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M A G A Z I N E



Innovation Edition

Aotearoa's coolest teen-run magazine!

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EVERY BODY IS A TREASURE

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Welcome to the

INNOVATION

EDITION

Editor's Note

And after four wonderful, creative and colourful editions, here is our second Innovation edition.

Merriam-Webster defines innovation, or to innovate, as 'a new idea, method, or device.' It is to create or believe in an idea strongly and work (mahi) hard to produce something. Innovation is so broad, but we believe at Create Happy that anyone has the power, love, and mind to innovate. Merriam-Webster also defines innovation as the introduction of something new. With everything we do and every magazine we create, we hope to introduce a feeling of fun and newness and keep a sense of whanau and consistency.

We also want to tell the stories of people who are innovators in their ideas, their lives and their groups. Many things can be considered innovative, from businesses and companies to individuals to recipes and animals. We are so excited to share these stories with you.

As a journalist for Create Happy, I've made many friends and continue to meet more people through creativity, interviews, and kōrero. This edition was my first as Co-Editor, and it's been a wild first ride. I'm excited to meet many more people, help tell their stories and work alongside present and future Create Happy creators to continue to pave the way for positive and inclusive youth media in Aotearoa. To Lola, our new CEO; to Maddison, our other new Co-Editor; our new Assistant Editors; our COO Leisha (lover of all things Lorax). Thank you to all the contributors to Create Happy, our supporters, and our mentors. I have so much love for you, for your power, your authenticity and your vulnerability. We are all cogs in a beautiful machine of glitter, hope, stories and art.

Let's empower the voices of rangatahi around Aotearoa and tell our stories - not just in the future, but now.

Holly Davies

Co-Editor of Create Happy Magazine

Innovation



Section 1

Wairua

spirit/soul



we got the power.

Living your trans life to the fullest

WORDS BY CASSIE TAULELEI

It was whilst watching a performance about masculinity, about how to be a 'good man' as they said, that I came to realise I was transgender.

Well, not precisely. It was during that performance that I had come only to the realisation I was not a man. Exactly which identity I most well occupied evaded me then, for I knew nothing of what it was to be transgender or queer in any respect. I barely knew what it was to be gay; my understanding of sexuality and gender stretched, but as far as: some men like other men, some women like other women, and even then, I probably lived more uninformed than I would rather recall.

Nevertheless, this realisation had set me on a path. It felt as if a veil had lay before my eyes under the previous fourteen years of my life, and only now had it lifted, revealing a manner of existence so groundbreaking to my mind, that I could never unlearn it. Even if I had pulled the veil atop my eyes again, tight as to blacken my vision, I would live with the knowledge, with that everlasting yearning to peek back out under the darkness and see the world filled with colour again.



AI Art: Mandi Lynn

I don't remember precisely how I wandered across the non-binary identity, but eventually, I did. It fit me perfectly, neither completely a man, nor completely a woman. I felt called to it, that it fit perfectly in the descriptive gap left in my identity.

Four days later, I came out to my parents. It has actually begun as quite a common source of humour for us, the manner for which I came out. Me and my mother had returned to our home after collecting me from school; she had bags of shopping from the day. We walked up to the door, my mother carrying her handbag and two bags of shopping, all whilst trying to unlock our front door, and I told her right then:

'Mum, I'm non-binary,'

She returned to me a softly dumbfounded look, which induced great dread in me.

To come out is not something queer people take lightly, so often are we pushed and prodded, not accepted, and sometimes victims of abuse. I was lucky, though; my mother pursued none of these endeavours and simply said:

'Can we discuss it when we get inside?'

So we did. I explained to her my understanding of what it means to be non-binary, to 'float in the gender fluid' as I like to say. I asked her to begin referring to me using they/them pronouns, which she obliged. A couple of months later, I changed my name. We have spoken about it since then, but my identity is thankfully not a topic of contention.

My world opened up like Pandora's Box when I came out.

Art: Ella Mooney



Not only did my perspective on my own identity change, but so along with that, did my perception of the world. I had given little thought to the fact that I had been thrust into a group of society that suffers under so much oppression.

“As I developed under my identity, I started to get a little glimpse into that struggle. I had family relationships crumble; people I had never talked with would go out of their way to deadname and misgender me.”

I had no need to; all that surrounded me at first had been love. As I developed under my identity, I started to get a little glimpse into that struggle. I had family relationships crumble; people I had never talked with would go out of their way to deadname and misgender me. I had to fight for my right to use the toilet. For the first time in my life, I felt scared to leave my house.

So many times have I wished that I wasn't trans; I desired just to be 'normal,' like everyone else in my life. I didn't want to fight to use a bathroom or have people recognise me as the person I am. I wanted to grow up like everyone else. I wanted to spend my time at parties, sleeping at friends' houses, sharing their beds with bags of popcorn and lollies between us.



AI Art: Mandi Lynn

I wanted my biggest fear to concern an inconsequential romantic venture at school, not the possible illegality of my existence.

I still sometimes endure those feelings, but now I feel more secure in my identity. I wouldn't want to change it. Even despite the hatred, the vitriol, and the bigotry that we as trans people endure, never will we vanish. We will endure. If we are forced into hiding, we will emerge stronger.

To every trans person: I know that it's difficult. I know that it's scary. Some of us have to hide our true selves to stay safe. The challenges feel like we should be swallowed and never emerge from their depths. You will emerge. We will blossom. We have a community that will always prevail. We have survived since Babylonia, the first evidence of gender nonconformity.

We have lived through plagues, Christianisation, centuries of persecution, colonisation, and every other attack with which they have tried to deny us.

Go put on some makeup. Wear a dress. Cut your hair. Grow it out.

Dance outside, scream, cry, sing, and let your power be known. Go to festivals, find love, and live as they never wanted you to.

That is the greatest form of resistance.

I am Samoan. I struggled to balance that identity with my gender identity, I knew that religion was deeply tied into our culture, and that scared me. My greatest fear was that I would be rejected again. I could not live with that. I didn't want to destroy my family again. Thank God, that proved not to be the case. I find comfort in reflecting upon the hundreds, the thousands of beautiful Fa'afafine who have come before me. Who look at my life from above and whisper in my ear: You have our strength in your heart.

To our wonderful trans community, carry the strength of those who have come before you in your heart. Listen to the millions of gender-diverse souls that have come before us, and let their lives and their voices echo in your mind.

You are not alone. We always have existed. We do exist. We always will exist.

why is it that you're almost nocturnal?

Poem by Holly Davies

blue shaded water
hot summer weather
favourite shows
and pale yellow sweaters.

melting ice on my skin
and home-made pepsi

falling over
broken toys.
twenty six degrees
and fever dreams
books
poetry and
others
stacked on my crooked shelf
cluttered and full
to the point of almost falling.

brush your teeth at three pm
wipe off last nights' cheap glitter.
wait for sleep
until the sun nearly wakes
and late night depression
rests for nobody
and she feels no aching empathy then.
colours
visions
and questions
why is it
that you're almost nocturnal?

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a bright red long-sleeved shirt, a green scarf, black pants, and white sneakers, stands in front of a massive, dark, textured tree trunk. The tree's bark is deeply furrowed and shows signs of decay or fire damage. The background is slightly blurred, showing more trees and a clear sky.

AWWA

Period Care:

Sustainable period products

**an interview with Kylie
Matthews, COO**



An interview by Holly Davies

Have you ever wondered if a more sustainable way to support your periods exists? Is there something better for the environment than single-use pads and tampons? Something comfortable, indigenous owned and both size and gender inclusive?

“I am passionate about sustainability and being able to ensure that we’re reducing our footprint”

This is something I’ve been thinking about for a long time. But one day in my fortnightly youth council meeting, I learnt about AWWA Period Care and thought 'I need to interview this company'.

In early May, I was able to interview Kylie, Co-Founder of AWWA Period Care. I asked her a few questions to understand better what AWWA Period Care is, who they are and what sustainable and inclusive period care looks like.

What drove you in creating and working with AWWA Period Care? What motivated and inspired you?

Kylie mentions AWWA Period Care’s other Co-Founder, Michele, saying, “Michele and I both came with different ideas and strengths into the business.”

“For me personally, I am passionate about sustainability and being able to ensure that we’re reducing our footprint... particularly the amount of plastic waste that ends up in our landfill.”

Kylie also tells me she is a qualified social worker. This means she can view periods and sustainability from a business, environmental and social-work perspective . She worked for Oranga Tamariki for a period of time, working with families and young offenders. “I saw first-hand the impacts that poverty has on families. If they can’t afford to put food on the table, then they can’t afford to buy period products.”

As a social worker and someone passionate about the environment and sustainability, these inspired her to work towards AWWA.

"So I came at it from, hey, we've got this major problem in New Zealand with single-use plastic waste, but we've also got this huge issue where people are missing out on work and education because they don't have access to period products, and all that's doing is widening the gap between the genders... and that's not okay."

Also close to the heart of AWWA, Kylie and Michele are both indigenous practices, aroha and whanau/motherhood. Kylie shares that Michele and herself collectively have four daughters, one of the driving forces in the want for positive conversation around periods/ikura.

"If the purpose of what you're trying to do sits core to your values, then I feel like you've just got to give it a try."

"Michele is Māori and had another business prior as well and was on a journey to explore traditional Māori medicines also, how did Māori handle their periods prior to colonisation?"

"Between us, we have four daughters, and we wanted better for our daughters... we didn't want them to be having to start their journey with their ikura with single-use pads or tampons, so we sort of joined forces, and that's how AWWA came about."

"I never did business, accounting, economics, marketing, or any of that at university, I did a completely different degree. Be afraid to step outside your comfort zone; for me, the businesses I thrive and want to be part of are purpose-driven... so what is the purpose of that? If the purpose of what you're trying to do sits core to your values, then I feel like you've just got to give it a try."



How do you ensure AWWA period care has a positive, inclusive, diverse environment? This can be through your company, through the shops and products.

"Within our company structure, we have clear policies in place against bullying, anti-racism and discrimination that state that nobody who applies for a job at AWWA will be discriminated against due to their religious beliefs, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, relationship status - that just wouldn't happen within our company... if you're a good fit for us and you want to work hard and do the mahi and share the same vision as us - then all those other things are irrelevant." This diversity also covers the company's advertisement, resources and products.

INNOVATION EDITION

"The language we use is gender neutral; we have a big size range all the way from 3XS to 6XL, all our models are different shapes and sizes, ethnicities, sexual orientation. We are open and inclusive to all."

"We're welcoming to our entire community."

How can we use gender-inclusive terms when it comes to topics like menstruation?

"When we first started, we did use the word woman, but very quickly, we realised this wasn't appropriate for our ambitions and intentions for AWWA to be all-inclusive when we were talking about women having periods, that actually wasn't right. We changed the language: really tried to exclude that word instead using inclusive language such as all people who menstruate or all individuals who get a period."

"I love that I'm really passionate about what I do. I love the impact our business has had... and working with such a great team."

What is your most embarrassing period story?

"I can't think of one time that has stuck in my mind and traumatised me. I went to an all-girls school, and I remember needing to go to the toilet and change and not feeling like I could just take the tampon out of my bag and walk out. It felt whakama. AWWA is all about smashing the taboos around periods and making it something that people can talk about. I've definitely had a few leaks; everybody has."



She says this last part with a quick laugh, describing the quick bathroom rush when you've realised you may have leaked. The universal experience of asking your friend if or checking the chair you've sat on just in case there is some slim chance you've leaked.

What's your favourite thing about your position?

"I love that I'm really passionate about what I do. I love the impact our business has had, the feedback we get from the people who receive our donated pairs of underwear, and working with such a great team. I love the flexibility that I have created as this gives me a really good work-home balance. It's a fun thing to be able to give back to your community, and it's purpose-driven... know that you're having a positive influence on the environment that can influence others to make changes."



How can we support people with periods emotionally and physically?

This is about changing the whole narrative around periods and making them something that's not seen as whakama and not something to hide away. Pre-colonisation Māori referred to their periods as te awa atua (the divine river); they were something to be celebrated. because it meant your whakapapa, your lineage, your genealogy could continue. The women were encouraged to rest during that time, and the men took over all the responsibilities, cooking, and looking after the tamariki."

We need to get back in tune with our emotions and our ikura and support others patiently and non-assumptively with their ikura.

"My partner is very supportive to have someone who doesn't go, ugh, you've got your period, like, get over it. Someone who's like, hey hon, would you like me to make you a cup of tea - you've got your period."

"The same message, almost, but the tone and the way it's delivered has a completely different outcome on my wellbeing - and actually the whole environment, because if I feel supported and loved, I'm going to be able to bring my whole self back to a place of zen sooner"

“My dream is that reusables become the only way.”

What do you envision for the future of period care? For AWWA and general period care worldwide?

"Oh, I can answer that easily... I would like more than anything to see single-use pads and tampons be non-existent. That everybody has access to a reusable option. Great if that's AWWA underwear, but if that doesn't work for you, cloth pads, a menstrual cup or discs. Anything that is going to reduce the amount of single-use waste that ends up in our landfills. The way to do this is to start with this generation who are getting their ikura now. We were started on pads and tampons, so that mindset to shift to underwear is a bit harder. My dream and vision is that reusables become the only way."

[@awwaperiodcare](#)

awwaperiodcare.com

Communication through flowers

a floriography

WORDS BY LEISHA HODGSON

Have you ever made up a secret code with someone so you could send notes or speak to each other without others knowing what you are saying? Secret codes have been used for hundreds of years. In the Victorian days, they used floriography, sending messages through bouquets, enabling them to show their true feelings in a strict and controlling environment where they could not usually say what they wanted.

There have also been many mentions of floriography in Shakespeare's work, especially Hamlet.

Now, how does this work? How can you get a message through a bunch of flowers? You see, most flowers have a meaning behind them. For example, the daffodil (aka Narcissus) means respect or unrequited love, return my affection, sympathy and the coming of spring. It is named after the Greek myth of Narcissus, a man who spotted his reflection in the water, fell in love with his face, and would not leave. Therefore he turned into the daffodil, always bowed down to look into the water.



While there are many beautiful meanings to flowers, such as primrose, meaning eternal love. Forget-me-not, meaning (obviously) don't forget me, and true love. Some flowers also have tragic meanings, like foxglove: insecurity, and marigold: pain and grief. Others, such as roses, have different meanings depending on the colour. While black roses mean all terrible things (death, despair, mystery, danger, and obsession), red roses signify true love.



Photography: Leisha Hodgson

Now while these are all useful to know for celebrations and such, they aren't beneficial for sending secret messages. Here are some flowers and plants that can be used in your secret codes:

Mint: Suspicion

Oats (Weirdly enough): Music

Olive branch: Peace

Shamrock: Good luck

Sticky catchfly: Invite to dance

Tansy: To declare war

Winged Seeds: Messenger

Aloe: Grief

Almond blossom: Promise

Baby's breath: Innocence, purity of heart

Balm: Sympathy

Basil: Success

Begonia: Beware

Birds foot trefoil: revenge

Striped Carnation: Refusal, no

Solid colour Carnation: Affirmative, yes

Black Dahlia: Betrayal, dishonest

As well as all these, there are also two flowers every month, like a birthstone.

- **January:** Carnation - fascination, distinction and love. And Snowdrop - Hope and support
- **February:** Purple violet - Faithfulness, loyalty. And primrose - eternal love

- **March:** Daffodil - unrequited love. And Jonquil - return my affection.
- **April:** Sweet pea - Gratitude, farewell. And Daisy - innocence, purity, loyal love.
- **May:** Lily of the valley - sweetness, trust, return of happiness. And Hawthorn - hope
- **June:** Rose - Love, I love you. And Honeysuckle - Devoted affection, bonds of love.
- **July:** Delphinium - Fun, heavenly, joy. And Water lily - Purity of the heart, beauty.
- **August:** Gladiolus - Honour, strength of character. And Poppy - Imagination, rest.
- **September:** Aster - Daintiness, a symbol of love. And Morning glory - affection.
- **October:** Marigold - Health, pain, and grief. And Cosmos - Universal love, modesty
- **November:** Chrysanthemum - Optimism, long life.
- **December:** Holly - Growth, persistence. And Narcissus - Self-esteem, formality.

Next time you want to send someone a bouquet, double-check what flowers you are sending, in case you accidentally send someone Queen-of-the-meadow (uselessness) on their birthday or gardenia (joy) to a funeral. Overall using floriography for a secret code or just a way to send messages to friends is such a cool thing to do. **Have you sent secret codes to people using flowers? Please send us your success (or failure) stories!**

Horse Sense

**Nina talks to Aotea Taylor
about her horse breeding
business in King Country**

Alexandra Hope



Photos: Supplied

Aotea Taylor is a 19-year-old horse breeder from King Country. From being a Muay Thai National Champion to establishing a Pedigree Stud Farm and working alongside her dad to help struggling youth get back on their feet, Aotea's story, of compassion, determination and ingenuity, is an amazing one.

From an early age, Aotea has always been working with horses.

"My Dad wanted to teach us three main goals growing up: How to fight, how to ride a horse, and how to survive off the land. During my brief fighting career, I represented NZ twice in the National NZ Black-Gloves Team at the IFMA World Champs in Thailand. I went further than I had expected, competing in a sport for which I had great respect but no passion. I did feel very pressured doing something I didn't enjoy, but looking back, I am grateful for the invaluable self-defence skills, the respect for myself and others, and the indispensable experiences I gained from it. I phased out of fighting and became more involved in helping Dad with Youth Programs for high-risk youth for a few years.

Recently, I moved on to my current profession-breeding horses, which I feel is very rewarding."

At age 19 Aotea has already established her own business and now breeds the most beautiful Friesian and Arabian crosses in New Zealand. Even at such a young age, she continues to show innovation that is inspiring for people of all ages.

With her business well established, Aotea is aiming to specialise in breeding beautiful Friesian sport horses with Arabian, Iberian and Saddlebred blood.

She recently sold a horse to attend a Compassionate Communication Training course. Compassionate Communication, or Non-Violent Communication, is a method of communication that encourages taking responsibility of your feelings and emotions and using them to increase empathy and establish a connection between individuals.

There is so much for us to learn from Aotea's compassion and determination.

"My Dad was first invited to attend the event, but things didn't unfold, so he suggested I take his place. I was more than happy with the idea because it was a break from the farm and an opportunity to expand my awareness and skills in dealing more efficiently with compassionate communication, essential to working with youth in our youth programs.

"My Dad wanted to teach us three main goals growing up: How to fight, how to ride a horse, and how to survive off the land."

I thought the wisdom I could gain from this program would expand my knowledge on the topic of non-violent communication, something that has challenged me in working with youth who have trouble dealing with anger and frustration issues and their inability to communicate efficiently. I wanted tools I could apply practically and use to create a better community and connection. I also saw a wide collection of people travelling from all walks of life, congregating in a single place to attend this event, all for similar reasons, seeking inspiration on their quest of self-discovery. As a neophyte horse breeder, I was very satisfied with my decision to sell one of my first foals for such a great cause and attend such an awesome experience."



Photos: Supplied

Thinking about the future, Aotea has yet another project in mind. After having experience helping her dad with Youth Programmes that assist at-risk youth, Aotea aims to bring her two passions together and create an equine-assisted Youth Programme aimed at high-risk youth who are falling through the gaps in the system.

"Our program would use a plethora of holistic, touch-based, natural horsemanship and liberty communication methods (gentle and respectful methods that encourage natural cooperation and trusting relationships).

It will build valuable life skills: confidence, dealing with aggression and conflict, communicating more effectively, and improving physical, mental, and social well-being, creating positive behaviour changes, and stronger connections to self and others. Our program would not only consist of the work we do with horses but providing opportunities for youth to accelerate their healing journey and improve their mindsets through outdoor activities as metaphors for exploring belief systems and behaviour.

INNOVATION EDITION

Many equine-specialised categories would be included, and there'd be employment and volunteer opportunities for our youth program members looking to work with horses in their careers and broaden their practical experience.

The biggest challenge at the moment is finding the facilities/location and the finances to start such a huge program, but I'm looking forward to the potential this proposal has and how I can make it happen."



Photos: Supplied

When asked who her main inspiration was, Aotea replied that;

"My Dad has to be my main inspiration. Dad has always been a very strong and stable character throughout my life. There are many things I admire in him, especially his tolerance, his dependability, and his ability to remain solid under any circumstance. He has always been like a solid foundation holding me steady. With whatever life has shown him, he is able to remain steadfast and resilient like a Maunga (mountain), with as much grace as the name he was bestowed."



Photos: Supplied

"I wanted tools I could apply practically and use to create a better community and connection."

Aotea's story represents that age doesn't matter, if you have a passion for something, follow your dreams.

"Everything happens for a reason. Some things may not unfold in the exact way you wished, but a greater opportunity can arise from it. Keep an open mind and be willing to see the silver lining in all situations."

Follow Aotea's journey through her Instagram: [@aoteastud](#), or on her website: [aoteastud.com](#)



Young Artist Profile:

Emili Biswas

My name is Emili, and I'm a young, small business owner in Auckland! I sell Canvas Paintings, Glass Paintings, and Paper Artwork and also do custom artwork! I do Auckland-based pick-up and New Zealand shipping. If you're looking for an art piece to display or a unique gift, contact @emilib.nzart on Instagram and Facebook!

Winter Activities

WORDS BY BRIANA TAYLOR

On a cold winter's day, you sometimes just want to curl up with a blanket and watch Netflix; other times, you want to get out and do something! But you may be stuck on what to do, so I've compiled a list of some activities to do in the wintertime.

Go Bush

Bundle up in warm clothes, get out of the house and into the bush! Bushwalking is a great activity to appreciate the beauty of our country, Aotearoa. It's great fun for the entire family while keeping you fit in these colder months. Walking outside has been proven to help our mental health, so even walking in the neighbourhood can hugely benefit you mentally and physically.



People watch at a cafe

Craving a warm hot chocolate on a chilly day? Go to your favourite cafe! You could take a book to relax with or just sit and watch the passersby. Either way, it's a great way to take time for yourself and enjoy the moment. Doing this will also support a small business, which is especially generous if you live in a small town, so it's a win-win.

Photography: Briana Taylor



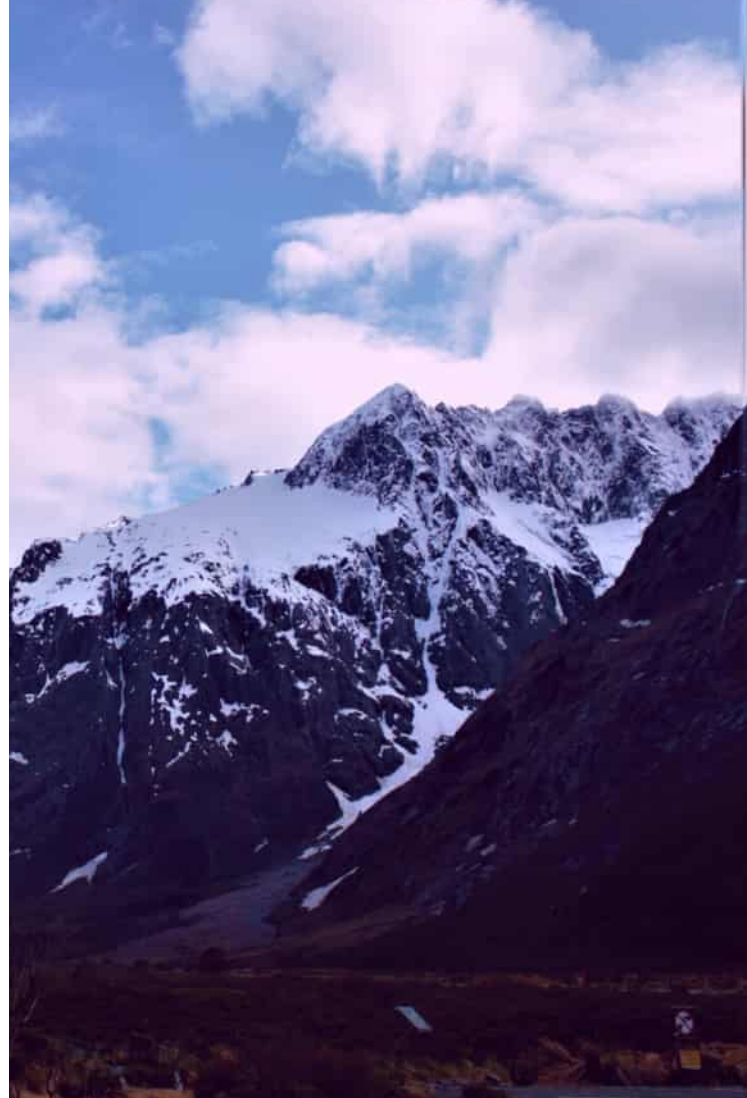
Bake yourself a treat

If you find yourself bored on a rainy day and don't feel like going out, dust off your recipe books, scour around your cupboards for ingredients and get baking! Baking is a great way to relax but also to get yourself feeling productive. It's fun for the entire family and can keep you occupied for hours on end! And the best part about it is you get to eat your creation at the end!

Get lost in a fictional (or non-fictional) world at the library

Reading on a cold, miserable winter's day is super fun and cosy. So what better place to go to than the library? They have hundreds of books and comfy setups, so you can get lost in the worlds of the authors. If you love reading, libraries will generally have like-minded people in them, so you may even meet some new friends you can talk to about your favourite books!

Photography: Briana Taylor



Photography: Briana Taylor

Wander around a museum

Most towns and cities generally have a museum. If your town/city has one and you haven't been, a miserable and rainy day is the best time to go. Or revisit it if you've been before. History is amazing, and learning the history of the land that you live on is fascinating. Especially seeing old photographs of places you're familiar with. Museums are generally inexpensive and are super entertaining for history lovers!

I encourage you to give at least one thing on this list a go the next time you feel bored. These are great ways to turn an unproductive day into a productive day!

Pros and Cons of being Neurodiverse

WORDS BY ELLA MOONEY

It's a sharp, bright, noisy, confusing world out there. On your rare forays into it, you see people walking down the street, somehow oblivious to it all, talking loudly on their cellphones despite the overwhelming noise. 'How do they do it every single day?', you wonder, knowing it will take you days to recover from just this one day-trip into the city.

This is only one example of what it can be like to live as a neurodiverse person in a world not designed for you.

A word about the term: There is some controversy about the term 'neurodiverse,' because it implies a difference from the norm, or 'weirdness,' though most people agree it is better than the term 'special needs,' which is highly patronising. Here, I use the term 'neurodiverse,' because it is widely known and understood.

There are many different forms of neurodiversity, all with their drawbacks – but all, in some way, with their blessings.

Starting with the drawbacks:

Interaction with people and the environment can be challenging, especially for people with Autism and Sensory Processing Disorder.

“There are many different forms of neurodiversity, all with their drawbacks – but all, in some way, with their blessings.”

Neurodiverse (ND) people often don't do well in school, because many ND brains are interest-based, instead of necessity based. Our brains pay attention to things we find interesting, and won't when the task is dull – even if it's crucial to maintaining our health, job or education. This typically presents with ADHD but can occur alongside other forms of neurodiversity.

Sometimes, neurotypical people simply won't 'believe in' neurodiversity, or even think people with neurodiversity are 'less than' them. Fortunately, many wonderful people try their hardest to make life easier for ND people.

Taking all of these drawbacks into consideration – from the daily difficulty of ‘fitting in,’ to the good old, “ouch, my brain hurts,” it can seem like neurodiversity is pretty grim. Well, it is, but there are good parts.

Consider, for example, the compassion and understanding one gains from living with a differently wired brain. Or the creativity that scores of neurodiverse people are lucky enough to have. Many famous authors, musicians, and artists were neurodiverse. Who knows, you could be the next Lewis Carroll! (He is reported to have had both Autism and ADHD – some say this was the inspiration for his ‘Alice In Wonderland’ world.)

“In short, neurodiversity is NOT being ‘a bit quirky.’”

Aside from that, neurodiverse people often enjoy certain things more than neurotypical people—whether it’s an intense fascination with astrophysics, trains, or music from the ‘80s, or the hyper-senses so many of us are blessed – and cursed – with being fixated on a beautiful melody, or even the joy of one single peaceful moment in your endlessly rushing, tumbling, searching brain.

A neurodiverse person may have an unquenchable thirst to learn everything there is to know about one very specific topic. I’ve always been fascinated by quantum physics and game theory, for example, and I could talk about them for hours on end.

For most neurodiverse people, this is a good thing. However, constantly talking about a single topic can sometimes be detrimental to one’s relationships, and can make teachers think you are at best, weird, and at worst, unintelligent. Well, it’s hardly my fault if quarks are a thousand times more fascinating than writing essays!

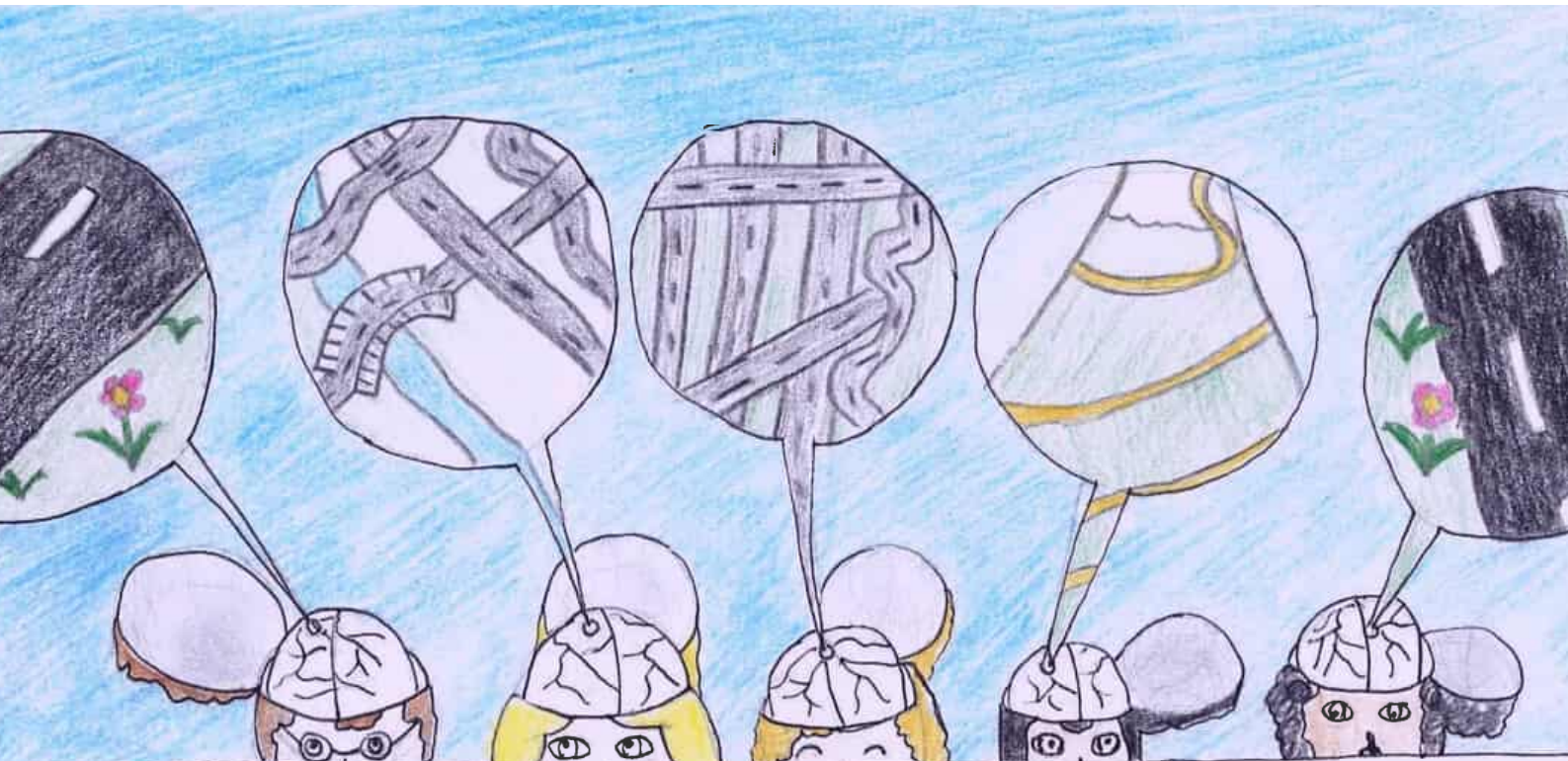
Art: Ella Mooney



Second item: If your senses can hurt you, they can also do the opposite. For many ND people, listening to a song is like watching a theatre play, sitting by a bubbling brook, and floating in space, all at once. This can apply to every sense. Some people are able to see sounds and feel tastes, among other things (this is called Synesthesia), and while this can be upsetting, it can also be excellent.

Last on the list: The pure unrestrained joy of, for once, not having a constant stream of sensory input, of intrusive thoughts, of having to pretend to be ‘normal’.

Art: Ella Mooney



Every time I take off my headphones in the dead of night when it's completely silent, or when I sit down after a walk filled with noticing, and I can close my eyes and just cease to notice, I feel... free, alive, lucky, peaceful, and above all, content.

Simply put, every moment my mind is not actively causing me pain is a very good moment indeed, and I am very grateful that my brain allows me to have any of those moments at all.

Neurodiversity is much more common than many people think. Certain types of neurodiversity can significantly affect people's lives,

to the point of them being unable to do the things they love. But, like with most things, there are always upsides- however small or insignificant they seem.

And no matter how your brain works, you are wonderful, and you are equal to everyone else on this planet.

No matter how much your brain hurts, annoys, and confuses you, remember: it will not always be like that. There will always be moments of joy.

So go enjoy your weird, wonderful brains, people. They're the only ones you get.

FINDING THE RIGHT CRYSTAL FOR YOU:

Exploring the meaning and healing properties of various crystals.

WORDS BY LILY DUTTON

Crystals have recently become extremely popular among teenagers, commonly used as cute decorations in rooms or worn as jewellery. I'm aware that many teenagers don't know the real meaning behind the crystals they buy, so below, I will briefly talk about some of my favourite crystals, how to care for them, their healing properties and how useful they are.

Amethyst

Amethyst is a standard, long-time favourite crystal loved by many; they are most famous for their exquisite purple colourings. Amethysts range from light violets and lilacs to deep, darker, moody purples. Sometimes you may even come across an amethyst with a red tinge. The deeper the purple colouring on an amethyst, the more uncommon it is. Amethyst doesn't just look beautiful; they have potent healing properties that help in many different aspects of life. They are known to balance mood swings, help you find inner peace, dispel anger, fear, anxiety and rage, and protect you from negative energies. Amethyst helps to ease all pain, grief and sadness.

Amethyst doesn't demand much attention like most crystals. Put them out on a full moon so they can recharge and eliminate negative energies that might be hanging on them.

Photography: Lily Dutton



Carnelian

If you are feeling sad, a positive, uplifting crystal is exactly what you need, a carnelian would be the perfect crystal for you. Carnelian is a joyous, warm crystal; its positive, exuberant energy helps open your heart and boost motivation. The colourings of a carnelian come in beautiful fiery reds and oranges, looking like a sunset.

Carnelian helps to anchor you in the present reality, allowing you to trust yourself and be confident in your abilities. It also helps connect with your creative self; place the crystal by your art pad to enhance the energy to draw creatively, and wear Carnelian to protect yourself and give you the self-confidence you need. To charge this crystal, you can bury it in soil, place it in sunlight/ moonlight or leave it near other charging crystals.



AI Art: Mandi Lynn

Rose Quartz

In sweet colours of pink, rose quartz is a precious crystal known to help you in all areas of love, from deepening friendships to growing your sense of self-love, rose quartz does it all. Rose quartz helps to open up the heart to feel and express emotions. Wearing or having rose quartz near you allows you to tap into more profound inner healing and to find room for forgiveness, compassion and peace towards yourself and others. It is also said to have the power to attract positive changes in your life with blissful romance, stronger bonds and new friendships. Rose quartz is best charged in the moonlight.

To cleanse the crystal, soak it in salt water, don't leave it in salt water for long periods, though, as the salt might get into the crystal. To ensure that the spectacular pink colour of your crystal lasts, keep the crystal out of direct sunlight so the colour doesn't fade.

Moonstone

If you don't like the slightest change and want things to stay the same, moonstone is the perfect crystal for you. Moonstone is a calming, comforting crystal creating harmony; promoting positive change and new beginnings with acceptance. Moonstone comes in many different colours that resemble different stages of the moon; the most known colour is the pale, pearly, white colour, which glimmers in sunlight and resembles hope and promises like the new moon. For the best effects of the moonstone's power, wear it; another good thing to do is place it in a family room where tension runs higher so the moonstone can do its work and calm the place down. Cleaning your moonstone crystal is simple, place it in cold water and scrub it, then put it in the moonlight overnight to recharge.

Next time you buy a new or your first crystal, keep the above four crystals in mind. Also, remember to choose your crystal carefully; think about the colour, healing properties and how to care for your crystal. Research the crystal you want to buy beforehand so you can go into the shop knowing exactly which crystal you want so that it can have the best chance of positively impacting your life.

Section 4

Māramatanga

awareness, insight, perception



Upcycling - the benefits

WORDS BY BRIANA TAYLOR

What is Upcycling?

Upcycling is when you reuse an object or material to create a product of higher quality or value than the original. For example, I recently went to this cafe that was initially a dairy factory! But they upcycled it into a cafe, climbing wall and museum! Obviously, your upcycling project doesn't have to be this extensive! It can be as easy or difficult as you want!

Benefits of upcycling:

There are many benefits of upcycling; here are some:

Creates less waste - By upcycling, you are taking something that will probably go into the landfill and reusing it to benefit you! Things ending up in landfills can harm our planet, especially if they're not biodegradable. By upcycling things, you are reducing that waste.

- **It can save you money** - Things nowadays can be costly. To save money, you can upcycle. Instead of buying new things, look at secondhand shops and see if anything grabs your attention! And don't be afraid to get your hands dirty if it needs a little attention!
- **Promotes creativity** - Feel like you don't have that creative spark everyone talks about? Look around the house or pop into your local secondhand shop to pick up a small upcycling project! Upcycling is a very creative activity; whether you're painting, hammering or anything else, it's a great way to be creative! And anyone can do it!

It makes you feel good - Helping the planet is always a nice feeling! And having something in your home that you've upcycled yourself is something to be proud of! It's always nice to show off a project you've done yourself!



AI Art: Ella Mooney

Upcycling ideas:

If you're reading this and want to upcycle something but are not sure what, I've got you covered! Here are five things you may have lying around and what you could upcycle them into!

- Pallets - Pallets are a great thing to upcycle! You can make them into many items, such as; tables, gardens and storage containers.
- Sheets/Blankets - Old materials like these are excellent if you or someone you know loves to sew! Bags and clothing are just a few endless things you can make out of them!
- Jars - Repurposing jars into storage containers is a great way to upcycle them! They can also be used as light fixtures and glasses to drink out of.
- Furniture - These can be repurposed and modernised to suit many decors with some elbow grease and creativity.
- Clothes - For those who like to sew, clothing is a brilliant resource to upcycle! Clothing can be adapted to suit current trends, repurposed for special occasions and redesigned to suit personal tastes.

As discussed, you can upcycle in all different areas of your life, from the clothes you wear to the storage you use to how you furnish your home. Upcycling is a fun and cost-effective, accessible and affordable activity that allows you to personalise something to your taste without breaking the bank.



AI Art: Ella Mooney



Art - Abi Street



Pile of unused blankets



Cutting the blankets to size



Sewing the parts together



The finished product

IT'S JUST A PURPLE FLOWER

WORDS BY HOLLY DAVIES

My Instagram username combines my favourite planet and lavender, my favourite flower, my favourite scent. I have a website that I occasionally use to post my poetry and photography when I can be bothered. It has the same name. My Snapchat and BeReal usernames both have some combination of my first name and my favourite plant.

“Lavender is a symbol; it’s a scent, a smell. It’s a flower. It’s a colour. Lavender is a part of me”

Lavender is a symbol; it’s a scent, a smell. It’s a flower. It’s a colour. Lavender is a part of me. Weirdly, it’s almost an identity. When my friends see lavender, the flower, colour, whatever - they think “Holly!” It’s become something they associate with my very being. It began as a simple hyper-fixation for me, but now it’s more. I don’t mind the association.

Genus *Lavandula*, or simply lavender, is a plant within the mint family. The plant is made of green shrubs or stems with rows of purple flowers. There are multiple different types of lavender - and while most grow in warmer climates (e.g., in the Mediterranean), others do not need a significantly warmer climate. According to New Zealand Geographic, lavender was among some of the first plants introduced to Aotearoa by Europeans. They also believe that we currently have around four dozen commercial lavender farms/spaces since then.

There are multiple different types of lavender; however, in Aotearoa, there are two main types. These are *Lavandula stoechas* and French lavender.





Art: Lindsey Song

The oil that causes the widely-known scent of lavender is taken from the plant to create essential oils and other products. Essential oils are used for various things - such as perfumes, anxiety remedies and more. I've often found the scent of lavender to calm my anxiety, and it has been something recommended to me by nurses and therapists.

Lavender has been scientifically proven to impact our nervous system. When we breathe the scent in, it regulates our anxiety symptoms - such as our heart rate and our breathing. It has also been proven in studies to help people (women in particular) with insomnia and to alleviate symptoms of depression.

One of my closest friends bought me lavender perfume for my seventeenth birthday, and I wear it almost daily. I love it so much. So while essential oils can be harsh on sensitive skin, I can wear the perfume - wear lavender - with me wherever I go.

My room also has a lavender candle and a healthy collection of lavender incense. Therefore, my room is no space for the lavender hater. Probably not the best space for those who are allergic, either.

Lavender has various symbolism in relevance to politics and the LGBTQIA+ community. The "Lavender scare" is the term or phrase used to define a wave of fear experienced in the United States of America (mid-20th century) around homosexual women and men working for the US government. Gay men and lesbian women were seen as weak and communist sympathisers; therefore, when their sexual orientation was uncovered, they were removed from state employment. The "Lavender Scare" was the official term coined and utilised to describe the movement.

In addition to this, lavender was also a symbol for the group "Lavender Menace." The group was made up of primarily lesbian and bisexual women who believed in

equality for all sexualities and also advocated for radical feminism.

During the 20th century, ongoing feminist movements often discluded and failed to acknowledge queer women, while gay rights and liberation movements often focused on white, cisgender, able-bodied gay men. Therefore Lavender Menace was born, bearing signs and photos with numerous slogans and forms of lavender.



Art: Lindsey Song

Lavender was also used as an identifying word or a synonym for queer people. Men were called "lavender lads", and lavender was and is often used in sapphic poetry.

As recently as 2022, June Bates released her collection of sapphic and lesbian poetry. *The Lavender Haze: Sapphic Poetry on Love* is available on Goodreads and explores the absolute lavender-coloured feeling and so-called "haze" of sapphic love.



Photography: Holly Davies

“Lavender was also used as an identifying word or a synonym for queer people. Men were called “lavender lads”, and lavender was and is often used in sapphic poetry.”

In evaluating my brief overview and love letter to lavender, lavender is versatile, relevant to pop culture and politics, and essential to literature, love and people in general.

Lavender is comfortable; it's pretty, it's calm. I love lavender, and it's for these reasons I will continue to, and why I will continue to take photos of every lavender plant I see. I hope you think about how wonderful they can be every time you see lavender from now on.

Lavender isn't "just" a plant. It's much more than that.

USING MĀORI TERMS

WORDS BY NINA M.ZINK

I'm Pakeha, with barely any Māori knowledge, and the rest of my family are in Europe. But culture is not a privilege; I'm sick of it being called a privilege. Our culture is a human right. No matter where we come from, or where we end up, each and every one of us has a history that means something to us. Our history is something to be treasured and learnt from, some of it is ugly, some of it is beautiful, but it has shaped us as people. We have the right to be ourselves and to learn and to grow.

“Our history is something to be treasured and learnt from, some of it is ugly, some of it is beautiful, but it has shaped us as people.”

Te Reo is part of Aotearoa's history, and part of Aotearoa's culture. I don't know much about the language and the culture, but I want to learn. Below I have compiled a small dictionary of Te Reo terms that we hear daily, whether on the news, in the media, or at school. These are some of the terms I thought are most relevant and that we can learn from as such.



I have done my best to translate them as accurately as possible & consulted our Create Happy Kaumatua, but honestly, the English language will never do these words justice.

Governmental terms:

Manatū Kaupapa Waonga - Ministry of Defence

- Manatū means ministry
- Kaupapa translates to the subject matter (of the day/relevance), the theme.
- Waonga means defence, to protect.

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga - Ministry of Education

- Te Tāhuhu is a central theme, idea, subject line
- Mātauranga is the word for knowledge and wisdom, in this sense, used to describe education.

Manatū Hauora - Ministry of Health

- Hauora is your wellness
 - Physical, Mental, Spiritual, Social

Tāhū o te Ture - Ministry of Justice

- Ture is to protect legally

Te Puni Kōkiri - Ministry for Māori Development

- A group moving forward together

Te Manatu Whakahiato Ora - Ministry of Social Development

- Whakahiato means to bring together
- Ora is wellness and satisfaction

Te Manatū Whakahiato Taiohi - Ministry of Youth Development

- Taiohi means young and youthful

Te Manatū Waka - Ministry of Transport

- Waka means a vehicle, a method of transport

Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children

- Oranga is welfare and support
- Tamariki is children
- Can be split into two parts
 - Tama meaning boy
 - Riki meaning little

Terms used in school:

Ako - learning together

Ao - world

Aroha - love, sympathy, empathy

Haere mai - welcome

Hapū - extended family

Hui - meeting; to meet with

Ihi - power or quality that evokes emotion

Iwi - tribe, biological community

Kaha - strength

Kaiako - Teacher, mentor

Kaitiaki - guardian; custodian

Kaitiakitanga - to protect, to guard [something]

Kaumātua - elders, people to be respected

Korero - to speak, discuss

Mana - to have authority, deserve respect

Matauranga - knowledge, wisdom, and understanding of the world around you

Mauri - life force, the essence of life

Ngātahi - together

Pakaritanga - maturing, strength

Papatūānuku - Earth Mother

Rāhui - to restrict; prohibit

Rangatira - chief, leader

Rangatiratanga - the qualities of leadership of a chief

Reo - language; voice

Taiao - the natural world

Tangata - people

Taonga- treasured, to be kept safe and looked after

Tapu - sacred, with great sentimental importance

Taiki - care for and look after

Tupuranga - growth

Waiaro - values; morals

Wairua - spirit

Whakaiti - humility

Whakapapa - genealogy; lines of descent

Whakataukī - proverb

Whānau - family

Whanaungatanga - kinship; relationships; connections

Whenua - county; land

for the love of pets

WORDS BY BETH

I think most of us agree that animals are amazing—whether they're rescuing us from disasters, helping us explore new areas of science, or keeping us calm.

Did you know there is scientific evidence that petting animals can make you more calm? One study done by the National Institute of Health proved that, "Pets may also decrease stress, improve heart health, and even help children with their emotional and social skills." Being calmer can also lower blood pressure and help you to be less argumentative, get better sleep, and think more logically.

As well as physical benefits, animals also give us mental benefits! Animals can help relax our minds, letting thoughts flow and stopping us from worrying. This is extremely good for mental well-being, and why animals are sometimes used for therapy. There was a study done by BMC Psychiatry where birds were given to people, and this improved their mental well-being significantly.

“Animals can help relax our minds, letting thoughts flow and stopping us from worrying.”

Now, in modern times, therapy animals are very common and even allowed in aeroplanes, trains, wards in hospitals, buses, and hotels. Many people find comfort in their therapy animals and often become best friends quickly. Did you know that the most common therapy animal is the dog? Especially labrador retrievers, who are often deployed after natural disasters or other traumatic events. These dogs are rumoured to have a connection with their human friends and so they are often used for human-related situations.





There was one situation where a retirement village resident was very depressed and melancholy- she wouldn't get out of bed or socialise at all-. Then she was introduced to Frankie, a therapy dog. Every week she would take Frankie for a walk down the hallway, and eventually, she began to regain hope. She would talk to others and leave her room to walk Frankie. This therapy dog really changed her life and gave her a reason to live.

“Many people find comfort in their therapy animals and often become best friends quickly.”

So it has been proved that just being around animals can improve our mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing. This is why animals are necessary parts of our lives. They're here to make sure we don't go through life alone, and they're here to expand our world too, giving us new possibilities and friendships.



But where can you go to be around an animal if you don't own any? To start, try the SPCA:

<https://www.spcanewzealand.org.nz/adopt>

THE TYPES OF VEGETARIAN

WORDS BY MACKENZIE HA

Vegetarianism is a way of living where you try to exclude animal products from your day-to-day diet. While most people think there are very few vegetarian/ plant-based diets, there are actually multiple different types of plant-based diets. Each varies slightly from one other, including and excluding different animal products. You can find vegetarians in almost every country; 22% of the world's population is vegetarian.

There are said to be many benefits of having a plant-based diet, such as consuming more vitamins and antioxidants and helping reduce your blood pressure. There are also said to have benefits for the environment, such as reducing the amount of greenhouse gases you are responsible for emitting into the air. Following a plant-based diet involves discovering a new way of living. It involves trying new and exciting ways to make plant-based meals and discovering new plant-based products.

Vegan:

Veganism is a diet which eliminates the widest range of animal products. Being vegan means your diet is based on plants such as fruits, grains, nuts and vegetables. This means you don't consume things such as dairy, any sort of animal meat, honey and eggs. There are around 88 million vegans in the world, which is 1.1% of the population.

Ovo Vegetarian:

Ovo Vegetarian is one of the lesser popular plant-based diets. It involves not consuming meat, dairy, honey or seafood but consuming eggs and products that contain eggs. For example, mayonnaise, egg noodles and some baked goods.

Lacto Vegetarian:

A person following the Lacto vegetarian diet doesn't consume meat.

Eggs and seafood as well but does consume dairy and products containing dairy. For example, products like milk, cheese, butter and yoghurt.

Lacto-Ovo Vegetarian:

Lacto-Ovo Vegetarian is the most popular plant-based diet. A person following the diet avoids meat, seafood and poultry (birds). The word "lacto" means dairy, and "ovo" refers to eggs, and being added to vegetarian gives you Lacto-Ovo vegetarian.



Pollo Vegetarian:

People who follow the Pollo Vegetarian diet include poultry in addition to the plant-based diet. This means they consume chicken, turkey and or duck. These can be used as a source of protein. The word "pollo" also means chicken in Spanish.

Pescatarian:

The Pescatarian diet is mainly based on plant-based products but includes seafood as a source of protein. For some people, this also includes dairy and eggs. People who are pescatarians are also sometimes referred to as "fish lovers".

Flexitarian:

Flexitarians, also known as semi-vegetarians or partial vegetarians, mainly follow a vegetarian diet. Those who follow the diet rarely consume animal products or just meat and or fish. The flexitarian diet was made to help people have a plant-based diet but still be able to enjoy animal products on rare occasions.

As you can see, there are many more than just one or two types of vegetarian diets. Research continues to show the benefits of having a plant-based diet, and the rise in popularity of eating plant-based doesn't show signs of stopping.



SEPARATING THE ART FROM THE ARTIST

WORDS BY ELLA MOONEY.

Picture this. Your TikTok feed is filled with posts about how JK Rowling is transphobic, Dr Seuss is racist, and Orson Scott Card is SOME sort of bigot. People are taking one side or the other everywhere you turn, telling you what to think and do. "She's right!" "He's wrong!" "They didn't mean that exactly-"

What is a person supposed to think here?

The answer is generally 'your own thoughts'. It's always a good idea to have multiple sources of information, whether researching a controversial tweet or a cure for the common cold. When people begin telling you what to think, it's generally a sign to go and do some research and form your own opinion based on the best facts available to you. To start with, we can't know for sure that a vague statement means what we think. People rush to take sides when someone famous is suspected of saying something controversial. Some rush to back them up.

"They meant this", or "That viewpoint is correct"- and some rush to distance themselves from the person- oh no, I disagree, we must boycott this book/music/painting etc. This can be both good and not-so-good. It can bring to light the less ideal aspects of famous people quickly so that we can decide what to do about it immediately - but it can also make for a confusing and not entirely truthful conclusion. Certainly, we cannot condone any 'isms'- but we have to know they are present to do anything about them.

There is a difficulty in this, however: Cancel culture. Often when people are told someone has said or done something objectively wrong, they rush to 'cancel' the person- whether or not they're certain the accusation is true.

Have you heard of the Overton Window? Every culture has had certain things you can and can't say. Decades ago, saying 'women should vote' was unthinkable. Now, saying they shouldn't is equally inconceivable.

The Overton Window has shifted- for the better in this case! Sometimes the window shifts swiftly, and people are left behind with an outdated worldview. For example, your slightly racist grandma who says, 'That's how it was when I grew up'. This could be one of the reasons for the statements artists make and what people do about them. The artist grew up with an outdated Overton window and somehow never got rid of it. Now, cancel culture is very much in the middle of the window.

Once you have ascertained that the artist did say something offensive, biased, or misinformed, what CAN you do about it?

“When you read that book or watch that movie, do you struggle to pay attention, busy wondering how someone with those views could create such an enjoyable narrative?”

Generally, a good starting point is to state that you disagree, why, and perhaps why others should also look into it, to any audience you have. Then, think about what you are inadvertently doing to support them- and whether you should stop. Remember that most artists get money when you buy their books, paintings, movies, etc. Even streaming movies on Netflix can give them money.

But can you even separate art from the artist in your own mind?



AI Art: Ella Mooney

When you read that book or watch that movie, do you struggle to pay attention, busy wondering how someone with those views could create such an enjoyable narrative? It can ruin your experience even if you're sure you're not actually supporting the author. All I can say is good luck with this. I haven't had any.

We have to make a decision here. If we can separate the art and artist in our minds and want to keep interacting with the work (if not the creator), we have to decide... is it worth it? Is not giving them the \$20 for the book worth not getting to read it? Is giving them \$12 to see the movie worth getting to see it? You could stop interacting with the work entirely.

No movies, no t-shirts with the protagonist on, no support for the author. Nothing. You could decide that an extra \$12 to see the film won't make any difference and continue as if nothing happened, occasionally shaking your head ruefully at the state of the world.



AI Art: Ella Mooney



You could decide on something in between- maybe getting the book from the library is ok, but not buying it new, to keep enjoying the art without supporting the artist too much.

There are ways to enjoy the work without supporting the artist, such as buying from a second-hand shop or borrowing from a friend, but these aren't always possible. And this is where the fandom comes in. Instead of reading the book itself, read the fanfiction! Instead of listening to their music, listen to covers by little-known bands. No, it's not quite the same, but it's better than nothing.

If someone has expressed hateful views, I don't want to support them- not by agreeing with them, giving them money, or even adding one more book to their sales numbers. But if I can, I will find a way to enjoy the art independently of the artist, such as buying a book second-hand or borrowing the movie from a friend.

Ultimately this art belongs to us now, and I refuse to let someone's bigoted views ruin it for me, no matter how much my brain inextricably links the two.

So, it's up to you. What do you think?

He Kaupapa Tūmanako Project Hope

Lily Dutton
interviews Nicki
Truman about
Project Hope



Earlier this year, I learnt about Project Hope. I summoned a leap of faith and took the opportunity to take the course, and it was like nothing I'd ever done before. I learnt new things about myself and how I wanted to live, and I also connected with the people in my group who were similar ages to me and shared common interests. Nicki Truman was my tutor for Project Hope. I was lucky enough to have an interview with her, and this is what she had to say:

What is Project Hope?

"Project Hope' is a 4-week course that engages young people, particularly in high schools, and challenges them to broaden their perspectives of hope. We do this by bringing students together from across NZ and the world to connect over key learning materials about hope and what hope can look like."

"Project Hope is a space where people can come from all walks of life, and I think its strength is that we can bring a really diverse range of people together. We can have different views, values and ways of looking at the world, but we can come together in that moment and really take time to connect."

She says before she started teaching Project Hope she was a little bit unclear on what hope felt like, as it can sometimes be very fleeting moments that you feel hopeful, but now, to her, hope symbolises two things: Connection (the idea that hope gets a lot richer when you are connected with others) and Taking action (taking active steps to create a hopeful future for ourselves)



Why is it important for teenagers to have hope in today's world?

"It takes me back to the reason the course was created in the first place; in 2020 we were experiencing intense disruptions from lockdowns and impending climate crises and potential recessions. There was a lot of unease for everyone around the world, but I think it was particularly

poignant for young people who were moving through their secondary school journey and perhaps hadn't experienced anything like this before in their lifetime. We all have the ability to create sustainable futures for ourselves, but sometimes it's just about thinking, about how can we create a sustainable future for ourselves even when we are in uncertain times. And if we think about the way the world is moving to the future, harnessing the power of young people is all the more important, and lifting our young people up and reminding them of their capabilities was the key thing for us."



Do you think international students gain different things from Project Hope than NZ students?

"Some of the richest feedback we have had in the past has been from our International students. I think as New Zealanders we are quite lucky and fortunate to be able to experience richness in our culture, and I think that the international students warm to it."

"The overarching thread of Project Hope is that it allows us to come together and experience something quite unique, particularly because it includes a lot of indigenous mātauranga Māori framing which I think can be quite a unique learning experience, particularly for our international students."

What are your 5 top strategies to find hope?

"The first is gratitude. What are the things we are grateful for? It's really important when thinking about our futures to start from that point because it sets you up with that positive mindset and frame of mind. Secondly, reflection. Taking time to reflect on things in your life that have brought different things to you. They may be good moments, tough moments, ugly moments. How can we reflect on our past to gain strength for our future?"

Third is patience, sitting with your feelings and sitting with yourself, so to speak. So if you do have challenging moments actually allow yourself to sit with that for a little bit, register how it is making you feel. Once you've done that I think it gives you the tools to move forward to the fourth strategy, which for me is connection. In week 2 of Project Hope, we ask students to think about a place that is really important to them and connect to that place.

“I think that without knowing it, we use hope.”

Lastly, for me personally, I would have to say 'ensure I'm connecting with my family', because I think it's too easy to get lost in a busy, fast-paced world, and leaning on your community (that might be your family or friends or your wider community) is really important. We live in a very individualistic society and I think that people forget that we all have teams of people around us."

Do you think Project Hope will still be relevant and needed in the future?

"Yes. It's one of those sorts of kaupapa and courses that is always going to be relevant because we are always living in times of disruption, particularly now with such complex global crises that are often entangled. If you think about climate change, for example,

it's closely connected with rates of overconsumption. Many of the big issues we see in the world today are connected, and they don't necessarily show clear signs of slowing down. Sometimes that information can be a little paralysing when you are constantly fed this doom and gloom take on the world, so Project Hope is going to be continually important as we move through potentially challenging times in the future. "

In the future do you think there will be big changes in Project Hope?

"At this point with Project Hope we are a really small team, there are only 4-5 of us, and we have been fortunate to be funded by Massey University

for the last couple of years. We are hoping that this year we can look at some different funding options so we can expand the project. Our hope is to bring more people into the conversation by having more international schools on board, and including more rural schools in NZ that might not always have the opportunity to engage with projects like this."

If you would like to know more about Project Hope, talk to your college to see if they are already involved, or feel free to email the team: kaupaprojecthope@gmail.com



Section 2

Mindset

guardianship of the sky, the sea, and the land



Sneaking in some serotonin: how to do more of what you love

WORDS BY SANTERIA
HEALEY STEVENS

What makes you feel well and content? Whether it's a thing you like to look at, getting up early, having a different breakfast every morning, or looking at the stars, it doesn't really matter! As long as you feel content and it puts you in a good mood, there need not be judgement- as long as the activity is safe for you and others.

Getting to that happy space, for me, is having a clean room, knowing that the clothes I'm wearing work well together, and having everything I need ready when I start a new project. And if I don't have everything I need available, improvising, and having it turn out great, also makes me feel good. Being in a good mood is important, especially if there is something you need to do that you don't want to do, like emptying the compost or the rubbish bin, or something like locating a dead mouse that's been stinking up the room (my most hated job). I mean, you might find those things quite fun, they are just my personal least favourites.

Once I discovered what puts me in a good mood, I began to think about putting more of that into my day to day life. Keeping my room clean, and when it got out of hand, taking the time to clean it. I rearranged my room to make it easier to keep clean.

Art: Abi Street





I prepared and made sure that I had everything I needed before beginning my next painting, so I wouldn't have to get up halfway through and get something. I double check before leaving the house, so I'm not caught off guard on the way to a violin lesson with a jumper I can't play the violin in!

“Being in a good mood is important, especially if there is something you need to do that you don't want to do, like emptying the compost or the rubbish bin,”

That way, by taking the time to clean my room, or get everything I need for a project, or check that I'll be comfortable in the clothes I'm wearing, I minimise the amount of bad moods in my day. This isn't necessarily the case for everyone, but keeping this in mind might put you on track to fix some problems in your day to day life, and might just help you to not feel so down in the dumps later on!



AI Art: Ella Mooney

All that being said, of course, all emotions are valid, and I don't want you to think that feeling down in the dumps is a bad thing. It's only bad if you don't feel happy at all.

Feeling down in the dumps can sometimes be refreshing and often help (for me at least) to solve the problems I couldn't figure out before. Sometimes if I've got in an argument with a friend or family member, and have a cry about it, or go off by myself and grumble away, it's like I will wake up and realise that I don't want to be enemies with my friends and family or that it's simply too tiring being annoyed with them. Don't be scared to be the first one to say sorry.

Keeping an Open Mind

WORDS BY LILY SANG

Misunderstandings

– Noun

‘The failure to understand something correctly.’

Misunderstandings cause a lot of arguments and can break up relationships - platonic, romantic, whānau, and every kind.

The thing is, humans are wired for negativity, seeing the worst in others before the best. This dates back to millennia ago, when primitive people had to register threats and danger. And although humans are evolving, certain habits seem to stick around longer than others. Seeing the worst in others is a trait that everyone - I hope - would want to get rid of. But it can sometimes be challenging.

When you meet a new person, do you think things like “they don’t look nice”?



If the person's wearing glasses, do you think “they look smart”?

Do you see someone with blonde hair and think, “they look dumb”?

These are called stereotypes. A stereotype is when you group together a bunch of people based on something like ethnicity, the clothes they wear, the colour of their hair, or other factors. Then they imagine everyone in that group to have a particular characteristic.

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For example, "Asian people are smart," "plus-sized people are lazy", or "gay people are flamboyant".

These are assumptions many people make, perhaps because they aren't educated enough and don't know any better, because they have made a habit of it, or in some cases, because they're just arrogant.

Have you ever looked at someone and gone, 'they look mean'? If I'm being honest, I have, and most of the time, I've been wrong. When you meet someone for the first time, it's hard not to make those assumptions, but here are three ways to help.

Recognising the thoughts: try to take more notice of your immediate thoughts when you meet someone or see someone in the street. Remind yourself that appearance doesn't affect personality. Have you ever heard of RBF (resting...female dog.. face)? I seem to have that, and it's the most annoying thing- people asking why I'm so angry/upset/sad every five minutes.

Getting to know them: if social anxiety isn't a barrier and it's okay for you to talk to them (i.e. it's someone who goes to your school/work), get to know them, say hello, and see if your assumptions were correct.

Love first. Think of the best in people first. If you're going to make a judgement, make a nice one. Don't think about the bad things they could have done; think about all the amazing things they could have done! Sometimes we overhear a conversation and automatically make assumptions about what's going on.



AI Art: Mandi Lynn

It's important not to add your two cents if you haven't heard the full story. Something to remember with conversations like these is that you don't know what's going on for people outside of school/work/wherever you know them from. And it's important to remember that some people just don't want your opinion, and that's totally okay!

In all aspects of life, keeping an open and positive mindset is really important. It's essential to take a step back and realise that most of the time, people have good intentions and are doing their best. It's nearly impossible to change habits immediately, so be patient with yourself, and allow your mind to take the time it needs to change.

SAD - tips to reduce the 'winter blues'

WORDS BY JAY ROXBURGH

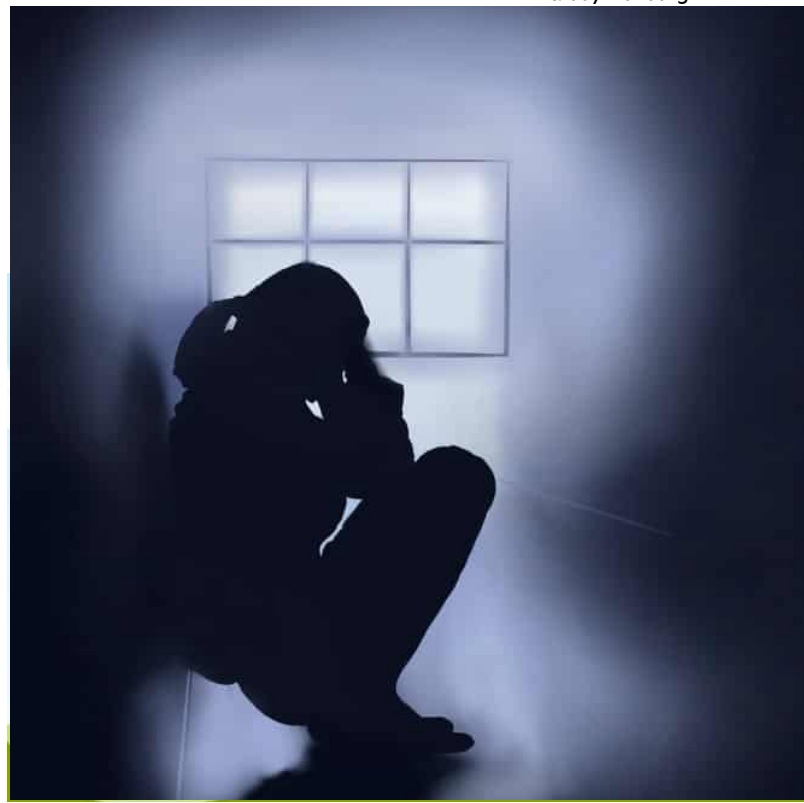
Around 5 percent of the world's population and 10 percent of New Zealanders have SAD. What is SAD? SAD, short for seasonal affective disorder, is a disorder that during certain times of the year when less sunlight is obtainable, one might feel symptoms of fatigue, depression, hopelessness, and social withdrawal. SAD has many different names, including the winter blues, seasonal depression, winter depression, etc.

Seasonal affective disorder often occurs when there is less sunlight and shorter days. It is thought that the combination of the two can trigger a chemical change in the brain. It is also believed that this disorder is connected to extra melatonin and a lack of serotonin. The two chemicals go hand in hand because melatonin, created when there is minimal light or in complete darkness, is the chemical that makes you sleep. Serotonin, created by your intestine mostly from what you're eating, helps you wake up in the morning. A shortage of melatonin can cause an absence in sleep and even insomnia, whereas a deficiency in serotonin can cause lethargy and depression.

Dark winter days mean more melatonin, leading to less serotonin, leading to SAD!

The obvious option to battle the winter blues would be to get more light. Simply putting an extra lamp in a room can sometimes be enough for some people to lessen the symptoms enough to be able to carry on normal everyday activities, but for some, it's a little more difficult to get rid of. So instead of decreasing melatonin, you can increase serotonin. You can do this via food and exercise.

Art: Jay Roxburgh



Here are nine foods to help boost serotonin:

1. Poultry, such as chicken or turkey
2. Eggs
3. Salmon and fish
4. Soy and tofu
5. Dairy products such as milk and cheese
6. Nuts and seeds
7. Pineapple
8. Dark greens and leafy vegetables
9. Sauerkraut and other natural probiotics

And as for exercise - anything physical expands the firing rates for serotonin neurons, but particularly running, biking, swimming, or even just walking, for an average of 30 minutes, should upgrade your serotonin production in your body immensely. Weight lifting and Pilates can also increase your serotonin levels but to a lesser degree. Technically, light also improves your brain's release of serotonin so if you're doing any form of exercise, it's always great to do it outside if you can.

The winter and autumn months are usually the darkest, so if seasonal affective disorder is sometimes a struggle for you, then remember three things. Food: try experimenting with the 9 foods mentioned to help with serotonin and find a way to incorporate them into your daily diet. Exercise: for thirty minutes, find ways to push yourself when being physical. You might just be surprised by the outcome. The third and final point is LIGHT! For me, light always worked wonders, but people often asked why our house is so bright; in winter, it's lit up like a Christmas tree!



However, even with all these tips and tricks, the colder and darker months can still be harsh, so try to keep a positive mindset and remember there is light at the end of the tunnel, pun intended!

Spring will come.

Overthinking and Overcoming it.

WORDS BY LILY SANG

A few years back, I struggled with anxiety, overthinking, and stress. This led me to the discovery of 2 incredible books written by Gwendoline Smith: the Book of Knowing and the Book of Overthinking. These books have been a lifesaver, teaching me everything I need to know about more than overthinking. Since buying them, I've read them whenever things become too much.

There are two types of overthinking; positive and negative. For example:

Positive: Ahh, I'm so excited about my wedding! It's only a week away, the venue's perfect and it will be the best day of my life.

Negative: My wedding is only a week away; what will we do if it rains? What if, what if, what if?

The book focuses on negative worry and how to help it. The book starts with the phrase "It's all connected", meaning your mind, body, mood, and behaviour are all encased in the environment. For example, say you sprain your ankle (body). You keep thinking about how you're going to miss your running competition which makes you feel bad (mood & mind), and you're probably going to have to rest in bed so that it can get better (behaviour & environment).

This explains the basis of conjunctive behavioural therapy (a type of therapy used for a range of mental illnesses that teaches you coping skills for dealing with different problems).

The next part of the book talks about reality: "You cannot change reality; it just is. You're the one who has to adapt. Look at cockroaches. They have been around for 320 million years - they watched the dinosaurs come and go."

“You cannot change reality; it just is. You're the one who has to adapt.”

A big part of stress/overthinking/worry is something Gwendoline Smith calls a thought virus. A thought virus clouds you from seeing the reality of the situation. Some of the most common ones are:

Negative mental filter: The opposite of seeing the world through rose-tinted glasses. Instead, you focus on the negative things in life, and the world looks dark and unforgiving.

Over-generalising: This occurs when you look at one negative event as an indicator that only bad things will come. For example, you fail your test, which means you will undoubtedly fail all your other tests, so why bother?

Fortune telling: When you believe you can see the future. "I'll never get a girlfriend", or "If I wear my hoodie, everyone will judge me."

Mind reading: When you believe you know what other people are thinking. (very common for people with social anxiety) I.e. "They hate me", "They think I'm ugly",

Personalisation: Blaming yourself for something you are not responsible for. E.g. your mum needs a stool, you get one, then she stands on it, the stool snaps, and she hurts her ankle. You think, "If I hadn't given her the stool, she wouldn't have hurt her ankle. It's all my fault".

Now that we have that covered, it's as simple as ABC.

A = Actual. What happened?

B = Beliefs. How you perceive what happened.

C = Consequences. Your emotions, how you were left feeling.

D = where you write down what thought viruses were clouding your thoughts at the time.

Next time you feel stressed or anxious, try drawing up a table and filling in the four slots (You can do this in your head if that's what works for you). Now most people in column A would put, "I went to the movie with Bob today. They fell asleep and didn't watch any of the movies. I was really annoyed because they didn't care that it was my favourite movie". That's great, you can write that first and let it all out, but that won't help unpack the situation.

For example:

| A | B | C | D |
|---|---|---|---|
| I went to the movies with Bob; they fell asleep | They didn't watch any of the movies, so they don't care about how I feel. | Annoyed Frustrated Offended Angry Fast heartbeat Heavy breathing | Negative mental filter Mind reading Personalisation |

By doing this, you can see the reality of the situation whilst still expressing your feelings.

Another method they use for de-catastrophizing is 'the terribleness scale':



When something terrible happens, place it on the terribleness scale. Say you scrape your dad's new car; rate that; it's a pretty bad scrape - maybe an 80? Now imagine you get a call saying your family was in a crash, and no one was severely injured, but everyone in the ED. Now rate that. Probably 90-ish, right? Now that scratch doesn't look so bad.

Next, they talk about worrisome overthinking and how to deal with these thoughts. Worrisome thoughts are fears that 96% of the time, we can't control or do anything about; 40% of things we worry about never happen; 30% have already happened, and we can't do anything about them;

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12% are needless worries about health; 10% are very tiny issues; 8% are real worries. Half of them, we can do something about; the other half, we can't.

A way to help with worrisome overthinking is to rationalise your thoughts. For example, instead of "I can't go to the party. I don't have an expensive dress and everyone will laugh at me and think I'm ugly", try rephrasing your sentence; "I hope the party is a non-judgemental space, if people are mean I won't stay, but I won't leave just because I believe people are thinking mean things about me. I will remember that most of the time, people are thinking about themselves."



AI Art: Ella Mooney



At the end of the book is a set of flashcards to retrain the brain. You can either set a timer and repeat your chosen ones to yourself three times a day (this is the better option for faster results) or bring them out when you can feel yourself overthinking or worrying.

How is this thinking helping me?

Feelings are not facts.

Worrying does nothing except cause distress

How bad is this?

I am not responsible for the thoughts and actions of other people.

If you want to read the books, they are called '[The Book of Knowing](#)' and '[The Book of Overthinking](#)' by Gwendoline Smith. Smith has also written 'The Book of Feeling Blue' and 'The Book of Angst'.

Outward Bound

WORDS BY MADDISON LYNCH

Disconnect to reconnect: Supposedly, that's what Outward Bound was going to help me achieve. I remember hearing the phrase in the introduction video a month or so before I left, and to be perfectly honest; I was sceptical. How much would I be able to grow in just 21 days? Over the course, I realised the answer was 'a lot'. I came home a stronger person, physically, but I would say even more mentally. Outward Bound moulded me into the person I have always wanted to become while having the time of my life.

Outward Bound is a non-profit organisation with over 37 schools worldwide; it is recognised as one of the most challenging experiences. Over 80 years ago, Kurt Hahn established the first OB school in Scotland. There were only two students! Eventually, OB was relocated to Wales, and it was then that it recognised the need for stronger resilience in young men in WW2. They found that too many young men were dying compared to the older men who had more experience and more resilience when it came to war; the answer to the problem was to teach young British soldiers how to survive through a program called Outward Bound. Early on, Hahn developed a curriculum that supported the ideology that character development was just as important as academic achievement.

- it was named 'Outward Bound', a nautical term referring to a ship leaving the safety of the harbour and going to the wide open seas. At great speed, Outward Bound expanded to international levels and, in 1962, reached Anakiwa, New Zealand.

I was incredibly fortunate to receive a scholarship for Outward Bound's 21-day Mind-Body-Soul course from the 4th of May until the 24th of May, and I would like to share a little bit about my experience and learnings.

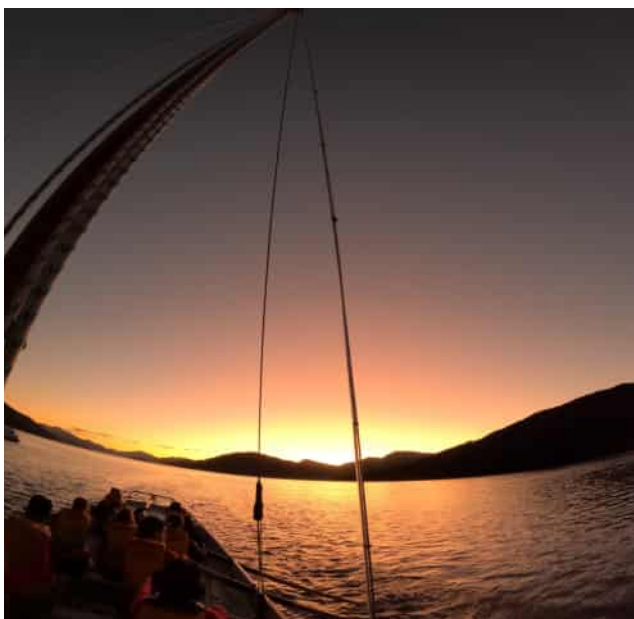
Leading up to the course, I was understandably incredibly nervous, and much self-doubt hung over my head. I was handing in my phone for three weeks, removing all connections to the outside world and undertaking an incredibly physically demanding course. I was convinced I had signed up for something more than I could handle.

Mt. Riley (1,311m): Maddison Lynch



Upon arrival, my anxiety ceased almost entirely; at OB, they made me feel safe, comfortable and capable instantly, and I could tell my watch mates were pretty special people right from the start. At OB, you live in a watch-house with 13 other people who make up your watch. My watch was Kupe 701, and we were undoubtedly the best watch on our course; these people felt like my family, and I think for the three weeks they truly were. We had so many laughs together, supported each other when the going got tough, accomplished great things as a team, and cried when it all came to an inevitable end.

Scheme after scheme, I tried many new activities. Many of these I found challenging, but each was just as rewarding as the last. I did high ropes, rock climbing, built a raft, Waka Ama, Pukenga Ngahere (Practise Hike), a three-day hike, and a three-day Sailing Trip. Every day/every scheme, I learnt something new, and I think my findings may be just as valuable to others as they are to me.



Making way during sunset: Maddison Lynch



Beginning the descent from 727m: Maddison Lynch

Day of Arrival: Treasure the little moments, and hold them to yourself as high in value as larger things.

Day 2: Don't head straight into action; communicate with others and make a plan first.

Scheme 1/Waka Ama: Live in the moment, don't fester on things in the future.

Day 5: It may be scary at times, but you are always capable.

Scheme 2/Pukenga Ngahere: You can be cold, wet and miserable, or you can just be cold and wet. It's your choice.

Day 6: Take the time to reflect and rest.

Scheme 3/Sailing: Things won't always go to plan, adapt and overcome.

Scheme 4/Mahi Aroha: Serve others before yourself.

Scheme 5/Solo: Stimulation is unnecessary; you can find yourself best when in your own head.



Scheme 6/ Rock Climbing: Give it a go!

Scheme 7/3 day Hike: The most challenging mountains to climb have the prettiest views.

Day 19: Laugh it out.

Day 20/Half Marathon: Even the most seemingly impossible tasks can be accomplished, all with a smile on your face.

Day 21: Leaving is hard, mourning is inevitable, but remember, most importantly, to reflect heavily on your accomplishments.

“You can be cold, wet and miserable, or you can just be cold and wet. It’s your choice.”

In broader terms, I learnt that it’s ok to lean on others, to express your frustration (in a healthy manner) and let it all out, and that struggling is fine, and failure is the path to success.

The most important skills I learnt, however, aren’t transferable, and it came down to my inner peace and my connection to others and the natural world.



Although hardly explainable, I felt it grew and resonated deeper inside me.

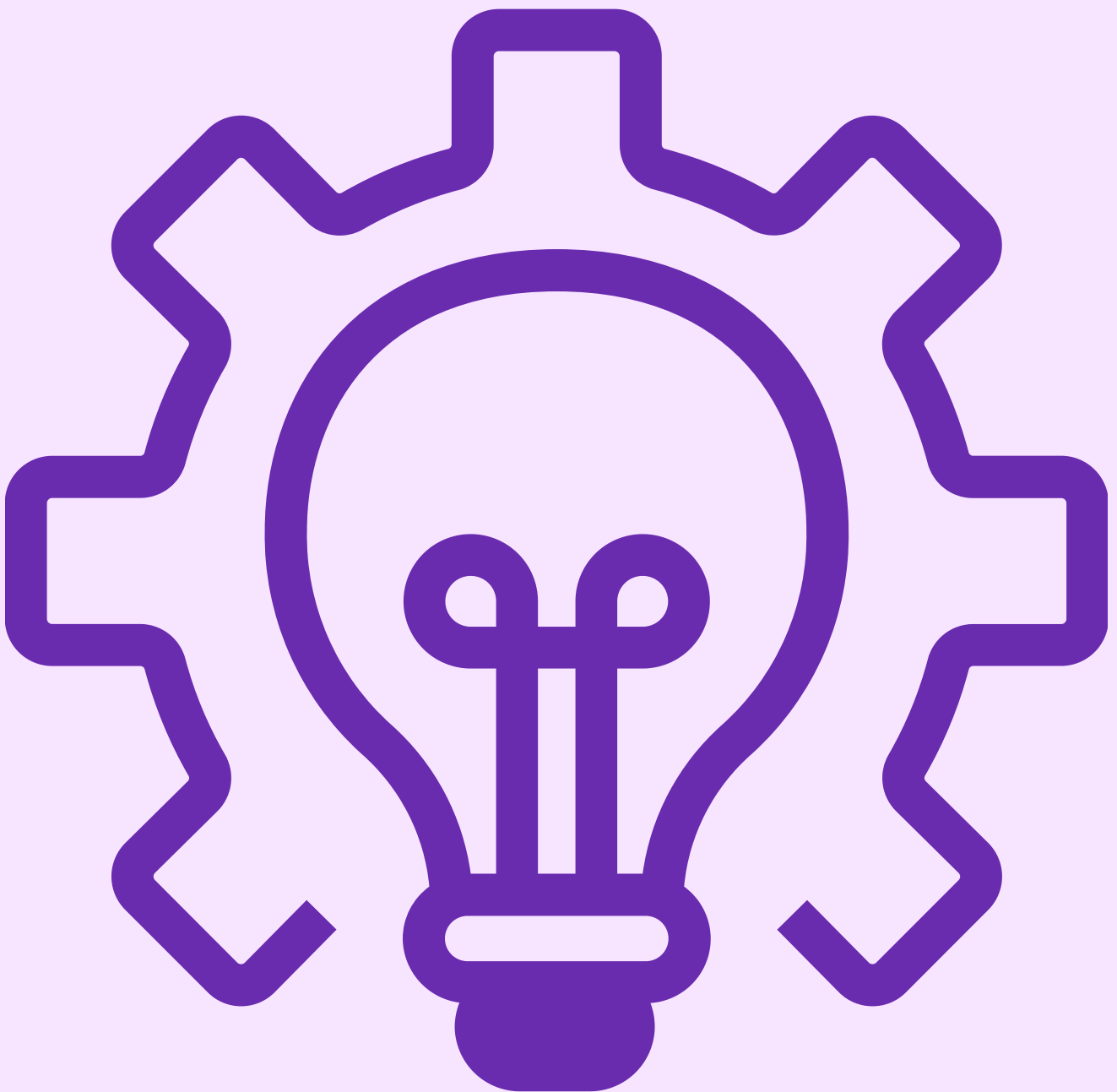
I am beyond grateful for the opportunity I was given, and it is one I often look back upon fondly. I would like to thank my sponsors for allowing me to go, my instructors for giving us the space to try new things and flourish, my watch mates for making it a blast, and anyone else who helped me along the way.

Outward Bound was incredible, and if you are reading this with even the slightest bit of desire to go: do it; you won’t regret it!

Section 3

Ideation

noticing or perceiving



Let's Talk Consent

Maddison interviews Laura and Jasmine about their organisation - Let's Talk Consent.

Written by Leisha Hogdson

"Let's Talk Consent is a digital hub for our young people in Aotearoa that empowers them with the tools and resources to engage and help promote a consent-focused culture - from their interpersonal interactions, experiences out in the world, engaging with media and all sorts."

They are also developing workshops and accreditation programmes for businesses to help improve consent culture in workplaces. The co-founders all had slightly different motivations when it came to creating the organisation, but they all had one clear goal.

"The core passion that we all have together is making a difference in improving consent culture in Aotearoa, particularly for our youth."

All founders have had various experiences across areas relevant to consent culture - in youth volunteering roles, media production, communications, politics, business, health promotion and more. Despite their diverse backgrounds, all of them share a core passion to do something about it.

Genna, the third and initial co-founder of Let's Talk Consent, started a campaign last year for consent



education reform, which got over 300 submissions from youth about their experience with consent education and sexual harm in schools.

"We have a digital resource coming out hopefully in July which is a Survivor's Guide to Healing from Sexual Harm, that's in collaboration with Brave NZ, so it's a resource that presents knowledge about supporting recovery from sexual violence in a non-traumatising way." It's also for friends and family to read about how they can do their part to support someone who has experienced sexual violence.

As well as the Survivor's Guide, they will also be supporting the consent education reform with the submissions that Genna received last year, which will support the release of Liv McClymont's documentary about consent in September.

The team feel it's important to be inclusive in their organisation because even though sexual violence does disproportionately affect women in New Zealand, they are also working to fill a gap to make it more engaging to people who identify as male or non-binary. And, of course, the indigenous and disabled community, because sexual violence can affect anybody.

"We've got the two streams of business, we've got the youth side, and we've got our more corporate organisational side. For our youth side, it's really important to us that we are open and engaging with everyone because when you are trying to make a cultural change, it does involve everyone."

"Targeting survivors, but also the general population, is super important because what we are aiming to do with consent education is inform people about consent so that if they are in situations, they have the knowledge and tools that empower them to challenge situations and behaviours that are conducive to sexual harm - which reaches beyond the basics of what consent is and isn't."

Jasmine tells us about their four-step process for their business model and future goals: raising awareness, creating an attitude change that results in a behaviour change and then, eventually, systematic change. They want to help people identify examples of consent in practice to aid in developing a broader consent culture for Aotearoa's society that can be supported and reflected by our laws and institutional policies. "So far, we have found the support to be awesome; there are so many people out there who have been willing to support us and share their knowledge and skills with us to help make a difference for this issue in New Zealand."



"Obviously, it's not like that all the time, and we recognise that in the position that we are in at the moment, we have been quite privileged to have not faced any of those issues. Being young female entrepreneurs, it's definitely something that we are aware of, and moving forward, we know that we will encounter people who will not be on board with us, but we know that we have a strong following that will support us and carry us through."

They find that people's biggest issue with them is not their gender, but their age. People feel that since they are young they do not have enough experience or qualifications.

"If you've got, passion, you've got the plan and you've got the support, then people can't tell you that you're not in the position to make a difference."

"moving forward, we will encounter people who will not be on board with us, but we know that we have a strong following that will support us and carry us through."

As well as potentially facing issues in wider society, it can also be a struggle to maintain an ideal work/life balance.

"Juggling our personal schedules, our full-time degrees, some of us have full-time work, part-time work, socialising and life and all those balances it can be quite difficult, especially because Laura and I are graduating at the end of this semester."



Also, setting up the business is a struggle in itself!

"To implement all our ideas and make a change, we have to complete a lot of business foundation and administration, so I think that's probably been our biggest challenge." The girls quickly affirm that while starting a business takes hard work, it has been gratifying and worthwhile.

Here are four pieces of advice about starting a business/organisation from Laura and Jasmine:

- 1.Utilise the networks around you - Don't be afraid to talk to people! We found that many people were willing to help us, so even though it can be a little scary, make sure to utilise the networks around you.
- 2.Reach out & put your best foot forward - The worst thing anyone will say is no, and rejection is just redirection!
- 3.Find your community - Find people in similar spaces whom you can lean on, especially in this type of work, where it can get quite heavy or sensitive. Find people that can support you, and you can have fun with.
- 4.Prioritise your wellbeing - Don't sacrifice your wellbeing for the sake of wanting to work towards a bigger cause. Achieving social change can be a long journey, and you want the mahi to be sustainable - it's about not sacrificing yourself along the way.

Make sure to follow Let's Talk Consent on social media to keep an eye out for updates!

HOW I LEARNED A SECOND LANGUAGE

WORDS BY CASSIE TAULELEI

Melbourne, 2020 – mid lockdown – I decided that I was going to learn Swedish.

I had absolutely no idea how one should begin learning a language on their own, but I was determined; very little was going to stop me. For lack of a better term, I fumbled around in the dark with my learning for the first few months of my endeavour.

“Bilingual people are also more creative, perceptive, and able to concentrate for longer. It is also delightful to be able to insult people without them knowing.”

I tried nearly every platform on the internet, every method sold to me on advertisements, all with the promise that they would be the ones to make me fluent in a suspiciously short period of time. Safe to say, not a single one of those promises ever amounted to anything.

I formulated my own method of education that led to more progress in the space of three months than those programs had given in the previous six.

Now, three years later, I can understand Swedish TV, radio, and texts with little trouble. I am able to hold a conversation, and if I was dropped in the country, I am confident in myself that I would be able to survive

It was not easy for me to learn – mainly because I had little idea of what I was doing – but I did.

Learning a second language has immensely benefited my experience, and that is not just coming from me. Studies have shown that learning a second language improves memory, brain function, speech, and sensory perception. It improves your ability to keep lists, sequences and names. Bilingual people are also more creative, perceptive, and able to concentrate for longer. It is also delightful to be able to insult people without them knowing.

So I have you convinced. You've decided you want to become bilingual. 'Where do I start?' you ask. The first step is to choose a language.



Art: Cassie Taulelei

If you have a familial or cultural tongue, I would recommend that, but if not, here are the easiest languages for English speakers according to the U.S Foreign Service Institute:

- Afrikaans
- Danish
- Dutch
- French
- Italian
- Norwegian
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Spanish
- Swedish

Out of that list, the easiest of them are probably Dutch, Norwegian, and Swedish. I would not recommend Danish for those who have difficulty pronouncing things. Rødgrød med fløde, anyone?

After that, hop on Duolingo. Yes, I know what you're thinking, but there is a reason Duolingo is so popular – apart from the company's social media presence which genuinely is glorious.

It is a great way to get a basic introduction to the language and allows you to jump off to other study methods very easily. If Duolingo doesn't offer your target language, there are a couple of other options. If you are learning a familial or cultural language, ask speakers you are close with to help you learn. Sometimes community and cultural centres can help you learn; I advise you to seek them out. If you aren't learning a familial language, you will have to find other online resources to act in place of Duolingo. Babbel, Memrise, and Pod101 courses are all great places to look.

“If you are learning a familial or cultural language, ask speakers you are close with to help you learn. Sometimes community and cultural centres can help you learn; I advise you to seek them out”

You could also choose to learn from the FSI courses – the way American diplomats learn – if you are really hardcore, but I wouldn't recommend it.

IDEATION

You will be, to a certain degree, fluent.

To a certain degree, bilingual. Where you go after this point is up to you; maybe you will have now reached your goal, and no more work needs to be done. Maybe you will continue studying. Maybe you will move on to learn your next language.

My only advice would be, don't lose it. Speak your language, write in it, read things, watch things, and listen to things in it. Keep your newfound ability alive despite the tribulations of those around you.

Go forth, make your choice, and learn.

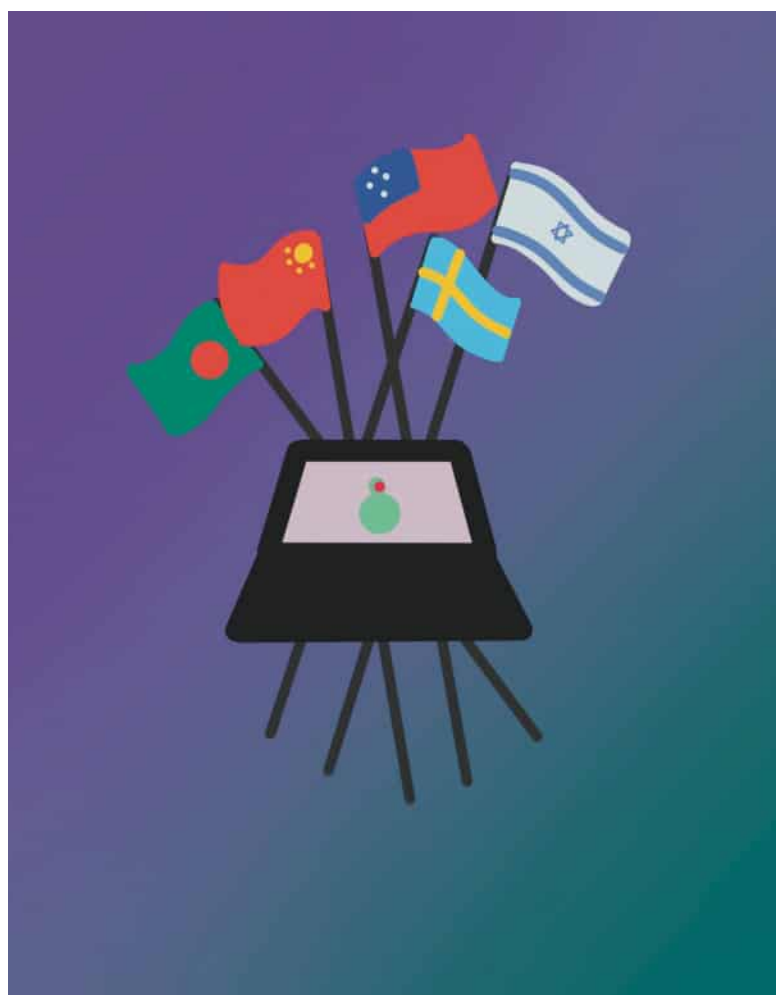


Art: Cassie Taulelei

Once you have a basic understanding, it comes to the tricky part. You need to acquire as much vocabulary as possible. So watch, listen, read, and consume all media you can find in your target language. Switch your phone and computer to your target language, and watch your favourite TV shows with subtitles or dubbing. Force yourself to learn the language. It won't be easy, and you will feel like quitting often, but eventually, you will make it. You will listen to the radio in your target language, and you will understand every word. Then the feeling of accomplishment will be immense.

There isn't really a distinct end to this phase that I could determine. You will always be learning new words, new terms and new ways of describing something you hadn't heard before. But once you reach the point where you can begin learning these new things in your target language, then you have achieved something great.

Art: Cassie Taulelei



DOGS AND THEIR IMPACT ON OUR WORLD

WORDS BY LEISHA HODGSON

Dogs are a blessing to our world. They have stood by humans' side for over 20,000 years. Before any livestock, farming, and civilisation in general, they were the first animals we have ever domesticated.

The actual history of dogs is vague; some believe they were domesticated around 10,000 years ago, and others 30,000. Location too; some think dogs were first introduced and domesticated in the middle east, but the most reliable source is that they were domesticated first in Siberia, around 20,000 years ago. Overall, dogs' evolution is truly a mystery to us, but what we do know is whether your dog is a husky or a corgi, all dogs are related to wolves.

Through breeding, humans have worked to create dog breeds that are perfect for specific jobs that we could not do, whether it's for the dog's impeccable sense of smell or for the warm coat that allows them to work in freezing climates. Dogs are well known for their incredible sense of smell, which proves helpful for many jobs that dogs do today. One job that a dog's nose is super for is sniffing out truffles. A truffle is a fungus with a vibrant taste and is super valuable. To find these, people go out hunting to locate them and dig them up, but the way to locate them is to sniff them out, and clearly, humans can't do this themselves. We use dogs to sniff them out as only their sense of smell can track these fungi. Some people also use pigs to sniff truffles out, but pigs tend

Ash and Teddy sorting the bulls in the yard: Sophie Hansen





Photo: Mandi Lynn

to eat them when they find them, which is not very helpful!

Everyone knows a dog's favourite game is catch/fetch with a ball, so in Brazil, they decided to use stray dogs off the streets to retrieve the balls in tennis games! They aimed to get spectators to fall for the dogs and adopt them, which they did! Although the dogs were adorable, they weren't the most obedient at this job, so they decided only to have the dogs retrieve the balls in the warm-ups.

“Everyone knows a dog's favourite game is catch/fetch with a ball, so in Brazil, they decided to use stray dogs off the streets to retrieve the balls in tennis games!”

Another incredible job a dog can do is detect cancer by smell. Dogs have around 300 MILLION smell receptors, while humans only have 6 million. A dog named Daisy got trained to smell cancer in people and correctly identified 550 people with cancer. Daisy saved all those lives, including her owner's, who claimed that her dog (Daisy) had been acting strange and pawing at her chest, so she got it checked out, and it turned out she had breast cancer.



Photo: Maddison Lynch

Huskies for sledging, border collies as herding dogs and many more jobs, but there are some super unique jobs that only a dog can do that you probably haven't heard of. Believe it or not, a dog is the mayor of Idyllwild, California, and he isn't even the first dog to be mayor there. The first-ever mayor of Idyllwild, Mayor Max I, was elected due to a fundraiser for an animal rescue charity. He died quite soon after he was elected in his sleep after some health issues. He had no puppies, but they found a relative of his, who was then elected as the next mayor at 11 months old: Maximus Mighty-Dog Muelle. The locals loved him; he even had two deputies, his cousins Mitzy and Mikey. He very sadly died in 2022 at nine years old due to surgery. Now, puppy Mayor Max III is the mayor of Idyllwild, alongside Vice Mayor Meadow (his sister) and still Deputy Mitzy and Mikey.

The name man's best friend was not given lightly, as dogs aren't only our faithful pets but our truffle sniffers, our ball boys/girls, our cancer detectors and even our mayors. Even if our furry friends don't do incredible jobs, they are still our best friends, therapists, exercise buddies, babies/siblings, and so much more. Dogs are indeed a blessing to us.

TECHNIQUES IN BAKING:

WORDS BY AUDREY GOH

In baking there are so many different techniques and concepts. These are the most common terms that are important and useful to know.

Practice Mise en place

Mise en place means, "everything in place." This is the first concept that is learned but is super important. For easy and relaxed baking, always read your recipe and gather your ingredients before you begin. This includes measuring out the different ingredients. If the recipe has different components, I like to place all measured ingredients and tools together in order of my components. Practicing Mise en place ensures you have everything to complete the dish and also you won't rush last-minute to find an ingredient.

Avoid distractions.

This is simple but overlooked. Personally, I like listening to music while I bake and cook, and that to me is fine, but it is important to keep an eye on all components even if they are just sitting there. The last thing you want is spilling different ingredients, overmixing your batter or burning your food.

Folding ingredients or components. This is also another common term and technique. Folding ensures that you don't lose any air bubbles that you worked so hard to create. To fold, go straight down the middle of the batter and along the bottom of that side of the bowl. Then go back up to the side of the bowl. Lift the batter up from the side of the bowl and move the batter over itself back to the middle. Do this motion while turning the bowl. The goal of folding is to combine components and ingredients without deflating the mixture.

Your method of measuring ingredients.

The most consistent and accurate way of baking is to weigh your ingredients. I highly recommend doing this step instead of using cups unless the recipe specifically says to do so. This is because all cups are different and this could lead to inaccuracies. If you don't weigh your ingredients, I recommend using the "dip and sweep" method. "Dip" the cup into whatever dry ingredient you are using to fill it up. Then get something flat like the blunt side of the knife to "sweep" away the excess.

Strawberry -Filled Macarons

AUDREY GOH

French Macarons are delicate and sweet desserts that exude time, patience and confidence.

This is the perfect recipe for a beginner that wants to try making macarons. Even if they don't come out right, don't be discouraged and continue trying, (and they still taste good!)

If your macarons don't come out right, check out my other article, "Troubleshooting Macarons"

This recipe was further developed from DocMacaron>Macaron Filled with Vanilla Bean Whipped Ganache.

BUTTERCREAM RECIPE :

- ¼ cup salted butter, the salted butter brings out the natural flavors of the other components.
- 2/4 cup + 2 tbsp icing sugar
- 1 tsp milk
- ½ tsp vanilla



Macaron Photography: Audrey Goh

MACARON SHELL RECIPE :

- 100 g egg whites
- 90 g granulated sugar
- 2 g powdered cream of tartar
- 130 g powdered sugar
- 130 g almond flour

MACARON SHELL INSTRUCTIONS:

Using our understanding of Mise-en-place from before,

1. Wipe with vinegar the silicon mats, bowls and baking trays. Print templates if using.
2. Weight all the ingredients in separate bowls
3. The egg whites can be directly taken from the fridge and do not require aging.

Note: I think that aging is just an extra step that isn't quite necessary. The idea behind aging the egg whites is to pull out any extra water from them. Although it is important to not add any unnecessary liquid to our macaron components, leaving the egg whites as it is, is ok. As the water content in egg whites is around 90%, we can't take all of it out.

Dry ingredients:

1. Add the cream of tartar to the bowl containing the granulated sugar and mix well.
2. If the almond flour is not super fine, I recommend doing 2-3 pulses in a food processor. Only do this for short amounts of time. This is because the heat from the machine can cause the flour to go all weird and clumpy again.
3. Sift the almond flour and powdered sugar into a large bowl. This is the bowl you are going to start making your macaron batter so make sure you like this bowl. Do this two times, this ensures a really smooth macaron shell.

Keep all the containers or bowls covered with lids or cling film. This is another good habit to practice, especially when you whip egg whites. This ensures that no ingredient has been contaminated.

French Meringue:

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a whisk, whip egg whites on medium speed until foamy/frothy. You can also use a hand mixer or a normal whisk, but I do not recommend a normal whisk where you whip it by hand. This is because the meringue is what gets your macaron stable and beautiful inside.

2. Gradually add the granulated sugar/ cream of tartar mixture, continue whipping on medium speed until glossy stiff peaks start forming.



Art: Lindsey Song

Macaronage:

1. Add half of the meringue to the flour/sugar mixture & add your gel food colouring. - using liquid-colouring adds too much extra liquid to the batter. Macarons with liquid food colouring turn out fine, just use small amounts.
2. Fold gently with a spatula till the dry ingredients are incorporated. You can also press lightly on the mix to make sure all ingredients are incorporated.
3. Add the remaining meringue mixture & fold gently until the batter becomes glossy & falls off the spatula in ribbons.
4. After 20 or so folds, gently press the spatula on top of the batter while you turn the bowl. This should result in some batter on the sides of the bowl, do this twice & continue the normal folding.

his process takes some air out from the meringue - if this step is skipped, it will result in cracked macarons. The finished batter should fall off the spatula in figure 8 motions and dissolve slowly into the batter while leaving a line in the batter.

Piping:

1. **Fit** a round tip (e.g Wilton 12) in a pastry bag, place the bag inside a tall measuring cup or a deli container, wrap the bag in the edges of the cup to keep it open. If you do not have a round tip, you can cut the end of the bag. This will result in oval macarons.
2. Pour the macaron batter into the pastry bag, remove from the cup. I recommend having a bench scraper to scrap all the batter down to the end of the bag. Make sure that the end of the bag is cut.
3. Pipe circles onto the tray with a silicone mat or pre-printed template under a piece of parchment. To prevent any paper components moving around, pipe a small amount of the macaron batter onto the corners of the baking sheet and put the parchment on top.
4. Once piped, bang the tray onto the counter for 3 times, this helps release any air bubbles that are on the surface. You can also use a toothpick to help release those air bubbles.

Note: If you do not use a piping tip to do these macarons, you have the chance of having lopsided macarons. The fix to this is to make sure they are piping straight down onto the parchment paper while holding the bag perfectly vertically downwards.

Resting and baking:

1. Let the piped macarons rest on the kitchen counter until a skin is developed, you will be able to gently touch them without batter sticking to your fingers.
2. Once the skin is formed, place inside the oven on the lowest rack or second to lowest rack, bake at 150-160 degrees celsius (this will depend on your location and other factors like humidity) for 15-18 min. **If you have one, use an oven thermometer to make sure the oven is not too hot. If the macarons do not peel away cleaning from the baking paper after baking time has finished, continue baking for one more minute or so.**
3. Let the macarons cool before removing from the baking surface. If your macarons are not properly baked after 20 minutes, just let your macarons cool completely before peeling away.

Filling:

1. Whip the softened butter until it is light, pale and fluffy. Slowly add in your icing sugar and vanilla extract. Not adding in all your icing sugar at once just ensures that no icing sugar flies out.
2. Once all is combined, add a little milk at a time. You want this to be a pipable consistency. The milk just loosens the buttercream up slightly but you still want it to be thick.
3. Add the buttercream to a piping bag and pipe along the rim of the macarons. This should result in a hole in the middle of your cream. Stuff fresh strawberries into this center and sandwich it using another similar size/shape macaron shell.

TROUBLESHOOTING MACARONS:

WORDS BY AUDREY GOH

Many things can go wrong with macarons. These are the most common mistakes, but there are plenty more. These are based on my research on what went wrong with my batches of macarons. - most of my answers and research came from [Indulge with Mimi>Macaron Troubleshooting Guide](#) - Remember, it is ok if these macarons don't go your way, continue trying and push through! Happy Baking!

Macaron Feet Develops Quickly and Outwards Past Its Shape

- The baking temperature was too high. Although if you bring it too low, your shells can't develop its feet. Your oven temperature should be around 150-160 degrees Celsius. **FIX:** Turn down oven temperature, and increase bake time.

- Flat Pancake like Shells from Over-mixed Batter. Make sure to follow the steps and look out for the signs of a figure 8 batter when swirling it. **FIX:** learn when to stop folding during macaronage

Macarons Did Not Develop Feet:

- Macaron shells are too "wet" due to humidity, or the ingredients have too much moisture. You typically know this if your macaron shells don't get that matte finish when they are sitting on the kitchen counter.

FIX: Turn on the dehumidifier, avoid liquid colouring and use gel colouring instead.

- A skin did not develop before the shells were put into the oven

FIX: wait at least 30 minutes AND until a "skin" has developed before placing macarons in the oven. It should have a dull matte finish.

- Baking Temperature Too Low

FIX: Increase temperature to allow the shell to develop properly.



The top of the Macaron Shells are Browning

Note: this was a super common occurrence when I started baking.

- Baking Temperature is Too High. This also can be paired with the macaron feet developing past its shape. If these two occur in your macaron, your main solution is to lower its baking temperature.

FIX: Decrease temperature and increase bake time.

- Too Close to Heat Source (assuming the heat source is from the top)

FIX: Move further away from the heat source while baking. Place an empty tray on the rack above it to shield it from the heat. This is super important. If it's too close to the heat source, it will brown faster while the inside is still undercooked.



Macaron Shell has Cracked

- This could be from not firmly tapping the tray against the counter after piping. **FIX:** tap/bang the tray firmly against the counter after piping.

- Hot spots in the oven

FIX: make sure you get good circulation in your oven by only baking one tray at a time. I also find that using the fan-bake setting is the best for macarons.

- Meringue needed to be stiffened more **FIX:** Make sure you beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form.

- The last reason is that you did not press out enough air bubbles while folding the batter stage.

FIX: Ensure you press out the air bubbles on the sides at least four times. It should result in a flow like lava, and do the "Figure 8" test to test consistency.



STARTING A BLOG – TIPS AND TRICKS

WORDS BY ISLA GALBRAITH.

Passionate about a certain topic and ready to share it with the world? Everyone's voice deserves to be heard- and a great way you can share your voice is through blogging. Blogging isn't only for the beauty gurus and crafty people; blogging can be for anyone, is super simple to do, and has many benefits.

My blogging journey began when I decided that I wanted to share my thoughts, passions and creativity with other like-minded people. My mother had prior blogging experience, but you don't need anything other than parental permission to start a blog.

Setting up a blog is simple. (Though you will need to be over the age of 13 to create a blog of your own.) Blogger is a website that is easy to use and beginner friendly. You can log in with your Google account, or you may want to create a new Google account/email address for your blog. After signing in, create a blog.

The website will ask you to give your blog a name (which will be displayed at the top of your blog page), and a blog address (URL). You can change colours, fonts and backgrounds, but more importantly, you can start posting.

“Remember, anything you say on the internet will stay there forever, even if you delete it.”

Before you start, there are precautions you should take to ensure your safety on the internet. The most important thing to remember is to keep personal information private from the internet. Don't share your address, phone number, your school or where you work. You can write with a pen name if you'd prefer (a pen name is a fake name that some writers choose to use instead of their real name.)



Photo/Lindsey Song

Under 'Settings', there is a section called 'Comments', and you will need to select 'Comment Moderation'- Click 'Always'. Comment moderation means that you will need to approve all comments before they can be seen on your blog. If you get comments that are making you feel unsafe, hurt, or uncomfortable, tell an adult you trust. There is another way to ensure your safety: under 'Comments', click on 'Who can comment?'. By selecting 'Users with Google accounts,' people cannot comment anonymously, and therefore it is easier to report someone if they are cyberbullying you.

Don't talk in a way you wouldn't in front of a boss or a teacher. Always be cautious and think about what you are saying. Never say anything that could make someone feel hurt/unsafe.

Blogging can benefit your mental health, through improved writing skills, and connecting with other like-minded people. You can share your talents and passions, educate others about areas you are knowledgeable in, and review books, movies or TV. It is a great hobby, and responding with 'I'm a blogger!' feels fantastic when people ask what you like to do.

“For me, blogging means expressing my creativity and love for writing.”

Blogging is super fun and rewarding, but sometimes you run out of ideas. Try collaborating with others, asking your readers to comment on what they want you to write a post about, or you can always google some ideas. Don't feel pressured to stick to just one topic; write about whatever interests you, whether that's cooking, books, travel or anything else. However, blogging may not be right for you, and there are many other ways you can share your voice- vlogging, podcasts, art, music or poetry for example.

I hope you enjoy your blogging journey. Feel free to check out my blog here:

<https://islawritesthisblog.blogspot.com>



Ask Mandi

Send your questions to: mandi@createhappy.org

Dear Mandi,

Sometimes I come up with cool ideas, but my mental health and anxiety kill it before I can really get going. How do I fix this?

Oh, darlin I feel you. My mind often felt like it was not a safe or healthy place to be when I was your age. It was sometimes a war zone,

It lasted into my late 30's until I finally had enough and went on a deep dive to heal my pains and evolve my mind into one that I enjoy and delight in inhabiting. I didn't have the funds for professional support at the time and had to learn to do it on my own. The cool thing was that once I did that creatively I took off. I won awards for my art, I was given a role as a director in a documentary, I even started a charitable trust that is the one that supports the team that makes this magazine. By working on my mindset and resourcing myself with wellbeing skills, it was like I was able to cut ties to weights that had been holding me down.

Was it my fault my mind was such a challenging place when I was younger? Nope. It was an odd mix of undealt with family stuff, my personal mind wiring, and systemic cultural issues creating a perfect storm in my head.



Imagine that when you are born your mind is a wild jungle. Full of branches and connections, so full that there were few easy to see pathways. But as you grew and experienced life in your family and culture, roads started to be formed through the jungle.

Some become superhighways. Some are dirt roads. The superhighways, if they lead to anxiety and negativeville, can cause lots of pain in your life. But the good news is you can take steps to build a road that is a dirt road initially, but with time and focus, it will be built up into a super highway that completely bypasses Negativeville (which is a dead end, by the way) and takes you past curiosity town. You will eventually end up in the city of completed creations.

The tool that most helped me to sort my thinking was the idea that my body was a channel for ideas to come into the world.

If you look at ancient well-being frameworks, they talk about many energy fields in your body that relate to your health and well-being. But from my observation, they also connect to your effectiveness in bringing ideas from out there in the ether down to the real world. I mean, Steve Jobs had the idea for an iPhone and then built a team around him to help put it in the pockets of millions of people worldwide. The idea travelled from somewhere to his mind and then through him to his people and the world.

So let's look at the body as a channel for ideas.

First, you have to get the idea.

Then you need to problem-solve how to get started on making it happen. (head)

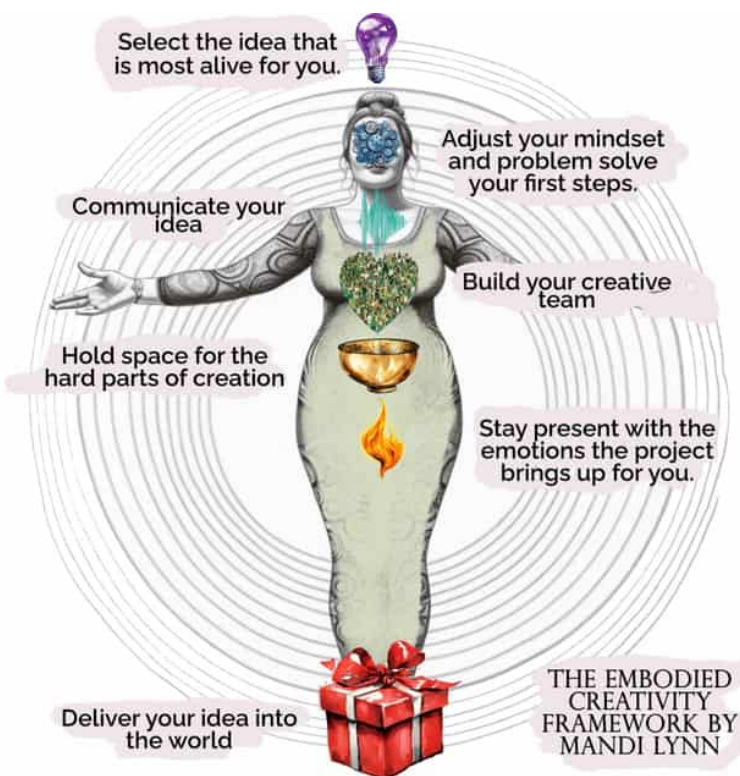
Then you need to communicate by listening and sharing (throat).

Then you need to connect with others who can help (heart).

Then you need to have the grit and resilience to take action (guts).

Then you need to be able to handle the emotions that come when it gets hard (emotional centre).

Then you need to deliver your creation to the world (grounding) finally.



Your energy can be diverted at any point on this journey if you don't know how to manage it. This framework that sits underneath this magazine is this framework. Our trust teaches courses that give you tools to identify where your energy could leak in your creative journey. Tools that help you to work on your mindset to shift from one that can be toxic to your best ideas to one that supports them.

The first place that you can begin to learn about this framework is in our Click Happy program that uses photography to teach wellbeing. This can be done on a tablet or on a cellphone or proper camera. We meet weekly and do a little about well being, we have creative challenges, and then we learn how to give and receive feedback on our work. It was kids from this program that founded this magazine. We would love to have you join us. It's free. It's fun and you might learn a few things along the way about becoming a stronger creative.

Support Lines

Kokiri Te Oranga Pai -

07 895 5807

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.

