

The Newtown News

October 2018



Brought to you by The Newtown Community & Cultural Centre

Kia Ora Newtown

Kia ora all,

Winter is usually a bit of a tough time, whether it's because of those high power bills or because no-one gets to see your cute outfit under the seventeen layers of thermals you have to put on to go out. The first signs of warmer weather are finally beginning to appear in Newtown and I, for one, am very glad of it! There's nothing like a bit of Wellington sunshine to warm through those cold winter bones. Eryn (Coordinator extraordinaire!) is away on leave, catching some real rays over in Europe, so I've happily stepped into her role temporarily to bring you the Newtown News this month.

As always, a lot has been happening at the Newtown Community & Cultural Centre, with the 'Our Town, Newtown' meeting to show off all the new upgrade concept designs (which you can have a look at in this month's issue), an e-vehicle and e-bike showcase including a test drive, and, as always, all the wonderful exercise and community classes. Meeting all the regulars - and excited new faces - here at the Centre has been one of the many perks I've been able to enjoy while covering for Eryn.

The focus of our newsletter this month revolves around Mental Health Awareness Week which runs from 8-14 October. We've got a great page on Mindfulness in Newtown, celebrating some of the great little spots we have around our community to find peace and comfort. My personal favourite is staring out the big windows at Peoples Coffee, watching the world go by, as I get my much-needed caffeine hit.

Mental health is an issue that affects all of us, in one way or another. Whether it is a close friend or loved one struggling, or someone we know from around our community, or maybe even ourselves, it will touch us all at some point in our lives. One of the things I find most important with this issue is to reduce the stigma and assumptions associated with mental ill-health. Mental ill-health doesn't look just one way, and it is not only expressed through tears and sorrow. The barista who smiles at you as they make your morning coffee, the person behind you in line at the market, or the couple laughing as they walk down the street, could all be struggling with difficult thoughts and emotions. It is important to make sure those around you know that you are there for them when they need it. Support, connection and community are important parts of dealing with and overcoming mental ill-health. There are services and resources available out there for yourself and your loved ones, and I've listed a couple below:

Lifeline – 0800 LIFELINE (0800 543 354) or free text HELP to 4357

Depression Helpline – 0800 11757 or free text 4202

Ngā mihi,

Lenny Zuccarello

newtowns.newsletter@gmail.com

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MINDFULNESS IN NEWTOWN

HERE AT NEWTOWN COMMUNITY CENTRE WE RECKON MINDFULNESS ISN'T JUST FOR YOGA CLASSES! MINDFULNESS CAN REDUCE STRESS, CONTROL ANXIETY, IMPROVE SLEEP AND EVEN LENGTHEN ATTENTION SPAN. WE HOPE THIS HANDY WEE GUIDE WILL INSPIRE YOU TO TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO BE STILL.

FIND YOUR FAVOURITE CALM SPOT IN NEWTOWN

HERE'S SOME OF
OUR FAV PLACES TO
CHILL:

- UNDER A TREE IN CARRARA PARK
- A COSY COUCH AT BAUBAB CAFE
- A WINDOW SEAT AT NEWTOWN LIBRARY

- ① GET COMFY!
- ② BE STILL
- ③ TAKE A BREATH IN THROUGH YOUR NOSE AND OUT YOUR MOUTH
- ④ NOTICE HOW IT FEELS
- ⑤ WAIT A MOMENT, THEN REPEAT
- ⑥ RANDOM THOUGHTS WILL COME AND GO
- ⑦ DON'T STRESS, JUST LET THEM DO THEIR THING!
- ⑧ THEN RETURN TO THINKING ABOUT YOUR BREATH.
- ⑨ CONGRATULATIONS, YOU JUST MEDITATED!

Ka ora pea ki a koe, ka ora koe i au

Perhaps I survive because of you and you survive because of me

By Quentin Abraham

Kia ora koutou te whānau o Newtown

One in five of us will experience a mental health difficulty this year, and more than half of us will go through mental distress or mental health problems at some point in our lives. Mental Health Awareness Week, 8–14 October, is a timely reminder that none of us are immune from experiencing this kind of distress or having a loved one in need of support. It is part of the fabric of our lives.

Mental health difficulties are now understood as more than a disturbance of your biological or neurological systems to be treated only with prescribed medication or self-medication with illegal drugs and alcohol. Medication can offer temporary respite from symptoms; a little more sleep, a little more relaxation, easing the way in relationships and perhaps less remembering of past traumas. However, long term we need to deal with the causes of the problem/s and this usually takes more time and effort, involving others at home, at school, at work and in our communities.

Many who approach mental health professionals seek diagnosis. A diagnosis can comfort an individual and their whānau by reducing a sense of blame for the problem. A diagnosis is sometimes seen as the way to receive the level of help required when services are rationed. Also there is the hope that signs and symptoms of their problem will give clues about what to do next. Diagnostic systems are rarely precise enough to provide helpful information about what kind of support is required as they focus on the symptoms and not the underlying causes.

Diagnosis also focuses on the individual rather than a more holistic view. Indigenous psychologies tend to embody holistic ways to promote wellbeing. For example, Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Whā encapsulates a view of health and wellness that values all four dimensions of taha wairua (spiritual health), taha hinengaro (mental health), taha tinana (physical health) and taha whānau (family health). I remember the incredulous look

from a kuia as I told her I had returned from a Psychology Conference. She genuinely could not understand that you would go somewhere to largely discuss people's wellbeing only in terms of their individual mind and behaviour (hinengaro).

A wider understanding of wellbeing means we shift our attention to strengths and what we want our lives to be about. Increasingly, high profile people in our communities such as All Black John Kirwan are speaking out to help reduce the stigma and blame of mental health difficulties. They offer practical examples about how to recover and/or live a full and meaningful life with difficulties. One of the wonderful things about living in Newtown is the general tolerance of diversity. Whether it is a different colour of skin, a different language or a different style of dressing, we are all part of this community. We know that a sense of belonging is vital to our mental wellbeing and physical health.

There is now well established evidence that poverty is the root of many mental health difficulties. Inequality, exclusion and colonialism have had disproportionate impacts on Tangata whenua, LGBTQI+, those with disabilities and people who have experienced major life traumas. Building resilient, caring, equitable and knowledgeable communities will go some way to reducing the risk of people experiencing psychological problems.

Many of us are active in national and local projects to reduce inequality. Even if poverty is not the only cause of distress, being hungry, having no home, being fearful of violence and having no meaningful employment make it much more difficult for individuals and those helping to make changes.

The People's Mental Health Report contains many stories of those who have experienced mental health distress and wished that they could access psychological support earlier. It is this demand from our communities that prompted the government's Mental Health Inquiry which will report back at the end of October 2018. There are promising signs that

they will consider changes to our country that might reduce distress.

A shift away from addressing symptoms means we ask those in distress not “what’s wrong with you?” but “what’s happened to you?” This question helps us understand mental health differently and make practical changes in the communities in which these people live. For example, Ahikaa is a non-clinical programme that seeks to give hope and purpose by developing an entrepreneurial mindset. Research indicates that for those who overcame childhood adversity there was no ‘one magic bullet’, “Rather it was a combination of people’s own evolving thinking about their childhoods and subsequent lives; being supported and encouraged by others; and developing aspirations to live a better life. A particular motivation was to create a better life for their own children and for their family and whānau”. Individual teachers at school were important, as was the opportunity to re-define themselves with meaningful work after leaving school.

The Mental Health Foundation proposes five ways to wellbeing:

1. **CONNECT** (me whakawhanaunga) - talk and listen, be there, feel connected
2. **GIVE** (tukua) – your time, your words, your presence
3. **TAKE NOTICE** (me aro tonu) – remember the simple things that give you joy
4. **KEEP LEARNING** (me ako tonu) – embrace new experiences, see opportunities, surprise yourself
5. **BE ACTIVE** (me kori tonu) – do what you can, enjoy what you do, move your mood

Go to our local Newtown Community Centre or library to find out all the ways you can improve and maintain your wellbeing right here, including low cost Yoga, volunteering with the Timebank, free Friday lunchtime soup, repair workshops, te reo Māori conversation classes, drop in centres and gardening projects.

Mental Health First Aid provides preventative educational programmes to equip local groups to respond positively to initial mental health concerns (see St Johns and CoLiberate for information).

Our communities, the people who know us well, are always going to be the people most likely to be on hand if there is mental health distress. Often these difficulties are managed locally without any external support. However there may be times when there is no whānau support, a crisis escalates very quickly or everyone is really stuck. This is the time to approach a psychologist or another mental health professional.

Now it’s time to leave my desk for a walk on the Southern walkway, especially as this year’s Mental Health Awareness theme is Let nature in, strengthen your wellbeing – Mā te taiao kia whakapakari tōu oranga!

Ngā mihi maioha ki a koutou i te wā o te kōwhai

Quentin Abraham
Registered Psychologist,
Greenstone Consultants

FURTHER HELP

Need to Talk
Free call or text 1737 any time for support from a trained counsellor.

Youthline
0800 376 633,
free text 234, email
talk@youthline.co.nz or online chat.

Samaritans
0800 726 666.

Lifeline
0800 543 354
(0800 LIFELINE) or
free text 4357 (HELP)

1 Elliott, M., & Cloet, A. (2017). People’s Mental Health Report. Retrieved from <https://www.peoplesmentalhealthreport.com/>

2 OIA and DIA. (2018). Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction: Questions and Answers <https://www.mentalhealth.inquiry.govt.nz/about-the-inquiry/questions-and-answers/>

3 Carswell, S., Kaiwai, H., o-Hinerangi, M., Lennan, M., & Paulin, J. (2017). Journeys of resilience: from adverse childhood to achieving adulthood. Retrieved from http://superu.govt.nz/sites/default/files/Journeys-of-resilience_0.pdf p78



The Wellington City Council has allocated \$3.4 million to upgrade the Newtown Community & Cultural Centre, Network Newtown and Newtown Hall on Daniell Street. The Newtown Residents Association, the Newtown Community & Cultural Centre and the Wellington City Council are working together to ensure the people of Newtown are at the centre of shaping the future of Newtown's community facilities.

WSP Opus Architects have facilitated two design workshops over the last couple of months to hear your thoughts on what changes should be made to the three sites and gain your feedback on their initial concept design drawings. At the next workshop, the architects will present some further-developed concept designs for your comment. This might be the last chance you'll have to comment on the concept designs, so don't miss the opportunity!

Third Workshop - Further-Developed Concept Designs

Saturday 27 October, 1-3pm

Newtown Community & Cultural Centre, corner of Rintoul and Colombo Streets

Drop in and have a chat to our architects about the options presented, check out the physical models they've made and enjoy the company of your Newtown community. We would love to see you and your family there and hear your thoughts.

Concept Designs from Workshop 2

The images on the following three pages are some of the initial concept design options put together by WSP Opus. They've taken your feedback from the last year and a half of consultation processes and put together some ideas we hope you'll like for upgrades to the Newtown Community & Cultural Centre, Network Newtown and Newtown Hall.

We don't know how much these ideas will cost yet, and chances are we won't be able to afford the 'dream big' option for all three sites, but I reckon we'll still get some great upgrades!

In this newsletter we're giving you a sneak peak at one option (of either two or three) for each building. You can find us on Facebook or visit our website www.newtowncommunity.org.nz/our-town-newtown.html to check out the remaining concepts and get more info on the background of the 'Our Town, Newtown' facility upgrade process.

We'd love to hear your thoughts on the concept designs, so please email them through to renee@newtowncommunity.org.nz before Monday 8 October.

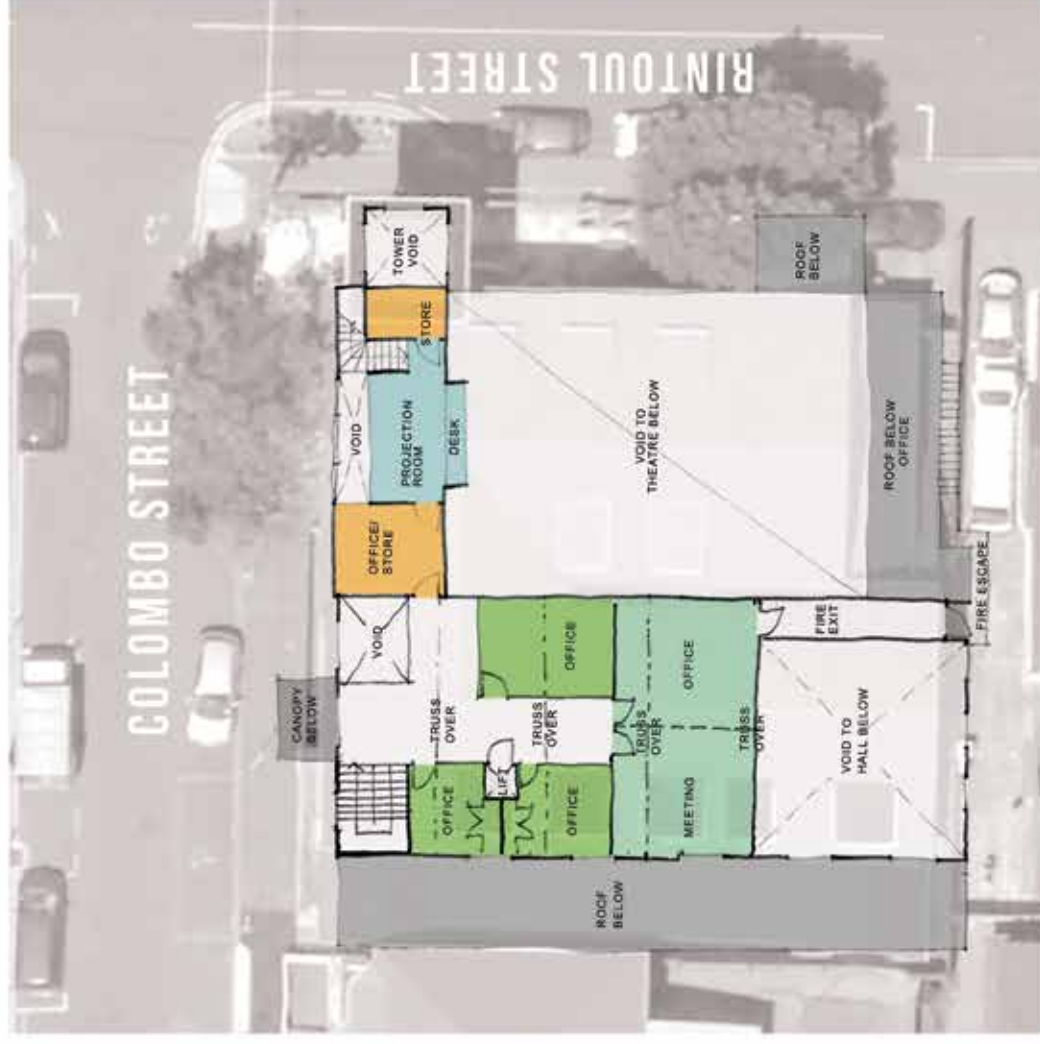
Enjoy!

NCCC
CONCEPT LAYOUT OPTION 2



GROUND FLOOR

To view remaining concept designs visit www.newtowncommunity.org.nz/our-town-newtown.html



FIRST FLOOR



NETWORK NEWTOWN

CONCEPT LAYOUT OPTION 1



To view remaining concept designs visit www.newtowncommunity.org.nz/our-town-newtown.html

NEWTOWN HALL

CONCEPT LAYOUT OPTION 2



GROUND FLOOR

To view remaining concept designs visit www.newtowncommunity.org.nz/our-town-newtown.html

Notorious NEWTowner

Anna Porter sits in the sun for a yarn with Newtown Citizens Advice Bureau manager Lyndon Smith...



Originally training in hotel management, Lyndon took a career shift into IT later in life when he eventually got sick of hotel shift work. Picking up a side job of development and training during his study at polytechnic, he was offered a permanent role after a colleague had “literally dropped dead”.

From there, his career in the field of Education and Information Technology Training flourished, and he found himself lecturing in various universities around the world, among a variety of other contract roles. But his real passion is in staff training and development, which he gets to “indulge in” with his current role at the CAB; a job he knew he wanted when he first volunteered there five years ago, and a position he feels extremely privileged to be in, working with an amazing group of volunteers: “I get to go home at the end of every day and say ‘I love my job!’”.

Born in the UK, but growing up in Nelson since the age of eight, Lyndon is a guy who likes to get around: Picton (regrettably), Wellington (multiple stints), Dunedin (home to his first B&B business), Ras Al Khaimah (where?), and a bunch of other places in between, it soon becomes apparent that Lyndon’s attitude to taking chances and making the best of any situation has moved him around the world.

He tells me how he bought his current home in Island Bay: after spotting a house for sale online whilst still living in Nelson, he emails “I want it” to his partner (who fortunately replies back with “Buy it”), and makes an offer on a house he’s never even stepped into. I’m a little astonished that he can make such a big decision so quickly and with so little information: “It’s all about just going for it”, he shrugs, but is quick to add that he also feels he’s been lucky in life.

After some more probing, he admits things haven’t always initially gone so smoothly: “I was bored one day at work and applied online for a job in the UAE, then soon forgot all about it”. A couple of middle-of-the-night phone calls later, he found himself accepting a job he knew little about, at a university whose location he wasn’t entirely sure of.

The first night in his house he hated it, and with nothing but a mattress, he cried his eyes out. “But”, he says, “A week later the furniture arrived, and everything started to eventually sort itself out. You just have to make the best of it, don’t you?”

I may not agree on impulse buying, but I can agree with that! You can catch Lyndon with the team at CAB Newtown; open Monday – Thursday 9.30am – 3.00pm and Friday till 12.30pm for free information, advice and support.

Cartoon Corner



What's the Happs?

**At the Newtown Community &
Cultural Centre, corner Rintoul &
Colombo Streets, Newtown**

Nobody Gets Out Alive

In a world where a basic funeral costs \$10K, death can be an expensive and stressful time for some families. This evening features a series of small talks that will cover the things you need to think about to ensure your passing is peaceful and stress-free for you and your family. It will cover some alternatives to the classic funeral, exploring both environmentally-friendly and cheaper options. Tuesday 16 October, 6-8pm. By donation. For more info contact info@newtowncommunity.org.nz or 389 4786. Registration not necessary, just show up.

Newtown on Film

Take a ride on an elephant, ferris wheel or the last tram to Newtown in this screening that showcases Newtown and its surrounds, drawn from the collections of Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision and screening as part of Wellington Heritage Week. Join us to take a step back in time to how Wellington used to be. Three screenings of the film: 2pm and 6pm on Tuesday 23 October at the Newtown Community Centre and 7pm on Saturday 27 October at Ngā Taonga. Tickets are \$5 from Eventfinda or you can pay cash on the door.

Gutenberg! The Musical!

Red Scare's final show of 2018 is the off-Broadway parody musical 'Gutenberg! The Musical!' 'Gutenberg! The Musical!' is a hilarious spoof of musical theatre conventions and a high-octane performance for two virtuosic comedians who must juggle dozens of roles simultaneously, as well as a heart-warming underdog story and a celebration of friendship. Shows run 4-13 October, 7.30pm. Tickets from Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/530863937325091/>

Harakeke Weaving Workshops

Learn the fundamentals of harakeke harvesting, preparation and tikanga Māori required for weaving your own flax work creations. Kete Whiri - Create your own kete! Learn how to harvest & strip harakeke to make a basic kete with a plaited base. 6 & 7 October, 1-4pm, \$40 (\$30 concession); 2 time credit spaces also available. Waikawa - Make your own Waikawa baskets - fun, no prep, heavy duty, multi-use baskets. 13 October, 1-4pm. \$20 (\$15 concession); 2 time credit spaces also available. Spaces limited, registration essential by emailing tanya.milne@gmail.com

Dances of Africa - NEW CLASS

Shake, shimmy and groove to the soulful rhythms of Africa, led by Jenny Bloomfield and accompanied with live drumming by Simon Elwell & the drummers of African Beats NZ. You will be guided through a warm up, learn some moves, and put the choreography to music for an interactive high energy experience, followed by a relaxing stretch, so you leave feeling great! Bring water and come ready to have fun! 7:15pm-8:15pm Thursdays, starting 18 October, \$10/class. Contact Jenny at jenbloomfield@gmail.com.

Newtown Crop Swap

Crop Swap is on Saturday 13 October (and every 2nd Saturday of the month). Bring surplus or homemade kitchen/garden goods, any amount welcome. Homemade crafts also welcome. Items like garden produce, plants, seeds, ferments/preserves, baking, homemade cosmetics/toiletries and art are all great! Crop Swap is a place to share resources and meet others in the community. Contact cropswapnewtown@gmail.com or visit 'Newtown Crop Swap' on Facebook for more details. Please arrive by 9.45am. Koha for room hire.