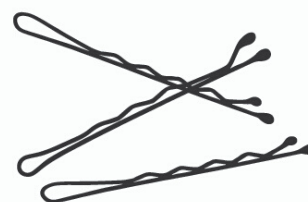
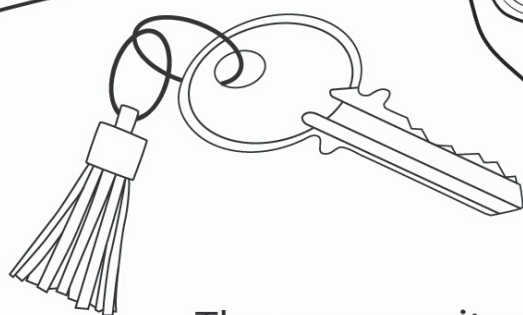


# Newtown News

Hui-Tanguru / February 2020



Singles  
Awareness +  
Palentine's Day  
Edition



The community zine by Newtown, for Newtown.  
Brought to you by the Newtown Community & Cultural Centre.

# Kia ora Newtown!

Kia ora tātou - hello everyone!



Ngā mihi o te tau hou pākehā - happy pākehā new year, I hope you all had a restful, safe and enjoyable summer break. I had a trip to Sydney to visit my whānau which was lovely, but with more than a dash of the apocalyptic, as it was (and still is) surrounded by catastrophic, climate change-fuelled bush fires. Love & solidarity to our Australian friends (and rage at the Australian government & polluters they support, like Adani - [www.stopadani.com](http://www.stopadani.com)). On the political buzz, I'm stoked that we have a first hand account of supporting migrants and refugees who are seeking a better life in the USA in this edition of the Newtown News - thanks to Anna for sharing her experiences with us.

Otherwise in this February's Newtown News we're celebrating the MOST important day of the month for luuuurve... Feb 13th, of course! This double whammy of a day marks 'Palentines Day' - a day to celebrate our love for all our friends and the important people in our lives who aren't partners - AND 'Singles Awareness Day' a day to celebrate ourselves!

Our society sets romantic relationships on a pedestal above all other relationships, but it's my friends and fams who have given me flowers, taken me on holidays, snorkelled with me, over-cafeinated with me, cried with me, laughed with me & made endless terrible jokes with me. We dance, walk, talk, tramp, swim and explore - they will stick around for the rest of my life. I wonder why on earth I should or could value these relationships less than a romantic one, when we brighten each others' lives so much (and bonus, they won't stamp on my heart!) I reckon all of our lives would be much darker without our mates.

The other person who's gonna stick around for (literally) my whole life, who I sometimes neglect and get pretty down on is ME! Self-care gives us more energy for the important things in life I reckon. So my plan for Feb 13th is to **1.** be kinder to me **2.** Tell my friends that I freakin' love them this day, and appreciate them a little (actually a lot) more all the other days too.

Ngā mihi - Ellie - [ellie@newtowncommunity.org.nz](mailto:ellie@newtowncommunity.org.nz)



Awesome cover art by Sharne Teh - check out more at [@sharneteh.creative](https://sharneteh.creative)  
Thanks for the support of our amazing local businesses! Please support them back!



Baobab Cafe

MOON

Peoples

*The views and opinions expressed in this publication are solely those of the original authors and other contributors. They do not necessarily reflect those of the Newtown Community & Cultural Centre.*

# Notorious NEWTowner

*Jan and Ellie kōrero about friends and 'Amigos' over lattes at Baobab.*

Jan is a true Wellingtonian! Despite spending 18 months gallivanting around the globe for work - to exotic locations like New York and Niue - she always found herself drawn back to Wellington 'because my family and friends are here'. And Newtown is the birthplace of the mental health organisation that Jan founded - 'Amigos Peer Support'!

Amigos is a volunteer run peer-support group for people who have experienced mental distress - Jan says peer support 'is about the community looking after ourselves', meaning the activities are all run by volunteers 'who are just other people experiencing the same kind of things'. At Amigos 'no one will tell you "you're mad" - we're welcoming and non-judgemental because we know what people are going through.' They run a wide range of activities to suit everyone - from walking groups to coffee catch-ups (at Baobab of course), curry lunches (at Curry Heaven, mmmmm!) to creative & art groups.

We talk about friendship and its importance for improving mental health - Jan says, 'it's harder to make friends when you're feeling down - but it is when you most need them' - and that's why Amigos exists - to facilitate those connections. 'I've made lasting friendships through the group, and I've seen other friendships blossoming as well.'

Jan puts in heaps of work, but you certainly can't be an Amigo alone, so she wants to give a huge shout out 'to all the committed volunteers'. As a self-confessed 'joiner-inner' Jan finds that she can become over-committed. Her top-tip for self care (other than joining one of the Amigos groups!) is: 'be prepared to say no, or say you have to go check your diary before committing to things - you don't have to do everything for everyone'.

Jan loves the cafes of Newtown 'I can't walk past a flapjack at Mr Bun & Baobab garden is also a fave spot - keep the vibe going Newtown!' Jan loves keeping up with current events (she's great in a quiz!), keeping fit and getting out and about for walks - 'it really clears the mind'. The Amigos' walking group's recommended Newtown walks are up into the Town Belt and around the zoo area.

Jan's other top-tip for wellness is simply to 'talk about it. The zipped-up-ness of NZ is changing, but you have to talk'. So get talking Newtown - preferably to an Amigo, who may well become a new friend.

Amigos relies entirely on volunteers - if you would like to join as a participant or group-leader check out their website: [www.amigospeersupport.nz](http://www.amigospeersupport.nz) or call Jan 021 211 8808 or Steve 04 385 4752 (9-5 M-F)





# A WHITE MIGRANT

Shortly after the United States (US) ratified its Constitution, the 'Naturalization Act' of 1790 established that citizenship was open to "any alien, being a free white person." So, from its beginning, US law assigns value according to race. Prizing whiteness continues through 240 years of US policy, and is now on blatant display in the 'Remain in Mexico' policy, designed to keep (non-white) asylum seekers out of the US. This concerns me (in both senses) because I myself am a migrant, born in the US and living in Aotearoa for eight years.

News stories about migrants in cages shocked the world last year. But not many know that more than 55,000 have been forced to wait in Mexico for the 'privilege' of entering those cages. If they pass an interview there, asylum seekers are returned to Mexico to wait for multiple court appearances. Many wait a year in Mexico, if they manage to progress their case at all.

I witnessed this illegal and inhumane process while volunteering in Tijuana, Mexico last November. It's impossible to overstate how much trauma people move through while continuing the hard work of keeping themselves and their children alive and in systems that want them gone. Mexican asylum seekers wait in the place they need to flee, and non-Mexicans face high risk of getting kidnapped, extorted, or killed.

In immigration court, I heard a judge state that what the government was doing to people was illegal. And that there was nothing he could do to stop it. Recent reports also reveal that the government is deporting people who've won their cases, by falsifying documents with future court dates that don't exist.

It's easy to despair that no one cares, yet surrounding this callous and sloppy bureaucracy are a host of free services, operating on oily-rag smells. I volunteered with one, Al Otro Lado's Border Rights Project ([alotrolado.org](http://alotrolado.org)). They provide free legal services so people know their rights, perfect the forms, and have a better shot in court.



# AT THE BORDER

By Anna  
V. Rogers



**Left:** Children's artwork made on 9 November 2019, while waiting at El Chaparral border crossing in Tijuana, Mexico. Photo credit: Anna V. Rogers

**Background:** Border wall at Tijuana. Photo credit: Wikipedia

No government gives them a cent, and very few people get paid. One of the things I love most about it is that everyone does everything. Everyone takes out rubbish. Everyone makes sandwiches. Nobody's law degree or finances make them more important than anyone else. It's an emotionally charged and fulfilling environment to work in.

You may be wishing these asylum seekers could come to Aotearoa, where they'd never face such hardship. However, the 16 asylum seekers imprisoned in Mt. Eden last year challenge that belief. And the absurd visa delays migrants face here put asylum seekers in dangerous traps. Here too, good people such as the Asylum Seekers Support Trust ([asst.org.nz](http://asst.org.nz)) provide the care the government won't.

As climate breakdown continues, even more people will have to move in order to survive. Now is the time to pay attention to countries' immigration policies, especially the countries we come from, and especially the country we live in. Politicians will soak up power by punishing non-white migrants, as they've done for centuries.

**The only thing that can stop them is us.**



# Crocodile

By Charlotte Kelly  
doorscreature.wordpress.com



in the middle of winter  
on a dark Sunday night  
rising above the lifeguards' silent judgement,  
we rode the pool inflatables -  
you on a generic dinosaur,  
cheerful yet stately,  
me straddling a low-slung crocodile  
mounted with difficulty,  
sturdy once aboard  
spreadeagled, laughing, shivery in the echoey air,  
artificial reptile skin coarse on wet thighs -  
like dry humping a bouncy castle -  
i could only move it by lying on my stomach  
and sort of doggy paddling -  
super elegant, obviously -  
and I said 'let's race' and  
you pushed my croc backwards with your foot and  
wobbled off  
looking somehow quite poised  
leaving me gasping in mock outrage  
splashing ineffectively in your wake  
through the gatorade blue  
and so you won by cheating,  
I hope you enjoyed your hollow victory  
the people in the gym  
went about their business  
looking down through the glass at  
two grown women astride  
grinning plastic animals,  
mighty beasts in a race to the end  
their jockeys flipping the bird in polka dots  
laughter swallowed up in the cold white space  
as Monday morning prepared its notes



# Love songs...

## Lizzo - Soulmate

Got a scumbag ex who got into a new relationship with your mutual friend 5 mins after you broke up? Lizzo's song about being her own soulmate is everything you need right now. Revel in the fact that while you're focusing on loving yourself, your ex not only lost YOU, they also couldn't stand even 5 minutes of their own company! Be your own soulmate and remember, "True love finally happens when you by yourself" [bit.ly/36SoEd7](https://bit.ly/36SoEd7)

## Miss Eaves - Paper Mache (Single AF)

This song will get you celebrating the single life and all the the learning, crafting, and hanging with your crew you can get done without a pesky partner dragging you down. Bonus excellent video about throwing yourself a party while wearing a dinosaur onesie. YESSS! "I'm alone, I love myself, So alone is fun as hell" [bit.ly/2Npeglp](https://bit.ly/2Npeglp)

## Tierra Whack - F\*ck Off

This is part of Tierra Whack's epic 16 minute long mini-album, with amazing video to match - watch/listen to the whole thing, but definitely watch F\*ck Off for when you need a bit of inspo on what to say when you bump into your ex and need to brush 'em off: "I hope your ass breaks out in a rash, you remind me of my deadbeat dad...F\*ck off!" [bit.ly/2QQNdBE](https://bit.ly/2QQNdBE)

## Nina Simone - Feeling Good

For when you need to remember that new starts are a great thing, "It's a new dawn, it's a new day and I'm feeling goooooood!" [bit.ly/35SgcsY](https://bit.ly/35SgcsY)

## Zedd & Kehlani - Good Thing

A reminder that you're good enough for yourself and probably no one else is! "I already got a good thing with me" Bonus points for a video where Kehlani waits tables at a big fancy event full of snobs and wreaks havoc. [bit.ly/35Salym](https://bit.ly/35Salym)

# ...to your single self!

# What's the happs?

*At Newtown Community & Cultural Centre (corner of Colombo / Rintoul Streets)*

## **FRINGE FESTIVAL - Another Day in Paradise- 28th Feb-1st March 7pm**

It's Another Day In Paradise, and a parrot just woke up far from home. Can she get back to happy? If you've ever been too depressed to grow up, or you're curious, come ramble with me as I look for the light. Tickets \$5 concession / \$10 general admission at [www.fringe.co.nz/show/43755](http://www.fringe.co.nz/show/43755)

## **Open Dance - weekly on Mondays, 7- 8.30pm**

'Let's get together, play, move our bodies and be as weird as we are!' Dance classes are collaborative and open to all bodies of all abilities! Koha.

## **Cueca Music & Dance workshops- weekly on Thursdays 5.45-6.50pm**

Musicians & dancers of all levels are welcome to come & learn some Latin dances & beats at this social Cueca club! Cueca is traditional music of Chile - bring an instrument or just yourself. Koha. [luis.flores.loyola@gmail.com](mailto:luis.flores.loyola@gmail.com)

## **Crop Swap Hui-Tanguru - Feb 8th 10.15am**

Share/swap excess veggies/crops/crafts and meet rad people! More info: [bit.ly/201Nn7i](http://bit.ly/201Nn7i)

*At Newtown Hall (Daniell St)*

## **Mindfulness Works course - 7.15-8.15pm Thursdays for 4 weeks starting 20th Feb**

This 4-week course will introduce you to mindfulness & meditation. Info, costs & registration at [bit.ly/37gtt0a](http://bit.ly/37gtt0a)

## **Weekend raranga with Tanya Weaves - 1-9pm 22nd & 23rd Feb**

Tanya is back with an intensive noho-style harakeke weaving class! Boost your skills over this weekend, whether you're a beginner or an experienced weaver. \$120 full / \$90 concession. Limited space so bookings essential - email [tanya.milne@gmail.com](mailto:tanya.milne@gmail.com) to register.

*At Network Newtown (9-11 Constable St)*

## **FREE 2 week Meditation course - Tuesdays Feb 4th & 11th, 6.30pm**

What is important in our lives? What is not? In our challenging modern world, meditation brings clarity, purpose, simplicity & calm. Learn this valuable life skill. Call/text to register: 0212168343

*Elsewhere in Wellington*

## **Self-Love Dance Party: Anti-Valentines Celebration - Feb 14th, 8.30pm**

A celebration of singledom, self-sufficiency, boss babes and dope tunes. IVY bar, 63 Cuba St. \$6 pre-sale/\$10. [bit.ly/3akCOWs](http://bit.ly/3akCOWs)

## **Waitangi Alert - Feb 6th, from 12pm @ WGTN Waterfront, behind Te Papa**

For your more radical Waitangi Day speakers & beats, join this alternative gathering hosted by Pōneke Solidarity Alliance - Ihumātao. Check their Facebook for more deets & updated times [bit.ly/30Zi0zM](http://bit.ly/30Zi0zM)

**Get in touch!**

[www.newtowncommunity.org.nz](http://www.newtowncommunity.org.nz)

[www.facebook.com/Newtown.Community.Centre](https://www.facebook.com/Newtown.Community.Centre)

04 389 4786 / [ellie@newtowncommunity.org.nz](mailto:ellie@newtowncommunity.org.nz)

