



Supporting Families/Whānau Taranaki Newsletter

Our Mission: Families and whanau experiencing mental illness are listened to, included, informed and connected.

Hōtoke/Winter 2017

13 Reasons How We Can Help Young People Survive and Thrive

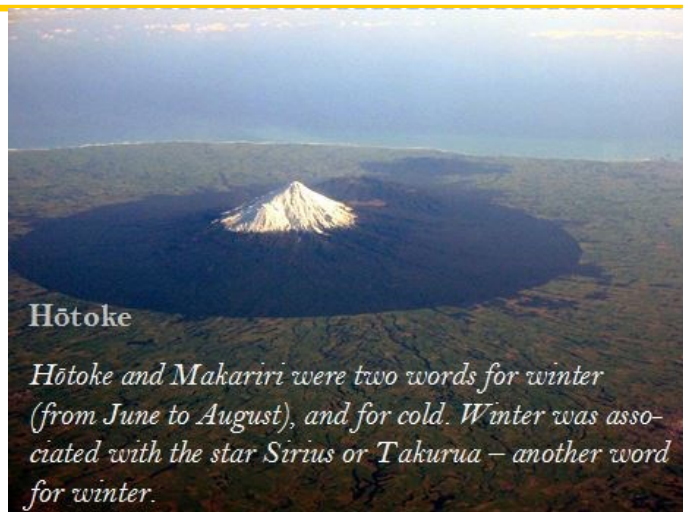
Let '13 Reasons Why' turn to '13 Reasons How to make a difference to the wellbeing of our young people'. These could be made a priority in this election year. We could make a big change in the terrible statistics of youth suicides in New Zealand and to the overall mental wellbeing of all young people.

We have been watching 13 Reasons Why showing the hazards of navigating adolescence in 2017 while we could help our real adolescents travel their own troubled waters to safer shores. The New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists asked all political parties to consider the following:

1. Mental health services funded to do the job properly: to offer talk therapies, not just medication or a night in respite care, and then send them on their way. Distressed young people can be taught skills for emotional regulation and Dialectical Behavioural Therapy in one to one sessions or in groups. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) clinicians need to work with parents as well to support changes in the environment around the vulnerable young person. Health dollars allocated to 15-19 year olds is one third of allocation to 60-64 year olds. We could share health dollars more fairly as younger people do not need as much spent on physical health but badly need good mental health and addiction services.

2. A youth-focused space in each city, to provide a safe, welcoming environment, a place of belonging, easy access to counselling support, development opportunities and youth-specific health services. Offer community education to value our young people and invest in their future wellbeing.

3. Health-wise schools: a health hub with social worker, counsellor, and nurses in every secondary school treating the increasing numbers of anxious and self-harming adolescents. Add professionals to work with their family mem-



Hōtoke

Hōtoke and Makariri were two words for winter (from June to August), and for cold. Winter was associated with the star Sirius or Takurua – another word for winter.

YES WE CARE forum

Saturday 1 July 2017 10am to 2pm

Join the greatest health minds and activists to make health funding a key election issue.

See Page 5 for the details...

bers so the adolescent and their family understand each other better.

4. Relationship and sexuality education, for all NZ secondary schools, by well trained "youth friendly" educators, that is sex-positive and gives students the ability to critically think about sexual attraction, consent, ethics, relationships, the body, gender, pornography and the online environment. Teach the skills of resilience and wellbeing: mindfulness and breathing, and relationships – how they are formed and how they can be broken kindly. Implement restorative justice practices with anti-bullying and emotional development education for teachers.

5. Parenting support to educate parents about the teenage brain, empathic listening, validation and being there when teens are "falling apart" or "losing it".

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Hours Mon to Fri 8.30am- 5pm

06 757 9300

Crisis Team: 0508 277 478

Te Puna Waiora: 0508 292 4672

<https://www.facebook.com/SFTaranaki>



(‘13 Reasons How We Can Help Young People Survive and Thrive’ continued...)

6. Support Key to Life, Youthline and other community organisations, so good counsellors and other peer supports are available to youth while providing relationship training to the volunteers, as well as initiatives like The Low Down.

7. Community belonging: let team sports, kapa haka, music, drama, dance, yoga, martial arts and other such groups develop emotional and social skills, and increase connection and resilience in children, youth and young adults. Connected communities, where neighbours know neighbours, welcome strangers and provide social belonging and connection are harbours of personal and community well-being.

8. Lower the voting age to 16: we need to listen and respect the views of young leaders in public conversations and lowering the voting age to 16 may be a way to empower that constituency and achieve a fairer age based access to resources and opportunities. Have a Youth Parliament every year.

9. Whanau Ora services resourced to heal generational trauma of whanau and iwi, to strengthen identity and resilience in rangatahi and young people. Parenting courses available to young parents to strengthen identity and well-being that are based in Maori values and practices.

10. Addiction services available to everyone that needs them so people with adverse childhood experiences who seek comfort in drugs can address their trauma and get free of the downward spiral of addiction. This is especially important when young men are leaving jail and trying to integrate back into the community.

11. Early intervention: heal relationships in family and whanau by intervening at the first sign of domestic violence or child distress, not waiting until the situation is so bad that the children need to be uplifted. Keep children with parents or hapu wherever possible by resourcing grandparents and other kin when they need to take children into care.

12. Attachment: provide informed early interventions for parents of new babies during their first 1000 days, focused on understanding relationships and developing empathy for children, not just behaviour management techniques. Make “Circle of Security” parenting available to families who need help to create security for their infants. Provide supportive parenting courses to bring commitment to change.

13. A longer election cycle to give politicians the courage to address homelessness, the increasing rich/poor class divide, earthquakes and weather vulnerabilities, and house price hikes that all create mental ill-health and split apart families.

- Lynne Holdem

Limits and Boundaries

Often family members of people with mental health issues are looking for help to get the loved one, the ill one, to do something. It can range from getting their loved one out of bed, taking their medication, getting treated or getting a job. However, it is important to understand that getting someone else to do something is not the idea of setting limits; it is the effect of setting a limit. Limit setting becomes clear if caregivers focus on themselves and not the ill person.

Every person has the right and responsibility to take care of themselves. In taking care of yourself you will have more energy to spare and be more at peace with yourself. By looking inside yourself you can become more familiar with your own limits. People often surpass their limits before they realize it sometimes. If you have surpassed your limits you will notice your energy or patience has diminished. If you persist in doing for others when your energy is depleted you may feel fragile, angry, depressed or even possibly anxious (how can I get everything done?).

Setting limits is not an event, it is a process. Your limits emerge from a variety of factors unique to you. Different people have different boundary styles and boundaries have different aspects which vary from situation to situation whether they are permeable, flexible or complex. In setting your limit you must recognize that there are four keys to setting them.

- 1) Steer clear of fear, obligation and guilt
- 2) Trust your perceptions, feelings and opinions
- 3) Refuse to rescue others from you setting limits
- 4) Recognize that limits have consequences.

Steering clear of fear, obligation and guilt means that you have rights too. Do not do things because of other people's expectations. One should not tolerate an abusive relationship.

The responses you should have toward your loved one should be made in respect for both parties. Sometimes we forgive our family members' behaviors and our limits get pushed and pushed further back. It is also very important to trust your perceptions, feelings and opinions. You have the right to feel the way you do. Feelings are real, whatever they are. If you ignore your feelings you will end up regretting some action that you take.

If you explain your feelings you have the opportunity to get your own needs met and you may become closer to the person by both of you discussing your real feelings. When you realize that you need to set a limit, make sure that you do not excuse them or change your mind. So do not set a limit that you cannot implement and live with.

People do need to be responsible for their own behaviors. So do not back down and do not believe them when they try to make you feel guilty for enforcing a consequence.

Once limits are set, if you give in, you send the message that you do not mean what you say and you will not be respected. If you set a limit and the person breaks it, they are making a choice. Choices lead to consequences. The person can choose their consequences but it may be up to you to enforce it. For example, if you own your home, you do get to state the terms that you want to live under. You have rights!

If you set a rule based on respect for each other and it is repeatedly disrespected you need to have a discussion about the problem. You can give the person a chance to help solve the problem (two heads are better than one), offer a consequence and follow through with the consequence should the rule not be respected.

At some point you may say "It's my way or leave". This would be a consequence of their choices and behaviors. If you do set this limit then decide how long the person has to leave before you use force to follow through.

Caregivers need to be their own best advocate and they need to learn the consequences of their own actions. Often caregivers think they know what is best for the ill person. Unfortunately, the ill person has other ideas which need to be respected (unless it is suicide or hurting others).

It is better to work with the person in a partnership.

There is usually more than one way to live and more than one way to solve a problem. We know what works for this society or what works for us, but do all people really have to get up at a normal hour and work? Why do we work? I ask you to consider that because we do not live in their shoes and we do not know how hard it is for them.

However we do know how rewarding it can be to be a valuable member of society. We do know how much easier it is to get a job and be social with others if we stay on the same routine as the rest. Keeping a 9 to 5 schedule keeps us connected with others. But we do not have the right to control another adult. We can influence and provide guidance.

If somewhere along the line your loved one cannot meet your expectations, then they might not be proud of that; they may even be ashamed of their fears and perceptions of their incapability. **There are reasons when days and nights get mixed up and those habits are easy to establish but take a long time to reverse.** I urge you to have compassion for the difficulties that have led to these situations.

That being said, when you are at your limit you can demand respect; negotiate what is negotiable and set consequences. It is important to be an advocate for the ill person and to

find services to get appropriate health care, but not at the expense of your own needs and health. The ill person needs to address why they are stuck and you trying to find solutions does not address the reason why they are stuck.

If you are working beyond the limit of your energy or patience then take a step back, recover and take care of yourself so that you can gain valuable energy. This stepping back will provide space, time, etc., for the ill person to stop resisting help that you offer. They then have to focus on themselves and what they need. The ill person needs to learn their symptoms, identify their needs and ask for help.

Sadly, often they lack the motivation to do what they know they need to do. Sometimes the ill person doesn't like the help that is offered. To some extent what is being offered can be changed or replaced. Keep encouraging your ill person to go to these places and find out what is new and how they can be helped. **By setting limits you will be helping yourself as well as your loved one.** A win-win situation for everyone!

Sources: Sheffield, Anne. How you can survive when they are depressed: Living and coping with Depression Fallout; and Kreger, Randi. The Essential Family Guide to Borderline Personality Disorder.

Family Connections

For family members of people with Borderline
Personality Disorder



Education around BPD
Relationship mindfulness skills
Family environment skills
Validation skills
Problem management skills

Next group is in Stratford, beginning the 5th of July,
6-8 pm

Please contact 06 757 9300 or
Gareth@STaranaki.org.nz to register.

Paying Tribute to Rosemary Ellis

We were very sad to hear the news that on the 18th of June one of the great contributors to Supporting Families in Mental Illness Taranaki had passed away, Rosemary Ellis.

Rosemary was a member of SF since 1985 and she served as chairperson and committee member for many years. Rosemary was also the SF representative on the Schizophrenia Research Trust until she stepped down in 2015. She was one of the people that SF could reliably turn to for good advice and her wisdom shone through in the care that she had for families and for SF itself. Rosemary was deservedly awarded an Outstanding Older Role Model award in 2014 for her work in the community.

She is survived by her husband Fred, three children and their partners, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Rosemary has lived a wonderful life full of service through her involvement with St Mary's Church and also Supporting Families. She epitomised a life well-lived and a life of service to others.



Barbara Hunt, Rosemary Ellis and Loretta McMahon

Take the load off...

For 20 years the Like Minds, Like Mine programme has been working to end mental illness stigma and discrimination. We've made some great progress, but there's still more to be done to make Aotearoa a place where people with mental illness are fully accepted and included.

We're excited to introduce **Take the Load Off**, a new online campaign to reduce mental illness stigma and discrimination.

Take the Load Off is part of the National Like Minds, Like Mine programme and will focus on the simple things people can do to reduce the weight of stigma and discrimination for people living with mental illness.

A key part of the online campaign will be a series of animated videos which will tell personal stories centred around how people lighten the load of mental illness stigma and discrimination.

It could be as simple as inviting someone to have lunch with you, asking how someone is going or visiting a friend who isn't well.

We'd love to hear your experiences to help us bring the campaign to life! Head over to www.taketheloadoff.nz to have your say and find out more.

If you have any questions about the campaign please email likeminds@mentalhealth.org.nz.

<http://www.taketheloadoff.nz/>

Peace is the result of retraining your mind to process life as it is, rather than as you think it should be.

Wayne W. Dyer





YES WE CARE forum

Saturday 1 July 2017 10am to 2pm

Join the greatest health minds and activists to make health funding a key election issue. It's free and so is lunch.

We start at 10am sharp. RSVP before June 23 at:

<https://actionnetwork.org/events/health-funding-crisis-forum-taranaki>

The pre-election budget is out and the smoke and mirrors around health funding has cleared. Without action, more Kiwis are going to miss out on the mental and physical healthcare they need, when they need it.

That's where you come in.

We've invited the most active community groups and individuals in workplaces and health to work on a grassroots election plan. Campaigning has made mental health a key election issue. We need to keep the pressure up and make physical health funding a key election issue as well.

At the forum, you'll also:

- * Hear about the latest research on unmet need and health underfunding,
- * How campaigning made mental health a key election issue,
- * Learn how to get your story in the media

Events: The main forum will be held in Christchurch. It will be streamed to hosted events in

- * Auckland * Taranaki: RSVP: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/health-funding-crisis-forum-taranaki>
- * Wellington: * Dunedin * Invercargill * Online: RSVP. goo.gl/16XrPS

For more information including speakers and the agenda visit: <http://yeswecare.nz/forums>

Brought to you by YesWeCare and partners



Mental Health in Modern Times

Many mental illnesses are treated with medication due to a recognition that they are caused by a problem with brain chemistry. However, behaviour can also alter brain chemistry. Researchers have found that returning to more primal habits may check the stress response and relieve mental health issues.

While our lifestyles have transformed dramatically over the last few centuries, the evolution of our bodies has not kept up. Our bodies are still designed to live the ways our ancestors did, with a well-balanced diet, as well as plenty of exercise, sunlight, sleep, and social support. Simply put, humans are not equipped to deal with the effects of having television, computers, Wi-Fi, junk-food and mobile technology at our fingertips.

Today, many of us live a fast-paced and demanding lifestyle, if it can be called a lifestyle. Many people work long hours, run from activity to activity, and are faced with a constant barrage of news and requests made possible by cell phones, TVs, and computers. As a result, our diets have become filled with processed convenience food, our sleep is often shortened and disturbed, and we spend more time sitting at desks or on couches than being active outdoors. Many of us accept sleepless nights and sleeping pills as normal- they are not.

Additionally, in the Western world, we have been born into a dominant culture that values independence and success over social connections, resulting in increased isolation, as we live farther from family and have smaller groups to look to for social support.

Our ancestors did not have the luxury of many of the innovations we have today, however their days were more active and spent outdoors, hunting, farming, building, and traveling (often by using their legs). Sleep was more regular and diets were quite different. They didn't involuntarily have Wi-Fi buzzing in their atmosphere.

Communities were smaller and tightly knit. Only in the last 11,000 years (which on our evolutionary timescale looks like yesterday) have we collected in large cities and accepted the presence of strangers in our midst.

Human beings were not designed for this poorly nourished, sedentary, indoor, sleep-deprived, socially isolated, frenzied pace of life- where we are expected to 'achieve' more, produce more, and to acquire more.

Our ancestors were also less burdened by disappointment because they weren't socialized to expect as much. But in the modern world, disappointment and depression continues its relentless march.

The relative sanity of our distant ancestors should not imply they led stress-free lives. Our lives would have involved a lot of stress- but unlike the chronic stress that plagues our society now, our stress would have been practical and useful (i.e. running away from a large creature trying to eat us as opposed to getting that report in on time).



Our remote ancestors had many factors woven into the fabric of their lives that turned off the brain's stress response, habits that in most developed countries have fallen out of fashion.

For example, if met with an obstacle on a path to some succulent wild-animal, hunter-gatherers may have vented their frustration by removing a boulder. Physical exertion holds up a powerful stop sign to the stress-inflammation circuitry. But today, an urban dweller stuck in traffic can do little but sit there stewing in their repressed juices.

Hunter-gatherer tribes still exist in some parts of the world and as researchers have discovered, their level of depression is almost zero. The reasons? They're too busy to sit around brooding. They get lots of physical activity and sunlight. They don't experience traffic, the bombardment of advertising and affluenza-riddled television. Their diet is rich in omega-3, their level of social connection is extraordinary, and they regularly have as much as 10 hours of sleep. At the moment we average 6.7.

Perhaps the path ahead is not always forward?



Sources: <http://tlc.ku.edu/>; <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2010/jul/19/beat-depression-without-drugs>; <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/mar/16/depression-mental-health-modern-life-young>

Self-Compassion

Many of us are all too used to bashing ourselves. And it's not surprising. In our society, we're taught that being hard on ourselves, and ashamed of everything from our actions to our looks, gets results.

Self-criticism is the preferred path to success. We rarely think about showing ourselves kindness. Or even if we do, we worry that doing so is selfish, complacent or arrogant.

But research has found that self-criticism only sabotages us and produces a variety of negative consequences. For instance, according to Kristin Neff, Ph.D., associate professor in human development at the University of Texas at Austin, studies have shown that self-criticism can lead to lowered self-esteem, anxiety and depression.

Self-compassion is what you'd show a loved one struggling with a similar situation. It has been linked to greater well-being, including diminished anxiety and depression, better emotional coping skills and compassion for others. According to Neff, self-compassion consists of three components:

Self-kindness: Being kind, gentle and understanding with yourself when you're suffering.

Common humanity: Realizing that you're not alone in your struggles. When we're struggling, we tend to feel especially isolated. We think we're the only ones to experience loss, make mistakes, feel rejected or fail. But it's these very struggles that are part of our shared experience as humans.

Mindfulness: Observing life as it is, without being judgemental or suppressing your thoughts and feelings.

Because beating ourselves up is so entrenched in our society, you still might be suspicious of self-compassion. Below, Neff dispels common myths that may stand in the way of people being kinder to themselves.

Myth: Self-compassion is self-pitying or egocentric.

Fact: Self-pity is being immersed in your own problems and forgetting that others struggle, too, Neff said. However, being self-compassionate is seeing things exactly as they are - no more and no less. It means acknowledging that you're suffering, while acknowledging that others have similar problems or are suffering even more. It's putting your problems into perspective.

Myth: Self-compassion is self-indulgent.

Fact: Being self-compassionate doesn't mean solely seeking pleasure. It's not shirking responsibilities or being slothful. Rather, self-compassion focuses on alleviating suffering. From this perspective, you consider whether something will hurt you in the long run.

Myth: Self-criticism is an effective motivator.

Fact: There's actually nothing motivating about criticizing yourself, because it makes you fear failure and lose faith in yourself. Even if you do achieve great things, you're often miserable, anyway.

It's interesting that in other areas of our lives we understand that being harsh doesn't work. Take the example of parenting. Decades ago, we thought that harsh punishment and criticism were effective in keeping kids in line and helping them do well. However, today, we know that being a supportive and encouraging parent is more beneficial.

Self-compassion acts like a nurturing parent. So even when you don't do well, you're still supportive and accepting of yourself. Like a kind parent, your support and love are unconditional, and you realize that it's perfectly OK to be imperfect. This doesn't mean being complacent. Self-criticism tears us down; it presumes that "I am bad." Self-compassion, however, focuses on changing the behaviour that's making you unhealthy or unhappy.

Strategies for Self-Compassion:

Being self-compassionate might seem unnatural at first. These strategies can help. This may be harder for some individuals, particularly if you've experienced trauma, so it's important to work with a therapist.

1. Consider how you'd treat someone else. The simplest thing you can do, is to imagine what you'd do if someone you cared about came to you after failing or getting rejected. What would you say to that person? How would you treat them?
2. Watch your language. You may be so used to criticizing yourself that you don't even realize that you're doing it. So it helps to pay particular attention to the words you use to speak to yourself. If you wouldn't say the same statements to someone you care about, then you're being self-critical.
3. Comfort yourself with a physical gesture. Kind physical gestures have an immediate effect on our bodies, activating the soothing parasympathetic system. Specifically, physical gestures get you out of your head and drop you into your body, which is important since the head loves to run away with storylines. For instance, putting your hands over your heart or simply holding your arm. Any gesture will do.
4. Memorize a set of compassionate phrases. Whenever you find yourself saying, "I'm horrible," it helps to have a few phrases at the ready. Pick statements that really resonate with you.
5. Practice guided meditation. Meditation helps to retrain the brain. This way, self-compassionate gestures and self-soothing become more natural.



Current SF groups on offer...

Eating Disorder Family Support Group– New Plymouth

Wednesdays-fortnightly 6.30pm—8pm

SF Taranaki Office

Family Connections– Stratford

12 week course for family members of people with BPD/emotional dysregulation

Begins July 5th

Please contact for more information or to register for the next group

Family Support Group- New Plymouth

1st Monday of the month 6:30pm—8pm

216 Devon Street West

(Next group is May 1st)

Family Support Group- Stratford

1st Monday of the month 7-9pm

Stratford Community House

52 Juliet Street

Touched by Suicide- New Plymouth

2nd Thursday of the month 7pm

186a Tukapa Street

Mindfulness– New Plymouth

8 week 'stress reduction and acceptance' group for family members of people with mental illness

Friday mornings 10am-11.30am

Begins July 7th

Contact Gareth on 027 555 1503 to register.

For more info on any of these groups please phone **SF Taranaki: 06 757 9300**



Supporting Parents, Healthy Children

A support service for families with children whose parents experience a mental illness or addiction.

At Supporting Families we understand that having a mental illness or addiction may add some challenges when it comes to parenting.

We know that a friendly welcome, someone to listen, kind words and encouragement can help us feel better about ourselves and our children. We all love our children and want to do the best for them. It helps our children and young people to have an understanding of what mental illness and recovery means and strategies for coping with the 'not so good' days.

Children or young people who have a parent with a mental illness or addiction require information, need their experiences validated and normalised and to have the confidence to talk with their peers and other adults. It helps to talk with someone else that 'gets it', to hear that it's ok and that it's not their fault that Mum or Dad are not well. We are able to guide parents through those important conversations with their children or young people.

We welcome you, your whanau, kaumatua, kuia or friends as support people. You can come to our office or we will meet you where you are most comfortable ie home, school, marae.

Supporting Families in Mental Illness Taranaki have a Family Worker to work with young people aged 10-18 years old in North, Central and South Taranaki.

Service includes:

- One on one support,
- Work with whanau
- Peer support groups called UP for 10-13 year olds and 13-16 year olds
- Caregivers with babies can access Circle of Security groups

If you are looking for some support or know of someone that could use some support then please contact us.

Ring or text Kelly on 021822629 or 067579300

Referrals are accepted from Community Mental Health Agencies. Self-referrals are considered.

New Plymouth Family Support Group

Family Support Group is a confidential space to meet with other people who have family members experiencing mental health issues. It is a place to share what is happening and to seek support from others who know the diverse and often challenging situations mental illness produces for families.

Family Support Group takes place on the first Monday of each Month, 6.30pm to 8.00pm, at 216 Devon Street West.

Aside from being a space for peer support, the group also offers information from Guest Speakers, DVDs of family experiences, and informative TED talks.



Family Support Group New Plymouth 2017 Timetable

July 3rd

Guest Speaker: to be confirmed

August 7th

Hope DVD: Rosser talks about supporting his wife through agoraphobia and depression.

TED: Julia Rucklidge- *Nutrition and Mental Health*. Clinical psychologist Julia Rucklidge speaks about the significant role played by nutrition in mental health or illness.

September 4th

Guest Speaker: Nicola Gilmoure is part of a team at Tui Ora that provides peer support for those with mental health and addictions issues, aged 18 years and over.

October 2nd

Hope DVD: Emma speaks about supporting a mother through mental distress.

TED: David Anderson- *Your brain is more than a bag of chemicals*. Neurobiologist David Anderson talks about new research that could lead to targeted psychiatric medications- that work better and avoid side effects.

November 6th

Hope DVD: Tupuna talks about supporting his wife with severe mental distress.



The Circle of Security is a free early intervention programme for parents raising a child under 3 in the midst of mental illness or addiction.

*Circle of Security gives
relationship tools to provide a new way
of understanding your children's needs,
creating lasting security for them and
more satisfaction for you.*

The next group will be held in Hawera.

Date yet to be confirmed. For more information and to register please contact Sally Phillips:

sjphillips@xtra.co.nz or 021 758 534

Mindfulness

For family members of people with mental illness.

Fridays @ 10am.

8 weeks beginning July 7th.

Each week exploring various components of Mindfulness. This group is about engaging in meditation exercises, exploring useful insights and sharing resources and experiences with one another.

Contact gareth@sftaranaki.org.nz for more info and to register.





Our Mission: *Families and whanau experiencing mental illness are listened to, included, informed and connected.*

MEMBERSHIP & SUBSCRIPTION APPLICATION

First name:

Last name:

Postal Address:

Work Phone:

Home phone:

Mobile Phone:

Email:

PLEASE TICK TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP (Note: Subscriptions are annual)

Family Membership \$35 ☐

Single Membership \$25 ☐

Community Services Card Holder or Student ID \$15 ☐

Would you like to add a donation to your subscription? Yes ☐ No ☐

Amount: \$ Do you require a receipt? ☐

Please return payment to PO BOX 8291, Central New Plymouth, 4243

Or Online Banking TSB 15-3942-0414737-01/ref SUBS

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL US ON 06 757 9300

OR EMAIL Manager@SFTaranaki.org.nz

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