



TTTWON:
Te Taitokerau
Tangata Whai Ora Network



TE RAU ARA

July 2013

THE NETWORK



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View From the Top – by Kay Poppen

I love my journey to reach “The Top” of the Mangamuka Gorge and I love the drive through the Gorge.

Each time I travel to Kaitaia turning off at Ohaewai I tell myself “I am Home”, home in the Hokianga. Being home means: the potholes don’t perturb me; coming across a farmer running a herd of cattle down the road is great; and going a little slower enables me to reflect on the scenery: ti tree; gorse; native bush; native pigeons; fantails; and cobwebs on the fences glistening with the sun behind them. As I reach Umawera my feelings compound with excitement because not too many corners and I will start my journey through the Mangamuka Gorge.

Childhood memories engulf me – memories of trips to Kaitaia with my parents in our Thames Truck, later updated to a Landrover then to a Toyota Corolla; memories of a flask of tea and sandwiches all packed in a box for us to enjoy at the scenic reserve at the bottom of the Mangamuka Gorge.

A beautiful spot with a fresh water river running by as we sat on the riverbank, tuis singing, the branches of the native trees gently swaying in the flow of the breeze.

Thus our journey continues up the Mangamuka Gorge, speed not being a factor. The vehicle motor is not designed for speed so this enables me to enjoy the beauty on either side of me.

Slowly but surely we get to the top and I am able to look out and down the valley we have just travelled.

Tucked away off the road is a pull-in viewing area and on most occasions there would be cars pulled in and on many occasions the occupants would be tourists who enjoyed asking questions about the area, the names of the trees and the birds.

Many a time cameras clicked away enabling the visitors to take home photos of this beautiful scene to show others.

The “View From The Top” greets you with miles of tree tops all lovely and green, new sprouts budding, the beginning of new life to replace some of the older trees that were beginning to fade away.

The View From The Top gave way to peace and quiet, time for reflecting before setting off to Kaitaia to do our monthly shop and to know that we would get the view from the

top on our way home was always looked forward to.

So now as I frequently visit Kaitaia not only do I enjoy the company I am with, the people I am meeting with, but that I am going on a

wonderful trip down memory lane.



Consumer Education 2013

Consumer Education is still going strong with a core group of about twelve people and new people coming all the time. We have discussed all sorts of topics this year: Problem Solving, Anxiety and what to do about it, Compulsory Treatment Orders, Wellness and Recovery Plans, What do you do to have fun, Maria from 155 Community Law came and talked to us, Denise did the Human Rights Act, and Helen did Deep Relaxation too. If you are interested in becoming the driver in your own recovery, come along to Consumer Education. It's held every Monday (bar public holidays) at 1pm to 2pm at the TTTWON rooms 73 Water Street. See you there!

The Friday Forum

The Friday Forum has been running for three weeks. It was born out of discussions had in Consumer Education and elsewhere about the need for somewhere where consumers could gather together in an informal setting. Since Whau Valley changed to redHub due to a contract change, the ability for us to informally gather has been limited. It is hoped that the Friday Forum will gather support to see it became a consumer run group. So, if you are in town between 12 and 2pm on a Friday and you're looking for a coffee, a biscuit and some time in a consumer run space, we'll see you at the TTTWON rooms 73 Water Street.

Special Notice* Special Notice* Denise will be running the movie 'Buck' on the 5th of July. All about a special relationship between horse and man.

Creative Corner

Just Visiting

A chemical straitjacket held me fast
 When life for me was something past
 Electric shocks restoked the fires of life.
 But now I'm free again
 To wander and to wonder
 On the highroads of life.
 I've searched the corridors of madness
 And the alleys of insanity
 Just visiting the world beyond the edge

If

If airports weren't called JFK.
 If Martin Luther King was here today.
 If Mahatma Gandhi had had his say.
 If nuclear weapons weren't here to stay.
 If aids could just be kept at bay.
 If hatred would just fade away.
 If parks were safe for kids to play.
 If rainbows shone out every day.
 Perhaps the world wouldn't seem so gray.

MUSIC GROUPS

Written by Richard Dick (consumer networker)

Thursday Music Group

You may have heard, or maybe even participated in the music group that has been happening most Thursdays at the consumer networks premises in Water Street.

This group started on a high note in May 2013 when a number of locals gathered to share an afternoon of musical camaraderie.

There was a range of standard radio songs attempted on the first day which reflected the personal taste of music that each person brought with them. The very first song was Phil Collins "I can feel it in the air tonight" and although the start was slow, with a few practice runs the tune turned out really well and is now part of the music groups play list.

Other songs on the play list include; "Bring it on home" by Sonny Terry and Brownie Mc Ghee, "Under the board walk" by the Drifters, "Folsom prison blues" by Johnny Cash, "Turn your lights down low" and "Three little birds" by Bob Marley, "It only happens" by Renee Gayer and a number of other tunes.

The play list is slowly growing along with the music group in general and the development seems to be guided by the people who turn up and the songs that they bring with them. All in all, the

Consumer network premises in Water St is a fun place to be on a Thursday afternoon.

If the music group is something you would like to get involved in feel free to make your way to **73 Water Street every Thursday** and join in the fun, the singing **starts at 1.00pm.**

The Network Band

The Network Band has been playing together, with a few different line ups, for almost three years now and the band is still practicing every Tuesday at Water Street.

The Network Band has performed at a number of venues and locations for a variety of causes; one cause in particular is Mental Health Awareness Week and the band this year, as it has done for the last three years, will be participating in the anti discrimination and de-stigmatising campaign.

On a personal note being part of the band has been an inspirational and awesome experience for me and I am so glad to be part of the whole journey, I am sure that this view is shared by all the band members past and present.

If you would like to be involved in the band in anyway, supportive or as a member, please feel free to come down and join in. Band practice is held **every Tuesday at 73 Water Street and starts at 5.00pm.**

Feedback Forums

TTTWON has been asked by the DHB to gather feedback from service users across Northland, so that they can act upon the information collected to provide better and more relevant services to the people of the area. In the last month The Network has held two of these forums one in Kaitaia and one in Rawene. The forum in Kaitaia on 17th May was well attended – 21 people taking part, having their opinions, views and concerns on a series of topics recorded. We decided to record these forums for greater accuracy and also to capture some of the narrative around the bare facts. Our thanks go to all those who took part and to the service providers and Support Workers who helped with transport and encouragement to make it a success.

The feedback forum in Rawene was held on the 13th June at the Rawene Community hall.

There were 9 participants, a very good turnout considering the geographical isolation of many of the people who came. Once again, our thanks to the support workers who encouraged and enabled people to attend the forum. In Rawene, as in Kaitaia, we were able to capture material that reflects the views of service users concerning the mental health services that they receive.

We would encourage TTTWON members in Whangarei, Kaikohe and Dargaville to participate in the Forums to be held in those areas. They provide an avenue for our voices to be heard by the people who make the policies that shape the Mental Health services we receive and they give us a sense of ownership of our future

The Whangarei Forum is Tuesday 9 July at 73 Water Street, 11.00am to 1.30pm.

Mental Health Commissioner visits the Network.

Thirty plus people turned up to welcome a party of three from the Mental Health Commission and to give feedback on Mental Health and Addiction services – the good and the not so good aspects of services that have a major impact on TTTWON members. This was a fine effort by TTTWON members on a cold winter morning. Our thanks to all those who made that effort, especially those who came from as far afield as Dargaville and also to all the support workers and agencies who gave encouragement and assisted with transport. The three visitors were Lyn Lane the Mental Health Commissioner, Robyn Byers, Manager Nelson/Marlborough Mental Health Services and Jayden O'Brien of the Ministry of Health. They were somewhat surprised and very pleased at the strength of the turnout. The warmth and empathy they showed made people feel at ease about giving their views of the services that they use. Many of the people present spoke of their experiences, both positive and negative.

The Mental Health Commission has always advocated for and encouraged service users to take an active part in their recovery and their wellbeing. The information gathered by the Commission from service users and service providers is used in the development of Mental Health and Addiction policies of the Ministry of Health.

Shelley Foster, who has generously lined TTTWONs' walls with her artwork, presented Lyn Lane with one of her paintings and another was purchased by Robyn Byers at the end of the meeting. Well done Shelley!





Quieting the mind and the body

I believe that teaching relaxation techniques is a sympathetic companion to those who are being supported through the medical and psychiatric services to wellness. Self-help is the key to finding a technique that will suit you best.

Total relaxation is a true gift, one which you need to learn to give yourself. It means that your body can become completely loose and relaxed and your mind, clear of all thoughts, fears and anxieties.

You can be overwhelmed with recurring symptoms of anxiety, nervous tension and a constant stream of negative self talk, throughout your day. Your conscious mind may be inundated with thoughts and feelings and fantasies that trigger the feeling of being upset. Many of these thoughts replay unresolved issues of health, finances, or personal or work relationships. This restless mental replay of unresolved issues can reinforce the anxiety symptoms and be exhausting. It is important to know how to shut off the inner noise and quiet the mind.

Some forms of stress are necessary for life.

RELAXATION GROUP

You need stress for creativity, learning and your very survival. Stress is only harmful when it becomes overwhelming and interrupts the healthy state of equilibrium that your nervous system needs to remain in balance.

Unfortunately overwhelming stress has become an increasingly common characteristic of everyday living. When stressors throw your nervous system out of balance, learning relaxation techniques can bring you back into balance by producing the Relaxation Response – a state of deep calmness that is the opposite of the Stress Response. The Relaxation Response puts the breaks on and brings your mind and body back into a state of balance.

There is no single technique that is best for everyone. When choosing a relaxation technique you should consider your specific needs, preferences and fitness level and the way you tend to react to stress.

The right technique is one that resonates with you, fits your lifestyle, and is able to focus your mind and interrupt your every day thoughts in order to elicit your relaxation response.

If you are interested in learning what Relaxation technique will work for you come along to the Deep Relaxation Workshops at **TTWON every Wednesday afternoon from 5pm to 6pm.**

Benefits of Service User Involvement in the services they receive:

The principles of user involvement have continued to attract attention and greater importance has been afforded to involving members of the public, patients and service users in the delivery of public services. Service user involvement has become commonplace in the areas of disability, mental health and social care. Progress has been slower, however, in other areas such as substance misuse.

The benefits of effective service user involvement are well documented and can be observed at a number of levels. Some examples of service user involvement include evaluation forms, face-to-face interviews, peer group forums, service management involvement and national strategy forums. The variety of methods available to involve service users means that individuals can participate at a level that they feel comfortable with. Each method is of benefit to both service users and service providers and should be encouraged.

Benefits to Service Users

- Service management involvement provides individuals with a forum in which to raise issues and concerns in an appropriate manner and encourages active participation in treatment decisions.
- It contributes to the development of open and transparent working relationships where individuals are valued and listened to.
- At an individual level, meaningful involvement allows active participation in treatment decisions and prevents individuals from becoming passive recipients of services.
- It provides individuals with opportunities to share their knowledge and expertise of what works and what does not work.
- It creates opportunities for service users to influence service delivery and service planning at both local and national levels.
- Where effective, service user involvement can increase and maintain self-esteem and self-confidence and support their progression through recovery and rehabilitation.

Benefits to Service Providers

- They can learn more about the experiences of users and carers and encourage the development of closer working relationships between service users and staff.
- They can use these experiences to change current provision or develop additional services to meet the needs identified by its service users.
- They can encourage service users to express their views and use their energy and experience to make long-term improvements to service.
- They are able to use the information from service users to evidence outcome measures and report to stakeholders.
- It enables the development of transparent and open services and decision making processes.
- Effective service user involvement creates a working environment where both staff and service users feel comfortable about expressing personal opinion - both positive and negative.
- Service user involvement should be used inform training and reflection on practice.

Benefits to Service Funders and Planners

- They will be able to ensure that service provision meets the needs of the local population.
- Information from user involvement aids the identification of gaps in service delivery.
- It informs and contributes to service reviews.
- It improves funders and planners abilities to influence the national debate by having better local information.



TE TAITOKERAU TANGATA WHAI ORA NETWORK**Programmes at TTTWON, 73 Water St – current as at 1st June 2013.**

Monday – 1-2pm: Consumer Education Workshops with Kirsten Neckelson

8th July – Bipolar Disorder

15th July – Major Depression

22nd July – GROW presentation – Christian based support group

Tuesday 4.30-6.00: Music Group – The Network Band practice – all welcome

Wednesday 5.00-6.00pm: Deep Relaxation - helps relieve stress and anxiety

Thursday 1-3pm: Music Group – Singing plus

Friday 12-2pm: Friday Forum – Discussion group – Social inclusion

One off Events

Friday 9th July – **Feedback Forum** 11 am to 1.30 pm – 73 Water St, Whangarei

Friday 19th July – **Feedback Forum** 11 am to 1 pm – Mid North Motor Inn, 158 Broadway, Kaikohe

The Feedback Forums are being held all around Northland to inform the District Health Board about the views of mental health and addiction service users, the services they use, the good and the bad points about those services and how they could maybe be improved. As Networkers we would urge you to attend these forums and give your views – it is an opportunity to have some input into the services that you use. These forums are being voice recorded for greater accuracy but contributors are kept anonymous – names are removed before the information is passed to the DHB and confidentiality is assured

Programmes in Kaitaia

TTTWON members meeting 11am 12th July - Seminar Room, REAP 33 Puckey St, Kaitaia

AOD Peer Support Group – Kaitaia Community House, 12 Puckey Ave, Kaitaia.

Every second Friday 12th July, 26th July, 9th August, 23rd August, 6th September

