be working out ways to better meet the mental and physical health needs of rural communities, becoming an integral part of assessments of needs and delivery of services and how we can collaborate better, together, in the future.



Contd. from front page

The NDI website is fronted by Sir John Kirwan who has also publically shared his journey through depression. The website already contains The Journal, which is a free online self-help programme designed to support people with mild to moderate depression. Written stories and videos from rural men and women who have been affected by depression can now be found at www.depression.org.nz/rural.

Addiction—a family issue...

Here in Taranaki we are fortunate to have a unique role in our Alcohol & Drug service – that of AOD Family Advisor. Across the country there are Family Advisor roles for Mental Health & Addiction services. These hard-working people are tasked with providing the family and whanau voice while advising management across the MH&A services from a family and whanau perspective. My role as AOD Family Advisor allows me to focus solely on our Addiction services. One of the prerequisites in becoming a Family Advisor is that we must have lived experience as a family member of someone with mental illness or addiction and as the mother of an amazing daughter with her own journey, I took on this role eight years ago. Anyone who has a loved one with substance abuse issues knows that this is not only an issue for the individual – addiction is a family and whanau concern. For every person who has a drug or alcohol problem, it is estimated five other people are adversely affected. Therefore it makes sense to involve family members in their loved ones' treatment.

Most Alcohol and Drug services, hospital or community treatment centres aim to involve family in three different ways:

Service delivery – *this is where Family Inclusive Practice includes the family as part of the treatment team and enlists their help in assisting a person towards recovery. This may involve working on some of the existing family dynamics and building on strengths within the whanau.*

Service evaluation and development – *this is where, often via a Family Advisor, services seek family and whanau feedback and opinion relating to the policies, procedures, structure and delivery of alcohol and drug services.*

Support and Education – *this involves provision of easily accessible, non-judgemental, confidential peer support, including information and education around addiction, specific substances, treatment options, navigating the addiction health system, communication skills, boundaries, rescuing, enabling, self care and more.*

Although all three of these levels of family involvement are important, it is Support & Education which may provide the most significant opportunity

for positive change for these families. Most of us, when we first come to realise our loved one has a serious problem with alcohol or other drugs, are feeling the pain and anxiety, shame, guilt, frustration and desperation of watching our loved one struggling with their alcohol and/or drug use. There may also be a coexisting mental illness which further compounds the distress for the person and their family. A family member, when presenting for support for the first time, is typically experiencing:

*Loss of sleep High anxiety
Not eating well Tearful
Fearful Angry
Financial problems Legal issues
Physical and/or emotional abuse
Other symptoms of stress*

Whether our loved one is engaged in treatment or not, is focussed on their own recovery or not, it is important that we do what we can to ensure our own lives do not become or remain unmanageable. If we are given some new skills and offered support and encouragement, we can learn coping strategies and gain strength in knowing we are not alone in our journey. We learn alternative communication skills and that there is always hope for improvement.

Support and information is best offered in the form of a facilitated peer support group. The purpose of such a group is:

- To reduce isolation, stigma and discrimination by meeting with others experiencing similar situations.
- To exchange information and practical ideas, exploring alternatives to strengthen coping strategies.
- To understand the nature and power of addiction, sharing ways of helping our loved one without Rescuing or Enabling addiction.
- To promote 'self care' and encourage the use of boundaries as protection from the consequences of another's drinking or drug use.

Research shows that people with alcohol & drug issues are more likely to engage in treatment if those closest to them are receiving support and education, so in seeking support for ourselves, we can impact positively on our loved one's A&D issues.

Clinicians report that when a family member has been receiving support

and education they are better prepared to contribute in a productive and helpful way when involved in family inclusive practice.

Historically, alcohol and drug treatment has focussed predominantly on the individual, while families may have been seen as part of the problem.

Today there is a refreshing and well-informed shift towards involving family members and natural supports in the treatment process and also offering support and education for the family member in their own right – this can be highly beneficial, even if the individual is not yet ready to engage in treatment. It is encouraging to see that today, for those people who are ready to address their alcohol and drug issues, their families and whanau are being recognised as part of the solution.

Sue Philipson
AOD Family
Advisor and FADS
Group Facilitator,
Alcohol and Drug
Services, TDHB



Taranaki DHB runs a weekly group called Family Alcohol & Drug Support (FADS) and when asked about the benefits of attending the group, family members said:

"I am no longer feeling alone"

"I have learned to accept, without condoning, the addiction and also know it's not my fault"

"I have learned it's ok to say NO – actually I NEED to say No more often"

"I have gained a more thorough understanding of addiction and different substances"

"I have learned the importance of taking care of myself"

"I now know that his recovery is his responsibility – not mine"

"I have learned how to communicate without so much anger – from a place of love"

"I've learned about 'enabling' and no longer give money or lie for her"

"I no longer rescue him by phoning his boss or protect him from negative consequences"

"I feel supported when things get tough"

"I know there is always HOPE"



Another
Like Minds Taranaki
Project

WHAT'S ON

NGĀ KAUPAPA O TE WĀ



Supported by the



Issue 81— *Compiled BY people on limited incomes FOR people on limited incomes...*

MAY 2014

Thu 1 MAY DAY— TDHB Café—Barrett's Lounge—Taranaki Base Hospital—10am—2pm. Also known as an international distress signal, MAYDAY is an awareness day where the NZ Federation of Disability Info. Centres raise awareness that 'Disability May Affect You'. There will be information displays from a wide range of service providers, spot prizes, goodie bags and a raffle. **FREE**

Thu 1 Mental Health Matters - Access Radio 104.4FM—9:30-10am—Topic: Mindfulness **FREE**

Thu 1 Central Area Housing Choices and Building Heights Presentation—The Plymouth Room, Civic Centre, Liardet St. 4:30pm—5:40pm. Join in the discussion with students Ashleigh and Kyle who will be talking about key central area design issues: housing choices and building heights, based on research they carried out over the summer. **FREE**

Tue 6 Mindfulness course—Last session in the 6 week course—5-6pm in the conference room at Govett-Brewster on the 2nd floor, 50 Devon St. West. Ph: 759 0966 **\$5** per session **OR Koha**

Fri 9 Govett-Brewster Seniors @Puke Ariki—Daily News Café—10am-11:30am. Meet for a conversation about the art on display. Bookings are essential: 06 759 6060. **FREE**

Mon 12 Understanding Epilepsy—Community House, 32 Leach St. 1:30—3:30pm. A seminar covering the causes, seizure triggers, first aid for seizures and many other related topics. **FREE**

Thu 15 Art to Lunch—Len Lye's Wind Wands—12:15pm Govett-Brewster—2nd Floor, Brougham House, 50 Devon St. West. Join the Friends and Gallery curators for a short talk about the current art projects. Coffee and tea are provided, bring your own lunch. **FREE**

Thu 15 Glow light your bike night! - Huatoki Plaza—6pm. Head off for a couple of Glow rides from the Plaza with the Let's Go Team. Younger children have a short ride to the wind wand and for

the older folk a ride out to Te Rewa Rewa Bridge and back. BYO high vis. gear and lights or come to the Plaza at 5:30 and get a great deal on all things bright before heading out. **FREE**

Fri 16 Tea and Topics: Taranaki Musician Mike Harding—10-11am—Puke Ariki. Enjoy a cuppa and a bikkie while picking up some top tips from local experts in their field. Now takes place on the third Friday of every month. This month Mike Harding will share his thoughts about New Zealand folksong and play a few tunes. **FREE**

Tue 20 Community Conversation—INGLEWOOD Town Hall—7-8:30pm. Join in the discussion about the future of the district. This event forms part of a community engagement initiative called 'New Plymouth—Shaping our Future Together' **FREE**

Sun 25 Edible Ornamentals—2-4pm—Hollard Garden, **STRATFORD** Come along for some great advice on selecting ornamental plants for your edible garden and ways to make delicious gifts, preserves for your friends or for your pantry. **FREE**

Thu 29 What is Life? 7:30—9pm—St Mary's Peace Hall, 44 Vivian St. (Opposite St Mary's Cathedral) How did purposeless atoms force themselves to deliver something as incredibly complex and fragile as living organisms? This and other provoking insights, including our future survival as a species, will be discussed by Dr Roger Hanson, a full time science writer and researcher, known to New Plymouth readers through his weekly science article in the Taranaki Daily News. **FREE**

Sat 31 Justice Of The Peace Service Desk—Level 1, Puke Ariki—10am—12:30pm. Do you need to have your signature witnessed, make a declaration, swear an affidavit or affirmation or have originals or copies certified? A Justice of the Peace will be on hand to help. **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.



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

REGULAR SUPPORT GROUPS

Peer Support Group—STRATFORD—Every 2nd Thursday, 10am-12pm. This month: May 8 & 22. For people and families with mental health and/or addiction issues. Come and talk, listen and offer each other coping strategies towards recovery. Stratford Community House, 52 Juliet St. For more details phone Mihi at Tui Ora's Hawera office 06-278-6603 or Kevin at Tui Ora NP 06-759-4064. **GOLD COIN**

Peer Support Group—HAWERA—Every second Monday, 10am-12pm. 164 Princes Street. This month: May 12 & 26. 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 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 also a group aimed at men living with the challenge of mental health issues 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**

Taranaki Touched by Suicide Support Group
Led by experienced group facilitators, you will receive peer support and education, which research has shown to be helpful in overcoming the grief from this type of loss. Meet every third Thursday of the month at 83 Hine Street, 7-9pm. All welcome—any enquiries by texting or calling 021 027 369 35. **FREE**

Women's Carers Group—A support group for female carers of people with dementia. St Mary's Cathedral lounge 10am-12pm held on the last Wednesday of the month. This month's meeting is on the 28th of May. Dr John Glass talks about behaviour and research. **FREE**

Support Group for Carers & Families of people with dementia—STRATFORD Community House, Juliet St. 1:30pm Monday 19th May. Discussion on the NZ Framework for dementia care. **FREE**

Memory Cafés—An opportunity for people with dementia and their carers to get together, to socialise in a supportive group. Crowded House, 10am every 2nd Wednesday of the month, next one 14th May and Nelson Café, 198 Broadway **STRATFORD**—10am every last Friday of the month (30th May) **FREE**

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

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, Level 1. **FREE**

Every Tue Rotary Club Walking—Hawera Tower Grounds , **HAWERA**—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 Wed Walkway Weeders Wanted! 10:30-noon. This group is looking for more people to join it to keep the section of Te Henui Walkway from Cumberland St to Durham Ave looking good. Meet at the walkway down from the Hartland place entrance. For more information call Carolyn: 758 2813. **FREE**

Every Wed Crackerjacks—Discover it! Puke Ariki. 10:30am –11am. Get children hooked on books! Come along for a crafty and creative storytime for pre-schoolers. **FREE**

Every Wed Crackerjacks—Waitara Library-**WAITARA**—10-10:30am. As above. **FREE**

Every Thur E-book Troubleshooting—Puke Ariki - 9:30-10:30am. Come along and learn how to download free e-books on to your device. **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**

Every Fri Knit and Natter—1-3pm—Community House, McLean Street **WAITARA**. This knitting group is now meeting every Friday and concludes with a cuppa. All are welcome. **FREE**

Every Sat Mah Jong—Beach Street Hall, Fitzroy. 1-4pm The small charge per person includes a cup of tea and biscuits and there is a small prize for the hand of the day. Everyone is welcome. For more information phone Betty: 757 5913. **\$3**

Every Sun New Plymouth Joggers and Walkers
Meet at Bellringer Pavilion at 8am for an hour. All ages—all stages—there is a walking or jogging group for your ability. All welcome. **FREE**

1st & 3rd Wed Table Games—1pm—3pm—Community House, McLean Street **WAITARA** Come along for a game of cards or scrabble, and a cuppa to finish up with. **FREE**

Every Weekend NP Potters—Te Henui Vicarage—1-4pm. Local potters have their gallery in the historic vicarage which was built in 1846. Call in and have a look at the wonderful works which are available for sale. (No EFTPOS) Tour groups anytime by prior arrangement.

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



Changes in Community Housing...

I am aware that you will have received copies of this information—but, it is very important, and possibly disconcerting for many older people currently in social housing.

In April 2014, all Housing New Zealand tenants and people on their waiting list for social housing received a letter and newsletter explaining the transfer of housing assessments to the Ministry of Social Development.

Links to the letter and newsletter are: social_housing@msd.govt.nz

Key points are:

Unless there is a change in their circumstances, people do not need to do a thing as a result of receiving the letter.

If there is a change in circumstances, receivers of the letter will need to contact the MSD. To do so call Work & income 0800-559-009 or—for over 65s, call Senior Services—0800-552-002.

Tenants and people on the waiting list can have someone act on their behalf

Key points for current State Housing tenants:

As from the 14th April, MSD will be responsible for calculating income related rents—as well as other housing assessment options. These include Annual income-related rents.

Housing NZ will remain the landlord and be responsible for repairs and maintenance.

Key points for people on their waiting list:

MSD will now be responsible for all applications

In addition, “approved community housing providers” will also be able to offer social housing options to people on the waiting list.

At this time who these other approved community housing are is not known however Positive Ageing will be seeking more information from MSD Taranaki at a meeting in the very near future.

In the meantime, we can only guess at what the advantages for both current tenants and those on the waiting list will be... *Opinion—Gordon Hudson*

Family Information Sessions

You have just found out that someone close to you has a mental illness or addiction. You want to support their recovery but you are not sure how? Supporting Families have been there and can help you find your next steps in this series of information sessions. They will help you find your way around the mental health system: the law, your rights, looking after yourself as well as being caring for others.

Come along to all of the sessions, dates are as follows:

May 6, 13, 20, 27 and June 3.

To be held at the Lecture room level 3, Taranaki Base Hospital at 7pm.

Save a place at these sessions by emailing:

manager@SFTaranaki.org.nz

or SF Taranaki PO Box 8291

Please include your name, telephone number and email address.

These sessions are free, you are welcome to make a donation.



Sharing and caring...

Community Social

Services is a NEW and FREE counselling service, able to offer both short term and long term counselling for individuals for most issues. If it is outside their scope they will endeavour to source the help that is needed. This service is offered by trainee professionals as well as those that are members of a professional body. Trainees are trained and assessed as competent to work with



people by the recognised and approved training provider. Trainees have regular and ongoing supervision with a qualified supervisor. Please e-mail or txt to arrange a meeting so that together you can look at the possibilities.

Phone/txt 0275552450 email:

communitysocialservices@outlook.com

Although not connected to the church, Community Social Services are located in the Taranaki Cathedral who have generously provided them with the rooms as a contribution to the good of the community.

Bank Safely!



At a recent Positive Ageing Public Forum, Westpac gave an excellent presentation and timely reminder for us to be careful however we do our banking. Here are some of their tips.

Cheques:

- Never pre-sign cheques
- If you lose your cheque book notify your bank immediately
- Always keep a record of the cheque amount, date and payee

ATM and EFTPOS and credit cards and Internet purchases:

- Never give your PIN number to anyone
- Select a different PIN for different cards
- Never write it down anywhere—if you forget your number—get a new one from your bank
- Always keep your cards in a safe place
- Beware of people looking over your shoulder when you enter your PIN number
- Take care shopping on line—slow and sure
- Check your card statements carefully and regularly
- Never respond to an email request for personal or account information, even if it looks like it is from your bank

Scams and Frauds:

- Never give out personal information to people or organisations you do not know or totally trust.
- Only pay people or organisations that you totally trust.
- Always remember—if you think what someone on the phone or internet is offering you is too good to be true—you are right!

General:

Banks have a rigorous customer protection service and very rarely, if ever, will a customer lose money through internet banking or shopping. Currently, almost 2 million Kiwis, of all ages, already shop online! And always ensure that your computer has an up-to-date browser and antivirus software. Senior Net & the Community Computer Access Centre can help you become familiar with these processes.



Current services on offer include free counselling, family planning clinic, free drama music and art classes, youth empowerment, Kapa Haka, grief counseling and more...
Contact details: 74 Powderham St.
Ph 06 757 9901

info@wavestaranaki.org.nz



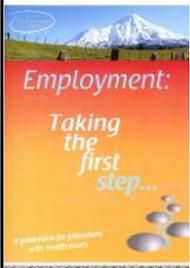
freshperspective mentoring is a voluntary support for parents and caregivers in our community. Mentors spend an hour or two a week walking alongside another parent simply doing the stuff of life together for a while .

freshperspective 0800 555 300

enquiries@freshperspective.org.nz

www.freshperspective.org.nz

Employment:
Taking the first step...



A 64-page guide-book for jobseekers with health issues. **Free** copies available from Like Minds Taranaki. 06-759-0966

Coming Soon on Access Radio...



"Mental Health Matters"

MAY

Cecily Bull interviews Mindfulness group participants about how mindfulness practice can have a positive influence on their mental health

9.30am every Thursday of each month

Hawera support group:

The venue for this group is at Tui Ora Ltd: 164 Princes Street, Hawera
Held alternate Mondays 10-12 noon
Next Meetings—May 12 & 26

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. Usually held at the Stratford Community House, 52 Juliet St.

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

This month's meetings: May 8 & 22

Eating Disorder family support group:

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 to share similar experiences and discuss strategies for strengthening coping skills.

Meetings are held every 1st and 3rd Monday of each month – from 6.30-8.00pm at the TDHB Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services.

For more information – call 06-753-6139 ext:7949



Thought for the issue:

“Feelings come and go like clouds in a windy sky.

Conscious breathing is my anchor.”

Thich Nhat Hanh

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.

The post-natal group is a non-clinical group offering support with child care available.

NEW PLYMOUTH GROUP TIMES AND LOCATIONS

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:

1st and 3rd Wednesdays
10am-12noon
of each month

NP Women's Centre

For more information contact:

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



LifeLine
WE PROMISE TO BE THERE

Taranaki
0800 543 354

www.lifeline.co.nz



Insomnia

There's nothing quite like getting up feeling more tired than you were when you went to bed in the first place, to set you up for the day ahead.

You know you're going to be constructive, able to cope with anything life has to throw at you. You just have this sense that you're going to be on top of things. The world is your oyster.

Yeah right! Anyone who has experienced insomnia before will know that the reverse is usually true. Life can be a struggle when you don't have enough energy to take things head on, and it can be difficult if not impossible to stay motivated to do things.

Sleep is important for all sorts of reasons, both physically and mentally. Unfortunately, there's little you can do to make up for poor sleep in the long run, other than having a restful night's sleep again.

Caffeine can only go so far towards remedying sleep deprivation, and too much of it can in fact make the problem worse.

Google "insomnia" and you'll find all sorts of sites offering you wisdom on how best to get off to sleep at night. Their approaches vary, but you'll probably notice that most of them suggest cutting down on your coffee intake and practicing good sleep hygiene.

Unfortunately, if you're looking for any kind of a 'quick fix' solution, it's highly unlikely that you'll be able to find one. Most of these solutions take time to implement, and may take weeks to actually pay off in the form of a good night's rest.

If they do at all, that is. Their effectiveness may be debatable because there are many possible causes of insomnia, and not all of them can easily be addressed.

What if, for example, you are experiencing insomnia as a side effect of the medication you are currently taking? If you find yourself in such a situation, you may need more than just an adjustment of your daily routine to help with your problem.

Talking with your doctor or psychiatrist is your best bet if your insomnia is being caused by your medication, as they may be able to change your dosage or even what type of medicine you are taking, to help you sleep.

It's also possible that they'll prescribe some sort of sleeping pill, but it's worth remembering that these are usually intended to be taken for only a short period.

You can develop a tolerance to the effect of sleeping pills over time, and you may come to depend on them for sleep and have difficulty when the time

comes to stop taking them.

One option your doctor may be able to offer you is Melatonin, a natural hormone which plays a role in our regular sleep/wake cycle. This is commonly seen as a safer option than regular sleeping pills as it is a natural substance that is secreted by our bodies.



Unfortunately, there's currently no "magic bullet" treatment available for insomnia. It can involve a lot of trial and error to find something that works for you.

Two things that definitely will work, however, are hope and patience. Whatever you try, don't give up hope that eventually you will be able to sleep comfortably through the night again. Have the patience to give any approach you try long enough to have a proper chance to work.

In the meantime, remember to be gentle on yourself. It may be a good idea to lower your expectations of yourself for a while, as you won't be performing to your maximum potential due to your experience of insomnia.

Given the time to find the right advice and treatment for your condition, it shouldn't be too long before you're feeling on top of the world again.

Tony Spencer

This month's "Korero Mai" and "What's On" are edited 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

June 2014 issue will be distributed in late May. Contributions by Friday, May 16th please.