

ISSUE

17

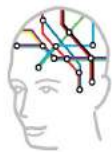
# Momentum

SPRING

2018

together on the road to well-being...

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



## WE HAVE MOVED

We are now located at  
[Unit 4, 357 Madras St](#)  
Ph 365 9479

BUS LINES: Blue Line, 60, 44  
and 28.

Phone and email contacts  
remain unchanged but our new  
PO Box is 21-020 Edgeware.

## CONTENTS

### ARTICLES IN THIS EDITION

Approaching growth from the  
perspective that you're OK

Find your passion and do what  
you love

Fitness and depression

Recovery is possible

What if the shitty thing doesn't  
teach me anything?

New Zealand's drinking crisis

Re-thinking addiction

and more...

### REGULAR FEATURES

Editorial and Opinion, Short  
Articles and Links, Notices and  
News, MHAPS programmes and  
events, Service updates.

*Momentum is published by*

THE LEARNING EXCHANGE

Editor: Ian Johnson



## What If You Approach Growth From the Perspective That You're OK?

Mar 17, 2018: <https://www.alifeinprogress.ca/youre-ok/>

There's a world of difference between seeking growth from a place of feeling broken or messed up vs. stepping into growth from the perspective that you're imperfect and you're OK.

What if you approach growth or a desire to find deeper healing or freedom from the perspective that you're already enough? That wanting to learn and grow and become more fully yourself is great – but not a prerequisite for treating yourself like you matter or behaving like you love yourself.

What if you show up curious each day, open to learning and self-discovery but not berating yourself for being exactly who or where you are right now. You're not wrong for where you're at on the journey. And even if you never budged from this spot, you're OK.

What if you decide to own your past and your pain but break off the shame attached to these stories? And you choose to be proud of yourself for fighting and not giving up. For choosing life.

What would change if you stopped living for external validation, desperate for affirmation, and you became your own best friend?

Could you reach out for help when you need it and realize that you're brave; it takes incredible strength to ask for what you need.

And what if you made the decision to trust the journey. To trust that we all struggle but if we just keep taking one stubborn step after another then chances are we will find ourselves one day in a broad place, a freer space, and realize that we have indeed grown and healed. Sometimes the change we seek comes when we're not looking.

*continued on page 3 >>>>>*

## Why peer support can't fix anything

"I think there's this fantasy that exists in how people think about mental health, that there's some discernible process you can witness, some sort of fixing that can occur, or that there's some ability that can really help people live more authentically, but I don't think I've ever actually witnessed that in any of my interactions.

"But if me delving into my previous life might provide an example of like, I was somewhere once, it might have been similar to where you are, and now I'm here... But I don't know how to tell someone who is homeless that it just takes time.

"But that's part of what makes having a [peer support] respite center ...different from anywhere else. Providing hope could be something I guess, or respect, respect for the infiniteness of someone else, but I don't feel like I can tell someone how to live their life in a way that will make them feel better, or make progress.

"But maybe through telling my story, or providing myself as an example, it might allow them to see that possibility for themselves too."

The quotes above are from a peer worker identified as Frank, in an article called *Care Wounds: Precarious Vulnerability and the Potential of Exposure*, by Lauren Cubellis.

When I read this article recently, I found it rang bells for me with an experience we sometimes have at MHAPS. People ring us or come in sometimes in great distress, begging for help. "I've tried everywhere/ everything /everyone," they tell us. "Nothing works. No one can help."

*continued on page 3 >>>>*

## Maybe you're simply OK as you are...

**.....so perhaps you shouldn't settle for less than finding, and following, your passion**

**I continue to be acutely aware of the nature and intensity of distress that people bring to us.** For me, when meeting with people for the first time the most common issues are abuse and trauma and the consequent self-harm, eating disorder, body image and substance abuse. Having suffered once, whether by accident or at the hands of others, so many people are then punished all over again for their behaviours when they try to get some relief from their pain. What are substantially health issues get treated as crimes, or the person is judged because their actions are seen to be 'just attention seeking.' Our gaols meantime are full of people from broken homes, abused as children (sometimes from being in State care), and who are functionally illiterate.

**When it all feels too heavy and a sense of despair is about to settle on me** I remember all of those people we've worked with who have demonstrated courage and determination and regained their lives. Not the same lives they might otherwise have had, but lives that come to be meaningful and have purpose. It's inspiring.

The **Mental Health Inquiry** (p6) has been and gone, those wonderful submissions including from **PeerZone** and from the **Awareness Consumer Movement**. Let us fervently hope that the outcome is not 'more money for more of the same' but instead a **Big Community** approach to distress, its outcomes and towards healing.

The lead article in this newsletter invites us to consider '**What would life be like if you were to approach growth from the perspective that you're OK?**' This sits comfortably with us here at MHAPS and especially with the messages that are carried through Peer Recovery groups and through our programmes. However, running with what feels like a counter narrative is an extract from **Graham Panther's Big Feels Club** article: '**What if the shitty stuff doesn't teach me anything?**' Or you can dip into '**How to find your passion**' on page 7 which links to **Steve Job's Stanford University commencement address** where he says *never 'settle' for less than finding your calling, and trust your power of intuition.*

*Ian Johnson*

>>>> *continued from page 1*

What if you only spoke to yourself with the same care and delight that you would offer your daughter when she's hurting. And what if you believed in yourself the way you'd fiercely stand up for your son?

And how would it feel to forgive yourself quickly, and forgive others too; to stop all the comparing and just be imperfect you. You are colourful, messy, intriguing, crazy beautiful ARTwork. And you're OK.

I wonder what might happen if you made the decision to just love the body you're in; if you nourished yourself with kindness and all sorts of good things.

What if you picked yourself up quickly every time you fall and remember you're just human and doing your best. And there's no one on earth who doesn't fall in time?

I'm curious if you'd be happier if you embraced that you're not like everyone else. You are colourful, beautiful artwork and we're not meant to be the same.

What if you realized you're already OK. That nothing else is required.

You are messy and imperfect and you're OK.

Krista xo

>>>> *continued from page 2*

Becoming able to ask for help was important in my own healing journey – it was exhausting to keep doing it all by myself. I had to learn about help as a two-way process, something I could accept as well as something I could offer to other people.

But helping, or being helped, can become a problem if it becomes too much of a one-way transaction. Some of us may be isolated from families, and may have no friends to draw on either. We can become so used to services “helping” us that we start to lose the art of help as a mutual thing, the beautiful dance of give-and-take where no one needs to keep score and both feel equally blessed over time.

Advocacy can be helpful at times to have your voice heard in systems, and maybe get some of the things that are stressing you out resolved. But like Frank and his colleagues in the article quoted above, sometimes our peer advocates also struggle with the gaps in systems, and sometimes we can't get a result that resolves that stress. Sometimes the thing that is needed just doesn't exist or is too expensive, or too exclusive and can't be accessed.

At these times, we all have to find a way to sit with the distress, and that can be very hard. As peer workers, just like Frank above, we don't presume that we can “fix” you, or even that we can necessarily “help” you. But what we can offer you in these moments is our stories, and a genuine willingness to listen and connect. And maybe, just maybe, that shared moment can bring some other possibilities to light.

It won't fix anything. You may not see it as “help”. But it can make a difference.

We have new groups under way or starting soon at MHAPS, including PeerZone workshops and a group for students and younger adults. All offer this type of mutual connection, and I invite you to check out what's on offer. There are more details elsewhere in this newsletter, or on our website.

*If you'd like a full copy of the article quoted above, please contact us.*

**Fiona Clapham Howard, MHAPS' Te Kaihautū / Service Director**



## Why Bother?

Right. So, we employ a lot of euphemisms for depression. "I'm going through a bad patch" or "feeling quite flat right now" or "that expletive black dog has got me by the throat and Churchill can have him back!". Maybe that last one is just me. We are familiar with this place and with what it has taken for us to get out of it. As I am fond of saying, we fall down fast but get up slowly.

There comes that time when the voice in your head says "Why bother?" Having recurring depression in our lives is in itself depressing. Am I not likely to just fall down again? And from inside that cloud all we can see are people who seem to have their stuff together and manage to cope with what life throws at them. So what's the point?

Point one: They don't. We cannot be trusted to assess someone else's life from inside our fog. Their apparent success may be no more real than the failure we keep defining ourselves by. We need to shut down the voice that compares us to others.

Point two: We know what things help us. Today it may seem too hard to get out for a walk, call a friend for a coffee, go to that yoga class, read that encouraging article, go to that peer recovery session, watch that comedian on YouTube but if we only do one, only for 20 minutes we will catch a new glimpse of our old self who is in there. That not-depressed self is just below the surface.

Point three: It is worth it. Whenever I come back up out of the grim place I am so pleased to see that people haven't given up on me, that there is pleasure in my garden, my cat, my friends, my books and movies. And I can hear again the appreciation of my friends and family. They don't expect me to be clever or rich or helpful all the time and certainly not to the level I expect of myself.

Point four: We live in an endlessly fascinating world. Outside of ourselves are creative, warm, funny people who are worth bothering to get to know. Being in friendships and whanau relationships provides the richness of life.

Please bother.

**Beth**

## AWARENESS

### Canterbury Action on Mental Health and Addictions



#### The Next Meeting

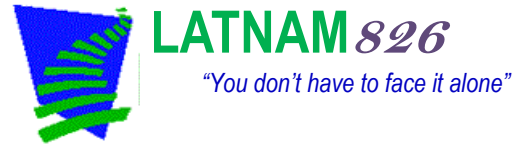
**Monday 8th October 12.30-2.30 pm**

**MHAPS Community Wellbeing Centre**

**Unit 3, 357 Madras Street (back door)**

All people who have mental health or addiction experience welcome.

Phone 365 9479 or email [awareness@mhaps.org.nz](mailto:awareness@mhaps.org.nz) for more information  
or come along on the day - Afternoon tea provided.



Hello to everyone,

As you can see from the logos above, the drop-in has a very interesting history. One we have been part of for **TWENTY YEARS**.

That's right, it was in 1998 that Psychiatric Consumers Trust, led by Andy Compton, got the contract for the social centre. Richmond Fellowship Adult Services Consumer Group (Christchurch) had run it for about 18 months establishing a stable popular drop in and it was felt that then was the time to let a Peer Led organisation run it and help the members move through from attending to volunteering to staff. In 2002 Colin Slade worked alongside Doug Willems, the owner of 449 Colombo St, to design the fit out to allow a good kitchen, lots of light and a roomy feel. It must have worked because we were there for 18 years.

So many names over those years: Andy Compton, Colin Slade, Linda Smith, Roy Chelley ... so many that we wouldn't risk trying to name them all for fear of missing a few. So many people started out as peer workers at Latnem (then Latnam) House and were able to move on with that experience and a good reference to employment in the wider community. So many people with no whanau, disconnected from society, who found a place to be accepted and a new family.



So many stories, from the renaming - when it was decided that

"Latnem" was no longer "politically correct" (it is "mental" backwards you see) - to the hard fought pool tournaments, to the Annual General Meetings where the membership elected the new trustees for Psychiatric Consumers Trust.

We remember when we held an anniversary party for Quiet Minds at the Annual General Meeting and Mahinarangi Tocker performed. We remember the

10th anniversary celebration when then MP Lianne Dalziel attended. We remember all the laughter, the movies, the board games and the encouragement. "You don't have to face it alone".

So, MHAPS is planning a celebration. Watch the newsletters and publications, the Facebook pages and the notice boards. We will have an open day and a recognition of our history. It is one to be proud of. If you have any old newsletters or photos we would love to see them. Just contact Wendy or Beth at MHAPS.

Looking forward to seeing you and reminiscing,

**Wendy,**

**Latnam 826 Manager**

**Beth,**

**Ex- PCT Manager**





**Consumer-run  
mental health radio show**

**Saturday 1.00—1.30 repeated Wednesdays 10.30 am**



Hello All,

We are having a great year with Quiet Minds. Hope you have kept up with all the great stories we've been able to tell, in particular there has been a lot of talk around the Mental Health and Addictions Inquiry and the Wellbeing Manifesto. 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**

**Upcoming Shows**

Sat 15 Sept 18 Deb talks to Annie about Animal Therapy

Sat 22 Sept 18 Post Natal Depression with Erin

Sat 29 Sept 18 Singh talks about his personal journey

You can get podcasts of Quiet Minds shows you have missed at <http://www.plainsfm.org.nz/>

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



**Update from the Mental Health Inquiry:**

Tēnā koutou katoa, Talofa lava and warm Pacific greetings

Over the past few weeks the Inquiry panel has moved into our deliberations phase in preparation for delivery of our report to Government in late October.

We ended our public engagement programme where we began, with a well-attended community forum on 8 August in Palmerston North, where we had launched our consultation back in April.

Two major submissions representing the views of 1000s of people from around the country have been presented to the panel. A couple of weeks ago panel member Josiah Tualamali'i and I, on behalf of the panel, received a submission signed by over 5,000 people calling for free counselling for all Kiwis. The submission was organised by psychotherapist Kyle MacDonald with the support of Action Station and can be found online at <https://our.actionstation.org.nz/petitions/free-counselling-for-all-kiwi-s-open-submission-to-the-mental-health-review>. After the presentation, Josiah and I enjoyed a lively session with Kyle and Hamish Coleman-Ross for the 'Nutters Club' radio show. The video is [here](#).

In late July, Mary O'Hagan, on behalf of PeerZone and Action Station, presented the panel with the *Wellbeing Manifesto* – signed by over 2000 people – at an event in Wellington. We enjoyed hearing about how the manifesto was developed, and were struck by the sense of hope and expectation in the room. You can view the submission at <https://www.wellbeingmanifesto.nz/>

There have been other collective submissions, collating the views of many people – notably the Changing Minds submission, presenting the voices of 760 people with lived experience and their whanau, following an online survey organised by Taimi Allan and team. You can read the submission [here](#). The PSA Youth Network, the wider PSA and the Council of Trade Unions are among those larger organisations that have submitted on behalf of their respective memberships. Other organisations have proposed particular community-based solutions, including kaupapa Māori and Pacific models of care. Each submission, collective or individual, is an important contribution to our task of 'hearing the voices of the people'. We appreciate all the effort organisers have put into gathering and presenting such valuable collations of experience and ideas.

We're grateful for everyone's input with around 5500 submissions and over 2000 people attending 26 public meetings around New Zealand and engagement with community groups and individuals at numerous other meetings. Our job now is to bring all this information together and shape our views and recommendations for improving mental health and wellbeing in New Zealand. It's keeping us busy!

My next update will be as we get near the end of the Inquiry and the delivery of our report. On behalf of the panel, thank you for all your work in sharing ideas about what's working and what isn't and how we can create a better society for the mental health of all our people. And thanks too for the aroha and encouragement that has lifted our spirits as we undertake this important work.

Ngā mihi, Ron Paterson, Inquiry Chair

# HOW TO FIND YOUR PASSION AND DO WHAT YOU LOVE

*and why prestige is the enemy of passion, or how to master the balance of setting boundaries and making friends.*



BY MARIA POPOVA

*"Find something more important than you are," philosopher Dan Dennett once said in discussing [the secret of happiness](#), "and dedicate your life to it." But how, exactly, do we find that?*

Surely, it isn't by luck. I myself am a firm believer in the power of [curiosity and choice](#) as the engine of fulfilment, but precisely how you arrive at your true calling is an intricate and highly individual dance of discovery. Still, there are certain factors — certain choices — that make it easier. Gathered here are insights from several thinkers who have contemplated the art-science of making your life's calling a living.

Every few months, I rediscover and re-devour [Y-Combinator](#) founder **Paul Graham's** fantastic 2006 article, *[How to Do What You Love](#)*. It's brilliant in its entirety, but the part I find of especial importance and urgency is his meditation on social validation and the false merit metric of "prestige".

*"What you should not do, I think, is worry about the opinion of anyone beyond your friends. You shouldn't worry about prestige. Prestige is the opinion of the rest of the world."*

**Alain de Botton**, modern philosopher and creator of the ["literary self-help genre"](#), is a keen observer of the paradoxes and delusions of our cultural conceits. In *[The Pleasures and Sorrows of Work](#)*, he takes his singular lens of wit and wisdom to the modern workplace and the ideological fallacies of "success". His terrific 2009 [TED talk](#) offers a taste:

*"One of the interesting things about success is that we think we know what it means. A lot of the time our ideas about what it would mean to live successfully are not our own. They're sucked in from other people. And we also suck in messages from everything from the television to advertising to marketing, etcetera. These are hugely powerful forces that define what we want and how we view ourselves. What I want to argue for is not that we should give up on our ideas of success, but that we should make sure that they are our own. We should focus in on our ideas and make sure that we own them, that we're truly the authors of our own ambitions. Because it's bad enough not getting what you want, but it's even worse to have an idea of what it is you want and find out at the end of the journey that it isn't, in fact, what you wanted all along."*

Psychologist **Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi** has a term for the quality that sets labour apart from work: [flow](#) — a kind of intense focus and crisp sense of clarity where you forget yourself, lose track of time, and feel like you're part of something larger. If you've ever pulled an all-nighter for a pet project, or even spent 20 consecutive hours composing a love letter, you've experienced flow and you know creative labour.

In his now-legendary [2005 Stanford commencement address](#), an absolute treasure in its entirety, **Steve Jobs** makes an eloquent case for not settling in the quest for finding your calling — a case that rests largely on his insistence upon [the power of intuition](#):

*"Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking until you find it. Don't settle."*

**Robert Krulwich**, co-producer of WNYC's fantastic [Radiolab](#), author of the ever-illuminating *[Krulwich Wonders](#)* and winner of a [Peabody Award for broadcast excellence](#), is one of the finest journalists working today. In another [great commencement address](#), he articulates the infinitely important social aspect of loving what you do — a kind of social connectedness far more meaningful and genuine than those notions of prestige and peer validation.

*"You will build a body of work, but you will also build a body of affection, with the people you've helped who've helped you back. This is the era of Friends in Low Places. The ones you meet now, who will notice you, challenge you, work with you, and watch your back. Maybe they will be your strength."*

*'...the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work...'*

Steve Jobs

Finally, you might recall **The Holstee Manifesto** as one of our [5 favourite manifestos for the creative life](#), an eloquent and beautifully written love letter to the life of purpose. Here's a snippet:

*"This is your life. Do what you love, and do it often. If you don't like something, change it..."*

This article has been heavily edited down from the original, which we recommend you read in its entirety—you can access it and many other interesting articles through this link:

<https://www.brainpickings.org/2012/02/27/purpose-work-love/>

## ***Fitness may be vital to depression patients' good health***

June 27 2018

**Exercise may be just as crucial to a depression patient's good health as finding an effective antidepressant.**

Depression has been linked to several other chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, obesity, and chronic kidney disease, which studies show can affect whether antidepressants are likely to help. For patients with these conditions, the more appropriate treatment may be exercise. A new study of nearly 18,000 participants found that those with high fitness at middle age were significantly less likely to die from heart disease in later life, even if they were diagnosed with depression. The research – a collaboration between UT Southwestern and The Cooper Institute – underscores the multiple ways in which depression may ultimately impact health and mortality. It also highlights the importance of overcoming a common dilemma among patients: **How does one cope with hopelessness and still find motivation to exercise?**

"Maintaining a healthy dose of exercise is difficult, but it can be done. It just requires more effort and addressing unique barriers to regular exercise," says Dr. Madhukar Trivedi, co-author of the study and Director of the Center for Depression Research and Clinical Care. Trivedi cites previous research showing that depressed patients can often perform about three-fourths of the exercise they're asked to do. He recommends patients take several steps to boost their chances of success:-

- Set aside a consistent time to exercise every day, but do not get discouraged by stretches of inactivity. Resume activities as soon as possible.
- Keep a log to track progress.
- Vary the exercises to avoid monotony. Keep the workout interesting and fun.
- Exercise with a friend.
- Task someone with holding you accountable for maintaining exercise.

***'How does one  
cope with  
hopelessness and  
still find motivation  
to exercise?'***

Dr. Trivedi says the findings are just as relevant to younger age groups, in particular college-age adults who are just entering the workforce. "This is the age where we typically see physical activity drop off because they're not involved in school activities and sports," Dr. Trivedi says. "The earlier you maintain fitness, the better chance of preventing depression, which in the long run will help lower the risk of heart disease."

Dr. Trivedi says the reasons behind this may partly be connected to the general health effects of physical activity, including the fact that exercise decreases inflammation that may cause depression. By reducing inflammation, the risk for depression and heart disease are lowered. "There is value to not starting a medication if it's not needed," says Dr. Trivedi, who's leading a national effort to establish biological tests for choosing antidepressants. "Being active and getting psychotherapy are sometimes the best prescription, especially in younger patients who don't have severe depression."

Dr. Trivedi has organized large studies to further solidify the cause and effect among fitness, depression, and heart disease. One example is RAD, Resilience in Adolescent Development, a 10-year study that will enrol 1,500 participants who are at risk to develop depression but have not done so. The study's primary aim is to examine whether personal factors such as lifestyle and biology influence a teenager's ability to resist mood disorders. But researchers will also document fitness levels and track whether depression and heart issues arise in later years. "There is enough evidence to show that the effect of low fitness on depression and heart disease is real," Dr. Trivedi says. "But further study is needed to establish the mechanism by which this effect happens."

"These new insights demonstrate the ongoing importance of fitness throughout the lifespan," says Dr. Willis, Director of Epidemiology at The Cooper Institute and lead author of the study. "Now we know that the long-term benefits, and the connection between mind-body wellness, are more significant than we thought. We hope our study will highlight the role of fitness and physical activity in early prevention efforts by physicians in promoting healthy aging."

**Get the full article here: -**

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20180627/Fitness-may-be-vital-to-depression-patients-good-health.aspx>

# 'Recovery is possible — and we're examples of it'

**Peer support from the recently recovered helps those in active addiction.**

Eric Dietrich July 10, 2018

*This story is part of [The Montana Gap](#) project, produced in partnership with the Solutions Journalism Network.*

There's some hope around a folding table here, inside this smallish Main Street storefront in Ronan, Montana, at the Never Alone Recovery Center. Outside, it's a sunny Tuesday evening in this 2,000-person, majority-white town on the Flathead Indian Reservation. Inside, a mixed-race group of men and women, passing around a bowl of candy, shoots the breeze for a few minutes before settling down to business. "I'm an addict," each says in turn. "I'm an addict," echoes the group's leader, Don Roberts — and, he adds, "one in recovery." Roberts is what's known as a peer supporter, someone who's grappled with addiction or mental illness — in his case, both — and has found his way back to health and, with professional training, taken up the work of helping others do the same.

It's not a new idea. Peer support in various forms has been part of Alcoholics Anonymous-style programs for decades, as well as endorsed by everyone from mental health activists to federal health officials. But in Montana, it's increasingly recognized as a bona fide profession, something that's a key piece of the puzzle as hospitals, service providers and community groups try to do a better job of helping the tens of thousands of Montanans who struggle with behavioural health problems.

The Tuesday evening meeting in Ronan is officially a SMART Recovery group, following a psychology-based curriculum that teaches people how to cope with addictive behaviours. But tonight, at least, Roberts is focused less on working through the curriculum than listening. As group members talk about how they're doing trying to stay sober, he draws on personal experience to respond, trying to reassure them that they're not alone in their struggle.

If group members say they don't like the way their medication for a mental disorder makes them feel, he talks about how he's on medication for bipolar disorder himself, even though he's tried unsuccessfully with medical supervision to wean himself off it. When someone says they're worried about how their addiction is straining their relationship with a parent, he shares a story about how he didn't see his mother before she died because he was serving a multi-year prison term.

As the meeting continues, Roberts passes around a worksheet that asks attendees to list things in their life they can look to for inspiration or stress relief as they try to stay sober. One of his points is his two-year-old son — who he wants to provide with a better life than the one he had growing up.

"You can't be a peer supporter if you can't share your story," Roberts said. "They'll listen when I say 'Look man, this is what I had to do.'"

"Recovery is possible — and we're examples of it," said Jim Hajny, the executive director of Montana's Peer Network and one of the state's major advocates for peer support.

*'If you're reaching out, we're here to pull your hand.'*

Peer supporters, Hajny said, can bring their lived experiences to the table in a way that isn't possible for mental health professionals who don't have first-hand experience with the diseases their clients are facing. That means supporters can relate to things like being hospitalized after a suicide attempt or going through treatment — and, he said, serve as living reminders that life can in fact get better.

That's an idea backed up by formal research, too, with a [2011 review published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) listing dozens of studies documenting the benefits of peer-run programs like the Never Alone centre, some dating as far back as the 70s and 80s. "The consumer-operated service model of peer support is now being recognized nationally and internationally," it concluded.

When it comes to addiction, Roberts said, one key to escaping is changing your social environment, learning to connect with people over things that aren't drugs or alcohol and letting go of relationships that pull you back into using.

Part of the idea behind groups like Never Alone's programs is that they can give people working toward recovery a welcoming place to find a healthier sort of fellowship — one that truly understands the battle they're fighting.

"We get a lot of people who walk through the door and just want to drink a soda and chat about recovery," Roberts said. "If you're reaching out, we're here to pull your hand."

**Get the full article here: -**

<https://www.hcn.org/articles/the-montana-gap--peer-support-from-the-recently-recovered-helps-those-in-active-addiction-in-montana>

## SHORT ARTICLES and LINKS



### What if the shitty thing doesn't teach me anything?

*In self-care circles, we're often encouraged to look for The Lesson in our pain.*

We hear about how suffering can make us stronger, or more compassionate. And this can be very useful, to help us find some meaning in the messiness of life.

But sometimes this way of thinking can also feel like a bit of a trap - especially when you're convinced there *is* no Lesson, and you'd just like the pain to stop now please.

Something I've been thinking about lately. What if the Great Big Painful Thing doesn't make me stronger? What if it doesn't have a lesson to teach me? What if it just hurts?

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** - I'M A BIG FAN of the **Big Feels Club** and want to promote it at every opportunity. I love the way **Graham** pushes back against the received wisdoms. You can read the full article at the link below or go on to click on **Big Feel's** logo on the link page and be transported to a world of fresh thinking about who we are and how we got where we are.

<https://mailchi.mp/8c8623a0c367/what-if-the-shitty-thing-doesnt-teach-me-anything>

## DADS GROUP



357 Gloucester Street

Saturday 10-11.30 a.m.  
(Starts Weekly from August 18th)

All Dads Welcome

### What is the Dads Group?

The Dads Group, is a new partnership between The Canterbury Men's Centre, Plunket and Father and Child Trust. It is a safe place where dads can come and share their experiences pre and post birth. There will be trained staff to support the group process and provide relevant information as requested by the group.

### Contact/Information

The Canterbury Men's Centre

Ph: 03 365 9000

Karl: 027 216 1082

Please note that this is solely for Dads. So come along for cuppa and share your story.

Plunket & Father & Child



## SHORT ARTICLES and LINKS

### New Zealand reaches crisis point with drinking

Scott Palmer

An alcohol expert warns New Zealand has reached 'peak booze' - and some of the worst affected are older generations. New statistics show the damage alcohol is doing to New Zealand as problem drinking cuts a swathe through our elderly. And the problem is getting worse.

The Ministry of Health estimates that over 780,000 adults are hazardous drinkers. Statistics NZ figures show the drinking habits for more than a third of people aged 18-24 could be potentially hazardous - regularly consuming six or more drinks in a single session. As well as this, hazardous drinking in the 66-74-year age group more than doubled from 2011/12 to 2015/16. *"Our older drinkers are some of the heaviest drinkers in the world,"* she says.

This drinking has a chilling effect our health system. During the 2016-2017 financial year, 4070 people were hospitalised due to their alcohol consumption - some more than once...

Get the full article here: - <https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2018/06/new-zealand-reaches-crisis-point-with-drinking.html>

### Everyone is welcome here

**MENTAL** is a growing collection of human stories that explore experiences and aspects of mental wellbeing in Aotearoa. Each story has been written by a New Zealander and shared with MENTAL. Every week or so we'll upload another series of stories and add to the collection. **Anyone from New Zealand can contribute a story at any time.**

The vision for MENTAL is to offer a space for individuals to voice their experiences of the realities of mental health in their own words. Through the preservation, documentation, and sharing of these stories, MENTAL hopes to help reframe perceptions of mental health in Aotearoa. Contributions emphasise the importance of supporting individuals, friends, whānau and communities who have experienced, or know someone experiencing mental illness. Everyone's story matters.

MENTAL strives to be inclusive, and collect contributions from all ages, genders, ethnicities, sexual orientations and life experiences. These words may encourage a dialogue with the general public, and perhaps leave readers with a better understanding of what it means to experience mental illness.

More at <https://www.ourmentalstory.com/team>

### Green Prescription



A Green Prescription is a health professional's written advice to a patient to be physically active, as part of the patient's health management. For more information contact **Sport Canterbury** on 03 373 5055 or go to: -

<http://www.activecanterbury.org.nz/health-professionals/green-prescription.aspx>

### Farmstrong



**Farmstrong** is a wellbeing initiative founded by the Mental Health Foundation and FMG. It's designed to give farmers the skills and resources to live well, farm well and get the most out of life.

The program is based on extensive [research](#) which found farmers wanted more information on how to look after themselves and their families' wellbeing.

The website contains practical tips and strategies that have been scientifically proven to improve mental health and wellbeing. It's all about establishing small daily habits which include physical activity, good nutrition, staying connected with friends, getting a good night's sleep and having time away from the farm. Research shows these actions help build resilient people who are able to better cope with the pressures of farming.

Farmstrong ambassador and rugby legend **Sam Whitelock** offers lots of practical tips and advice about how to live well and farm well.

*"I grew up in a small rural township so I'm familiar with the pressures of farming. I feel strongly that the Farmstrong initiative is a fantastic resource to reduce isolation and give farmers the skills and support to lead better lives."*

<http://farmstrong.co.nz/>

## SHORT ARTICLES and LINKS

### **‘Like falling in love’: How experts are re-thinking how we see addiction**

By **Andrew Brown**

Matt Noffs has spent most of his adult life working with people who are struggling with addiction, yet he will readily admit he has battled addictions of his own.

*"I was having my own issues with emails and technology in the lead up to get pill testing off the ground around two years back," he says. "There would be many times where I would leave work stressed, thinking that we were not going to get it up and running. I would leave work late at night and be on my way home and I would keep looking down at my phone looking for the next hit of news. "It didn't have to be good news [about pill testing], it could have been anything, just something to trigger the flourish of brain chemicals that would make me feel happy. I then ended up getting a text saying the kids were in bed and all of this time had passed, even though it felt like a couple of minutes."*

When the word addiction is mentioned, many will first think of a drug user alone in a dark alley, yet the chief executive of drug and alcohol service The Noffs Foundation says it's more complex than that. From gambling, to smoking, to coffee, to sugar, to mobile phones and even our jobs, everyone, Noffs says, has an addiction of some kind, all existing on the same spectrum. He says forming an addiction is a lot like falling in love. *"When you fall in love with someone, all our mates get sidelined for that first month or so, because all we're doing is spending time with the person we love. All we're doing is thinking about someone, and it takes a few weeks to come back to our friends and go out for a beer or see a movie, and we recalibrate. A way of thinking about addiction is that it's an obsession with something. Instead of thinking of addiction as a negative thing, the latest research shows it as an adaptation in human and mammals."*

It's this rethinking of the nature of addiction - an obsession with something that everyone possesses in one form or another - that has led Noffs to write a new book on the topic, aiming to bring fresh understanding to an often maligned subject. Noffs says addiction affects people in many ways, such as technology addiction. *Addicted?* is a joint project between Noffs and Noffs Foundation program manager and psychologist Kieran Palmer. Part deep dive into addiction, part personal accounts of working on the frontline and part help guide to managing unhealthy addiction, Noffs says despite having spent many years working in the area, the project prompted a total overhaul of everything the pair knew. *"We said 'let's pretend that we don't know anything about addiction, despite our experience,'" he says. "The book aimed to be something for you and I to understand what addiction means to us and how it might affect us, compared to how it might affect someone in a back alley with a needle in their arm."*

The way most addictions are formed is relatively similar. It's how those addictions develop, however, where the difference lies. *"You and I are able to recalibrate after [minor addictions] because of the support structure around us, things like friends and family and work. You and I have these factors that reduce the factor of becoming addicted to something in an unhealthy way."* Studies have shown a link between trauma and substance addiction. *"The person who becomes addicted to a drug, for instance, hasn't got that same support structure. It's very possible that they have experienced trauma in their life and grown up in poverty."*

Get the full article here: -

<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/national/act/like-falling-in-love-how-experts-are-re-thinking-how-we-see-addiction-20180620-p4zmoy.html>

## **MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK**

8TH—14TH OCTOBER 2018

### **‘Let nature In’**

MĀ TE TAIAO KIA WHAKAPAKARI TŌU ORANGA

STRENGTHEN YOUR WELLBEING

Go to the Mental Health Foundation's page for details of activities during this week:

<https://www.mhaw.nz>

# PROGRAMMES and EVENTS UPDATE

## WHAT'S ON AT MHAPS?

As well as the programmes profiled on this and the next page, we also offer peer advocacy and a range of peer support options.

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

or email: - [reception@mhaps.org.nz](mailto:reception@mhaps.org.nz) or phone (03) 365 9479 or call in and see us and ask for a copy.

## Mindfulness programme

Facilitator: Kathy Hughes

4 weeks, 7:00 – 8.30pm

**Next programme is scheduled for November** (date to be advised)

*'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 us on:

[reception@mhaps.org.nz](mailto:reception@mhaps.org.nz) or phone (03) 365 9479

## PeerZone Workshops:

### *Leverage the Power of Lived Experience!*

MHAPS has recently trained four peer workers to be able to deliver **PeerZone** workshops.

We are now offering fortnightly workshops.

If you are interesting in attending these workshops please contact the MHAPS Peer Support Team via [reception@mhaps.org.nz](mailto:reception@mhaps.org.nz) or (03) 365 9479.



### Upcoming PeerZone workshops:-

Monday 17th September	12.30 – 2.30pm	<b>Finding our voices</b>
Monday 1st October	12.30 – 2.30pm	<b>Dealing with crisis</b>
Monday 15th October	12.30 – 2.30pm	<b>Coping with stress</b>
Monday 29th October	12.30 – 2.30pm	<b>Enhancing our relationships</b>
Monday 12th November	12.30 – 2.30pm	<b>Understanding trauma</b>
Monday 26th November	12.30 – 2.30pm	<b>Empowering ourselves in services</b>
Monday 3rd December	12.30 – 2.30pm	<b>Minding our lifestyle</b>

To find out more about **PeerZone** visit <https://www.peerzone.info/lived-experience>

## PROGRAMMES and EVENTS UPDATE

### *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 your interest is for yourself, a friend, family member or relating to your profession—you are welcome to attend. If you haven't been to **Themes** before, please contact [reception@mhaps.org.nz](mailto:reception@mhaps.org.nz) or phone (03) 365 9479 to register and get details of our venue and/or schedule for the year and times.

**Upcoming topics: -**

- 25th September 2018: **Personality Disorders and Mental Health** Dr Scot Duffton and Dr Penny Mansell, CDHB Secondary Mental Health service.
- 23rd October 2018: **Stress and Trauma**—Helen Colhoun (Anxiety Disorders Service, CDHB)

### MHAPS has moved !!!!



we are now at

>>>> **unit 4, 357 Madras St.** <<<<<

(alongside The Heart Foundation's office)

Our phone and email contacts remain unchanged but please note our new post box number:

**PO Box 21-020 Edgware.**

**Parking for MHAPS' visitors** is under cover between the units, or at the rear of the building. There are also P60 parks onsite, near the Salisbury St entrance, and unrestricted parking on Madras and Salisbury Streets nearby.

### Do you experience moderate or high anxiety?



The next 11 week **RecoveryWorks** programme begins **early OCTOBER 2018**. Workshop are four hours each plus there are two individual coaching sessions through the programme. There *may* still be places still available on this programme. Over nearly seven years most people who have participated in the programme have made successful and positive life changes: -

*'Exceeded all my expectations....' '....has changed the course of my life completely.....'*

For more detailed programme information **contact Ian** on [lex-manager@mhaps.org.nz](mailto:lex-manager@mhaps.org.nz) or (03) 365 9479.

# NOTICES AND NEWS

"One awesome thing about Eeyore's story is even though he may be clinically depressed, he still gets invited to participate in adventures and shenanigans with all his friends.

And they never expect him to pretend to feel happy, they just love him anyway, and they never leave him behind or ask him to change."



@projecthappiness\_org

## Good4Work has been enhanced

The free online workplace wellbeing tool, Good4Work, has been upgraded and revamped. Aimed at small to medium-sized workplaces, and any business getting started with workplace wellbeing, Good4Work helps you assess your workplace's current wellbeing situation and decide how to take action. New additions include the ability to ask team mates to take the Good4Work quiz, to compare your workplace with other similar Kiwi businesses, enhanced to-do and action lists, and the ability to download and save your results and progress. If you're already on Good4Work, don't worry – your data is safe and still relevant.

[Log in to see what's new.](#)

*visit our website and Facebook pages*

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

<https://www.facebook.com/mhapschch>



**Peer Support**

**Peer Advocacy**

**Peer Recovery Groups**

**Consumer Participation**

**Latnam 826 programme**

**Recovery programmes**

**Information and Talks**

**Quiet Minds Radio**

**PO Box 21-020 Edgware**

**CHRISTCHURCH 8143**

**Unit 4, 357 Madras St**

**365 9479; 0800 437 324**

**[reception@mhaps.org.nz](mailto:reception@mhaps.org.nz)**

**[www.mhaps.org.nz](http://www.mhaps.org.nz)**

The 2018 **New Zealand Mental Health Media Grants** are now open for applications.

Use your talents, skills and experience to reduce stigma and discrimination and make Aotearoa a more accepting and inclusive place for people who experience mental distress. In 2018 there are three journalism and two creative grants on offer, worth up to \$10,000 each. Previous projects have included emotive and thought-provoking plays, art exhibitions, magazine articles, music, and more.

Register your interest at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XFWDRBF>

**Applications close 12 Oct 2018.** If you have questions please email: Gina [info@mediagrants.org.nz](mailto:info@mediagrants.org.nz)

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

**Free call or text 1737 anytime**

**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

**DISCLAIMER:** The information provided in this newsletter has come from a variety of sources with sometimes diverging views of what is effective and safe for recovery and wellbeing. Whilst MHAPS endeavours to ensure the reliability and accuracy of all information, this cannot be guaranteed. Any treatment or therapy decisions you may take should include your GP. It is especially important before making any changes, including additions, to any prescription medications, programme or treatment you are using that you discuss your intentions with your GP or whichever health professional you have used.

**FAMILY  
VIOLENCE  
IT'S NOT OK**

**IT IS  
OK  
TO ASK  
FOR  
HELP**

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



## 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)

## 5 WAYS TO WELLBEING



*MHAPS acknowledges and thanks the following organisations for their continued and valued financial support*

**CANTERBURY DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD (CDHB)**

**RATA FOUNDATION (Canterbury Community);**

**CERT; One Foundation Ltd;**

**Christchurch Casino; Christchurch City Council;**

**Christine Taylor Foundation; David Ellison Charitable Trust;**

**Frozen Funds Charitable Trust; Lottery Grants Board;**

**Lion Foundation; Pub Charities; Southern Trust**

**IF UNDELIVERED PLEASE RETURN TO: -**

**PO Box 21-020, CHRISTCHURCH 8143**

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