

# Making a Difference

It's fair to say that there's room for improvement in society's treatment of those with experience of mental illness. Much of this can be attributed to the gap in understanding between those with firsthand knowledge, and those who haven't experienced it for themselves. Communication is an important tool towards bridging this gap.

There is a need for society in general to increase its acceptance and understanding of mental health issues, which organizations including Like Minds have been established to meet. A need also exists for greater understanding by those employed to treat these conditions.

This is a demand which the Taranaki Consumer Advisory Group (TCAG), and similar groups throughout the country, have been established to fill.

Their purpose is to create a feedback loop between mental health consumers and the system itself, giving an insight into how well their needs are being met and identifying areas which could be improved.

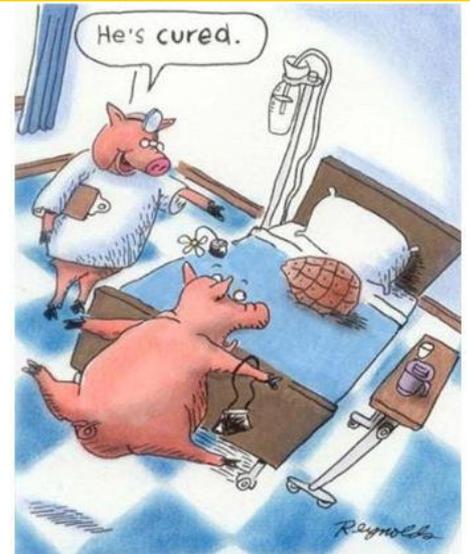
Working towards this goal, TCAG is comprised of a diverse range of people from a variety of organizations who work in the field of mental health, and also mental health consumers; all of whom have a greater understanding of the subject thanks to their personal experience.

This broad cross section is a real asset because it provides many points of view, and points of contact for consumers.

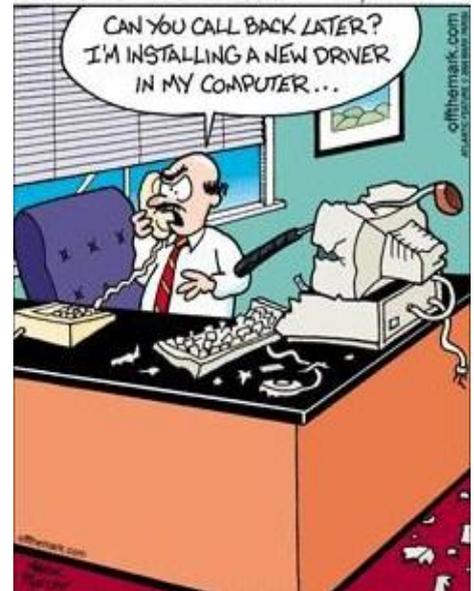
**TCAG is always seeking to increase its membership; all people with experience of mental illness are welcome to join and take an active role in improving the provision of mental health services not only in Taranaki, but throughout New Zealand.**

**Meetings take place on the last Thursday of each month, at room 11 of the mental health outpatients unit at Taranaki Base Hospital, from 12.30-1.30pm. If you'd like to know more, please call Tony Spencer on 759 0966 or email:**

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## Quote for Today:

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."*

Margaret Mead



*"Korero Mai"* is edited by Gordon Hudson, *"What's On"* by Stephanie Mapley and *"Whakaaro Pai"* by Tony Spencer—all from Like Minds Taranaki. Your news and views are eagerly sought. Like Minds Taranaki, P O Box 5015, New Plymouth, 3rd Floor, Stirling Sports Building, Devon Street West, NP, ph 06-759-0966 [mental.health@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mental.health@xtra.co.nz). [www.likemindstaranaki.org.nz](http://www.likemindstaranaki.org.nz)  
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