



create happy

MAGAZINE



Aotearoa's coolest teen-run magazine!

Innovation • Aroha • Grit • Impact • Gratitude • Adventure

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Welcome to the

GRIT

EDITION

Editor's Note

In the time of exams, stress, and the excitement of the on-coming summer, I am proud to say that we now bring you the Grit Edition. If you've been with us for a while, you'll know about the ups but not necessarily the downs, of Create Happy Magazine. Juggling our lives, NCEA exams, studying and Create Happy, I know more than some of you will sympathise with the scatteredness of our brains. On our Instagram, you'll see exclamation marks, exciting news, and notable introductions, but let me introduce you to the gritty side of Create Happy.

Not many teenagers can say they have co-created a magazine from scratch with no experience, barely any money, and next to no spare time. Now with a 450-strong Instagram following, we are paving the way for young journalists and creatives, showing what you can do with a bit of heart and a lot of grit.

Create Happy Magazine isn't run by Millennials or Generation X. Our eldest contributor was born in 2005. That means that all of the journalists and photographers are under 18.

Gen Z is the future & we are Gen Z. (of course, we can't forget Generation Alpha, but ya'll will be teenagers next year.)

Create Happy isn't run by superhumans, either. Aged 12-18, we're in the period of our lives where school, exams and our social lives usually take precedence. Don't get me wrong, Create Happy still comes after school (for most), but in my mind, this is a testament to how resilient our crew members are.

This Grit Edition has shown me just how incredibly resilient and resourceful the Create Happy team is. Coincidentally, this fits in with our value for this edition!

Let's redefine the stereotype of Aotearoa's typical teenager. Let's show the older generation that we deserve to be celebrated, inspired and united. Let's create more happy.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lola Fisher". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping 'L' and 'F'.

Co-Founder & Editor in Chief

Lindsey Song



Section 1

Wairua

spirit/soul



DENYING SOCIETIES IDEALISED IDENTITIES

WORDS BY HOLLY DAVIES

Growing up, my head and ears were filled with stories of elegant but clumsy princesses who fell in love with the charming prince. Films and books about Ariel, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, Cinderella, Tiana, Belle and more were essential to my childhood and my idea of what I wanted my life to look like.

"My favourite fairy tale growing up was *The Little Mermaid*. I wanted to literally *be* Ariel. Mermaid tail, red hair, sea animal friends and the ability to sing the way she did."

You watched these films, and your parents and older siblings read you these books, and you began to think you wanted to be that imperfectly perfect non-disabled girl who fell in love with the ideal guy who would save you in any circumstance.

Or maybe you were the little boy who wanted to believe he could be the perfect guy who could "swoop in" and save the girl from the metaphorical dragons that are the challenges and dangers of our layered world.

My favourite fairy tale growing up was *The Little Mermaid*. I wanted to literally *be* Ariel. Mermaid tail, red hair, sea animal friends and the ability to sing the way she did. The relationship with Eric didn't sound horrible either. The story seemed perfect when you removed the giant sea witch, the eels and the obvious fact that I did not have a mermaid tail, nor could I breathe underwater for more than thirty-odd seconds.





I thought her giving up her voice for him was brave and romantic. Now I look back and question the idea that giving up your voice is worth it for teenage love. To each their own, I guess.

As I grew, the idea of being in love with a man and being in these fairy tale relationships began to bore me, or just not feel the same as when I was young. I had crushes and thought I had liked boys, but now I realise it wasn't the same as my friends felt for their first boyfriends.

I was bisexual, then I was pansexual, and then at fifteen, I realised I was a lesbian. Liking girls and non-men was slightly overwhelming for me only because the media only showed me heterosexual couples. Real-life too. My parents were married and male and female, my female friends had crushes on boys often, and as I started high school, paths were blocked by sweaty, straight teenagers kissing and holding hands in halls for everyone to see.

As well as my queerness, I was always anxious and often felt sad. It wasn't really a result or "side effect" of my queerness, which I sometimes had nurses and professionals suggest, but it was just an addition to my differences. My brain chemistry was out of whack, I suppose and growing up as a child who would often have undiagnosed panic attacks and stress headaches finally caught up to me.

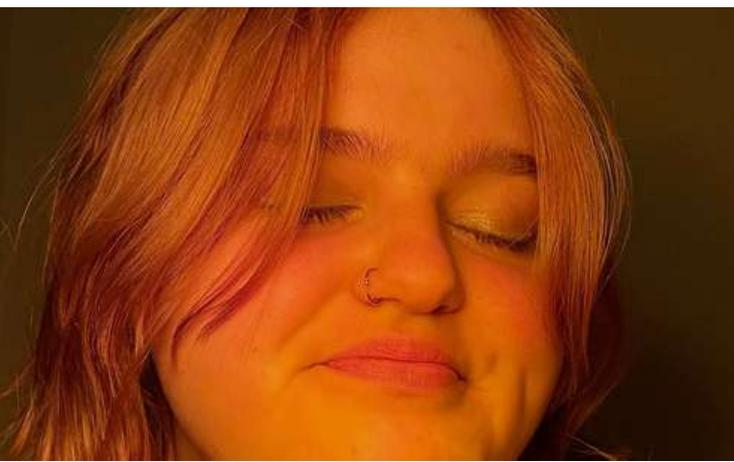
Fatigue, distress from bullying, and an almost consistent (illogical) fear of being kidnapped will do that to a kid. Medication for anxiety and major depressive disorder started when I was fourteen, and it's been changed, stopped, upped and decreased countless times since then.

Now my imperfections couldn't be similar to the clumsiness and quirks the princesses portrayed because I was no longer simply clumsy and bubbly like everyone thought.

I was an extra level of "too much", messy in my thoughts and borderline crazy according to the media's perceptions of people with mental illnesses. My brain, my hurt and my scars labelled me unconsciously as psychotic to a society that wasn't, or maybe still isn't, educated on psychological and mental distress.

I was another "girl" filled with hormones who didn't eat, or ate too much, slept all day, hurt myself and had panic attacks because of her school work. The only difference was my pain didn't increase because of heartbreak caused by boys who didn't find me pretty.

My constant thoughts that the sky would collapse because I watched Chicken Little once when I was nine, and the muddled mess of my brain and lack of serotonin often failed to explain and define the entirety of my reactions.



"I thought maybe it was a result of my derealisation and dislike for myself during anxious moments."

I wasn't a girl. I wasn't a boy.

Not entirely. It made me struggle with myself because I thought maybe it was a result of my derealisation and dislike for myself during anxious moments. I like(d) she/her and they/them pronouns, but it was hard to think of myself as anything other than the pink, the dresses and the barbies I was when I was small. The things society told me I was.

I wasn't pink, I wasn't blue.

I was probably supposed to be less of a person who cared for feminism because I wasn't pink anymore and because I didn't like men. My genderqueer or non-binary identity and as a queer/lesbian person made me feel like my feminism was invalid.

This is because I felt like maybe straight, cisgender women are able to compensate for their feminism by marrying men. It was balanced that way. I, however, would be calling out injustices of minorities as a person who wasn't cisgender and could never marry a man, like somehow that would balance my feminist beliefs.



I lost friends and had to process on my own that I was physically and mentally ill, that my dad had just been diagnosed with muscular dystrophy, and I was moving islands again. It was mostly on my own purely because I hated vulnerability, and my therapist visits had stopped due to not knowing when I would have to finish packing and move.

I still hate vulnerability, but recently I've begun to accept that this isn't pity, and pity isn't something I aim for. I've found wonderful people, and while life still sucks sometimes...

“Grit has been something that is and always will be necessary for elements of my life.”

I started to figure out I had hearing loss, too, when I was fourteen/fifteen. Honestly, everything happened at once, and figuring out I had around half of the hearing capacity left in my right ear, and a tachycardia condition in my heart at sixteen was confusing. They acted as additions to a continuously growing list of things. I took every new condition and every new pain, chronic and/or nerve, as something that just happened.

The increasing panic attacks were something that just *happened*.

Around eight panic attacks a day became overwhelmingly normal for me in my early to mid-teen years and resulted in weeks and months of school being missed.

Grit comes in careers and success - but grit also comes in living when your pain aches. It grows and develops from realising that disabled people aren't only visually disabled, not all bald people are bald from cancer, and not all people who are disabled are in wheelchairs or can't walk. Grit comes from realising you will never be the princess with the charming prince for a husband, or maybe from realising you will. Grit is recognising your independence and personal acceptance of every colour you are.

Grit may be hard to accept, but you have it. You have it all the time.

Self- published at 15

Denika Mead talks about motivation and publishing her series, *Royal Orchid*, during her teenage years of homeschooling. As told to Maddison Lynch

How did you first become introduced to writing fantasy and old dystopian novels?

"I have always loved fantasy, and I've always loved reading it. When I was younger, I loved Harry Potter, Wings of Fire and books like that. I have recently enjoyed The Hobbit, The Lord of The Rings, and Phillip Pullman's His Dark Materials Trilogy. The characters and stories I create often have some kind of fantasy, dystopian feel. Dystopian, for me, has always been something I have loved, but fantasy writing has always been my main passion."

How did you make the move to write your first book? And why did you decide to write your first book?

"There was a competition called the Youth Laureate competition. You had to submit a manuscript. The competition winner would get their manuscript published, which sounded very exciting."



Denika Mead/Jo Frances-Moore

I submitted two manuscripts, one of which was *The Death-Hunters*, the novel I published. While neither of them won, both were finalists, which gave me the confidence to self-publish it."

How do you get the motivation to write the novels that you do?

"It's something I've always enjoyed and have never seen as work. It does get tricky around that 70% mark when I've got it back from the editor. When I get to that point, what keeps me going is I imagine what would happen if I didn't finish it."

"All the characters and stories I create in my head [had a] fantasy, dystopian vibe to them for sure."



Denika with one of her books from *Royal Orchid*/Jo Frances-Moore

The disappointment I'd feel outweighs the work because it's something I enjoy. It's fun for me, and I would be disappointed to stop. That idea keeps me going."

What would you say the timeline would be like for writing each of your books?

"Roughly, each book takes a year from starting the planning to the finished product. I balanced it out because I'll be editing one manuscript, then I might be writing another, and I'm planning another, so I have multiple on the go in different stages. And that can make it seem like a shorter amount of time because they overlap."

Why did you decide to self-publish?

"I decided to Self Publish because I liked the control that self-publishing gave me.

"It's [writing] never been something I've seen as work... It's fun for me."

Because you've got the rights to things, you can decide what your cover looks like. So I worked with a cover designer, editor, and proofreader. The critical thing with self-publishing is to get input from others to ensure a professional product. I enjoy the process of working with a team. Self-publishing gives you much more creative control over the whole process."

How do you manage to juggle school and writing?

"I finished NCEA level 3 last year, which was very exciting. Now I'm working towards a diploma in writing at Whitireia, which has been great because the working hours have been flexible;



Denika Mead/Jo Frances-Moore

I am completing my diploma over two years. The flexibility is amazing since I can focus on my studies and still run writing classes. I tend to do most of my writing in the mornings as this seems to be my most creative time. I will then study after that."

How do people react when they discover your age, and is it ever a barrier for you?

"I wouldn't say it was a barrier. People are often quite surprised, and it's something they don't usually expect. People have been supportive."

I tend to do most of my writing in the mornings as this seems to be my most creative time of day. I will then study after that

And what would be your advice to any other young, aspiring writers?

"Read lots. Because then you see what works and what doesn't. The other advice I'd give is just to start writing; it can be so hard once you've got a plan, and then you don't want to start writing."

That can be scary, or when you finish your first draft and don't want to touch it again. Just keep going, trust yourself, and don't stop."

What would be your plans for your future? In terms of writing? Or would you like to go down another different course?

"I want to continue writing. On October 30th, I launched the final book in my Royal Orchid series, *The Crystal Continent*. I've started working on a science fiction dystopian series. So I've got plans for future books."

To find out more about Denika and her writing, you can visit her Instagram page @denikamead or visit denikameadauthor.com to sign up for writing classes and more!

Denika with the *Royal Orchid* series/Jo Frances-Moore



THE POWER OF MY HIJAB.

WORDS BY JUMANA FOUDA

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لَأُزْجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ
عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلْبَابِهِنَّ ۚ ذَلِكَ آدَنَىٰ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ ۗ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا .

O Prophet! Ask your wives, daughters, and the women of Islam to draw their cloaks over their bodies. In this way, they will be more likely to be recognised 'as virtuous' and not be harassed. And Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

This is an ayah (verse) from the Quran (the Islamic holy book). It is known as the ayah of the hijab. You might have heard of the hijab recently in the news, with women in Iran being forced to wear the hijab and women in France being forced to take it off. What's happening in Iran doesn't reflect Islam or anything Islam stands for, and what's happening in France is just an attempt to get all people to act a certain way that fits the 'modern and western' lifestyle.

While both countries seemingly do the opposite, there is one apparent similarity between them - using political power to control the citizens of their countries.

What's happening in Iran doesn't reflect Islam or anything Islam stands for

Through both of these events, people have forgotten what the hijab truly is and what it means to those who wear it. So here's a quick recap on it. The literal translation of 'hijab' means "to cover." It is usually referred to as the physical headscarf, but it is so much more than that. Hijab is a way of life, followed by Muslim women who choose to wear—or not wear—the headscarf.



Art/Abigail Street

It represents a set of codes that we, Muslim women (and men), follow that regulate our day-to-day life. These codes embody modesty and morality: how we represent ourselves, behave, speak, and treat others. Wearing the hijab is part religion and part culture, but it can also be a political statement or a fashion choice. It is a decision made by Muslim women based on all four concepts. Overall, the concept of hijab is open to interpretation.

For me, wearing the hijab is extremely personal, yet it is the most visible and the first thing people see about me.

Wearing the hijab simultaneously symbolises my religion and my culture. It reminds me that my hijab isn't just what I wear—it's also what I do and say. It reminds me that every day, I am lucky enough to be living in a country that allows me the power to choose to wear something that outwardly represents my morality, modesty, and my pride in being a Muslim woman. At the same time, some people aren't fortunate enough to have that right. For me, in no way whatsoever does my hijab restrict my goals in life—whether it is in school, my future career, or just my self-growth. My hijab does quite the opposite; it empowers me.

It means that with my hijab, I ultimately have the power to choose how I show myself and what I want the world to see. Because I cannot deny the fact that there are negative connotations of the hijab everywhere (even where people have the power to choose to wear it), my hijab serves as a constant motivator to try to break the associated stereotypes wherever I am; however I possibly can.

"My hijab serves as a constant motivator to try to break the associated stereotypes wherever I am"

My hijab forces the people I interact with daily to look past my appearance and see who I truly, unapologetically, am. While I do take pride in my appearance, it is important to me that I am only judged by my personality and intellect.

I remind myself that the hijab not only acts as a filter for people who will judge me because I am covered but will also serve as a conversation starter with a stranger.

Although it is unfortunate when I find myself talking to someone who already has preconceived notions about what Islam is and believes that the hijab is oppressing Muslim women, it is at that exact moment that I am happy to serve as an ambassador of my faith and can show people that no, I am not like what you see in the media. I am someone that might share more in common with you than you might imagine.

People choose other things—a tattoo, a necklace, or a bracelet—to remind them of something personal, I choose my hijab to do that.

My hijab means so much to me. It's a physical reminder of the way I choose to represent myself, my strength, and, most importantly, my way of showing devotion to my religion and God.

It may sometimes create barriers in my life, but the power the hijab provides allows me to overcome those barriers. Like how people choose other things—a tattoo, a necklace, or a bracelet—to remind them of something personal, I choose my hijab to do that.

In my opinion, the physical aspect of my hijab should not be judged: it's not about how I look but only about how it makes me feel. My Hijab is my dignity, my respect, and my honour, and I would never trade it for this temporary world.



“I am lucky enough to be living in a country that allows me the power to choose to wear something that outwardly represents my morality, modesty, and my pride in being a Muslim woman.”

Jumana Fouda



To live

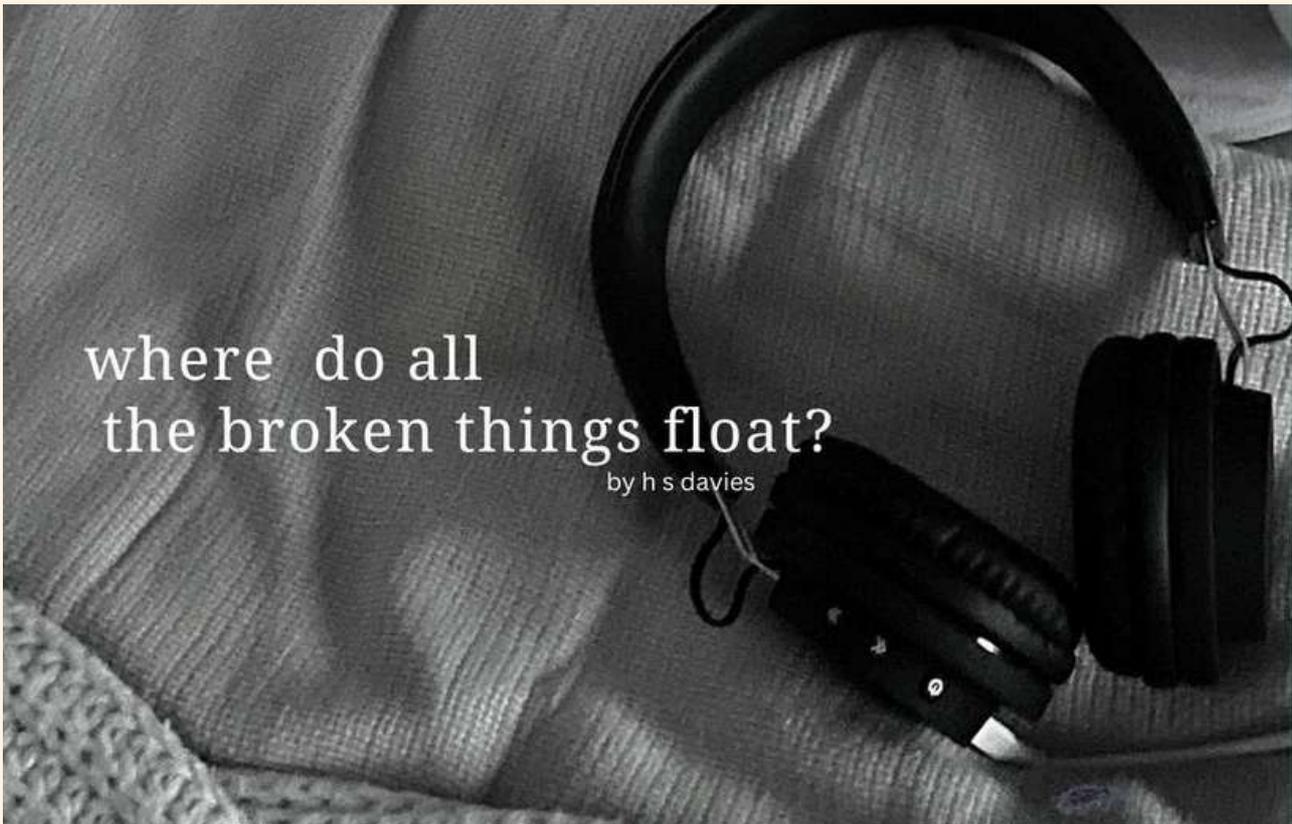
i do not view being alive
breathing
the same as living
living is to be bold
maybe within yourself
to be full,
if not happy
and it is rather to skip than to walk in certain times.
living is to almost thrive
in contrast to just having organs that keep you here.
and to live
is to have moments, places
people
that you can be without fear
and i promise
one day you'll be there.

something i wrote last september

i may not feel the same way tomorrow, or even in an
hour or so
but when i think in this moment
im genuinely okay
and i think i believe i'll be okay
because even though it's hard
and i've survived impossible things
im here and im alive, even though i wanted for so
long not to be breathing
because i felt i was not living
i still think there is a lot i am missing
but because im here i can do those things

i can smile
i can hear the music and i can see the stars
and i can feel the bitterness of tears
and the comfort of hugs
for a little while longer.





where do all the broken things float? Is a series of collected poetry I've written over the last 1-2 years. It contains themes like mental illness, loss, and finding beauty in a world that is so often ugly and features my experiences with queerness and relationships (platonic and romantic). *where do all the broken things float?* Is so extremely important to me, and while I'm still scared of the vulnerability of these poems and my book, I'm excited and hope my writing and 'internal conflicts' can mean something to you.

Find my poetry and my ebook for purchase on Google Books today for the first time, or check out my Instagram at @hsdaviespoetry.

Holly Davies

NZSL

New Zealand Sign Language is one of the three official languages of Aotearoa. People need to learn this to communicate with New Zealand deaf people.

To help make your actions easier to understand, it is best to wear a short-sleeved shirt or roll your sleeves up. Also, make sure to mouth your words and add facial expressions to clarify questions or emotions.



Good morning - First, with your right (or left if you are left-handed) hand, do a thumbs up, then still using your right hand make an 'okay' symbol (the thumb and forefinger meeting to form an O and the other fingers spread apart and curved slightly) and move your hand up and across in an arch-like shape to the right.

Sorry - Using your dominant hand, make a thumbs up and put it on your chest. Move it around in a small circle. It doesn't matter which way you go.

Thanks - Start by putting an open hand on the end of your chin then move the hand out and down in an arch.

Please - Start with an open hand on the end of your chin, then move your hand down to the middle of your chest; as you bring your hand down, close your fist but leave your thumb sticking out so it looks like a sideways thumbs up.

Introducing yourself (My name is __) - Start by holding your fist to your chest, then using your dominant hand point with two fingers to the side of your forehead, then turn your hand outwards. Next, you spell out your name. Figure out how to spell your name with the alphabet down below.

Nice to meet you - With your dominant hand, wipe your chin sideways, then with both hands, point out your index fingers and touch your fists together. Then point to the person you are speaking to.



Want to learn the whole alphabet? Head to createhappy.org to find Abi's video.

nzsl.nz is a great New Zealand Sign Language dictionary.

Here's a link to an excellent NZSL course www.learnnzsl.nz

The Power of Rest

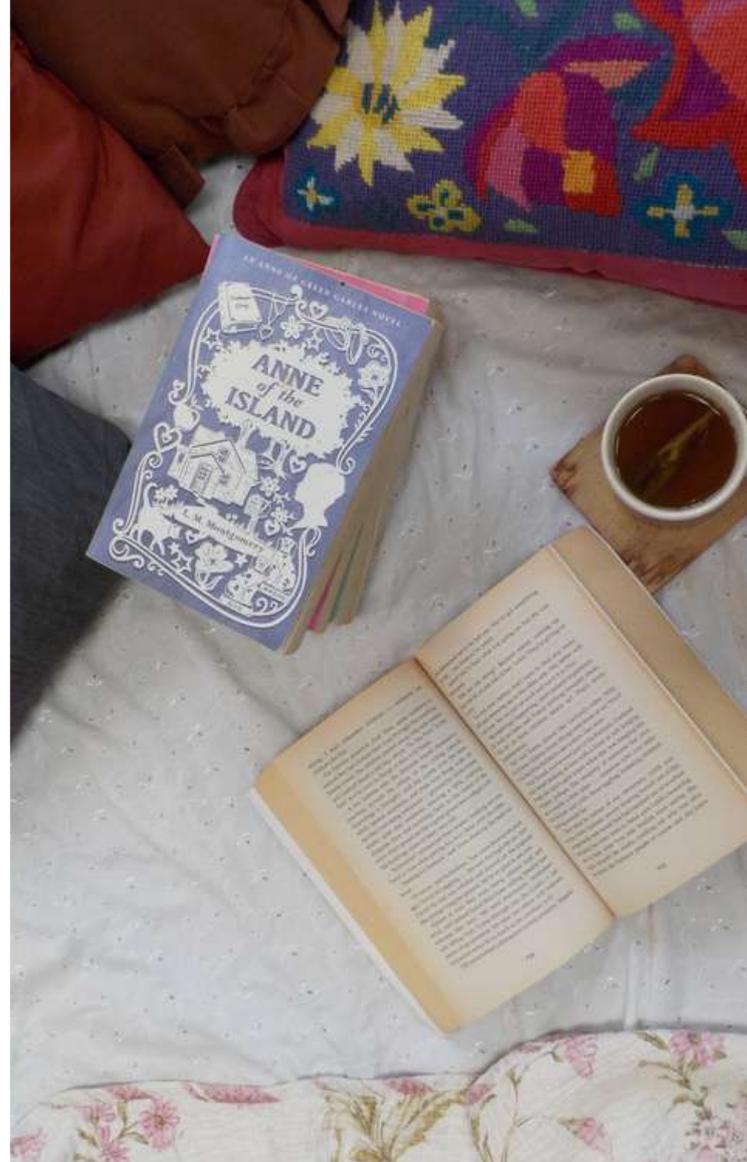
WORDS BY SYDNEY FREMISTA

When was the last time you got some rest? Regardless of your age and lifestyle, we all get tired. Rest is crucial for our body, mind and heart to regenerate and work at their best abilities.

For some of us, the thought of resting comes with guilt - denying that we deserve it. Personally, this is something I struggle with. So if you're in the same boat, let's get through this journey together.

"Sometimes the most productive thing you can do is relax" - Mark Black.

When we avoid rest, it can lead us to become highly stressed. Your hypothalamus is the area of your brain that controls your thirst, hunger and body temperature. When stressed, the hypothalamus reacts to a stressor that sends signals that start the production of stress hormones - adrenaline and cortisol.



Photograph/Santeria Healey-Stevens

Adrenaline affects us by increasing our heart rate and blood pressure - our vital signs. The feeling is like when you win a race, and you're all suddenly pumped up with energy even though you just ran your heart out. Cortisol, on the other hand, slows things down and usually puts certain functions on hold till the stress passes. Functions can be digestion, reproduction and the immune system.

These symptoms typically last for a short time, only leaving once the stressor passes. These hormones can be beneficial, but only in short durations and on occasion. When we frequently get these stress hormones, we experience those headaches, body aches, nausea and mood changes.

The majority of us are fixated on a screen from 9-5. Screens are our new books. Sometimes, our brains get fried from the bright glare of our screens. More the reason why rest is vital to incorporate within our daily schedules.

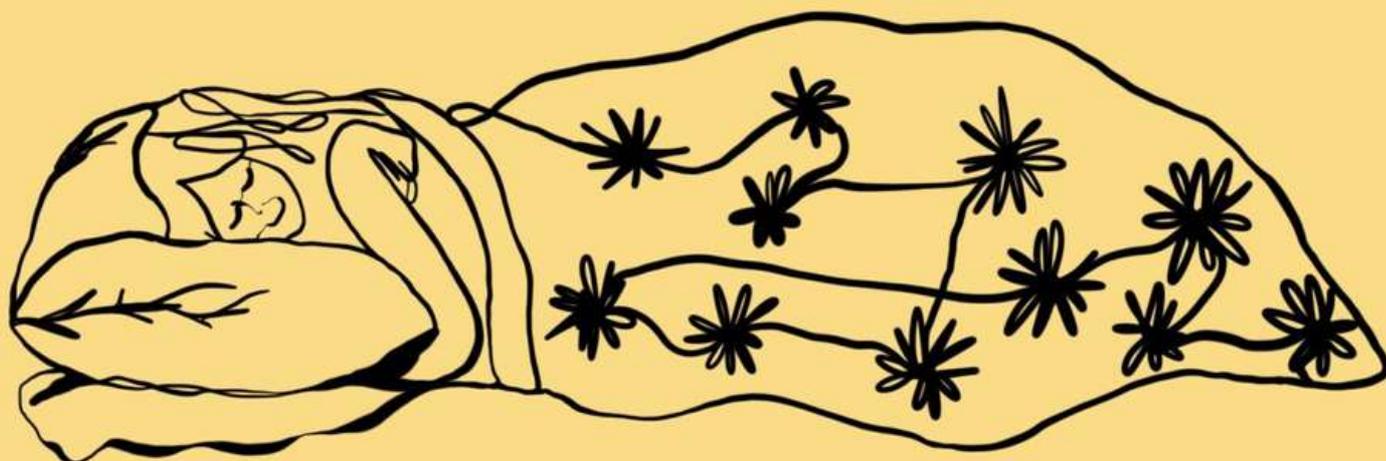
Rest can look like multiple things to everyone. To some, it may be putting the devices away and getting some natural light, and Vitamin D. I like to get some shut-eye and let all my muscles loose and relax. Some other standard methods are going on a walk, reading a book, doing your favourite hobby, hanging out with your furry friend or simply putting your feet up and putting on some TV.

No matter what rest is for you, it still allows the adrenaline to pass and your cortisol levels to milder. Your vital signs are balancing once again.

Overall, no matter your age and occupation, rest is crucial. Not only for our bodies but our minds. Our brain needs some time to regain balance and store memories effectively.

Perhaps- you may now think of taking a nap after a long study session. Even if it's only 10 minutes, that resting time is better than none.

Art/Sydney Fremista





Exploring Aotearoa...

Still, want to explore New Zealand? Leisha put together the rest of the country for you - so what are you waiting for? Hit the road and see some new things; from Lake Tekapo to the West Coast, you're sure to find something cool!

Starting at the top of Te Waipounamu, Marlborough is famous for its wines, fresh seafood and its stunning sounds (like a fjord) It is filled with beautiful views and fantastic wildlife. Kayaking, hiking, and biking are just some examples of amazing activities that are loved by tourists.

Lake Tekapo; the stunning blue colour from the glaciers makes it one of the clearest stargazing places in the country.

Next up on the road trip are Tasman and Nelson. In this region, there is Abel Tasman National Park. For people serious about hiking and camping, it takes about 3 to 5 days to walk, but you can also walk small parts if you aren't up for a massive hike. Tasman is a beautiful sunny place with wide sandy beaches and is known for its 3 National Parks. It is also known for Golden bay, with beautiful wide golden beaches.

Moving down the map, we have the West Coast. It's starting to get a bit colder now, with Franz Josef and Fox glaciers. The West Coast has stunning mirror lakes, such as Lake Matherson - a photographer's dream - and gorges, such as Hokitika Gorge, adorn this part of the country. This coast can get wild, especially the awe-inspiring rock formations like the Pancake Rocks at Dolomite Point.

The West Coast is the prime place for finding Pounamu; for rock lovers. Also, the Heaphy Track is a long walk, around 4 to 6 days, that many hikers love to visit.



After this, we have the giant region of Canterbury. There is Lake Tekapo; the stunning blue colour from the glaciers makes it one of the clearest stargazing places in the country.

In addition, we also have Kaikoura, which is famous for its whale watching, which is breathtaking to see. Tons of seals, dolphins, whales, and other sea life is in Canterbury.

Christchurch is home to the mountains, specifically Mount Cook, followed by its botanical gardens, art galleries, and gondolas. Aoraki (Mount Cook) is the tallest mountain in New Zealand and is stunning. Mount Cook is one of the most amazing places in New Zealand, and I recommend it.

Further down the country, we have the region of Otago. Queenstown is a city in Otago with a small population of 15,450 people. In Queenstown, you can see beautiful mountains and regular snow. There is also the Luge which is an enjoyable family activity. Otago has a lot of ski fields, so if that's your thing, then you have many options.



Art/Lindsey Song

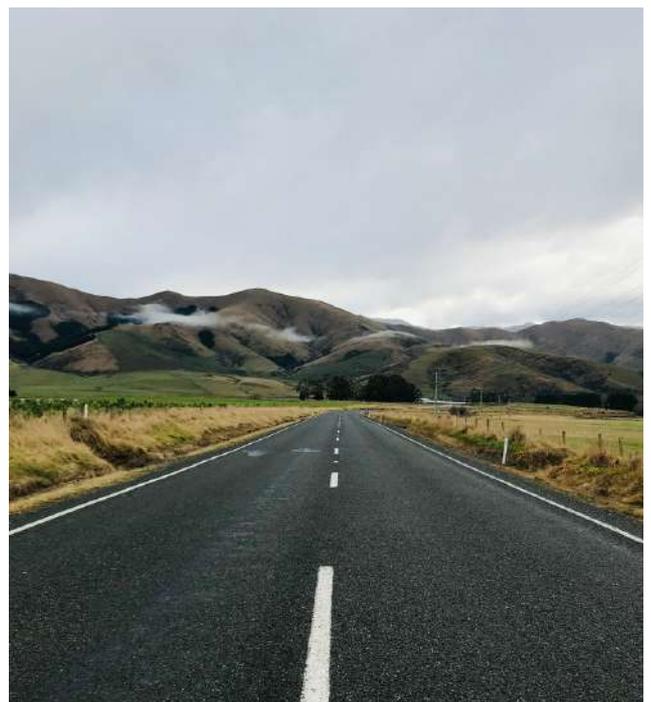
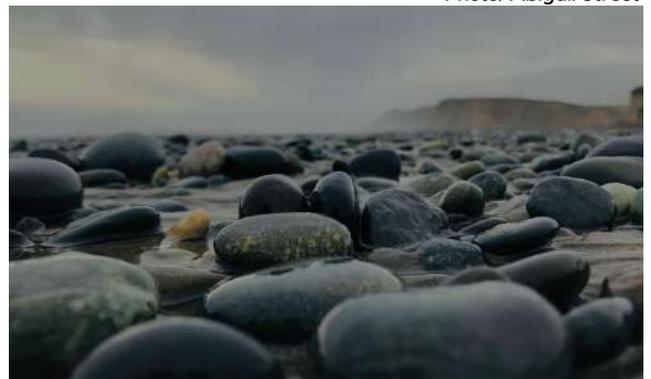
This includes the Remarkables mountain range, which, hence the name, is remarkable. Also in Otago is the Moeraki boulders beach, with peculiar round boulders in the sand. Lake Wanaka is also famous for the single tree standing in the lake, a great photography site.

Finally, at the very bottom of the country, we have Southland, famous for its sounds, Milford, Doubtful and a few more.

At the very bottom of the South Island, is a small town called Bluff, which is famous for its oysters. Then, of course, there is Oban (Stewart Island). Stewart Island is an amazing place for wildlife, hikes and beaches.

Even though the borders are (finally) open, you don't need to travel to another country to have an amazing time. There is still so much of our wonderful country to explore!

Photo/Abigail Street



Section 2

Integrity

moral & ethical principles



LETTERS TO STRANGERS

Words by Lola Fisher

Letters to Strangers New Zealand is a nonprofit organisation advocating for youth mental health through letters written by strangers from your community.

Since December last year, Claire Ma has been the driving force for Letters to Strangers (L2S), creating a community of people advocating for better mental health in their regional neighbourhoods.

Initially inspired by chatting to the founders of the global L2S, Claire says, "We talked together, we vibed well, but when I asked her if there was a Letters to Strangers [in New Zealand], she said no. A couple of people had tried to start one a few years ago, but it never went anywhere."



Claire describes the feeling when she first started a New Zealand L2S branch as a 'hot-headed moment'.

How exactly does Letters to Strangers work? You write a letter to a stranger in your community or school through your local L2S branch. In return, you receive a letter from a stranger writing an uplifting and hopeful letter to inspire you to keep going. This is called a 'letter exchange'. Claire describes this second stage as 'receiving a response from the world to you.' L2S also runs community events every month, where they gather the community and put out a couple of ideas to reflect on past experiences.

'Our team number varies throughout the year. Our core team has about 5-6 people & each person represents their school.

In terms of structure, I get everyone to host a club in their region, so they hold that leadership role in their community. My role is to support them, setting long and short-term goals.



The inside of the shop/Lola Fisher

Such as how we can run L2S in their communities, mental health support, and how they are looking after other people.

We meet about twice a month & each time we meet, I always put in a 'closed circle time'. I throw out tricky questions, self-affirmations and more to get thoughts flowing. I'm also giving everyone that attended a chance to speak and contribute.'

Juggling all the different activities and projects in her life, Claire isn't always the super-chill superwoman she seems. She talks of how it's rare to sit down to take a mental health break, so she's started to "take the time to reflect and learn" as part of her de-stress schedule.

'I've always been quite stressed about the thought of uni: living alone, and the cost, plus studying'.

'Once, I was writing a letter exchange, and the theme was focused on paying attributes around some flooding at the time.

One person wrote a letter saying she felt isolated and alone in uni life. She avoided feeling these negative thoughts by doing what she loved and not focusing on the bad. Hearing that, it shocked me how our experiences were so similar; I instantly felt less stressed about living alone. Letters to Strangers means I feel more engaged in the community, which is my motivation for the letter exchanges.'

Despite this, for Claire, there has never been a moment where it felt like there was too much going on in her life, describing it as 'I enjoy having a lot on my plate; it makes me feel like my life is to its full extent.'



There have been a couple of points in Claire's journey where she felt a little overwhelmed, one of them when multiple people were organising letter exchanges from around the country. 'I was quite overwhelmed by the applications, and others started backing out. This, in some ways, made me feel like I was alone trying to lift other people.'

'I overcame this by communicating this to my crew and organising other people. After laying my thoughts out, I felt a lot better.'

'I was overwhelmed by the applications. This made me feel like I was alone trying to lift other people.'

At the start, losing members made Claire feel a bit doubtful about herself and how she ran the organisation. Thoughts like 'maybe it's because I've organised the meetings a certain way.' or 'I'm too full on' ran through her head. 'As I was thinking about this, I realised I was going through a negative cycle. So, I took a step back and looked at the bigger picture of what we were achieving, which counteracted our loss.'

Claire has learnt many things over the past year of running L2S and says that,

'The whole year-long experience has taught me more about how to lead an organisation and keep everyone happy while working hard. I now know to set a very accurate and focused agenda and send a meeting summary soon after a meeting.'

These are the invaluable working skills I will use for the rest of my life.

In personal development, I've learnt a lot about other people's experiences. Loss [of team members] is a part of the journey, but no matter how many people we have on our crew, we'll always pick up more by running the letter exchange events, which is a tremendous driving force.'



What's next for L2S? 'In the future, we are looking at a couple of mental health workshops to run next year & I have also just started to fill out charity registration forms for us!'

Interested in collaborating with Claire and L2S? Here's Claire's note:

'100 per cent reach out to us. We have heaps of resources to support you in engaging teachers, peers, and people who have experience running L2S events, and you can always ask for tips and tricks.'

You can find Letters to Strangers nationally at @L2SNZ on Facebook & contact the branch at nz@letterstostrangers.org. You can also find LS2 globally at letterstostrangers.org.

YSAR: what it is and how to get involved

Zaria enlightens us with more information about Youth Search and Rescue in New Zealand!



[YSAR in action/ysar.org](https://ysar.inaction.org)

YSAR stands for Youth Search And Rescue. It is an organisation that focuses on involving youth in search and rescue programs, setting them up for jobs in the future.

YSAR began in 2009 when a survey revealed that 67% of the Search and Rescue (SAR) population were over 40. This issue, if not addressed, could've meant that many of our critical SAR workers would be unsuitable to be sent out, leaving Aotearoa lacking, and at risk. Clearly, young people needed to be trained in the sector, and this is where YSAR comes in. The program was developed to remedy the ageing SAR population and has certainly done that.

Over the 11 years it has been running, they have trained more than 325 young people in SAR skills and prepared them for future careers. The three-year course focuses on a different skill each year.

“We’re aiming to create multi-skilled young people who will be invaluable to their community”

In the first year, they focus on teaching self-leadership skills, bushcraft, survival, and an introduction to SAR.

They partner with organisations such as LandSAR, Coastguard and Amateur Radio Emergency Communications (AREC) throughout the year. When the students reach the third year, the course focuses on Emergency Management. They learn how to manage a full-scale emergency and respond in those situations.

Vision, Purpose, and Mission make up the core of YSAR. Their idea:

"Survive, thrive and save lives." Their purpose: "empower the next generation of community-minded volunteers." Their mission: "Enabling adventure through our leading-edge Search and Rescue and Emergency Management programme."

With this as their base, YSAR has dramatically added to communities around Aotearoa and helped our national SAR services.

"We're aiming to create multi-skilled young people who will be invaluable to their community," co-founder and GM Steve Campbell said.

"It's highly likely some of our students will go on to save lives, but they're also going to be great human beings", he adds.

Currently, YSAR operates in Auckland, Tauranga, Thames Coromandel, Waikato Central, Wellington and Christchurch, with more regions being added in 2024

If this sounds like your kind of thing, head to ysar.org.nz to apply or click here

Art/Abigail Street



New Year's Resolutions

(& actually doing them)

Article by the one and only, Lindsey Song

A new year can give us a considerable boost of confidence, so we get a little carried away with making plans for our fresh start. Sometimes, our actions don't exactly match our great expectations, and our new year's resolutions are forgotten (especially if some of us had planned to stop being phone addicts).

This article is written to motivate your lazy butts, so you can wake up in the morning and enjoy a successful and gratitude-filled year. We're going to take a page out of BJ Fogg's book and follow his 'tiny habits' strategy.

Anchor Moment

Firstly, let's merge our goal with an 'Anchor Moment'. We're going to slowly thread our goal (e.g. actually start that essay which is due tomorrow) into our daily life by using a habit we already do every day. It may be painfully hard to remember at first, but it is constructive if your attention span is short as hell.

For example, if we were to try to complete a school assignment on time, we could remind ourselves by changing our lock screen into the Lorax, so when we go on our phone, we'll be like; "why the hell is this furry moustache guy on my screen, oh, now I remember, I gotta do my homework." (Don't actually change your lock screen into the Lorax lol) Or, if you want to be more normal, every time you wake up in the morning and your feet hit your floor, you'll be reminded to praise yourself so you won't be an emo kid. If remembering your morals or values is still difficult, make an alarm, note, etc., and place it somewhere you often go. For example, a post-it on your phone, drink bottle (stay hydrated), laptop, etc. Surely then, one day, your goal will be interpreted into your life.



Tiny Behaviours

Like our man BJ Foggs said, the second technique is 'tiny behaviours'. Excuses are not excusable unless you or your family were hit by a truck. If so, you are allowed to be as depressed as you want. But if you are a teenager who constantly compares yourself to other people's success before stepping out of your sad little hole, just know that goals are goals because they're hard. We're going to scale down that goal by quadrillions, so if your goal was running a kilometre every day (if you can actually do that you should trial for the Olympics), make it into something achievable at first, such as walking a few meters to your mailbox. After a time, build that goal further to your original goal, and you're all set up for success.

Celebration

The last thing of the 'tiny habits' method is 'celebration'. It's pretty self-explanatory; of course, it is to encourage and praise your beautiful, gorgeous self. <3 You see, it's not that hard to say, "damn, I'm the sexiest person on this planet," or "Einstein is only smart because I've been humble." Even if at first you don't believe in your self-compliments, believe that in the future you will.

Don't cry

Friendly reminder for those of you who almost always give up when you see someone supposedly better than you. You are looking at people who have already reached their destination, geniuses, professionals, or that one psychotic friend who is good at everything.



The jokes on you, the people you're looking at probably cried 30 million times in their bed, just like you did (Maybe). Go and change your life.

Here are some resolutions for those of you who are still too lazy to think of one:

- Stop being lazy
- Get out of bed at a set time
- Drinking at least 4 cups of water every day
- Getting an hour of fresh air every day
- Shortening your screen time
- Studying for at least one of your tests
- Get a new wardrobe of clothes
- Make new friends
- Get into reading
- Pick up a new sport and stick to it
- Pick up a new instrument and stick to it
- Taking steps to stop caring so much about what others think
- Learn some card tricks
- Date someone ;))

Obviously, we thank our man BJ Foggs and his epic tiny habits program for being our muse for this (heavily inspired) article. head over to [tinyhabits.com](https://www.tinyhabits.com) right now to start getting good grades!

Grit Apps



Strides:

Strides is a free app to help us keep track of our goals and see how much (or little) progress we've made. Strides let us focus on recurring habits as well as specific objectives.

Think Up:

Think Up is a fantastic app for self-positivity; it lets us record and save affirmations using voice to help boost mood and self-esteem. These positive affirmations can lead toward a healthier & happier life.



My wonderful days:

My wonderful days journal allows us to remember our days by writing about our day and selecting options for how we felt that day.

Fabulous:

Fabulous is a daily planner and habit-making app that uses behavioural science to help people make intelligent changes and quickly build healthy habits.



WHY YOU DON'T NEED TO COME OUT TO BE VALID

WORDS BY BRIANA TAYLOR

Coming out is a big part of being queer, but most of the time, it can be confronting or scary. Sometimes, it can even be dangerous. You are still valid if you don't want to come out yet and don't owe anyone an explanation of who you are.

"Coming out is ongoing – you will meet new people and may want to tell them!"

What does it mean to come out?

Coming out of the closet is essentially telling people that you're queer. Some people do this by going all out to tell their family and friends, while some just casually tell them. Both are valid! It's okay if you don't want to come out, especially if it's unsafe. If you don't have a safe place to go if your guardians are not accepting, do not come out to them, your safety overrides everything! Coming out is ongoing - you will meet new people and may want to tell them!

The term 'coming out' has been used for a long time; the phrase was borrowed from debutante balls where young women would 'come out' officially into society.

The term 'coming out of the closet' originated in the 1960s. Hiding in the closet means you are keeping a secret. So coming out of the closet means revealing a big secret while stepping out into society.

You are still valid if you don't come out.

Repeating what was said before, you don't need to come out to be valid. Sometimes it can be dangerous to come out, so it's better to stay in the closet. Even if you live in an accepting community, you are still not obligated to come out. There is much pressure surrounding what they are, especially for youth. But guess what? You don't have to know! And you don't have to have a label! It's normal to be stuck on what you are! And if you do know, that's great! You still don't owe anyone an explanation for your sexuality, it's your body, so you get to decide who knows and who doesn't.

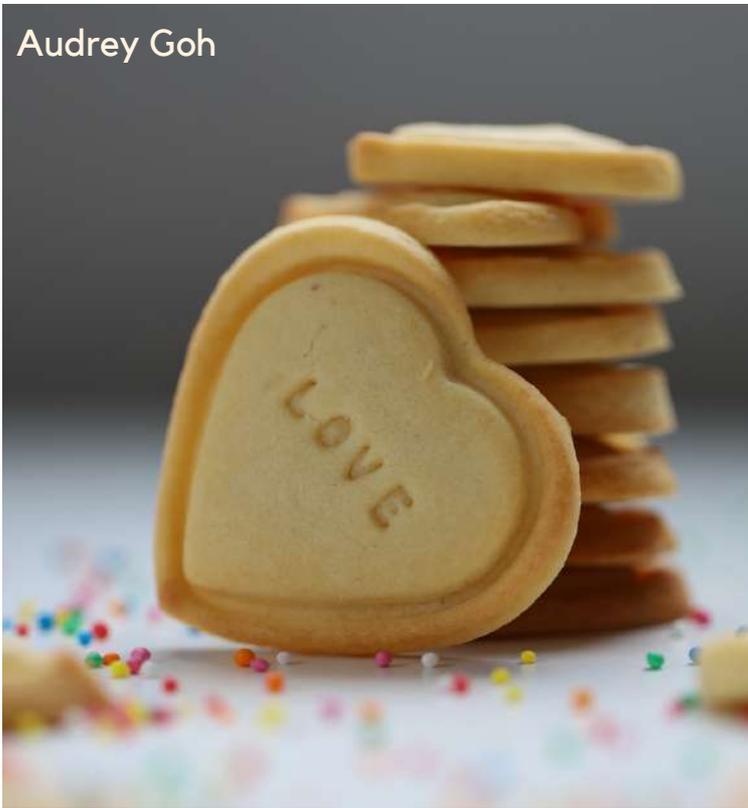
Remember the wise words of Lady Phyll, the UK's Black Pride founder; "The goal isn't to come out. It's for queer people to live happy, healthy, free lives!" Whether for you that's coming out or not, it doesn't matter as long as you're happy!

What to do if someone close to you comes out to you.

Don't know what to do if someone comes out to you? Here are a few tips.

- Thank them for having the courage to tell you. Coming out can be challenging, even in the ideal environment; if they decide to come out to you, it means they trust you.
- Do not judge. It does not matter whether you agree with them; they have felt they trust you enough to tell you, so keep your opinions quiet for the time being.
- Keep it private. Unless you've talked to them about it and they've expressed that they're okay with you telling others, keep it a secret.
- Keep reminding them that you still care about them and love them, no matter what. Sometimes, people are scared to come out because they're afraid they will be shunned; even if they know they won't, it's still a fear.
- Ask questions! Just know that they might not have all of the answers. Asking questions will get you to know about their journey and will help the two of you become closer.
- Be supportive! It's crucial to be supportive of them! It shows that you care about them! And is a great way to help them become more confident in who they are.





Christmas Heart Cookies

These cookies are the perfect foodie gift for Christmas! These cookies are buttery, not overly sweet, and tender cookie. This easy Christmas cookie recipe is an ideal gift for friends and family.

Ensure the dough is chilled before punching out the cookie shapes; otherwise, it will stick.

INGREDIENTS:

- 343g All Purpose flour (2 1/2 cups)
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 170g softened butter
- 115g powdered sugar (1 cup)
- 1 large egg
- 2 tsp vanilla extract

COOKIE INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In a small mixing bowl, whisk together the flour and salt. Set aside.
2. In a large mixing bowl, beat the butter and powdered sugar until light and fluffy. Add the egg and vanilla and mix just until blended. Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl with a spatula; mix again until incorporated.
3. Add half the flour mixture and blend on low until combined. Blend in the remaining flour and beat until incorporated. Divide the dough in half and form each into a disk about 1-inch thick. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes or up to one hour.
4. Remove the dough from the refrigerator and allow it to rest at room temperature for 5 - 10 minutes or until pliable. On a large piece of parchment or wax paper, roll a portion of the dough to 1/4-inch thick. Cut into animal shapes and place about 1-inch apart on the prepared baking sheet. Once the pan is filled, bake while cutting out the remaining dough.
5. Gather scraps and either re-roll or refrigerate until chilled. Repeat with the remaining disk of dough until all cookies have been cut out. Alternatively, you can store the leftover dough in the freezer for a time closer to Christmas!
6. When ready to bake, preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake for 8 to 12 minutes (depending on thickness) or until the bottoms are browned and the top is golden brown. Remove to a cooling rack. Store at room temperature in an airtight container.

Section 3

Passion

devotion to an activity





The Art of Femininity

Mary Ieremia-Allan



Mary Ieremia-Allan/GirlBoss NZ

Arriving at the gym, her cardio warmup is finished and she heads to the toilet. No bleeding through, phew. Back out she goes to start weight training. Twenty minutes later, she packs up her gear and heads home with an aching body. Just one of those days, her mind tries to tell her subconscious. After showering at home, she makes a warm breakfast, takes ibuprofen, then heads out the door for university. Her day drags on as the echoing words of social media repeat in her mind. Work harder, she tells herself as the monthly pain kicks in again.

What does it look like to be a contemporary female athlete in a media savvy, corporate sponsored world? Men and women are biologically, mentally and emotionally different. Yet the world we live in compares, and encourages the two to strive for the same achievements, and follow the same training schedule.

Waking up, his 5:00 am alarm chimes with a familiar musical motif, beckoning him to get up and end the incessant buzzing. After a few minutes of scrolling, he rises with a readiness for the day ahead. Tiptoeing around the house, he heads out the door for his first exercise session that day. He arrives at the gym, finishes his cardio warmup and starts weight training. An hour passes. A shower, a fresh set of clothes and a smoothie later, he heads out of the door for university.

Meanwhile, waking up, her 5:00am alarm chimes with a familiar musical motif, urging her to get up before the rowdy neighbourhood awakens. Before getting up to start her day however, a familiar heaviness clouds her mind. Half an hour and a few panadol later, she rises for her first exercise session that day.



Mary Ieremia-Allan/GirlBoss NZ

Simply put, I cannot do all the things my guy friends can do. I can't run faster than most of them. I can't hit a hockey ball harder than them. I can't throw a rugby ball further than them, and I sure cannot lift weights as heavy as them. But they wouldn't be able to run the distances our women's running club runs. They couldn't improve their technique as fast as my teammates have been forced to. They often can't publicly speak the way I have learnt to.



Mary Jeremia-Allan/GirlBoss NZ

And they most definitely could not endure greater pains that many of my female friends have learnt to endure. 'Work harder!' We female athletes are told, as we try to lose extra body fat women biologically are born with in preparation for childbearing, whilst men are building muscle. We are simply just different.

In the heavily masculine-driven avenue of sports, when did we lose sight of the strength that lies within femininity? Femininity is not at all the act of surrendering and being submissive as people perceive, but it is instead the art of grace, strength and perseverance. Within females is a grace to embrace challenges with their chin held high. Within females is a fierce strength to bear courage for an entire village. Within females is an enduring drive, to push through in the face of hardship

and tribulations, and specifically to see the potential in her own hands.

Most mornings I wake up, and life is beautifully bliss. Chirping birds serenade my morning routine, as I wake up to a loving and supportive family. Ebbing waters remind me of the progress I have seen in my life. Old water filters out, and freshwater approaches my shore. I am reminded that true resilience can be found in life



when we disregard unwanted expectations, and instead work towards our own goals that fit our schedule, and allow balance for our physical health.

Instead of eating salads like I see #gymbros eating in their cutting season, once in a while I sit on the couch and eat oil soaked, deep fried, greasy as, #unhealthyas, crumb fried cheese. And hey, who cares! (Sorry Coach hehe). Balance is a beautiful equilibrium in life where the mountain top highs can be celebrated, and valley lows can be appreciated and learnt from. For all the girls out there, don't compare yourself to your guy classmate, teammate etc... Your journey looks different, so your success will be different also! Your initiatives and ideas will look different, but here's a little secret I learnt = difference is almost always the secret ingredient to lasting impact. You've got this!



Nikau Grace

Nikau Grace Chater/GirlBoss NZ

Words by Leisha Hodgeson
Interview by Lola Fisher

Nikau Grace Chater is a just-turned-15-year-old girl whose true passion is singing. She loves anything to do with music and is proudly a 100% kiwi artist. She currently has four released songs, her latest one called *Identity*, which just came out this year.

“If I explained who I am, I would just say, I am me. I am a teenage girl still trying to figure out who she is.”

Even though her main passion is singing, she also enjoys sports and plays netball for her school.

“If I explained who I am, if someone didn't know, I would just say, well, I am me. I am just a teenage girl still trying to figure out who she is, and while she's doing that, the thing that's helping her the most is music and finding her voice through her songwriting.”

According to Nikau's mum, she has been singing forever, writing her first song when she was about 2 or 3. Nikau finds inspiration from many singers/songwriters, but most importantly, her mum.

“She's been an incredible inspiration to me because she's pushed me and helped me in any way possible so I can continue this journey and hopefully one day become a like well-known singer/songwriter”, Nikau explains.



Nikau receiving her award/GirlBoss NZ

Another person she finds inspiring is Teeks, the New Zealand singer; she claims his lyrics to be "Melodic, beautiful and emotional", Nikau tries to make her lyrics as meaningful as his. Another artist she looks up to is Elton John; she wants to be the girl version of him. *"I want to be able to play the piano like him one day at a concert of my own,"*

“Having dyslexia and going through the struggles helps me get into my songs and music”

Nikau finds inspiration in any musician who follows their dreams in music, such as Holly Smith, who has mentored her since 2020.

Like everybody, Nikau has struggled with her singing career, she has dyslexia, and you'd think it would be hard for her to write songs. However, she claims it is a blessing in disguise.

"I only recently realised that my brain works differently. For me, that works well because I can memorise hundreds of songs."

People have told her she is dumb because of her dyslexia, but she believes it helps her creative mind become stronger.

"I think having dyslexia and going through the struggles of all that stuff helps me get into my songs and music because music is probably the one thing my dyslexia doesn't affect."

With her mind working a bit differently than others, Nikau thought she was crazy when she was younger, her brain picking up on all sorts of background sounds such as extra instruments or the harmonies when she was listening to music.

"I'd ask my mum. "Mum, am I crazy? Do you hear those?"

She found that with her brain, she wasn't going crazy; only she heard things differently from others. Today she finds that skill instead of a burden, as it helps her with her composition skills.

Nikau Grace/GirlBoss NZ





Nikau Grace/GirlBoss NZ

Although her confidence with her dyslexia, Nikau has had some unfortunate experiences with bullying.

"Bullying has been tough there's been a lot of it for me growing up and probably still. A lot of the tall poppy syndrome stuff is just people trying to pull you down because you're succeeding at something. For a long time, I believed everything people would tell me."

But now Nikau has found a way to manoeuvre around the unkindness and has even learnt to appreciate the words her bullies have said to her.

"It's, like, thank you! Thank you for breaking me and tearing me apart because the industry that I want to go into is like that, so I say in my mind, thank you for preparing me for the lifestyle I want to live."

"And yeah, it's still hard, and it's still really hurtful, and it sucks that people do that, but I mean, that's life, ay?"

Nikau recognises that anyone who is successful or does well in things has to put up with people like this. However, in any case, she gets excellent song lyrics out of them!

She struggles with juggling her family, school, and social life with her music. She has little to no free time, and sometimes finds it hard.

"I'm having fun in life, but I don't have the time to hang out with them or just relax."

"There have been multiple times where I've been like, why am I doing this? What is the point? Because I'm at high school, all my friends are hanging out with each other and just having fun in life, I mean, I'm having fun in life, but I don't have the time to hang out with them or just relax."

When she gets free time, she uses it to spend time with her family and friends or play lego! When Nikau needs to clear her head, she (obviously) listens to music but also likes to take a deep breath because she has ADHD and needs to focus on sitting still. However, she also finds that sometimes, just having a breakdown helps.

When Nikau was 11 years old, she made a list of goals and dreams that she wanted to achieve in her future.

"As an 11-year-old, I set goals that would probably never happen, and when I looked back at late last year or early this year, I was like, ugh, what was I thinking? One of the goals was to sing in Spark Arena before I turned 15. Then, I sang with Sol3 Mio a week before I turned 15 at Spark Arena! Which was awesome; that's probably one of the things I feel most accomplished about because 11-year-old me, her goals and dreams came true even though they were very unrealistic."

One of her proudest moments was working with Holly Smith to produce four of her songs professionally.

"That was the first time I felt proud of my songs. Before that, when I had written songs, I never really liked them, but now that I kind of more professionally had gone through the process of writing them and recording them and producing them, I not only appreciate my songs more because of the work that I put in, but I would listen to them because I don't like listening to myself sing."

Nikau is determined to work on her singing career and become more well-known and successful.

"I was 100% positive that this was what I want to do and I'm gonna do anything I can to make it happen."

Some of her most significant accomplishments have been releasing her songs, especially the new one called Identity. She has also competed in a few competitions and, of course, singing with Sol3 Mio. Also, Nikau will be performing at Christmas at the Park in Auckland this year, which is very exciting. Her favourite part of her journey (so far) has been meeting new and inspiring people.

"Those people are the people who catch me and have gotten me where I am today. So I think that probably my favourite part of what I'm doing and most grateful for have been these people who believe in me."

There is no doubt that Nikau has a bright and prosperous future ahead of her, and she already has plans.

"What will happen next is my next 11-year-old goal and dream list: to be an artist on tour before I'm 18!"

You can find Nikau as Nikau Grace Chater on Spotify, Apple Music, and Bandscam, on Instagram as Nikau Grace.

Nikau Grace Chater/Supplied



Pony Bug

Hannah Viles talks of how a horse can increase your resilience.

I can happily say horses have and always will be a big part of my life. I've been around them since I was very young and caught what they call the pony bug.

I was only around 8 months old when I sat on a horse for the first time and I was four when I got my first pony. My first pony definitely taught me a lot, she gave me an insight of what horse riding is all about. Of course not everything is happy and great all the time and there are always ups and downs with equestrian life, heaps of people don't realize how much guts and strength it takes to dust off and just 'get back on'.

Mental health is one of the most amazing things that horses are capable of helping or curing.



"Riding a horse for me is like nothing else on earth; it's just you and your horse, and nothing can stop you from living your dream."

Horse riding and even being around a horse lower blood pressure and relieve stress and anxiety. Horses, for me, are something to look forward to every day; they are someone to talk to when you're feeling down or share your thoughts and feelings about everyday life. Horses are non-judgmental; they take you for who you are, no matter your mistakes in the past.

When you look into a horse's eye, what do you see? I see a kind heart and a trustworthy soul that can and will lead you anywhere you want. Horses make choices and possibilities endless.

The equine world has changed the lives of many and helped people through thick and thin. I was 8 when my father left, which hit me pretty hard.

As I grew older, my fear of things went sky high, this constant worry in the back of my mind that something terrible would happen, I developed a habit of nail biting and skin picking, and any time I felt uncomfortable in public, I would panic.

Riding was something that always took my mind off things, it made me feel relaxed, and I felt safe no matter what.



SLANG DICTIONARY

ZARIA POLLARD

Teenage slang is weird. It's confusing even for me, someone who uses it every day. If you're like I am and don't get it, this basic dictionary should get you started.

Sus

Derived from suspicious, from the game Among Us.

E.g. 'That food was a bit sus.'

Extra

Over the top or excessive in actions, words, clothing or anything. Usually irritating.

E.g. 'That person was so extra.'

Slay

It is used to describe something unique or outstanding.

E.g. 'Your shirt is so slay!'

Queen

Used when describing someone amazing when they have done something great. Usually in conjunction with slay.

E.g. 'Slay queen, that was amazing!'

Dogs

Teenage slang for toes or feet.

E.g. 'Put those dogs away.'

YOLO

Stands for 'You Only Live Once'. When a decision is going to be made, such as going down a waterslide fully clothed.



SLANG DICTIONARY

continued

For people who pretend to know what that texting slang means (and the adults reading)

Ty

Stands for 'thank you'. Sometimes used as 'tysm' (thank you so much).

E.g. 'Tysm for the food!'

Smth

Stands for 'something.'

e.g. 'I'm busy doing smth, sorry.'

Ig

Stands for 'I guess.'

E.g. 'Yeah, it's a good song ig.'

Bffr

Stands for 'Be f***** for real'. Used for calling someone out when you think they're lying.

E.g. 'That's gotta be a lie, bffr.'

Idk

Stands for 'I don't know'. Variations include Idek - 'I don't even know'

E.g. 'Idk what our homework is.'

Fr

Stands for 'for real'. Can be questioning (for real?) or affirming (for real).

E.g. 'What, they did that? Fr?' Or - 'Yes, fr.'

Lmk

Stands for 'let me know'.

E.g. 'Lmk what you think of that song.'

Lmao

Stands for 'laughing my a** off', considered today's 'lol'.

Rn

Stands for 'Right now'.

E.g. 'I'm doing homework rn.'





Audrey Goh

TAIWANESE CASTELLA CAKE

Delicious and fluffy, this cake is smooth, bouncy, and has the perfect sweetness with the fragrance of vanilla.

Before we start, here are some notes to help you out!

- For a stable and successful cake, ensure you beat the egg whites until they are stiff.
- When you put it into the oven, ensure enough water in the pan and do NOT open the door until the cake is finished.
- Low and slow is the key to this cake; having a low temperature and a longer cooking time would bring this cake to perfection.

COOKED DOUGH INGREDIENTS:

- 105g cake flour
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 80g butter
- 120g milk
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 6 egg yolks
- 6 egg whites
- 100g fine sugar

CAKE INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Sift the cake flour + salt in a medium bowl, set aside.
2. Separate the eggs into a small bowl with the yolk and a large bowl with the whites.
3. In a heat-proof bowl, add the butter and milk. Melt and heat the two ingredients over a double boiler. Keep stirring until the butter is completely melted. Remove the bowl from the double boiler. As the mixture is still hot, add it to the dry sifted ingredients. Use a whisk to mix them well until incorporated. The mixture will be thick.
4. Add in vanilla extract and, add the yolk, one at a time. Mix until well combined. It should glossy, set aside.

**CAKE INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED:**

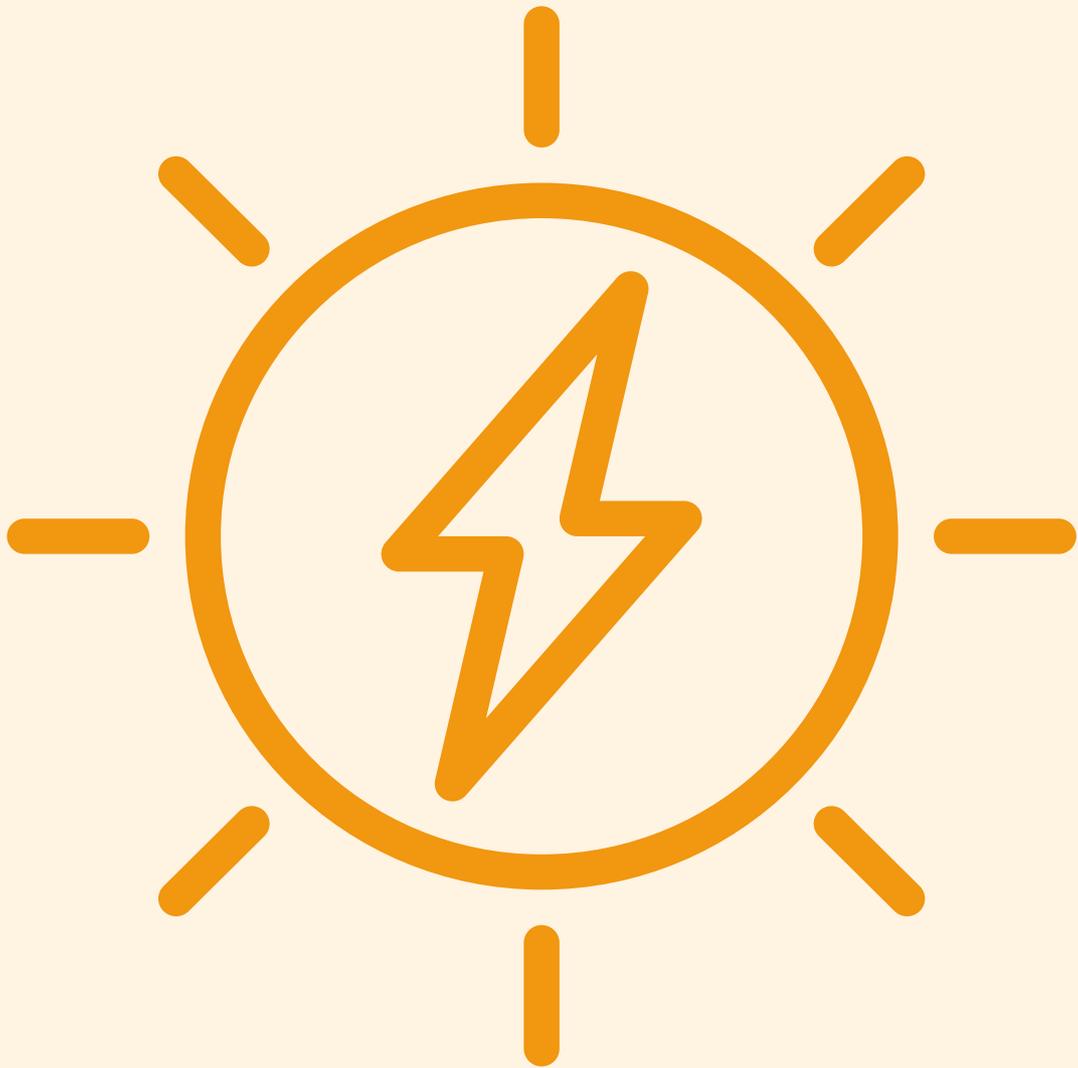
5. To whip the egg whites, a whisk attachment is best. You can do this by hand, but be prepared to get a workout!
6. Whisk on low until tiny bubbles form on the entire surface. When small bubbles form on the surface of the bowl, start to add the sugar in $\frac{1}{3}$. It's best to use a spoon and sprinkle it in, but add them in slow measurements.
7. Once you add the sugar, you will notice more small bubbles; start to add another third of your sugar while whisking.
8. You will notice changes after whisking your $\frac{2}{3}$ of the sugar. The tip will droop over when the whisk/beater is lifted up.
9. Beat/whisk on high until stiff peaks. This is when the top of the peaks will hold its shape. It will look glossy.



Section 4

Mana

possession of energy



When I was small...

Sophie Hansen

The weather raged around me, viciously attacking anything in its way. The old hay shed fought to stay together, but the wind was no match for its tired, rusty screws, peeling off the corrugated iron roof bit by bit. The row of pines behind me swayed, creaked and crunched like old people trying to dance. Meanwhile, the tree I was sitting in wasn't coping well either. Leaves ripped off and flew everywhere; even some small branches joined in. At least it was still standing. At the top of the hill, half a dozen or so poplars hadn't been so lucky. Their skeletons lay discarded across the field like mass murder. I snuggled down into my nest, trying my best to block out the howling of the wind around me. I buried my head in the straw and slowly drifted off to sleep.

I don't know how long had passed, but I was awoken when a sudden gust of wind made the tree give a sudden lurch. One minute I was sleeping; the next, I was falling. The cold, hard ground hit me like a boxer hitting a punching bag. I was alone. I desperately cried for my mum, but it was no use; the wind drowned out my calls. I was just a needle in a haystack. No one would notice me, and no one would find me.



Photograph/Sophie Hansen

The cold was getting to me; my bare little body was useless for keeping me warm. Hunger was grasping me, too; it gurgled and growled in my stomach, ready to devour anything that entered. I curled into a tiny ball, conserving the last of my body heat. I longed to be back in the warm, cosy nest with my brothers and sisters. A little while later, the world went fuzzy. I don't remember much after that, but I remember a voice, "Look, mum! It's a baby bird on the ground!" then I felt warmth. Warm, soft hands cradled my icy body. I felt safe. I fell asleep after that, exhausted from the fight to stay alive.



When I awoke, the aroma of warm, soaked cat biscuits filled the air. "Hey, little birdy, do ya want something to eat? Quite a fall you took there; you're lucky to be alive!". I warily eyed the creature. It didn't have feathers like my Mum, nor did it have a beak, claws, or even wings. It picked up a cat biscuit and edged its alien hand closer to my face. I cautiously backed away. However, my stomach disagreed; it gave a defiant growl. I reluctantly took the food. "Good little Birdy!" The creature exclaimed.

Photograph: Supplied



It scooped me up into its hands and cuddled me. Its warm, soft hands were comforting; it felt like I was back in the nest. The creature smiled at me, and at that moment, I knew, despite our differences, we were going to be best friends.



FAILURE

= *GROWTH*

HOW TO CHANGE YOUR MINDSET

WORDS BY SYDNEY FREMISTA

Usually, failure is looked upon in a negative light. When facing defeat, our whole motivation drops. Suddenly, we just think this is the end. Why should we continue if we fail?

"Failure is something no one likes to face. But in reality, it's what helps us grow and develop."

Think back to how you used to dress when you were younger. The short to long dresses, galaxy prints, flower crowns, skinny jeans, tall gelled hair. We are all cringing at those questionable fashion choices. But now, we have an excellent fashion sense in which we feel the best and most confident. Failure can look like this. At first, we may not have something fully furnished or uncoordinated.

With time, we discover ways to improve it and slowly evolve it into something we are proud of. Instead of looking at the flaws others noticed, look at the further potential it holds. Ask yourself, how can I develop this into something more significant?

That process is easier said than done. We've all heard the line, 'you learn from your mistakes'. Sometimes, we can't help but stare at our mistakes in frustration. The constant cycle of degrading ourselves- 'it's horrible, I'm never doing this again cause I sucked at it', 'there's no more point in trying', 'I wasted my time on nothing useful.

We can change our perspectives, flipping negative self-talk. Look at what you're proud of. Don't let the red words blind you. Try and look for the positives, the things you did great in. Reassure yourself that you are not a failure. Acknowledge your strengths and be proud of them.



Or anything along the lines of that. Think of other personal reasons, such as, did you do it late at night? Do you fully understand the concept of what you're doing? Did you do it on an empty stomach? Were there any distractions around you?

From this, think of how you can overcome this barrier. Perhaps, next time you take a test, you remember to eat or study the things you aren't most confident in with your teacher. What are your needs in overcoming these barriers?

CHANGING YOUR MINDSET

Failure is something no one likes to face. But in reality, it's what helps us grow and develop. Not only in the things we do, but also as humans. This is a mighty mindset, as it can shift your view of your life and the world. Remember, failure isn't a setback; it's a step back to think and grow.

Now, look at the negatives. Don't dwell on them, but think about why they came out this way. The invalid reasons for this are:

'The reason why I failed in this part is because I'm dumb.'

'I am just stupid.'



Peer Pressure

how to overcome it

Peer Pressure: noun

'A feeling that one must do the same things as other people of one's age and social group in order to be liked or respected by them.'

Almost everyone has experienced peer pressure at least once in their life, either on a small or large scale, in a positive or negative way.

Peer pressure is when someone (often a young person) gets persuaded into doing something by their social peers. Most of the time people give in to peer pressure because they want to feel accepted or valued by the people around them.

It's quite easy to be influenced by others, especially as a teenager because no one wants to feel left out. Sometimes when people give in to peer pressure it causes them to do risky things like vaping or drinking. It's important to have good friends because they will help you make sensible decisions.

For example, research done at Columbia University claims teens are 6 times more likely to drink if their friends drink alcohol often.

There are two types of peer pressure: direct and indirect.



Direct peer pressure is when you ask the question straight up. For example: "We're gonna skip school and go to the dairy, do you want to come?". In this scenario the person asking the question is waiting for an immediate reply. It is hard to say no when faced with direct peer pressure and many teenagers would go along with them. This type of peer pressure usually involves direct confrontation and it is difficult to come up with a believable excuse on the spot. Everyone usually feels bad with whatever they chose, if they say yes they are faced with the guilt of doing something wrong. If they say no they could feel left out knowing their friends are having fun without them.

Ways to overcome Peer Pressure

Dealing with peer pressure may be challenging but it's important to reflect on your own personal values and make decisions based on those rather than the beliefs of the people around you.

Here are 5 ways you can overcome negative peer pressure...

- Say "no" like you mean it, look them in the eye and say it forcefully and with authority.
- Be repetitive and don't hesitate to state your opinion over and over again
- Choose your next friends wisely - surround yourself with good, positive people!
- Pay attention to how you feel, if something doesn't feel right in a situation it probably isn't
- Plan ahead, practise or go over in your head what you might say in different situations
- Consider the result of giving in, think about the consequences of what might happen if you say yes.



I KEEP THE CLOSET DOOR CLOSED

WORDS BY FREYA ELLEN

I've been in the closet for two years, hiding to keep my secret. Throughout this time, I've gone through a roller coaster of emotions and thoughts towards my current situation. I've finally faced the fact that the closet may be the safest place for me. In the outside world, it can get pretty brutal. I've had my fair share of that whenever I venture out of the closet. But with some people, it's my safe place.

It hit hard when I realised I'd never be able to come out to those who should care for me and I, them. Sometimes, life doesn't work out that way. The pain of this thought was heart-clenching, but it would be better than if I came out of the closet. It was a lot to process but further knew I had to embrace my new reality, my new home. Unfortunately, this is easier said than done. I cried for hours, trying to confront and embrace my new reality. I sometimes wondered if it would hurt less just to rip off the bandaid. I found the truth undeniable but also devastating, overall just overwhelming. I knew I had friends who cared and loved me for me, but how I wished they would think and feel the same way. Sometimes I'd test the borders of escaping the closet, but every time it made me want to crawl and hide in the deepest corner within it. This process took months and months of crying, journaling, processing and endless thinking. The realisation made me think the closet wasn't my hiding spot anymore; it was my safe place.



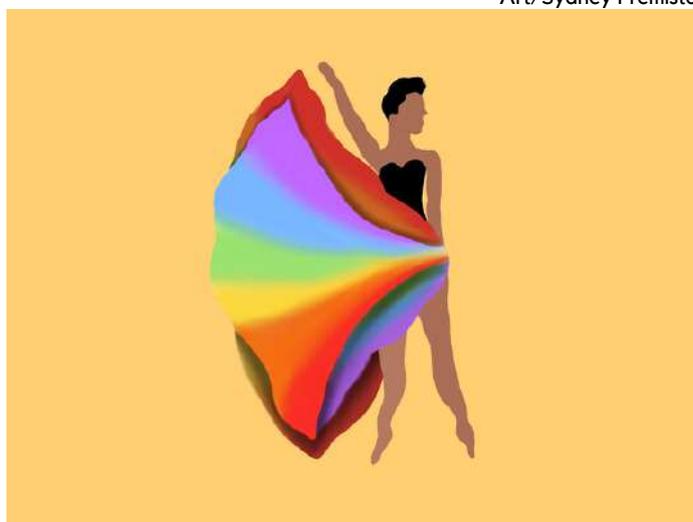


This is only a fraction of my wonderful rainbow pride. It has taught me a lot. It took a considerable amount of grit to face those fears and overcome them finally. I was at an all-time low, but somehow, I picked everything up back to the top. This journey isn't easy, so congratulate yourself for getting through it. It's devastating that people still don't feel safe under your roof, but this is a life lesson that you can take forever.



Art/Sydney Fremista

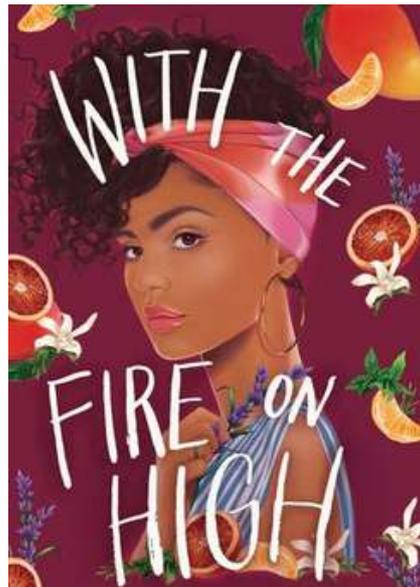
Another message to enforce is that you don't have to suffer alone. We are a community, and you belong here in a safe, open, positive space. Adding loneliness to the pile of distress makes things a heap worse and almost intensifies that feeling, so please, if need be, don't be afraid to reach out for help. You can check out our previous editions with multiple helplines specifically for LGBTQIA+ people within the LGBTQIA+ content section. Don't be afraid to reach out; remember, you got this!



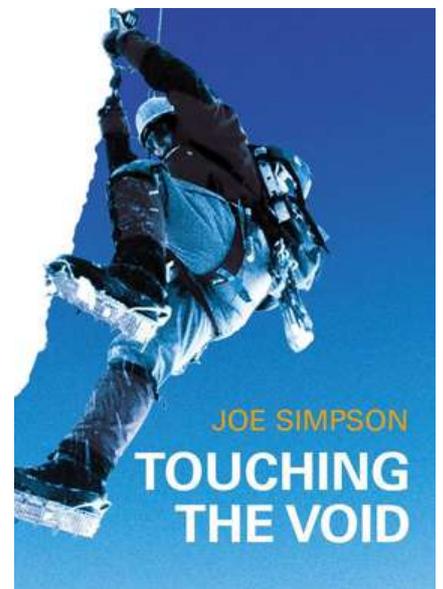
Still need some motivation? Briana put together 3 books to inspire you to the moon and back!



At just eight years old, Jess Quinn found she had an aggressive type of bone cancer. Just before her 9th birthday, she had to get her right leg amputated after chemotherapy failed to shrink the tumour. In her words, she is a "walking miracle". Now a model and a body positivity promoter, Jess has grown an Instagram following of over 200,000 followers and is a widely known influencer. Her book, *Still Standing*, came out in September 2021, taking you through her life as an amputee, showing the hardships she had to deal with and the sheer grit and determination she had to have while living her life with her unique body. Jess appeared on *Dancing with the Stars* in 2018, becoming a finalist and gave a Ted Talk that same year.



Emoni Santiago got pregnant at the end of her freshman year. Although she has a great support system, she still finds it hard being a mother so young and in college. With her mother dead and her father in Puerto Rico, Emoni lives with her grandmother in Philadelphia. Influenced by a love of cooking, she takes her college's culinary arts course and finally finds what she wants to be - a chef! After a nasty run-in with her professor, she starts skipping class. Inspired to join the class again, Emoni has to show that she is worthy of the course. This fictional book has a great show of grit and perseverance in it. It has a significant meaning behind it; even though there will be bumps in the road & challenges along the way, if you don't give up, your dreams can come true!



This true story tells the tale of two climbers, Joe Simpson and Simon Yates, who decided to climb an unclimbed route on the mountain Siula Grande in the Peruvian Andes in 1985. Whilst climbing, they encounter dangerous ground and snowstorms. Once at the summit, they want to get down as soon as possible, as bad weather is closing in, so they set off quickly. As they descend, Joe falls and breaks his right leg - a potentially fatal incident. Simon lowers Joe down the mountain by threading rope through a belaying device. It seems to work until worsening conditions make it too hard for Simon to see or hear Joe, meaning he has to cut the rope.

Interview: Ashley Lynch

Words by Maddison Lynch

Often we focus on and compare ourselves to people who are achieving above and beyond others their age. We often forget to take a moment and acknowledge other successful young people who have made a career and are equally important to others who have gone above and beyond. We forget that the ordinary is anything but. Read on to find out about two young people who have made a success out of themselves and to remind yourself you needn't change the word in a big way to become someone special.

Ashley Lynch tells us her story and reminds us that changing your profession is perfectly normal and okay.

What do you do for your job, and what does it entail?

I am a new builds sale consultant at Platinum homes for Whakatane, Rotorua and Taupo. As part of my job, I take people through our showhome and consult with them about what they want to build, timeframes and what they want and price up the build. I also design builds and work with local councils to get building consents.



Why did you decide to enter this field?

I suppose you could say I originally intended to become something other than a new builds sale consultant. Still, after being offered the job, I felt that it could be an area I was interested in and could eventually lead me to more pathways. Since I was young, I have always enjoyed designing things, and to get to do it as a career is rather exciting.

How did you enter this field?

After leaving high school in 2020, I pursued a law degree at the University of Waikato; I was initially drawn to this. However, after a year at law school, I discovered that the field wasn't what I thought, so I began thinking about other options for my future. I then found real estate and shortly completed my certificate for that. After selling my first house, I felt that my workplace environment was unhealthy; as I began to look for new places of employment, the job at Platinum homes became available. My partner was living in Taupo, where my office is, so it was a no-brainer that I would take the job.

What are your plans for the future?

Eventually, I hope to move into a higher role at my current workplace and ultimately get started with interior design. I have always had a strong interest in design and the arts, so this would be a good step moving forward.

What struggles did you have to overcome to get where you are?

I struggled a lot with age discrimination and people with power in my workplace taking advantage of my youth and lack of experience. I was pushed around and left to figure things out on my own. This was quite difficult to work through as someone exploring a new career.



Interview: Mason Grimmer

Words by Maddison Lynch

Mason Grimmer talks about his pathway to project management and the struggles he has overcome.

Why did you decide to enter this field?

I have always been interested in project management, and this opportunity came up; I felt it was an excellent place to start my career in higher roles.

On the side, I also do motorsport; every family member lives and breathes motorsport. My dad was very successful in his younger days, and I wanted to give it a go, but now I love it.

How did you enter this field?

I completed a bachelor of Business degree at the University of Waikato. As part of my degree, I had to do an internship at Warner Construction, they were impressed with how I worked and offered me a job, and that's where I am now.

What are your plans for the future?

I plan to learn and grow as much as I can where I am now, and the company I work for is expanding. It is at the point where current project managers will be retiring shortly, and there are opportunities for me to step up to the plate and become a project manager.

MANA



What do you do for your job, and what does it entail?

I work in quality insurance and project management for *Warner Construction*. They are a large engineering company that specialises in building geothermal pipelines. In my role, I oversee many quality controls, systems and protocols; I essentially ensure that the paperwork is done correctly, documented and recorded. So, for instance, currently, there is a pipeline we are working on which is seven km long, and the cost of that project is 50 million dollars. The pipe is joined together by welding, which means that every 12m, there is a weld. In total, there are roughly 1625 welds. Where I come in is that I have to document who did that weld, when it was done and more. I also do a variety of different documentation and data collection.

I also do the New Zealand Rally Championship in the Allcomers class; I compete throughout New Zealand. I've had some great results in the past few years and would like to contest to New Zealand title in the future. I have just started broadening my horizons by getting into the circuit.

What struggles did you have to overcome to get where you are?

I had to overcome many struggles. Right through university, there was the struggle of learning with no support, no help and just being away from home. Having to push myself and just having the mental strength to get through the hard times was a challenge for me. Despite my age, I have had to prove my worth; being so young in an industry with many older and more experienced people, I often face the challenge of not being taken seriously. However, I also have the opportunity to learn from them.



THE QUEER COMMUNITY AND GRIT

WORDS BY HOLLY DAVIES

Grit and courage have been portrayed by different groups, communities and individuals globally and throughout history. The LGBTQ+ community are no different.

Queer people have always had to show determination, grit, and significant levels of courage to have their voices heard and their actions seen in a heteronormative society. From the AIDS epidemic, to the Stonewall Riots (New York City USA, 1969) to advocacy for bans on conversion therapy to groups in history like *Lavender Menace* and *The Gay Liberation Front*, Grit is relevant.

While the entire LGBTQ+ community as a whole throughout history, closeted or not portray grit and courage consistently, this article will cover some groups/organisations and individual activists that campaign(ed) and struggled for rainbow rights and lives to be valued.





Image of Lavender Menace circa. 1970 via tumblr. Taken by photographer Diana Davies.

LAVENDER MENACE

Lavender Menace was a group of women who prioritised the idea that lesbians were a significant part of the feminist movement. Women such as **Rita Mae Brown** and **Betty Friedan** were frustrated with the supposed invalidation of lesbians and queer people in relevance to feminism, and the invalidation of lesbians in the gay liberation movement.

While there were groups for both feminists and queer people, the Gay Liberation Front (formed after the New York Stonewall Riots in 1969) focused on the rights and liberation of white gay men and the feminist groups focused on the rights of white heterosexual women who were usually wealthy and highly educated.

The Gay Liberation Front allowed lesbians to join, but members of the Lavender Menace often expressed feeling excluded by their fight for the rights of primarily of gay men.

Feminist groups in contrast, often declined the applications of out lesbian women and coloured women due to their probable fear of ruining the reputation of their "radical" feminism.

Lavender Menace began creating and handing out their magazine 'Woman identified Woman' in 1970. It was handed out to groups of people and aimed to educate on the problems of separating lesbian women and AFAB people from the feminist movement due to their sexual orientation. It also defied the patriarchal and misogynistic roles that are so often forced upon women (or AFAB people) in society.

Through protests, this magazine and conversations with the public, the Lavender Menace almost started a third wave of feminism in the 1970s, attempting to unite and remove the divide between heterosexual, bisexual and lesbian women.



An anonymous writer from leftist newspaper *Rat*, who said society and media were "so used to dealing with women's liberation...from the shelter of their status as educated, secure, white privileged women. Suddenly, they had to consider why other women hadn't wanted to stay with them, hadn't want to play their game."

Coloured women and AFAB peoples also began to open up about the divide between white and coloured people in the feminist movement.



"Their game" was the idea that feminism was to be acquired in society by a specific group of women. The able bodied, white, wealthy, heterosexual, cisgender and educated woman. However, while their beliefs and feminism is valid and has been since pre the 1970s and their struggles are not diminished, people who identified as women and were lesbians, and/or people of colour and possibly of lower social status were finally being acknowledged in a way these groups hadn't been before the 1970s. Their stories were finally unravelling as well as finally being written in a way that validated and acknowledged their work and advocacy.



THE GAY LIBERATION FRONT

The gay liberation front was a group created after the Stonewall Riots/Rebellion in the late 1960s to the early 1970s. It was a group created and manufactured by mostly the younger generation of the *Mattachine Society*, a group also showing grit even before the Stonewall Riots in order to reach queer and non-queer equality and solidarity.

This group consisted of mostly gay men, but also had lesbian and bisexual women, bisexual men, transgender people, drag queens and other people of different identities. They demanded liberation in a way that was rare to the media and public prior to the riots that occurred in New York in 1969.

However, due to feelings of exclusion from their own group or community, other queer activism groups were created to allow spaces for what they believed to be lesser acknowledged identities.

Some believed that The Gay Liberation Front often focused primarily on the liberation and opinions of cisgender white gay men, and other identities felt they were being left behind or excluded by this environment.

Individuals continued to show grit through the creation of groups such as the earlier mentioned Lavender Menace. The Gay Liberation Front will always be prominent and powerful, as it was one of the first mainstream groups of queer activism, and as it and the Mattachine Society allowed the creation of groups nationally and globally that focused on marginalised queer and gender identities.

WHEN IS IT OKAY TO QUIT?

WORDS BY MANDI LYNN

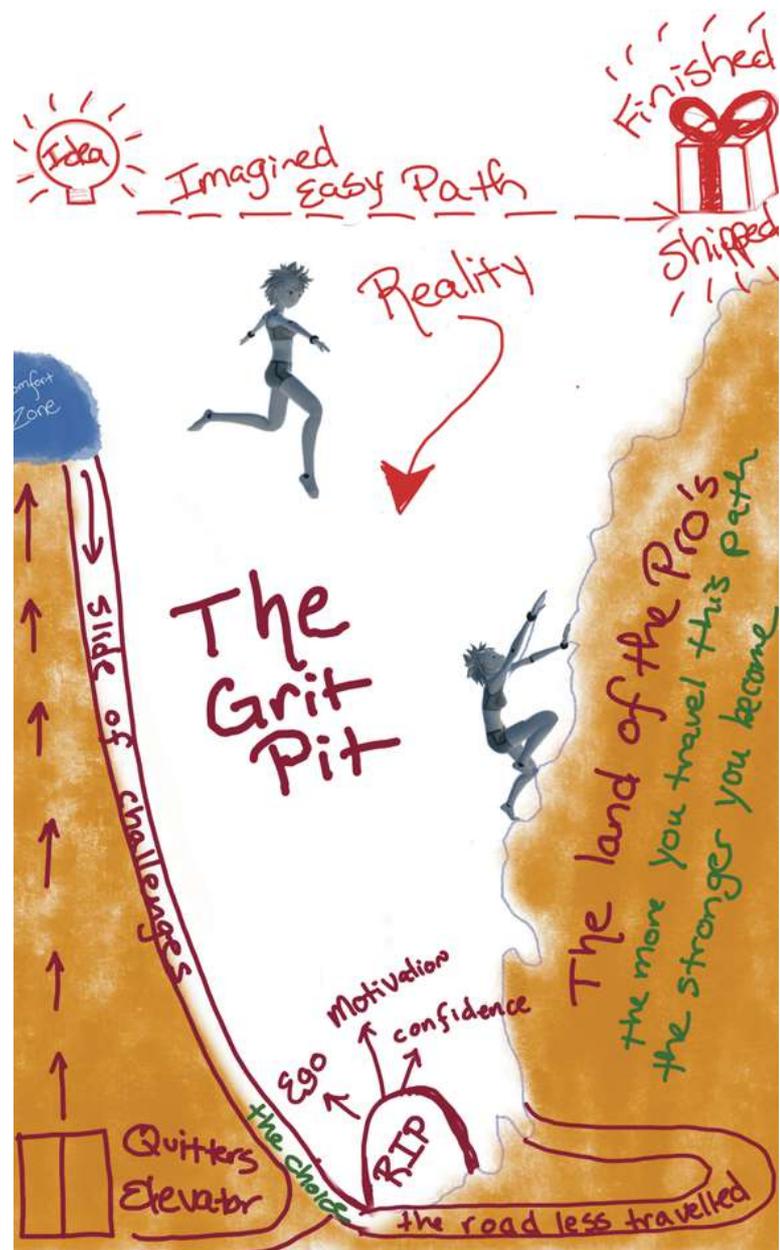
Sometimes I just get overwhelmed, and I want to quit. When is it okay to quit?

Good question. One of the most important traits a person can have is the ability to finish what they start. So you can feel like a failure if you make a habit of quitting.

So when is it okay to quit? If the thing you are doing is sucking energy and not giving you any in return. Suppose the thing you are doing brings you no joy. If it will not deliver in the long run something of value to you or others that you care about. Suppose it is blocking you from doing what makes your heart sing. You only have a small amount of time on this beautiful planet, so you must choose to do things that tick the following boxes:

- #1. It brings you joy to think of yourself as a master of whatever you do.
- #2. It makes the world better if you become good at it.
- #3. You are willing to eat the "crap sandwich" to improve. You are eager to deal with the unfun parts to become the best you can be at your thing.
- #4. Is it tied somehow to something you love, and if you stop doing it, your chances of doing the thing you love decrease?

These are all questions you can ask yourself to help determine if it is okay to drop something.



WHEN IS IT OKAY TO QUIT?



There is a lot to be said for white space and not having a chocker schedule but having enough time and energy to play and reinvest in what you love.

I share a drawing with students when I want them to understand the importance of grit and why it matters. The left side is the side of the treadmill, where you do stuff only for yourself and not for a bigger purpose. You tend to start things, lose energy, and start something else.

Grit, on the other hand, allows you to do something for more than just your ego's entertainment. It has a bigger purpose; because of that, it can draw energy and people to the idea, and you will get more help along the way.

People are drawn to passion and want to help passionate people, and if the passion helps many people, there will be more people wanting to give you a leg up along the way. So the trick to get the most momentum is to find your Ikigai. This Japanese term is the intersection of what you are good at, what the world needs, what you can get paid for and what you love.

If you find this, you will find your grit and not even ask if you should quit. You will be willing to scale the hard wall to get there because it will not feel like a hard wall but just an intriguing challenge to embark on. Oh, and you can spend your life looking for your Ikigai, and that will be fine. It is the journey that is important here, not just the destination. But you need to know what you are looking for...

Finding your Ikigai

Do you love doing it?

Do you have a natural talent for it?

If you get good at it, can you get paid to produce it?

Does the world need it?

**Want to create with us?
Get your teacher or parent
to nominate you for the
Aotearoa Creativity
Awards**





If you are nominated you will receive a year of mentorship in photography and visual storytelling with Click Happy as well as an opportunity to join the Create Happy Magazine production team.

Find out more at clickhappy.org/aca

The screenshot shows the homepage of the ACA website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a 'Home' link and a 'Make a Donation to the Trust Supporting Clickhappy' button. Below the navigation bar, there are three main content blocks, each featuring a large image and a title. The first block is for 'Visual Storytelling Bootcamp (16-21 Jan 2023)', with an image of a glowing, abstract landscape. The second block is for 'Creative Photography Master Class Series (23-28 Jan 2023)', with an image of a young woman holding a camera. The third block is for 'Year of Creative Collaboration and Mentorship 2023', with an image of two young people laughing. Each block includes a list of bullet points describing the program's benefits and activities.

Home Make a Donation to the Trust Supporting Clickhappy

Visual Storytelling Bootcamp (16-21 Jan 2023)

- Learn composition skills that can help with any form of visual storytelling
- Painting
- Graphic / architectural / landscape Design
- Photography

Creative Photography Master Class Series (23-28 Jan 2023)

New Zealand's Top Photographers share their gifts

- Tony Carter (Gritty Documentary)**
- Richard Wood (Virtual Reality folded into

Year of Creative Collaboration and Mentorship 2023

- Set yourself up for a career as a creative
- Contribute to a collective youth photography exhibition.
- Learn the Embodied Creativity framework to improve

Support Lines

If there were any topics covered that you found upsetting or triggering and you need to talk to a professional, here are a few helplines you can call

Whats Up (youth 5-18 yrs) -

0800 942 8787

Lifeline - 24 hour counseling -

0800 543 354

Youthline - 0800 376 633

The Lowdown - text free - 5626

Need to Talk? - free call or text 1737

Remember:

*If you or someone else is at risk of harm to themselves or others, call **111** and ask for police.*

*For urgent mental health support/advice, contact Crisis Assessment and Home Treatment service, for all ages 24/7 - **0800 50 50 50***

For non-urgent support/advice contact your GP (general practitioner/doctor) first.

Grit

