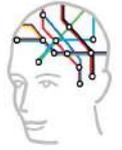


ISSUE

14

Momentum

MHAPS
Mental Health
Advocacy and Peer Support
Together on the road to wellbeing

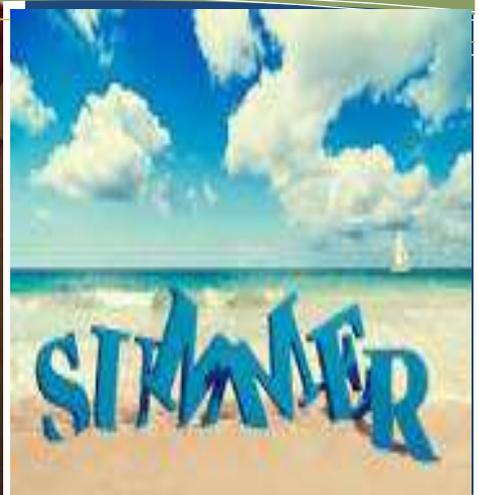
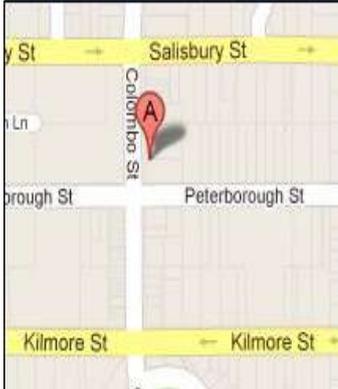


SUMMER

together on the road to well-being...

2017-18

WE ARE HERE



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Momentum is published by

THE LEARNING EXCHANGE

Editor: Ian Johnson



Feeling okay about feeling bad is good for your mental health

14,/9/2017: Harvard Health blog :David R. Topor, PhD, MS-HPEd, Contributor

When you have a negative emotion, are you upset or disappointed in yourself? Do you feel “bad” or “guilty” about this emotion? If so, you may be at risk for poorer longer-term psychological health.

A **study** in the July 2017 *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* looked at the psychological health of people who accept, rather than negatively judge, their emotional experiences. Researchers found that accepting these experiences led to fewer negative emotions when confronted with daily stressors.

The article reported on three separate, but related, studies that explored how accepting negative emotions, rather than reacting to them, affects a person’s psychological health.

The first study aimed to see whether accepting emotions was associated with greater psychological health, and if this association was moderated by several demographic variables. Undergraduate students at the University of California at Berkley completed evaluations to assess acceptance, stress level, and psychological health. The researchers found that accepting mental health experiences was associated with greater psychological health across a range of demographic variables including gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. Further, results indicated that the benefits to psychological health were associated with accepting the emotions associated with a negative event, rather than the situation *that triggered* those emotions.

continued on page 2>>>>>

>>>>>>> continued from page 1

In the second study, the authors examined a potential explanation for how the tendency to accept negative emotions is related to psychological health. They explored whether accepting one's mental experiences helps to decrease negative emotions when experiencing stressors. A consistent reduction in negative emotions should, in time, improve overall psychological health.

Again, a group of undergraduates completed questionnaires related to acceptance and to their emotional responses to a stressful task completed in the lab. Results indicated that by habitually accepting emotions and thoughts, people experienced a lower degree of negative emotion when in stressful situations.

Finally, the authors wanted to see if these results held up for people other than college students. They followed people in a Denver community for a six-month period. These study volunteers completed measures of acceptance, psychological health, and stress, and kept nightly diaries for two weeks identifying the degree of negative emotion felt when experiencing stressors that day.

Results indicated that people who habitually accept their emotional experiences were more likely to report greater psychological health six months later. This was true regardless of gender, ethnicity or socio-economic status. Further, people who accepted these emotions were less likely to respond negatively to stressors. That is, people who routinely accept their emotions and thoughts when under stress, experience less daily negative emotion during these times. This in turn is associated with increased psychological health six months later.

Taken together, these three studies highlight the benefits of accepting emotions and thoughts, rather than judging them, on psychological health. It seems like common sense. When a stressful situation causes negative emotions, accepting feelings of frustration or upset — rather than trying to pretend you're not upset, or beating yourself up for feeling this way — reduces guilt and negative self-image. Over time, this will in turn lead to increased psychological health.

moving, moving, moving, keep those people moving.....

No, this is not a promo for exercise, although exercise is certainly involved. Since the February 22 2011 earthquake we have moved twice, we are about to move yet again to new offices. In between the second and this upcoming move the whole organisation moved from the first floor of current premises to the second and back again in the space of just six months. But wait this more. Our tiny team, Hannah and me had no sooner settled back into our offices on the first floor than we were asked to move again to our current location and that was just earlier this year. Over that time I also personally move house –twice. I am diagnosing us with (something I think I've invented) -'moving fatigue.'

Believe it or not my purpose is not (just) to complain but to once again claim fellowship with those of you for whom the ground may have settled but the consequences of the earthquakes are still rolling on. I know that for some people earthquake induced changes have been profound and perhaps even also positive but as Gerry Brownlee (remember him?) famously said 'there will be winners and losers.'

What always resonates strongly with me is how powerfully, and with what clear intention some people are able to move forward, and, with a bit of help, create a new and better life. Most often that is evident with people who complete the RecoveryWorks programme. Most people that is. For some however more time is needed because their experience of anxiety was always complicated by other issues that are beyond the scope of the programme to resolve. Helping them to shed or even better manage their anxiety however creates more free space and energy for the other work to take place.

A highlight for me over the last few month was Aaron McLoughlin's *Themes*' talk 'You Can Sleep.' Up until listening to him I had thought that I'd heard and read everything there was about sleep, that is principally those useful messages about sleep hygiene, mindfulness, breathing, tension release etc. Aaron acknowledged the value of these things but importantly he had new insights and new techniques. We are talking with him about a workshop or two in 2018.

On behalf of the staff here at MHAPS, **Merry Xmas** and we hope that 2018 will meet your best expectations.

Ian Johnson, Editor

The more things change, the more they stay the same...

As I write this, we here at MHAPS are getting our breath back from a fortnight of farewells. Two long-standing members of staff are moving on to new adventures, and we have gathered to celebrate them both formally and informally in as many ways as we could, and in as many ways as we needed to.

Phil from the peer support team, along with his wife and their baby, is moving to the North Island. Phil has been with MHAPS from the start in 2011, and before that was the very first coordinator employed for the



Awareness consumer network. He has touched many lives in his time with us, both colleagues and the many peers he has worked with over the years. And not to forget the dozens of people he has interviewed for the Quiet Minds radio show on Plains FM.

At the same time, our beloved General Manager Sue Ricketts is gearing up for her well-deserved planned retirement at the end of this year. Sue already had a big job to do in 2011, promoted to lead three small to middling NGOs as they merged to become MHAPS – a job made even bigger by the February 2011 earthquake, striking just a few weeks before the merger became official, and suddenly giving her a whole new set of priorities to juggle.

Sue has absolutely put the “general” into General Manager. You’re as likely to find her offering you a cuppa as you walk in the door as you are to find her representing MHAPS at a providers’ forum; offering support and information to a distressed person on the phone, responding to the media, picking up a hammer for running repairs (or a toilet brush!) – whatever is needed, Sue has done it.

Phil doesn’t like blowing his own trumpet, and Sue doesn’t like being the centre of attention. But I have no qualms in saying both of you have made a difference – in our lives, in others’ lives – and both of you have inspired us. You leave us richer and wiser for having worked alongside you.

Sue’s legacy for MHAPS includes a stable financial base and strong governance, which have seen us pick up new contracts and new staff throughout her term, including in the last year.

But I think what most of us will remember Sue for is the warmth of her welcome. The culture of manaakitanga Sue has created is one of the most striking things people notice about MHAPS, and another key part of her legacy that I am committed to maintaining.

You may have heard we are looking for new premises. The lease for our current site, signed in 2012 when the central city looked very different, and we were a smaller organisation, expires in June next year. One of the key priorities in our search is accessibility – both physical and emotional. It is so important to us to offer a human connection right from the first moment you walk in.

So there are a lot of changes happening – but the important things here will not change. **You may find us in a new location in the next few months, but you will find the same warm welcome awaits you.** There will be some new faces in the peer support team soon, some new groups and programmes on offer in the new year, but the commitment to connecting and learning together remains.

Keep in touch! Meanwhile, all the very best to you and those you care about over the holiday season.

Fiona Clapham Howard, Te Kaihautū/Service Director (from 11/12/17)

New guidelines warn against using medication too early to treat anxiety



Anxiety affects women's health more than heart disease and kidney failure, but new guidelines make drugs a last-option treatment. The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) has overhauled its guidelines for treating anxiety. It recommends small interventions such as lifestyle changes or e-therapy as a first port of call.

Face-to-face therapy came in second. Medication was advised after six weeks if symptoms did not improve. The guidelines warn against patients taking benzodiazepines such as Xanax for long periods. Previous guidelines published in 2003 recommended Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) and antidepressants as the first line of treatment.

One in five New Zealanders have an anxiety disorder. International research shows it causes more days off work than diabetes, arthritis, cardiovascular, respiratory and substance disorders. Women are twice as likely as men to suffer from anxiety.

RANZCP president Dr Kym Jenkins said anxiety could interfere with sleep, relationships and work. There was no "globally-accepted reason" why anxiety affected women more than men. It could be a response to social pressures and an evolutionary design for women to be better equipped to protect children. She said the new guidelines were based on research done since 2003.

Studies found providing information to patients about anxiety and advising them on lifestyle changes could be enough. "Often people have had anxiety for years before seeking help", Jenkins said, which meant they needed recognition and reassurance first and foremost. Others would respond to e-therapy. For those who did not respond to less intrusive methods, face-to-face therapy and / or medication could be considered.

The guidelines were intended for all clinicians dealing with patients with an anxiety disorder. Most people talked about the condition to their GP, who could recommend lifestyle adjustments or e-therapy, Jenkins said. It was crucial patients' progress was monitored to see if they needed more help.

New Zealand Association Of Psychotherapists spokeswoman Lynne Holdem said **e-therapies were not a substitute** for seeing a trained professional in person. Online therapy was new, with evidence coming only from a small number of studies using small samples, she said. The "one size fits all" online tools were not appropriate for everyone. "It's important that mental health providers in New Zealand **offer a range of responses** to people with anxiety and depression."

The clinical practice guidelines for the treatment of panic disorder, social anxiety disorder and generalised anxiety disorder were presented at the New Zealand Conference of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists in Tauranga from September 25 to 27.

For further information, contact the Mental Health Foundation's free Resource and Information Service (09 623 4812).

- Stuff

Positive outlook may mean *better sleep*

Harvard Health Publishing, Harvard Medical School. Published: October, 2017

Trouble sleeping? You may need to examine your outlook on life. A study published online July 10, 2017, by *Sleep Science and Practice* found that people who felt they had more meaning and purpose in their life had fewer sleep disturbances like sleep apnoea and restless legs syndrome.

Researchers asked 823 older adults, average age 79, to fill out questionnaires about their sleep quality and their feelings about their lives, such as how strongly they agreed with statements like "I feel good when I think of what I've done in the past and what I hope to do in the future."

The results showed **an association between a more positive outlook and better sleep**. People who felt their lives had meaning were 63% less likely to have sleep apnoea and 52% less likely to have restless legs syndrome at the two-year follow-up.

The connection could work two ways, according to the researchers. For instance, people who feel good about their life tend to be more proactive about maintaining good health, such as staying active and exercising regularly, both of which are linked to better sleep. Also, people who battle age-related issues that dampen one's outlook on life, like depression and heart disease, tend to have more sleep problems.

Why We Need Boredom and Distraction



Perfectionists tend to regard boredom, distraction, and procrastination as the axis of evil. But they can actually benefit your mood and productivity. In his blog, *Why You Need Boredom, Distraction, and Procrastination in Your Life*, Thorin Kloski defines boredom, distraction, and procrastination as the “holy trinity of inactivity.” According to his research, the brain can’t and shouldn’t work at 100 percent all the time. Unrealistic expectations here can wind up in symptoms of depression and anxiety. **We all would be better off to allow our brains a breather here and there.**

Klosowki quotes from Benedict Carey’s post in the *New York Times*, *You’re Bored, But Your Brain Is Tuned In: Boredom is more than a mere flagging of interest or a precursor to mischief. Some experts say that people tune things out for good reasons, and that **over time boredom becomes a tool for sorting information** — an increasingly sensitive spam filter. In various fields including neuroscience and education, research suggests that falling into a numbed trance allows the brain to recast the outside world in ways that can be productive and creative at least as often as they are disruptive.*

‘His theory is that boredom allows two crucial processes: curiosity and desire.’

Carey shares the gist of a paper published in *The Cambridge Journal of Education* by Teresa Belton and Esther Priyadharshini of East Anglia University in England, who reviewed decades of research on boredom and concluded that **boredom should “be recognised as a legitimate human emotion that can be central to learning and creativity.”**

Klosowski also quotes a *Psychology Today* piece from F. Diane Barth, L.C.S.W called *When Is Boredom a Good Thing?* Barth mentions the research of Adam Phillips, a British psychoanalyst and author of the book *On Kissing, Tickling, and Being Bored*. His theory is that boredom allows two crucial processes: curiosity and desire.

Think about it. When you are bored, counting the number of tiles on the ceiling during yoga, you begin to wonder about things. **Curiosity, he says, is the launching pad for growth, interest, and creativity.** Same with desire. If we are given everything, or if our minds are occupied every waking second, then we want nothing. Wanting nothing means that we won’t be motivated to achieve or grow or create

What Klosowski says about distraction is also intriguing. He highlights a study from the journal *Thinking & Reasoning* by Mareike Wieth and Rose Zacks. They asked participants to solve analytical problems (the kinds of word math problems on the SAT) and insight problems (requiring more creativity or innovation) at peak or off-peak times. For most people their peak times are in the morning after a strong cup of coffee. The study found that analytical problems are best solved at optimal times of day, however, **insight problems are better tackled when your brain is a little tired**

Klosowski also mentions a study published in *Journal of Neuroscience* that suggests that “daydreaming improves focus by creating long-range neural connections. In short, **getting distracted and letting your mind wander can actually make you smarter and more focused in the long term.**” However, my favorite quote from among his many sources comes from a piece in the *New York Times Magazine* called *In Defense of Distraction*: - Focus is a paradox—it has distraction built into it. The two are symbiotic; they’re the systole and diastole of consciousness. Attention comes from the Latin “to stretch out” or “reach toward,” distraction from “to pull apart.” We need both. In their extreme forms, focus and attention may even circle back around and bleed into one another.

There you go. No more guilt about zoning out, wasting time on Facebook, or being aimless in concentration and direction. Your brain is merely taking its well-deserved coffee break.

Therese Borchard: September 30, 2017

INSPIRING YOUNG PEOPLE TO LIVE THE LIVES THEY VALUE IN AN URBAN FARM SETTING



Fiona Heargraves, a youth worker, and Bailey Perryman, an ecologist, came together via the Vodafone Foundation.

Both were “World of Difference” grant recipients. They spotted a cross-over in their work and after a one-hour chat over coffee, the pair knew that their purposes were aligned and **Cultivate Christchurch** was born.

Fiona grew up on a farm between Geraldine and Fairlie, which, she says, taught her a lot about herself and gave her that sense of freedom and confidence. Living on a farm was a huge reason why she wanted to start a farm school for young people that didn’t grow up with those opportunities. Particularly those that have challenges learning, because a farm is a place where you can do things in a more free environment. **There’s always a job and always a purpose** for that activity. When you feel like you’ve got a purpose, you feel more connected.

Fiona originally trained in psychology and education, but after a stint of overseas travel realised that the energy and youthful intelligence of teenagers inspired her most.

“I love the energy that comes with a young person and the wisdom that’s generally untapped because they haven’t been in an environment where they feel comfortable to open up and share their perspective of the world. I’m learning so much every day from giving them a voice. It’s mind blowing.”

“You learn what inspires you and what makes you feel healthy and alive.”
— Bailey Perryman

Bailey remembers being a teenager. “You have the energy of youth - unbridled and unfiltered, a raw, pure creative energy. And then it meets society and meets reflections of itself. Everyone has to go through a crisis of dealing with itself and asking ‘who am I?’”

“I went through that - every human goes through that. But I had the privilege of going through it with a loving family and with access to opportunities to learn. To be able to create that environment for young people.”

Planting a seed and watching it grow might seem like a simple process, but Bailey sees something very profound at work. “When you are interacting with living systems, the same processes are reflected back within ourselves. You learn to understand what nourishes you at the most fundamental level - your soul. You learn what inspires you and what makes you feel healthy and alive.”

Fiona says she set out to create an environment for youth development, but along the ways she’s found a community for herself. “**I didn’t even realise I was lacking a sense of community for myself**, but now I feel a whole lot more connected.”

‘Cultivate’s beautiful greens and produce - grown locally and organically - are intrinsic to our business and personal beliefs’ - Michelle, Made Espresso.

<http://cultivate.org.nz/>

Men Overcoming Sexual Abuse and Assault

Portraits and Biographies of Male Survivors

[Read about the project](#), [participate](#), [view the documentary film trailer and order the film](#), or scroll down for individual stories.

The stories of healing from these courageous men will inspire a range of emotions.

<https://bristleconeproject.org/>

Recognising that mind and body are not separate opens door for new treatments

[Hannah Devlin](#) Friday 3 November 2017 16.33

[As a trial for a radical schizophrenia treatment](#) begins, the link between biological factors and some mental illnesses is becoming clearer than ever. Scientists have discovered that immune cells in the brain, called microglia (stained green) appear to go into overdrive in the early stages of schizophrenia. Photograph: MRC Clinical Sciences Centre

Undoubtedly, life's experiences and our personalities shape the way our brains function. But there is now a compelling body of evidence that brain disorders can also originate from things going awry in our basic biology.

Particularly intriguing is the discovery that the brain, once thought to be separated from the immune system by the blood-brain barrier, is powerfully influenced by immune activity.

The latest trial, focused on schizophrenia, is backed by converging evidence from several fields that immune cells in the brain, called microglia, play at least some role in this disease. Prof Oliver Howes, the psychiatrist leading the work, discovered that these cells appear to go into overdrive in the early stages of schizophrenia. Genetics studies have linked changes in [immune system genes](#) to increased risk for schizophrenia and anecdotal evidence, including a recent case report of a patient who developed [schizophrenia](#) after receiving a bone marrow transplant from a sibling with the illness, also triangulates on to the immune system.

"It's all challenging the idea that the brain is this separate privileged organ," said Howes.

[Schizophrenia](#) is not a special case. Scientists are showing that immune activity may play a role in a broad spectrum of mental disorders, ranging from depression to dementia.

People with diabetes, an auto-immune disease, are 65% more likely to develop dementia, according to a 2015 study. Other [research](#) has found that Alzheimer's patients who suffered regular infections, such as coughs and colds, had a fourfold greater decline in memory tests during a six-month period compared with patients with the lowest infection levels. And there is [tentative evidence](#) that some patients with treatment resistant depression may benefit from antibody treatments.

Perhaps most striking has been [the discovery of an entire network of vessels](#) beneath the skull, linking the brain and the immune system, that had surprisingly been overlooked until very recently.

"It has been a fundamental problem that the brain and mind have been seen as somehow separate entities, and that physical and mental healthcare are separate," said Belinda Lennox, senior clinical lecturer in psychiatry at the University of Oxford. "It has denied the psychological factors that play a vital part in all medical disorders, just as much as it has denied the importance of the biological factors in mental illness."

Whether the latest trial will yield a successful treatment is difficult to predict and the psychiatry's record warns against premature optimism. However, recognising that biological factors, such as the immune system, can have a powerful influence on the brain and sometimes explain why things go wrong, will be essential to finding new and better treatments..

'the brain, once thought to be separated from the immune system by the blood-brain barrier, isinfluenced by immune activity.'

Science fiction writer [Arthur C. Clarke](#):

'A wise man once said that all human activity is a form of play. And the highest form of play is the search for Truth, Beauty and Love. What more is needed? Should there be a 'meaning' as well, that will be a bonus? If we waste time looking for life's meaning, we may have no time to *live* — or to play.'

I HAVEN'T TOLD THEM, THEY HAVEN'T ASKED!

the **employment experiences** of people with mental illness – Mental Health Foundation 2007

<http://aiscloud.nz/MNT03/ais/downloadfile/Qj04NjY2MTM1NjlmVT0xODE3/I%20havent%20told%20them%20they%20havent%20asked.pdf>

Mindfulness techniques can be more than quiet contemplation

Published: April, 2017

Mindfulness—the practice of focusing on the here and now—seems to boost both your mood and overall well-being. You may think of mindfulness as something you do during meditation—that is, while you're sitting quietly with your eyes closed. If you can carve 20 minutes out of your day to meditate, that's great. But meditation is just one mindfulness technique. You can also practice informally, by simply being present in the moment during everyday activities.

For example, instead of trying to multitask and do two or more things at the same time (such as eating while you're driving or watching television), try to practice "single-tasking." That means doing one thing at a time and giving it your full attention. As you floss your teeth, pet the dog, or eat an apple, slow down the process and be fully present as it unfolds and involves all of your senses.

The goal of any mindfulness technique is to achieve a state of alert, focused relaxation by deliberately paying attention to thoughts and sensations without judgment. This can help you refocus on the present moment. Below are suggestions of different meditations you can try, as found in the [Harvard Special Health Report Positive Psychology](#).

Basic mindfulness meditation

Sit quietly and focus on your natural breathing or on a word or mantra (such as "om," "relax," or "peace") that you repeat silently. Allow thoughts to come and go without judgment and return to your focus on breath or mantra.

Body sensations

Notice subtle body sensations such as an itch or tingling without judgment and let them pass. Notice each part of your body in succession from head to toe.

Sights and sounds

Notice sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches. Name them "sight," "sound," "smell," "taste," or "touch" without judgment and let them go.

Emotions

Allow emotions to be present without judging them. Practice a steady and relaxed naming of emotions: "joy," "anger," "frustration."

Urge surfing

When you feel a craving or an urge (to eat excess food, use an addictive substance, or practice an unwanted behaviour), acknowledge the urge and understand that it will pass. Notice how your body feels as the craving enters. Replace the wish for the craving to go away with the certain knowledge that it will subside.

By Julie Corliss, Executive Editor, *Harvard Heart Letter*

Just 10 Minutes of Meditation May Help Anxious People Focus

BY KATE HOROWITZ, MAY 1, 2017

Researchers say just 10 minutes a day of mindfulness meditation can help reduce distracting thoughts for people with anxiety. They published their findings in the journal *Consciousness and Cognition*. "Mind wandering accounts for nearly half of any person's daily stream of consciousness," psychologist Mengran Xu of the University of Waterloo said in a statement: - *'That's a lot of distraction, and it's not just idle time. Wandering minds make it hard to work and learn. They also make mistakes. Some of those, like mailing an envelope with no letter inside, are relatively harmless. Others, like drifting into another lane of traffic, can be dangerous and even deadly.'*

Conditions like anxiety and depression can often make it even harder to concentrate. Some previous studies had found that mindfulness meditation can improve focus, but others were less conclusive. And nobody had yet investigated if the same was true for people with anxiety.

Xu and his colleagues recruited 82 college students, all of whom were prone to anxiety. They divided the students into two groups. Half of the participants listened to a 10-minute audio lesson on mindful breathing and meditation. The other half, the control group, listened to the first eight paragraphs of *The Hobbit*.

Next, all the students were asked to take a brief test on the computer. Every so often throughout the test, a dialog box opened with a "thought probe," asking the participant what they were thinking, and how motivated they were to keep thinking about it. The students' test results and their answers to the thought probes suggested that even a mini meditation has a lot to offer.

"Our results indicate that mindfulness training may have protective effects on mind wandering for anxious individuals," Xu said. "We also found that meditation practice appears to help anxious people to shift their attention from their own internal worries to the present-moment external world, which enables better focus on a task at hand."

More research is needed to confirm these findings. This experiment was small, and relied on participants' own reports of their thoughts and feelings. Also, all the participants were college students, and their results might not necessarily translate to the general population. Also: It's true that mindfulness can be hugely helpful, but we should note that it is not a cure—for anxiety nor any other illness. If anxiety is making it hard for you to focus or function, it's time to talk to your doctor. You can meditate in the waiting room.

<http://mentalfloss.com/article/500507/just-10-minutes-meditation-may-help-anxious-people-focus>

ARTICLES IN BRIEF

Write your anxieties away

OCTOBER 13, 2017, 6:30 AM: [Srin Pillay, MD](#), Contributor

In the late 1980s, psychologist James Pennebaker developed a form of [writing therapy](#) called expressive writing. When you engage in expressive writing, you write about your deepest thoughts and feelings without concern for spelling, grammar, or sentence construction. It is free-flowing and unfocused self-expression.

Although [not everybody benefits](#) from expressive writing, recent studies have shown that expressive writing helps anxious individuals [perform better on tests](#). We're not sure exactly why this is, but one leading theory is that writing about test anxiety "offloads" worrisome thoughts, thereby [freeing up mental resources](#) to concentrate on the test.....

Ask us for a hard copy or get the full article here: -

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/write-your-anxieties-away-2017101312551>

How to Get Through the Holidays With Your Mental Health Intact

Corrina Allen/Nov 9, 2017

It's the most wonderful time of the year! Also? One of the most stressful. Your social schedule is packed, the [gift-buying](#) pressure is on, both money and time can be tight, and [emotions and expectations](#) are running high. There are a lot of reasons why — even for [people who LOVE the season](#) — the holidays can be tough on your mental and emotional well-being. It's completely normal to be mid-celebration and suddenly overwhelmed by feelings of loneliness, anxiety, or depression — but there are steps you can take to minimise or prevent this. We talked to Arielle Salama, a psychiatrist at St. Michael's Hospital and Sherbourne Health Centre in Toronto, about what you can do to make sure that the holiday pressure doesn't get to be too much to handle.....

Ask us for a hard copy or get the full article here:-

<https://www.brit.co/how-to-get-through-the-holidays-with-your-mental-health-intact/>

For anxiety - should you try adult colouring books?

By [Jenny Cook](#): 10 November 2017

Colouring used to be reserved for children, but recently the activity has found its way to an entirely new demographic. What started as a niche hobby has now turned into a phenomenon that's taken the nation (and the world) by storm over the last year or so, having us all rushing to the nearest bookstores and ransacking the house for felt-tips. New research from the University of Otago in New Zealand have also discovered that daily **colouring could help reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression**.

Yes, adult colouring has certainly made its mark — and not just on paper. It's been suggested that it can aid in the wellbeing of working adults, **1 in 10** of whom are likely to have a disabling **anxiety** order' at some stage in their life, according to [Anxiety UK](#).

<http://www.netdoctor.co.uk/healthy-living/mental-health/a26286/colouring-therapy-anxiety-stress/>

Putting off retirement may benefit your brain, health, and longevity

The purpose and engagement of a job you love can keep you healthy and connected.

Published: September, 2017

While many women dream of kicking back and relaxing into retirement, there's increasing evidence that in some cases, it's better for your brain and your health to **keep your nose to the grindstone a little longer**.

"The research to date is mixed, but it tends toward the positive — that is, for many people, there are health benefits to working longer," says Dr. Nicole Maestas, associate professor of health care policy at Harvard Medical School.

The right job, she says, can **keep you connected** socially; it can help you stay **physically active**; and it can give you a **purpose**, a challenge, or a creative outlet. These factors have all been shown to contribute to health over the long term.

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/putting-off-retirement-may-benefit-your-brain-health-and-longevity>

ARTICLES IN BRIEF

“To hope is dangerous,

and yet it is the opposite of fear, for to live is to risk. I say all this because hope is not a lottery ticket you can sit on the sofa and clutch, feeling lucky. I say it because hope is an axe you break down doors with in an emergency; because hope should shove you out the door... Hope just means another world might be possible, not promised, not guaranteed. Hope calls for action; action is impossible without hope... To hope is to give yourself to the future—and that commitment to the future is what makes the present inhabitable."

– from *Hope in the Dark*, by historian, activist and author Rebecca Solnit

Mental Health Information Hub

Our new [Information Hub](#) keeps you up-to-date with the latest books, videos, articles and research on mental health and wellbeing.

The hub provides access to everything we hold in our small but specialised library, including electronic documents, videos and websites, that you are free to browse. It also houses our widely read weekly *E-bulletin*.

Special collections include mental health books in Mandarin, information on older people's wellbeing, children and young people's resources, a suicide prevention collection, an inventory of NZ pamphlets focusing on mental wellbeing, and literature and resources on positive psychology. If you need help finding your way around the Information Hub, [watch our video](#).

People are telling us they find the hub vibrant and inviting, and they like the different ways they can access information. If you have any feedback, or useful resources to include, please email kim.higginson@mentalhealth.org.nz

Mental health is relevant at work because we spend so much of our time there; we bring our whole selves to work and sometimes we go through hard times and need extra support. We are, after all, only human.

Mental Health in the Workplace: Resources for Managers from the Mental Health Foundation

There are huge benefits to creating a workplace culture where it's normal to talk about mental health. To help you do this, we've launched a range of [free Open Minds resources](#) including videos, posters, tip cards and FAQs.

The resources are designed to give managers the confidence and practical skills to talk about mental health in the workplace. They cover topics including, the barriers managers and employees face when talking about mental health at work, the steps you need to take to have successful conversations about mental health at work and the cost of not talking about it.

Start using these practical resources today to create a workplace where everybody feels supported and safe when it comes to talking about mental health.

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/home/our-work/category/40/open-minds>

NOTICES AND NEWS



Take the load off

A new campaign from the Mental Health Foundation is underway focusing on simple things people can do to reduce the weight of stigma and discrimination on people who live with mental illness. The campaign offers tips on how we can all help, with people sharing their experiences of what's helped lighten their load. Learn more about their experiences www.taketheloadoff.nz.



The Lowdown

Aimed at young New Zealanders (12 – 19), a new campaign from uses animated characters to promote discussions around five common life issues teenagers face. The aim is to get young people talking about their issues, and reducing the impact of depression and anxiety. The Lowdown website is a great resource for young people in your workplace or for parents and caregivers. www.thelowdown.co.nz



Depression and anxiety

A new campaign promoting small steps New Zealanders can take to manage depression and anxiety is underway.

It directs people to the depression.org.nz, the National Depression Initiative website, to find out about steps to take to get well and stay well, and places to go to for help. There's also advice for support people, inspirational stories, and the self-help tool, the 'Journal.'

OCD FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

A group of families have started an OCD support and networking group **based in Auckland.**

Its called **Fixate** – and the aim is to network families of people suffering with OCD, to share stories, information and possibly lobby for treatment or respite options.

If you are interested in being part of this please ask to join the closed group Fixate on Facebook or email coordinator Megan Jones on megan@honestbob.co.nz



All Right? would love to hear what you think about our

campaign. We are especially interested in how the campaign has been perceived by tangata whaiora/ mental health services users. Your views will help ensure that **All Right?** is meeting the needs of everyone in Canterbury.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RHW5JTJ>

What's new on Wellplace

Stop smoking services map

An updated interactive map makes it even easier to find local stop smoking services. Find the map via the 'Smokefree contacts' section on Wellplace's Smokefree support page. The map allows you to click on your area to find local services.

Updated resource section

We're always updating our Wellplace.nz resource library so make sure you check in regularly to see what's new. Browse our posters, images, links to useful websites and videos to help you help your people stay well.

PROGRAMMES and EVENTS UPDATE

Thrive

a new programme of 5 x two hour workshops

If you're making good progress with your recovery and you want to lock in the gains you've made and provide for the possibility that you may need support in the future then this programme may be for you.

For information about **thrive** talk to Hannah or Ian on (03) 365 9479 or email lex-manager@mhaps.org.nz

Themes

FREE talks on mental health and recovery topics

Every 4 weeks we have a subject matter specialist come and talk **about a mental health and recovery topic**. Whether this is for you, a friend or family or professional interest you're welcome to attend.

If you haven't been to **Themes** before please contact reception@mhaps.org.nz or phone (03) 365 9479 to register and get details of our venue, schedule for the year and times.

<http://mentalhealthadvocacypeersupport.org/our-services/programmes/>

WHAT'S ON AT MHAPS?

As well as the programmes profiled here we offer peer recovery groups, including the **Friday Group**, and weekly **Workshops for Wellbeing** that offer you an opportunity to try things different to see what works.

For a copy of the current month's schedule: - <http://mentalhealthadvocacypeersupport.org/>

or email: - reception@mhaps.org.nz or phone (03) 377 9665 and ask for a copy.

Mindfulness programme

Facilitator: Kathy Hughes:- 4 weeks, 7:00 – 8.30pm

Ask us about 2018 programme dates

'Tutor was excellent and her knowledge was very good.'

'Everything, the course was great.'

To register for this programme or for a flyer, describing the course rationale, expected outcomes and details about the tutor please contact:

reception@mhaps.org.nz or phone (03) 365 9479

Do you experience moderate to high anxiety?



The next 11 week workshop-based **RecoveryWorks** programme begins **Wednesday February 7th 2018**. Workshop are four hours each plus there are two individual coaching sessions through the programme. There are *a few places* still available on this programme. Over nearly seven years most people who have participated in this programme have made successful and positive life changes.

You can pick up a flyer from our office, or by contacting us on (03) 365 9479 or reception@mhaps.org.nz

For more detailed programme information contact Ian on lex-manager@mhaps.org.nz or (03) 377 9665.



Coping with Christmas

It seems to rock up faster every year (or is that just because I get older every year?) Here we are the first week of December. There is Christmas music everywhere and decorations have gone up. Now personally, I like Christmas. My kids have grown and no longer ask for outrageous things (Ask me about the Barbie Holiday Home sometime). I can tell you it is MUCH easier to have Christmas where it is warm rather than under a ton of snow. And I happen to like having company and feeding people. I still make a huge turkey dinner even though it is 24 degrees out. If that weren't enough, we also get a good break from work between Christmas and New Years so I love that part.

Not everyone is as happy at this time of year though. I know money is the biggest challenge. I used to be a budget counsellor so have always known how much pressure is on families because of the ridiculous expectations set by advertisers. And the down side of a warm Christmas is that it comes right at the same time as trying to have a family holiday and preparing for the new school year. Another big challenge is family. They can have some terrible disagreements, violence is up, drug and alcohol use is up.

Not painting a happy picture, I know. I would encourage everyone to take back control wherever possible. Put a No Circulars sign on the post box so those flyers don't even come in the house. Always be honest with your children about the reality of your budget. They have to live within their means eventually so modelling that can only help them. Set a realistic budget and stick to it. Buy less of that plastic rubbish that ends up in landfill within a week.

Don't spend time with anyone who makes you feel bad. Make excuses, leave early, claim illness. Just don't set yourself up to be criticised or bullied. You have to take care of yourself first. You have a right to your safety and peace of mind.

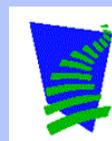
Share something. It really helps to feel connected. Bake some cookies with cinnamon in them so the house will smell nice. Get outside as much as possible. Find a place to sing carols. Singing is really good for your mental health and this time of year you are allowed. Wear a Santa hat and flashing earrings. You are what you pretend to be so put on a happy face. Avoid social media if it is full of comparisons that make you feel bad. Get enough sleep. Take a yoga dvd out of the library. Take the time to enjoy doing all the tasks on your list, remembering why you are doing it. Or drop out. Go to Hokitika for the whole week!

However you set things up to enjoy the season we hope you have a good quality Christmas.

*

Beth and the Advocacy team

Hello from Latnam 826



LATNAM 826

"You don't have to face it alone"

Well another year has flown by. I would just like to start off by saying a big thank you to the people who have supported us throughout the year, starting with Janette and George. They provide food for us most Fridays out of their own pockets. Thank you so much for your generosity and the members have really appreciated it.

Thanks to Tony Gill for his donations and biscuits and Robbie too, and a big thanks too anyone I've missed.

To the members, thank you from the team for a great year. We have enjoyed the fun and getting to know you better. Long may it continue and, looking towards the future, may good things come our way. Our volunteers and student placements have been awesome. Thank you so much for the hard work that you have done this year. We are so grateful to have you.

Christmas is coming. The dates that we are closed are all public holidays so Christmas day and Boxing day, then New Year's day. After that we are back too normal. So see you on December 22, 23 and 24, then on December 29, 30 and 31. Back to normal from the 5th of January.

Congratulations to Darryn W for taking out the last pool competition of this year and to Kendra for getting a hard earned second, which is amazing considering she's never played much pool before joining the student placement team at Latnam.

So merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you all. Be safe and have fun,

Cheers -Wendy and the team



AWARENESS

Canterbury Action on Mental Health and Addictions

Welcome to Summer! This column will have a completely different tone because Beth is writing it for Kelly. Any mistakes are definitely mine. Here is some of what we have been up to in the last 3 months.

Writers' Group: this excellent programme has continued through the spring. People interested in writing have been able to share their work with published authors and each other. Feedback is critical to improvement and it has been great to offer a safe place to be able to do that.

Mad Poetry: the last evening for this year was in November and there was a large group enjoying the creativity. It always amazes me to see people with so much more courage than I have. Anyone who knows me knows I have a good dollop of confidence and blather but I would never have the nerve to stand there reading my personal poetry. If you want to enjoy the great atmosphere the open mic nights will resume in the new year on the third Friday in February and again in March and April.

Service Users in Academia Conference: This conference has grown to a very impressive size giving our community a chance to highlight the research we do on mental health and society. This year Kelly, Anne and Don were able to report on the results of research into the experiences of service users who deal with Oranga Tamariki (formerly Child, Youth and Family). This joint project has seen very interesting details come out that paint a picture of how parents with an experience of mental distress can work in the system.

Haumaru Ngakau, Peer Crisis Support Project: every month we hear more stories from our peers about how difficult it is to get through tough times. There is ongoing stress from housing, earthquakes, relationships and our community would benefit from a good, peer run, crisis support programme. This project is in the final stages of its feasibility study and steady progress in being made to create a solid case for the funding of just such a place in Canterbury.

This is only a part of what we've been up to. Hope to see you at the next meeting for more good news.

Beth for Kelly

The Next Meeting

Monday 11th December 12.30—2.30 pm

MHAPS Community Wellbeing Centre at

826 Colombo St by Peterborough St

All people who have mental health or addiction experience welcome. Afternoon tea provided

Phone 366 8288 for more information or come along on the day



Consumer-run mental health show Saturdays 1.00pm and Wednesdays 10.30 am

- Sat 9 Dec 17 Kelly with Awareness Update
- Sat 16 Dec 17 Michael W with Personal Journey
- Sat 23 Dec 17 Christmas Show
- Sat 30 Dec 17 Repeat: Brett's new role in the mental health sector
- Sat 6 Jan 18 Isobel re Mental health and breast cancer
- Sat 13 Jan 18 Beth presents Ted Talks about mental health part 1
- Sat 20 Jan 18 Beth presents Ted Talks about mental health part 2

Another year wraps up and we invite listeners to consider being involved next year. If you would like to be on the committee that plans the radio show, starting in February 2018, please give Beth a call. Or if you have a recovery story or a service to promote give us a call at

**366 8288 or email
mgr.cas@mhaps.org.nz**

You can get podcasts of shows you have missed at <http://plainsfm.org.nz/podcasts/programme/quiet-minds/>

We apologise if the show played does not match this list as a result of last minute changes.

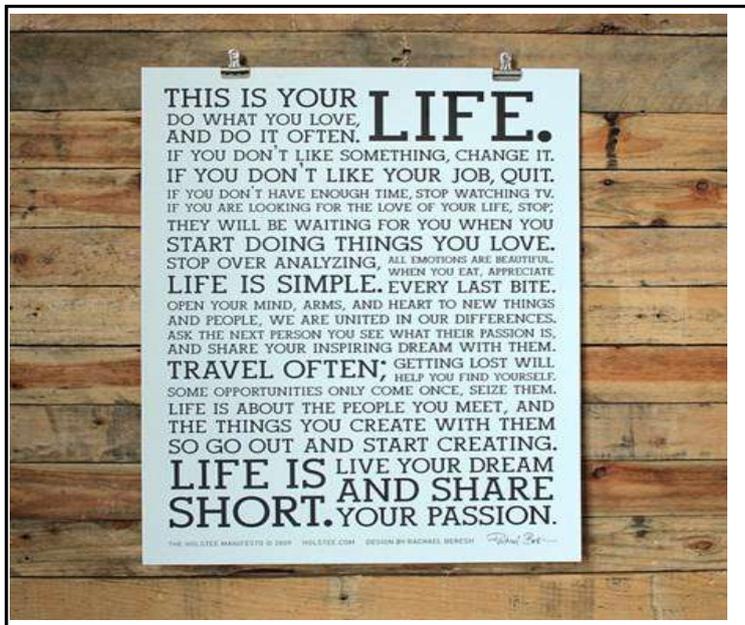


Farewell

to our valued colleagues

Sue Ricketts, our general manager since MHAPS was formed in 2011 and a longstanding colleague in our sector well before that.

Phil Snape, consumer advocate, peer support worker, always available to listen and reflect.



visit our website and Facebook pages
www.mhaps.org.nz



- Peer Support
- Peer Advocacy
- Peer Support groups
- Consumer Participation
- Latnam House programme
- Recovery programmes
- Information and Talks
- Quiet Minds Radio

826 Colombo St.
PO Box 33 332, Barrington
CHRISTCHURCH 8244
365 9479; 0800 437 324
reception@mhaps.org.nz
www.mhaps.org.nz

WE HAVE A LARGE LIBRARY OF BOOKS

CD's and DVD'S!!

We have 98 books on anxiety alone plus a further 30 DVDs and CDs.

We also have a large number of resources for those experiencing depression, bipolar disorder and other mental health issues.

Make a time to come in and browse.

Email reception@mhaps.org.nz or phone 03 365 9479.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Crisis Resolution 0800 920 092
364 0482 or 364 0640 after hours

24 Hour Surgery 365 7777

Lifeline 366 6743 or 0800 543 354

Healthline 0800 611 116

Alcohol and Drug Helpline

0800 787 797

Youthline 800 376 633

Parentline 381 1040

Christchurch Women's Refuge

364 7306

DISCLAIMER: Please note that the information provided in this newsletter has *not always* been provided by a qualified health or mental health professional. Whilst MHAPS endeavour to ensure the reliability and accuracy of all information, this cannot be guaranteed. Any treatment or therapy decisions you take should not be based solely on information contained in this newsletter. It is important that you discuss first with your doctor, or other appropriately qualified health professional, any changes that may affect your health.

**FAMILY
VIOLENCE
IT'S NOT OK**

IT IS
OK TO ASK
FOR
HELP

<http://www.areyouok.org.nz>



Anxiety
New Zealand
TRUST

24-Hour Hotline

If you are feeling anxious and need someone to talk to – wherever you are in New Zealand – you can phone our free 24 hour Anxiety Help Line.

0800 ANXIETY (0800 269 4389)



**MANY THANKS TO THESE SPEAKERS FOR THEIR
SUPPORT OF OUR 2016 *THEMES* PROGRAMME**

CDHB Anxiety Disorders Service: -

Ron Chambers, Juliet Macleod, Hannah Blakely, Joanna Lothian

Secondary Mental Health Services: - Tim Vincent, Katharine Donovan

Other Speakers: - Aaron McLoughlin, Louise Deane, Honalee Hunter.

IF UNDELIVERED PLEASE RETURN TO: -

PO Box 33 332, CHRISTCHURCH 8244

If you no longer want to receive this newsletter or our regular updates 'What's on at MHAPS' please contact Shelly on email: reception@mhaps.org.nz or (03) 365 9479