



create happy

M A G A Z I N E



The coolest teen-run magazine in Aotearoa!
Innovation • Aroha • Grit • Impact • Gratitude • Adventure

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Welcome to the

AROHA

EDITION

Contents Page

WAIRUA

Quack Pirihi: Interview	1
Small Steps: Using Kaizen	5
A Snapshot Of Connection: An Interview	7
AI: The Basics	12

MANAAKITANGA

Aarthi Candadai: Interview	17
Eat VS Heat	21
How Papatūānuku Provides For Us	25
Chocolate Tarts	27
Light Pollution	30
Georgia Latu: Interview	33
The Social Discomfort Of Having Food Allergies	37

ACCEPTANCE

Where Are You Really From?	42
Homebound	44
Be You	47
From Passion to Action	48
Accepting the Fight	51
Climate Action Week	54

Contents Page

COMMUNICATION

The History Of Communication	56
Finding Your Voice	61
Creating Christmas Chaos	64
They Told Me I Had Low Self Esteem	67
Photography: A Tool For Animal Conservation	69
Philosophy Of Te Whare Tapa Whā	75
Ask Mandi	79



Editor's Note

Kia ora readers,

Thank you for joining us for yet another edition of Create Happy Magazine.

This issue is bound to be one of our best yet, with interviews with legends like Aarthi Candadai, to articles about how to take action against climate change, to awesome recipes from our in house chef Audrey.

First, a huge thank you to all our contributors and mentor - without your mahi and dedication Create Happy would not exist. And a thank you to you! Our amazing readers and supporters. Your support in celebrating the stories of rangatahi across Aotearoa is incredible.

This edition is a celebration of our shared humanity.

It's about the moments that define us, the conversations that connect us, and the care we extend to one another – that's manaakitanga in action. We are so honoured to bring you our Aroha Edition.

If you want to support Create Happy Media in our journey, we urge you to share our social media platforms and our website to anyone and everyone. If you have knowledge, connections or would be able to give financial support and would like to support Create Happy Media to grow further, please reach out to us at hello@createhappy.org.

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

Holly Davies & Maddison Lynch

Co-Editors of Create Happy Magazine

Section 1

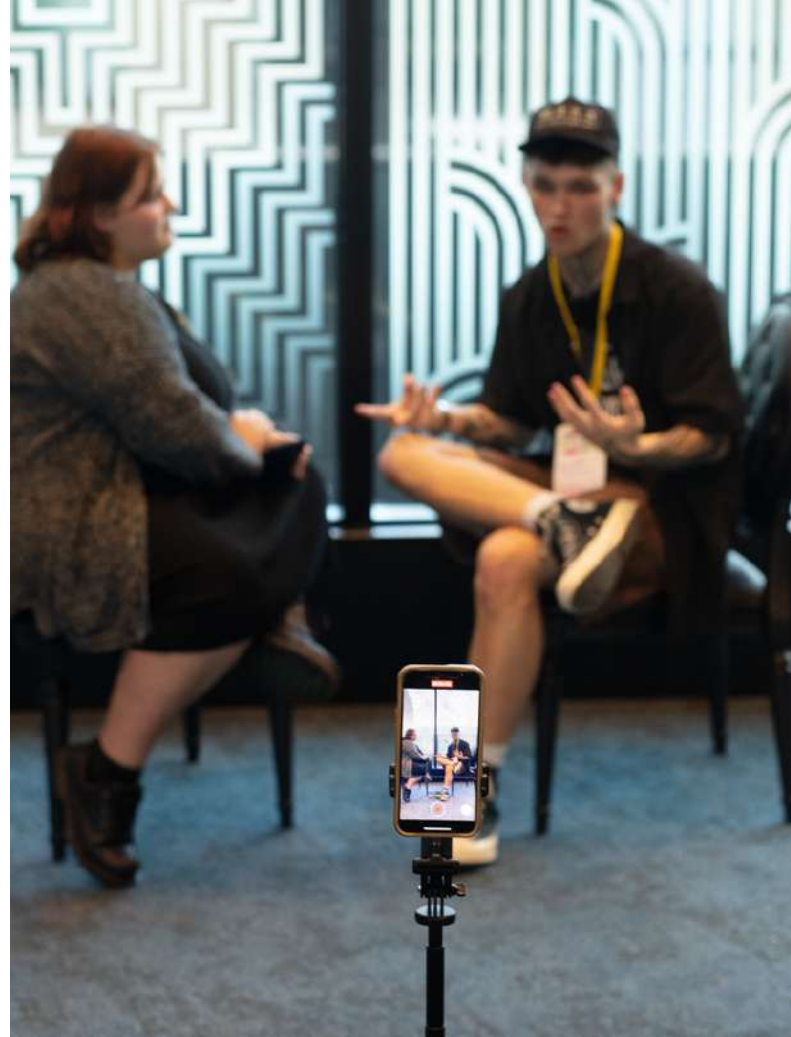
Wairua



Quack Pirihi

On Mana
Aniwaniwa and
Being a Young
Activist





Photographs/Mandi Lynn & Jazmin Tainui Mihi

Interview by Holly Davies

Quack Pirihi is an advocate and activist for queer and indigenous voices. I came up with a few questions we could ask them during a jam-packed interview and a small space of time. They are energetic, kind, and absolute sunshine and took my consistent fistbumps extremely well. As well as learning a lot from them, we had a hell of a lot of fun.

“Without that humility in itself... you wouldn’t really thrive in these activist spaces.”

What drives you to be an activist?

Hei pātai nui, big question. Rangatahi. And I think the very real fear is that if we don't do anything now, we won't have a planet to live on, in a hundred years. So just survival, really.

Who and what are your biggest rocks?

My partner Jax. My beautiful Jax. Huge rock. I think the commitment to always learning and the commitment to being corrected even if it is really embarrassing is what really drives me. And I think without that humility in itself, without wanting to be corrected or wanting to just do the mahi, then you wouldn't really thrive in these activist spaces.

How do you rest and recharge after a busy day?

I don't. I don't. I do not have everything together. Bank accounts - broke, mental health - broke. I think it's really important when we're working with rangatahi in these spaces or when you see rangatahi in leadership, it's important to represent that we haven't always got it figured out. We're not in these spaces magically - it's taken a lot of hard work.

A lot of errors, we continue to make said error, and we continue to learn how we learn from tuakana in this space, from elders.

How do I relax and recharge? Come see my partner, I love the office. I've been really struggling to disengage from the kaupapa mahi at the moment. Especially leading up to the Matariki season. To be honest, do you have any tips?

Disclaimer: I, in fact, did not have any tips.



Photographs / Jazmin Tainui Miti

Tell us more about Mana Aniwaniwa, what's the story?

Mana, strength, authority - can be interpreted in many different ways. Aniwaniwa is one kopu that we have for the rainbow. So viewing Mana Aniwaniwa is a response to abuse and specifically suicide within takatāpui and queer communities. I'm not going to blab on and act like it was born off this, like, euphoric moment where I was like... wow, the world's f*cked up. Because I just was thinking, and I wanted to do this thing, and I wanted to run kaupapa, and I saw Mana Aniwaniwa as a vessel for driving that change. Working in the rangatahi and take.

I've seen many other rangatahi express the desire for workshops that help change the roots of the problem, so target that homophobia in our whanau, that invite family into spaces before they become families before parents have tamariki they can come to these waranga and ask what it's like to be takatāpui in 2023. And so, I think it is an ongoing response, it's always going, always changing. We're wanting to launch this year in Matariki, I'm drawing in opportunities for money and funding, so bringing it back to that not being able to recharge and disengage.

Stay calm, don't let your waka go this way, that way and this way. I'm hoping everything will work out. I'm sure everything will work out.

“when you see rangatahi in leadership, it's important to represent that we haven't always got it figured out. We're not in these spaces magically - it's taken a lot of hard work.”

Holly: It's about prevention. I think people, with homophobia, think it's about 'fixing' it afterwards, where it is that, but it's also like prevention - you know? I just feel like people don't look at the root. And they just think about, well, this is sh*t now it's happened.

Quack: Shout out to organisations like RainbowYouth, Auckland Pride and InsideOut and Outline who are doing the hard mahi, and Gender Minorities Aotearoa, who are doing the hard mahi by working with Rangatahi. Mana Aniwanawa intends to work alongside them to deliver the kaupapa before we have to solve the solutions. So instead of supporting Rangatahi who have had horror stories of coming out, who have had horror stories of abuse, we are at the top of the hill, wanting to help support the whanau.



Photographs/ Jazmin Tainui Miti

In five, ten years even - where do you see yourself and your mahi?

My dream, dream job is to be a detail car cleaner. Everyone always laughs at me, car videos on YouTube make me so excited.

My dream is to be a kaitiaki and I don't want to have to be an activist. I want to live in a world where it's normal to be a protector of the environment, to be a protector of the people and you're not expected to be turning up to protests all the time, to be leading initiatives, to always be asking the government to do the bare minimum. And I think that change, hopefully, will come in the next 5-10 years.

I want to see a government that is Te Tiriti-based, I want to see all these other things... but I want to be alive, and I want to hopefully still be happy.

What does being Quack mean to you... apart from being a cheeky little sh*t?

Cheeky little sh*t... I always say that. I said that in a job interview a little while ago and then I didn't get the job.

What does it mean to be Quack? I don't know. I don't think I'm this one identity. I view myself as, so many people say, like a vessel for change. I like to facilitate conversations between youth.



I don't like to always be hosting the conversation. And while my TikTok and Instagram may look like that one thing, I do a lot of other mahi on the side, a lot of other kaupapa where I love passing the mic around and coming up with solutions to real-world problems. But being Quack means infiltrating white spaces, pākehā spaces. I love that. And I also love swearing, especially in professional environments.

Cut to a dialogue where we discuss our favourite swearwords that I, unfortunately, could not include here.

To keep up with their antics, mahi and wonderful energy - follow Quack Pirihi and Mana Aniwanawa at @quackpirihi on Instagram & TikTok

Small Steps:

using Kaizen daily

WORDS BY ISLA GALBRAITH

Having ambitious goals can help you get further in life, but they usually seem large and overwhelming. What's the first step in starting your own business, becoming a professional sports player, or writing a novel? Often we're not quite sure where to start.

This is where Kaizen comes in. In Japanese, 'Kai' means change, and 'Zen' means good. Combined into 'Kaizen', this translates to 'Continuous change' or 'Change for good.'

Kaizen originated in Japan as a business philosophy, but it is more than that. Kaizen is a way of living that involves breaking down a large and overwhelming goal into much smaller actions. These small actions will lead to significant changes over time.

There are several fundamental principles that are part of the Kaizen methodology:

Continuous change for good.

This is the main idea of Kaizen. Keep consistently moving in a positive direction.

Make way for the new.

More often than not, we need to cut out old habits to make way for new ones. Trade 10 minutes on your phone for 10 minutes working towards your daily goals.



Ask yourself a simple question- 'Why?'

Why is this so important to you? Why do you need to achieve this? You don't always have to have an answer, and it's ok if you don't! But asking yourself 'Why?' can help give you more motivation to chase your goals.

Kaizen is proven to be a very effective method. It works well because the human brain is scared of significant changes, so the smaller the change, the easier for our brain.

Our brains aren't designed for change, which is why evolution happens so slowly. A natural selection force, such as environmental change, is what causes evolution to happen. But this force must continue for evolution to persist. If you make a small change in your life, but only for a day, then you won't change either.

However, if you make a small change every day, you will start seeing changes in yourself and in your life.

And remember- you don't always have to break your goal down into steps. Change is fluid- it can't always be measured, and usually, you can't see yourself getting better at first. No matter how talented you are, it will take time and patience. It takes one action every day for many months, sometimes years.

But unfortunately, shooting one hoop a day isn't going to make you a basketball star, just like how writing one sentence a day isn't going to make you a famous author. Don't lose all hope, though! There is a simple solution to fixing this. On average, it takes 66 days to form a habit. This equals to a little over two months, or one sixth of a year. Everyone is different, though, and you might take more or less time than this.

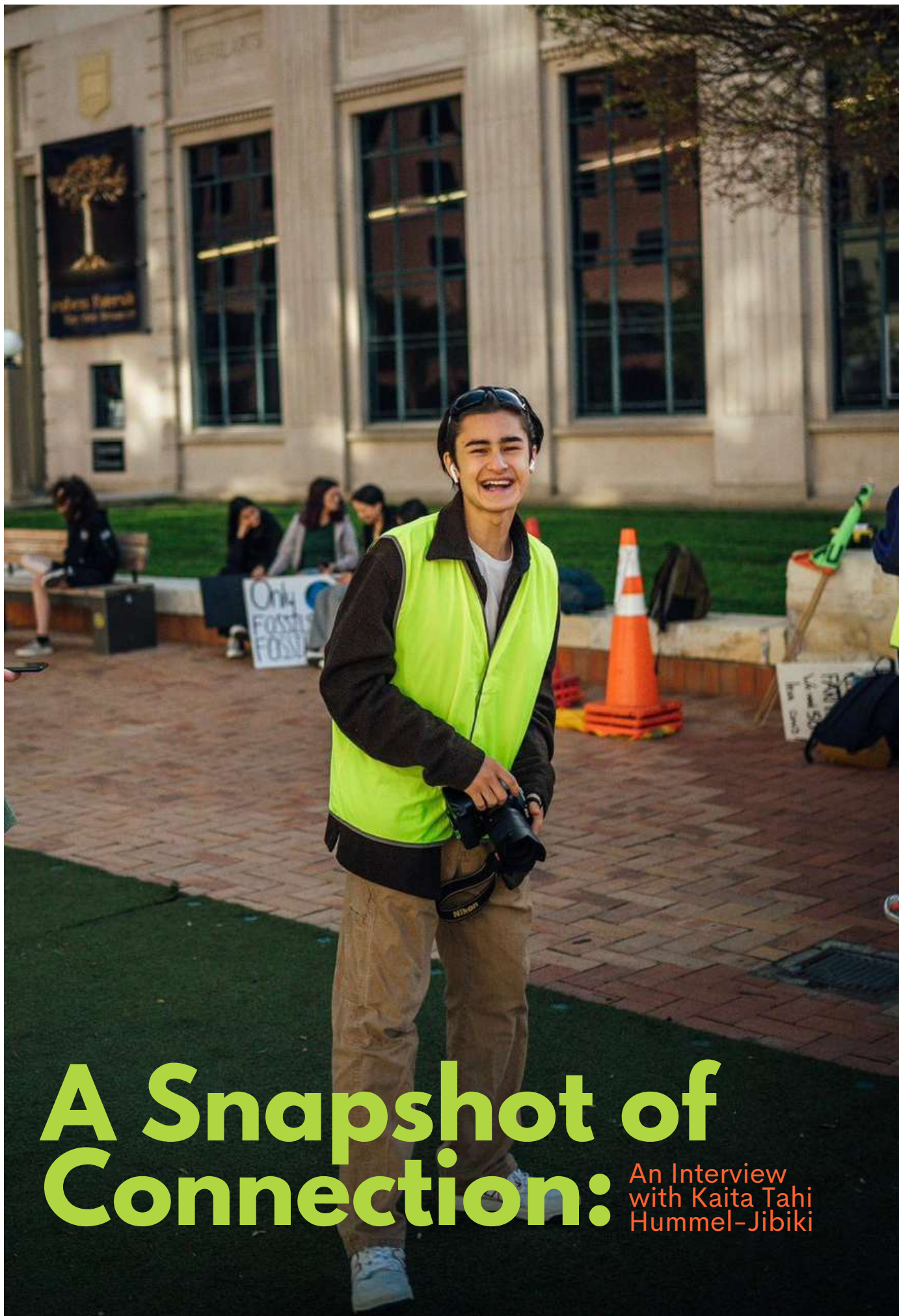


Either way, it's going to take a while if you keep going at this rate. So once you get comfortable with your daily action, when it's turned into a habit that doesn't feel like a chore, you can increase it. Ten minutes turns into 15 or 20 minutes; one action turns into two. Keep slowly increasing when you feel comfortable to do so.



So try it. Write one sentence a day, read one page a day, spend one minute practising whatever you choose to practise each day. Once you get into the habit of doing this and are comfortable with it, make your action a little bigger; two sentences instead of one, two pages instead of one, two minutes instead of one. Keep going. Any goal you want to achieve, you can achieve through Kaizen, no matter how ambitious it is!





A Snapshot of Connection:

An Interview
with Kaita Tahī
Hummel-Jibiki

Photo/Dominic Scott



Photo/Kaita Tahi Hummel-Jibiki

"It's not complicated. It can be as hard as you make it, but it can also be as simple as you make it."

Kaita is a 17-year-old activism photographer from Wellington. A year 13 at Tawa College, a member of Wellington's Youth Advisory Panel for Te Mana Whakaatu classifications office and an ambassador of the Student Volunteer Army, Kaita has his heart set on helping his community. And on the side of his activism, he is a photographer who aims to connect people through his photos.

Kaita's photos aim to inspire and tell the story of the people they contain. Kaita's inspiration isn't a person or an individual but rather the things he sees around him. The things he is passionate about that he can make an impact on.

"It's less someone or something physical, I grab my camera when there's a story to tell, when there's an issue people are passionate about. I think it's really hard not to get involved when you're a person that cares, it's simple as that."

Kaita's photography stems from his activism and the strong sense of community that he has. Kaita has completed hundreds of volunteer hours, helping his community in any way he can. Yet there's a hidden aspect in his photography too. A privacy each photo has in a way that they tell the behind-the-scenes something very personal. There's a sense of truthfulness in each photo; they're not edited to hide or modify people. But rather, they tell a story of people's emotions, journeys, passions, dreams and ideas. He describes it in the way that there's not really a structure to his activism, and it's not really



Photo/Kaita Tahi Hummel-Jibiki

advertised in any way. The key is just reaching out to people and seeing what you can do to really help them.

"The hardest part to getting involved is making that first step. Whether it be getting a media pass or emailing an organiser, you'd be surprised how many people answer "yes"

"Putting a good story behind it means you're getting a good photo."

Taking pictures is telling a story; you can't just freeze any old moment in time and expect it to work. A photo may be technically perfect, but it won't speak to people unless you manage to put a story into the picture. "Putting a good story behind it means you're getting a good photo."

When asked what something he'd always believed in was, Kaita replied: "I guess, just change for the better, it's quite cliché to say that, but also, I think it's really hard to identify."

As youth, we have a right to stand up for what we believe in. It is wonderful to find an outlet to express yourself, your beliefs, your values, and your ideas. Although it's not always that easy, it's not always clear what that step forward looks like. To me that was being proactive, signing up for everything on the face of planet earth and giving anything that came my way a try. Looking back, the friendships and connections I've made are so valuable."

As Kaita describes it, the best things you can get are the connections: "Connections, I guess. Not in the sense of networking, but pure and genuine relationships filled with aroha"

Photo/Kaita Tahi Hummel-Jibiki





Photo/Kaita Tahī Hummel-Jibiki

You don't have to have your life set out in front of you and have a backup plan for your backup plan. All you need is your vision and a passion, let that take you wherever.

Kaita doesn't see himself becoming a professional photographer, but he does see it as a hobby, an outlet for his activism and what he's passionate about. "I don't want to become a professional photographer. I don't see that as me reaching my potential, but I always think it will be a way of expressing myself and what I care about. Whatever career path I go down, I see photography as a really powerful form of expression and connection."

When asked what's something he'd say to people who want to be like him, Kaita said, "Just do it, you know. Don't get caught up on what camera you should get, what photos you should take; just grab a

"Whatever career path I go down, I see photography as a really powerful form of expression and connection."

camera and get out there, hassle people, be the one to ask questions and make it work."

And I think that's one of the best values of all, to have the courage to just give something a go. Because Kaita's right, "It's not too complicated. It can be as hard as you make it, but it can also be as simple as you make it."

Photo/Kaita Tahī Hummel-Jibiki





All images/Kaita Tahi Hummel-Jibiki



AI: THE BASICS

WORDS BY ELLA MOONEY, CASSIE TAULELEI, NINA M ZINK, MILLY PETRIE, ISLA GALBRAITH

Artificial Intelligence, or AI, exists all around us. AI is defined as '...computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence... such as translation between languages'. That's not all, though. Variations on AI models have been developed to work within our phones, our cars, our schools, our offices, sometimes even our homes. Engines like Google use AI systems to determine which search results you most likely want to see. The high-infamous algorithms of TikTok and YouTube use AI in a similar way; it's not possible to have humans monitoring the views of every user and manually recommending other content.

But as with all advances in technology, the advent of AI is not coming upon us without fear and without consequence. Especially following the release of ChatGPT, experts, scholars, and everyday people have begun ruminating about the future of this technology. What will it bring? Will it ever become sentient? What are the consequences? Should we be scared?



This article is the first in a series of four that will examine the use and technology of AI, and aim to answer some of those questions.

We focus first on the basics. What is AI?

Just like humans, current AI models develop through learning. There are two main types: supervised and unsupervised learning.

Supervised learning means someone wants the AI to learn a specific thing, or pick up a specific pattern. Unsupervised learning means they feed data to the AI and see what patterns it naturally picks up.

The first is used to train chatbots and image generators. The second is used in algorithms and data processing.

The main difference between them is that supervised learning uses labelled datasets, and unsupervised learning uses unlabeled datasets.

For example, an unsupervised system might be given all of the data from an experiment, and it will sort through and automatically pick up on patterns. It's responsible for functions like 'if you enjoyed this, you'll also enjoy this'.

A supervised machine learning system might be given 'input' and 'output' and asked to find the 'function used' (or, basically, algebra). It's responsible for image generators (generally) understanding the difference between a lemon-coloured suit and a suit made of lemons.

AI image generators work through a complex supervised machine learning algorithm called ANN: Artificial Neural Networks. It's essentially what the name would suggest; a network of neural pathways – copied from the brain's biological neural pathways– trained to identify millions of text and image pairs.

In the same way that, to a human, the word 'lemon' suggests a bright yellow fruit with a sharp, bitter taste, it suggests to image generation AI a small yellow oval with a point at each end, thereby training them to cultivate an image of a lemon.

Through ANN, AI image generators are also able to gather inferred information about the world to apply to its images, from the effects of different weather on lighting and mood to the distinct art styles of Disney or Studio Ghibli.

Image generation can happen once an AI program has been 'trained' to identify these relationships. The AI will take a text prompt, identify the elements within that prompt, and produce an image based on its knowledge of those elements.

Say you prompt it: a Golden Retriever barking at the moon through a window. The AI system would identify the terms 'golden retriever,' 'barking,' 'moon,' and 'through a window.' It would generate the image elements of the dog and the moon, and through the learned understanding that windows usually come alongside houses and that the moon sits high up in the sky, it would place the barking dog inside a house, below the window, with the moon far above among the stars.



A language model, on the other hand, is an AI model that's been trained to predict the most probable next words based on the previous ones. Using data like books and articles, they are trained to generate natural-sounding responses to prompts. The general purpose of these models is to replicate human interaction.

Not all AI language models are the same. There are two main kinds of models: machine learning and rule-based.

Machine learning models are pretty complex. Through language, this type of AI model learns patterns and connections. You've probably heard of ChatGPT. It uses machine learning and NLP (natural language processing) to reply to prompts from the user in a natural and human-like way. If you've ever used ChatGPT, you'll know that they've pulled this off really well.

Rule-based models are given data sets and rules on how to use the information to generate text depending on the prompt. Though rule-based models are a lot easier to develop, they are limited as they cannot recognize language patterns. They merely follow the information or guidelines that have been provided to them.

Another variety of AI systems is the algorithm.

Algorithms are essentially a set of rules on how to do something, whether it be calculating a term in a sequence or solving a problem. We use algorithms daily; the human body runs off algorithms. They are infinitely more complicated than we can imagine.

An algorithm is defined as 'the process of decision making, for a single purpose or result'. AI relies on information being entered to its system by humans, for now. But AI algorithms evaluate and ultimately make the final decision.

AI models use a complex net of algorithms to continuously re-evaluate decisions as new data comes in. In this way, AI can always modify, improve, and create new algorithms to produce unique solutions. This can be as simple as using people's prompts in a search engine to bring up the relevant results, or as complicated as using a range of sensors and data to autopilot a car.

AI was created by humans, for humans, and modelled on the human brain. However, like with the human brain, we are yet to know the full complexities and inner workings of artificial intelligence. The connections that AI makes with itself were modelled after the Central Nervous System (CNS) and the ability neurons have to connect with each other. This neural connection ability means AI can process data such as patterns and common problems and even recognise faces.

The technology of AI facial recognition has become so advanced that as of April 2020, top face recognition technology has an error rate of 0.08%, whereas humans can distinguish faces with 97.53% accuracy under ideal conditions.



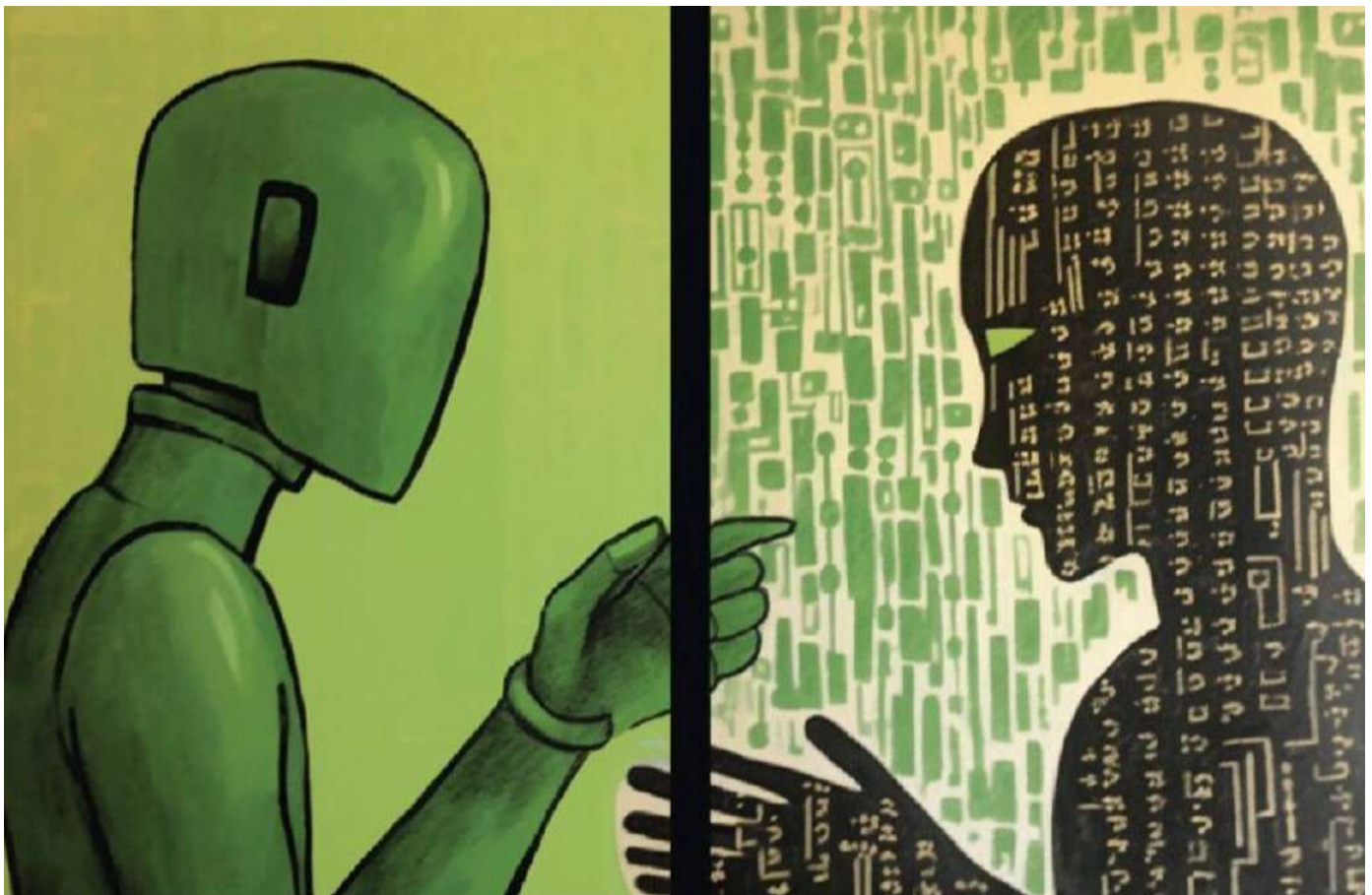
How has a technology that we have created been able to overtake our abilities? AI can deeply analyse every aspect of a human face in milliseconds using neural networking to greater extents than humans ever could, learning from past mistakes. This technology has been of great use to identify criminals and suspicious behaviours, and even unlock mobile phones.

But at what point is too far to allow this technology to overtake our abilities?

So what do you think? Are we ever going to develop general artificial intelligence? Will it someday become sentient? Will AI be the beginning of humanity's golden age or of a horrifying dystopia?



Read the next three editions of Create Happy Magazine for more discussions about ethics, bias and the future of AI. Next up is AI bias- or how humans are creating AI in our own imperfect image. Until then, check out Midjourney and ChatGPT to see AI in action for yourself!



Section 2

Manaakitanga





Aarthi Candadai: Entrepreneur, Businesswoman, Innovator.

Photo/Supplied

Meet Aarthi: Aarthi Candadai is sixteen and already an entrepreneur, businesswoman and advocate. I met her for the first time at Festival for the Future in July and interviewed her on some of her mahi, her life and her insane ability to lead and girlboss in every aspect of her life.

Where do you see yourself in the near future? 1, 3, years from now?

Currently, I am 16 years old, and I am a student at high school. I will still be in high school for the next two years, but after that, I think I would like to do something meaningful. I would love to return to my homeland of Chennai, in South India.

I think the beauty of life is that we're here for a really short time; we're not here forever, so we want to make the most impact we can when we are here. Right now, I have so many resources and skills, and a vast network to help me do everything I'm keen to do. I'd love to return to my homeland, meet new people, gain new experiences, and volunteer abroad.

Who are your biggest supporters?

My community is my biggest support. I'm from the Tamil community in NZ. We are a marginalised community; we're small and don't get much representation in the media. They're my biggest supporters mainly because when they were growing up, they didn't get a lot of the opportunities that I have now. So a lot of what I do is take all those opportunities to get as much knowledge and information as I can, and take it back to those communities so I can share it with them. I know they're always proud of me; they're my biggest supporters, and everything I do, I do it for them.

What have been your biggest challenges? How have you grown from these? How are you growing from these?

As a South Asian woman, there are a lot of barriers that I face on a day-to-day basis, obviously with people saying, "She's a woman of colour - is she going to be able to lead?" It sucks that we're in 2023, and we still have mild racism going on, and people think



Aarhi teaching children about child rights/Supplied

MANAAKITANGA

Students Association, TedX, Save the Children NZ, but my current favourite is probably Voices of Aroha, which is a cool radio programme that I work with; they're so amazing, and they empower marginalised communities which is everything I'm about.

How do you reconnect with yourself and papatuanuku? How do you rest?

In terms of reconnecting with the earth, I love taking walks on the beach. They're so healing for the soul; the sound of the waves and your feet on the sand, it's a calming experience.

I love doing yoga, meditation, mindfulness, and gratefulness. I have a journal; I'm a journal-er. Sometimes I like to sit outside, take in everything around me, and write about my feelings. Sometimes it's not even that significant, but it's just nice to write, you know, and be in the cool air. I think that whenever I'm outside, my mind is fresh.

funny. But it hurts, you know? Because I have so much pride and respect for my culture and I'd expect others to respect that as well. I won't let anything or anyone get in the way. I don't take what people say too personally and I know I have my goals and vision. Staying on track and knowing what I want is helping me focus on my goal and not what's happening around me.

When you have haters, you know you're doing it right; your goal is never to make everyone around you happy, right? It's to make yourself happy. People talk about changing the world, but is it about changing **the** world or **your** world? Is it about creating a better place for yourself, your whaanau, and your community? I think that's my goal.

What are your hobbies? What do you do for fun?

Hobbies... there are a lot of weird things that I find fun. I'm a yoga girl, a yoga teacher; I teach 1-5 year olds yoga; it's very hectic, but I love it. It's so great. I'm really into music, performing arts, singing. We recently had the Big Sing; we just finished our school production of High School Music, and that's kind of where I'm in my natural element. I'm also in a lot of clubs & youth-run projects; Wellington International



What do you dream of for Aotearoa and the world?

I would love to see more diversity and inclusion, and people feeling included and like they belong. Because, you know, I call New Zealand home, and I also called India home, and sometimes it's a balance; am I losing my culture by staying in New Zealand because I'm not surrounded by it as much as I am in India? I'd love people to stay connected with their cultures, know their whakapapa, and where they're from. I think it's really important to me.

Also, just young people getting involved in everything, because we're the generation about to inherit this land, and we're about to grow up. We're going to pass it on to our own next generation, and we want to do everything

in our power to make sure that they grow up in a place where they're safe, comfortable and happy, and you know, where they can take their dogs for a walk without worrying about all the plastic pollution. That's up to us.

We may not enjoy the shade from the tree we planted today, but they will. And they'll thank us for it, and they will do it for other people and the next generations as well.

To keep up with Aarthi and her mahi, find her on Instagram at @aarthi.candadai and her wonderful new project with some of her friends @hervoiceherchoicenz





How do the decisions **OUR POLITICIANS MAKE** affect rangatahi?



SCAN HERE to find out

EAT VS HEAT

Debates about meat

WORDS BY ELLA MOONEY

“I think people in NZ have more in common than we realise.”

I think we all really want the same thing - for people to be happy, for all of our systems, from agricultural to economic, to work as well as possible, and for the future to be as good as, or better than, now.

That's why I decided to interview two people from groups with very different views to see where their opinions were similar and different. And guess what - I was right! Both people, at the heart of the matter, just want the best for New Zealand.

Here are their perspectives.

Who are our interviewees?

Suzanne Menzies-Culling

“I'm a grandmother and a mother, I'm a member of the Green Party, I've been a policy networker for the Deep South Province for about six years.”

Bryce McKenzie:

“I'm Bryce McKenzie, a founder of Groundwell NZ - an organisation of grassroots farmers, people who just want to have a voice.”

I asked them the same questions, expecting wildly different answers - but their replies were very similar. Both want everyone to look after the land better.

Do you think our current farming system is unsustainable in any way?

Suzanne:

“I think it's totally unsustainable. I think the way our country was colonised was seen as a place where you could just loot whatever was here to make money.”



Art by Ella Mooney

"But things like water, land, and air are things that should be held in common by everybody for many generations. Now, though, there are lots of smaller groups - organic farmers groups, for example - which are doing more to look after the land and not use nitrogen-based fertilisers."

Bryce:

I wouldn't say it's unsustainable, but I think there are some things that need to be done... where there's wastage where there doesn't need to be wastage, there's some damage where there doesn't need to be damage, so there are things that need to change.

How do you think it could be improved?

Suzanne:

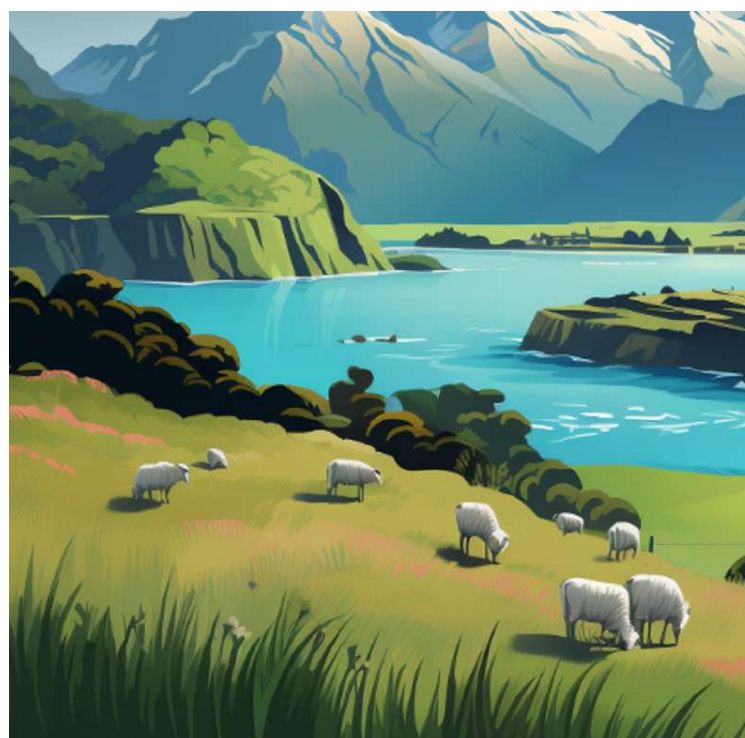
"I think we could have a tenth of the cows we have now, but produce really amazing dairy products which we could then export, if people want to, and make a lot more money than by just selling lots of milk powder."

The thing that really doesn't sit well with me is, as I understand we produce enough food to feed 40 million people here, but most of it goes overseas, and we have people here who can't feed their kids."

Bryce:

"Probably the way that waterways are treated, I think there needs to be more thought put into how people actually manage the waterways and what they put into the waterways. I'm a member of a water-care group. We concentrate on testing our water all the time and finding out where there are problems on our waterways, and seeing what we can do to improve the water quality."

Both people, from two organisations often seen as opposing, agree that things need to change and that we all have to understand what we are doing and try to improve.



How can all of us help achieve this?

Suzanne:

The farming *and* town communities have to be responsible. I think there needs to be a lot better regulations, and I think people in cities need to understand that a lot of the problem is that the rural communities are really under pressure. We all need to understand that water belongs to everybody, and we can't afford to keep destroying our environment the way we have in the last 200 years.

Bryce:

Everyone has to do their part for society, but some have to do more than others. We all have a part to play, and we've all got to be conscious of that - doing a little bit to help improve the quality of water, thinking about what we're actually putting into the water.



What do you think NZ's main goal for the future should be?

Suzanne:

I think we should be importing less, looking after our own people, taking refugees and asylum seekers in, and we as a country have to understand that the resources we have are not infinite.

There IS good animal feed which doesn't produce as much methane, which some farmers are using now. It's those little changes, that's what we need to do.

Bryce:

I think we've got to learn to farm more hand-in-hand with the environment, I think farming's still got a big future because, ultimately, people have to eat. They've got to get the food from somewhere.

We can't grow vegetables and that sort of thing everywhere. Livestock farming is done on a certain type of country, and you can't grow vegetables on that sort of country. It's got to be a balance between what you can grow and what soil type you can use. There'll always be a place for all different types of farming.

One final message from each of our interviewees:

Suzanne:

"We need to understand that we are part of the planet, the ecosystems, nature, we don't control it—we're part of it, and we have to look after it.

Christianity brought in the concept of humans being in charge and being able to do anything we like. Indigenous people always knew we are part of the land."

Bryce:

"I think everybody should know that people that are working the land are all conscious of trying to do the best they possibly can. Some people are a bit slower in learning than others, but everybody is very conscious of taking care of the environment now. That's the message everybody needs to understand. We all care deeply for the environment and are trying not to damage it."

"I think everybody should know that people that are working the land are all conscious of trying to do the best they possibly can"

And so the article concludes— not with two very different ideas about how the world should work, but with an understanding of how similar we all are and how important this country and this world are to everyone.



HOW PAPATŪĀNUKU PROVIDES FOR US

WORDS BY LEISHA HODGSON

If you have ever read Hatchet, you have probably wondered how long you could survive in the wild.

I find it strange that humans used to be born in the wild and relied on instinct alone to survive, but now you need a significant amount of knowledge about foraging, hunting etc. just to survive there for a short time. Most people today have no idea about food, shelter, or anything else you need to survive in nature. Of course, it does also depend on what type of environment you are in.

Papatūānuku is the Mother Earth in Māori legends. Her husband is Ranginui, the sky father. Learning how to live off the land is learning what Papatūānuku can provide for us. Even if you aren't in a plane crash, forced to survive alone in the wild for weeks, these are still essential techniques to learn. Knowing how to harvest and identify different edible plants is still interesting, and you can search for them in your own backyard!

The first plant is one that you can find almost everywhere. If you know how a carrot stalk looks, you can quickly identify this. It is called Queen Anne's Lace, also known as the wild carrot. It is a large flower with a very tall stem, and the flower is white. It's a nice-looking flower but is now identified as a weed as it grows almost everywhere. The seeds of this plant can be dried and put into tea, but the best part of this plant lies underground. While you can eat the entire plant, the root is the most palatable bit. If you pull this plant out of the ground, the white root will be pretty large; it is entirely edible, depending on how old it is. This is the wild carrot, which you can boil or eat raw, but it has less flavour than an actual carrot.

One thing you must be very wary of is that Queen Anne's lace has a doppelganger. You might be familiar with the hemlock plant, a poisonous flower or root that looks very similar to Queen Anne's lace.

The way you can identify the difference between these plants is as follows:

- 1: The Queen Anne's lace has a hairy stem, while the hemlock is smooth with purple splotches.
- 2: The hemlock flower has separate stalks for the flowers, while the Queen Anne's lace's stalks are clumped.



Queen Anne's Lace Root by Leisha Hodgson

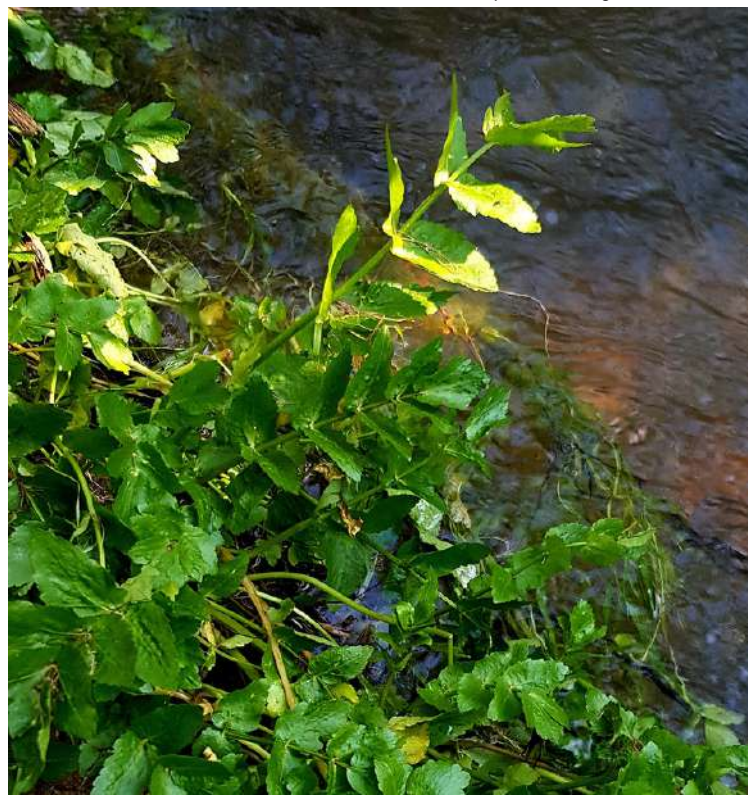
Remember that it is imperative to ensure that the plant you eat is safe before eating it. If you are unsure about a plant, you should never consume it.

The second plant I will be mentioning in this edition is Watercress. You may have heard of Watercress, a common plant especially in Māori culture.

It thrives in flowing fresh water, such as small creeks or rivers. Once picked, it is commonly boiled and tastes slightly spicy, like mustard, but can still be eaten in large amounts or used as a garnish. Cooking it is a great way to eat it, as consuming Watercress raw is not ideal. It could end up being not so great for your health if it has been in a river, because it could have picked up harmful things from the water. Fools watercress is also very common in New Zealand- it too grows in large amounts in creeks and rivers, and is often mistaken for Watercress. While it looks similar to Watercress, it tastes very different, more like a carrot.

There are so many different types of plants in this country, and identifying which ones are edible can prove helpful to you and is so important to know. While some are food, some are poisonous and consuming them is incredibly bad for you. Stay tuned to Create Happy Magazine for more survival tips, just in case your own Hatchet situation happens.

Fools Watercress by Leisha Hodgson



Chocolate Tarts

BY AUDREY GOH

These tarts are decadent and rich with the perfect balance of flavour. Filled with a hazelnut crispy layer, it becomes the perfect texture.

Recipe developed from Hanbit Cho > Chocolate Tarts

Chocolate Tart Shell

- 80g Butter, room temperature
- A little bit of butter, room temperature, for greasing the tart ring.
- 75g Powdered Sugar
- 12g Almond Powder
- 15g Cocoa Powder
- 40g Cornstarch
- 40g Eggs, room temperature
- 140g Cake Flour

CHOCOLATE TART INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Lightly beat the butter until it's slightly fluffy.
2. Sift in the powdered sugar/almond powder/cocoa powder/cornstarch and mix.
3. Gradually add the eggs and mix until thoroughly combined.
4. Finally, sift in the cake flour and continue to mix well.
5. Knead + roll it out to 2mm between parchment papers and rest in the fridge for 1~2 hours.



Photography by Audrey Goh

Note: If your hands are warm, the dough is likely to stick to your hands. Place the dough onto a silicone placemat or your clean bench counter. Use a spatula and a bench scraper to flatten this dough and fold it onto itself. This prevents mess.

1. While the dough is chilling, take the extra bit of softened butter and grease the inside of your tart rings/mold. Also, take this time to determine the width of your tart rings and height. This would be used in the next step.
2. From Step 6, cut the chilled dough into discs + strips according to the width of your tart rings/mold.
3. Line the tart ring starting with the base, then the edges.

3. If these still don't fit perfectly, that's ok; just take a sharp knife and cut where necessary. If you also have some dough hanging from the top, cut that off with a sharp knife.
4. Make sure you fuse the dough all together using the heat of your hand.
5. Bake at 160 °C for 14~15 mins. (pre-heat to 160°C)

Croustillant Layer (crunchy layer)

- 15g Milk Couverture Chocolate
- 15g Dark Couverture Chocolate
- 45g Feuilletine
- 45g Hazelnut Praline

Feuilletine

- 50g butter, melted
- 50g sugar
- 50g flour
- 50g egg white

FEUILLETINE INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In a bowl, mix together egg white, sugar, and flour. Mix well.
2. Add melted butter and mix until well combined.
3. Add about a tbsp or 2 onto your baking tray and spread as thinly as possible.
4. Bake for 5 mins in a preheated oven at 200°C
5. Let it cool for a few minutes and crush into small pieces.

CROUSTILLANT LAYER INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Melt the two chocolates together using a double boiler method or in the microwave.
2. Mix the praline with the chocolate until combined, and add in the Feuilletine.
3. Mix well but gently to prevent crushing the Feuilletine bits.

Photography by Audrey Goh



Note: You can substitute Feuilletine for cornflakes, but it is much nicer and easy to make! It is also easier to crush it in a zip lock bag. Just place your big pieces of Feuilletine in and crush.

Chocolate Ganache

- 140g Heavy Cream
- 100g Dark Chocolate
- 100g Milk Chocolate
- 25g Butter, softened

CHOCOLATE GANACHE INSTRUCTION:

1. Melt the dark and milk chocolate together using either the double boiler method or in the microwave as well as the heavy cream (in a separate bowl)
2. Add the melted chocolate and heated cream into a bowl and blend using an immersion blender.
3. Once everything is combined, add in the softened butter and continue blending until Ganache looks silky.

Note: It is important to keep air bubbles out of this mixture. To achieve this, keep your immersion blender submerged and prevent it from bringing it up and down from the liquid. Making the ganache right after all components are made and put together is also important. This ensures the ganache does not harden before you pour it in.

When you measure out the chocolate, it may also seem like a lot but remember that this is a chocolate tart!

Assembly:

1. Place 15g of the Croustillant at the bottom of the cooked tart shell and press down super gently with a spoon or a small spatula.
2. Put the tarts onto a baking pan. Make sure you are happy with what the tarts are sitting on because they need to be set.
3. Pour the chocolate ganache into the top of the tart shells and let it set.

Note: It is important to pour the ganache slowly to ensure not a lot of bubbles are created. When you also press down the Croustillant, have a gentle touch in order to not break the crust.

If you want to send your own recipe or any queries for Audrey, contact her at @audreybakesnz on Instagram or email recipes@createhappy.org



LIGHT POLLUTION

WORDS BY MACKENZIE HA

Ocean pollution, air pollution, and even land pollution are commonly talked about in the media and in day-to-day life, but what about our use of light? It too has its own dire effects on the world around us, but is much less spoken about.

Light pollution is the presence of excessive or unwanted artificial/man-made light. It's most commonly seen in big cities, but it affects almost all of us living in the modern world. It disrupts many aspects of day-to-day life, and many of our actions contribute to the light pollution in our area. While light, for example, uses electricity, which mainly runs on fossil fuels that already damage our environment, but the light itself is also affecting the world around us.

There are three forms of light pollution: glare, clutter, and light trespass. Glare is excessive light or brightness that causes visual discomfort. Wondering what visual discomfort from light is? Imagine someone just shone a torch into your eyes. Glare often affects people driving at night.

Clutter is confusing, bright, and excessive grouping of light sources.



Square in New York City is a great example of clutter light pollution.

Finally, light trespass is when light extends past where it is wanted or needed. This is commonly seen in urban and city areas where street lights illuminate nearby houses. Many outdoor lights are poorly positioned, and as a result send unwanted light into the night sky.

Light pollution affects not just the natural environment, but also us, humans. It can have many different effects on human health, depending on the level of light pollution someone lives in.

Light pollution can cause sleep deprivation, anxiety, stress, headaches, fatigue and much more. When you're exposed to light pollution, it can cause your body to reduce melatonin production; this is a hormone produced as a response to darkness. This hormone helps you sleep, so when the production is reduced it can affect your ability to sleep and stay asleep.

When it comes to animals, light pollution can affect their migration patterns as well as wake-sleep habits. This causes animals such as sea turtles and birds who are guided by the moonlight to get lost and confused, which often tragically results in death. On top of all of that, light pollution affects astronomers' view of the night sky. Light pollution severely decreases the visibility of stars and other celestial objects such as our moon and other planets.



WHAT CAN WE DO?

Light pollution can be reduced in day-to-day life by simply turning off lights when they're not being used and reducing the amount of light that escapes one's house at night.

These simple gestures can help reduce the light pollution in your area.

Turn off lights when not in use

Turning off lights when they're not being used not only helps reduce light pollution, but also helps other aspects of our environment. It can reduce the amount of energy one uses, as well as reduce carbon emissions and the amount of greenhouse gases released into our atmosphere.

Avoid letting light escape your house

If you close the curtains when the sun has set, less light escapes your house. This can have an immediate effect on the level of light pollution in your area.

Keep lights pointed at the ground when outside at night

When using things such as torches outside, always remember to point them towards the ground. Even a single beam of light can contribute to light pollution. This is recommended in any environment, whether it's in the middle of the bush or the middle of the city.

Use fewer lights indoors

Using fewer lights indoors, especially in high rise buildings, can help reduce the amount of artificial light in our skies. Also try having dimmers on lights inside.



Photography by Abi Street

Avoid using decorative or unnecessary lighting

Though having decorative lighting can be lovely, is it necessary? Removing unnecessary lighting can help reduce the severity of light pollution in your area, and save you money on power.

Try to use downfacing lights

Using downfacing lights, especially outdoors, can help reduce the amount of light that's beamed up into our night sky. Just try to point lights at the ground instead of the sky.

Raise Awareness

Light pollution is something that takes everyone to reduce its effects on us and the environment. We need to raise awareness, talking about light pollution and discussing how to reduce light pollution as well as taking action.



An interview with Georgia Latu





Photography/NUKU Women

Interview by Nina M. Zink

At age 12, Georgia Latu began making Poi for a school fundraiser. Now at 16, she is the CEO of the world's largest Poi Manufacturing Company, Pōtiki Poi.

“My backbone is my whānau”

When her brother Api was born with Down-Syndrome, Georgia strove to build a company that could support her community and all those in it. Georgia's company keeps the community and the environment at heart, her materials second-hand and or biodegradable, with many of her employees having diverse abilities. Now she employs around 60 employees and has had contracts for the world stage, including making over 23,000 poi for the Women's Rugby World Cup in a mere 3 months. She has also opened Kura Poi, a school of arts and contemporary Poi dance academy, aiming to revitalise her culture.

What motivated you to establish your business?

“My biggest motivation to start the business was my whānau and people. We noticed that this not only had the potential to be a business, but it had the potential to give back to our whānau and community.”

Have your family and friends always supported you in your journey?

“My backbone is my whānau. ‘Te amo rangi ki mua, te hāpai ō ki muri.’ As I lead in the front, there are many hands helping behind the scenes. I couldn't do it without them.”

When you were younger, who was your main inspiration and why?

“There has always been one role model that has remained a pillar in my life ever since I was born. And that is my māmā. She is the most talented lady I know. She works full-time at the University of Otago as a senior lecturer for Hauora Māori and juggles being the director of Pōtiki Poi plus being a full-time māmā.”

What have been some of your main struggles?

"The biggest challenges I face are mostly to do with me being a young Māori wahine. But that has not stopped me from pushing down every barrier I might face so the next generation don't need to go through the struggles."

"...not everyone might agree or be on the waka with you, and that's okay. But if you can't even be on your own waka, that's when it becomes hard. Believe in yourself!"

Did that affect the way you view life now?

"I think the way I live now is a reflection of every hurdle in my life. But with great support, anything is possible."

What's one thing you have and always will believe in?

"My biggest turning point now is that not everyone might agree or be on the waka with you, and that's okay. But if you can't even be on your own waka, that's when it becomes hard. Believe in yourself!"

What has your biggest accomplishment been so far?

I think my biggest accomplishment was watching 32 thousand Pōtiki Poi flying through the air at the Women's Rugby World Cup 2021!

What are a couple of projects that you've especially enjoyed working on and why?

"Rugby World Cup was a highlight for myself and my whānau, and it was also a challenge. But to see all of the hard work and my nana's face as we watched the finals brought joy and fulfilment."

What is next for you? Now and in the future?

"I would like my next journey to be Tāmoko. Reviving more taonga Māori in a contemporary way."

Photography/Supplied



What's one piece of advice you would give to someone who wants to one day be like you?

"Surround yourself with people that help you grow."



The Social Discomforts of Having Food Allergies

WORDS BY SANTERIA H-S

"Some say food brings people together, but for me, it often sets me apart."

I feel isolated as the only person with a different version of what everyone else eats or some other food entirely. I think this way because I have many food allergies. Things like apples, beetroot, and cane sugar are uncommon allergies, though some are more common, like gluten and dairy. Since my reactions to those foods are also strange, it's hard to explain to people.

They aren't allergies but sensitivities, which means if I eat some apples, it's not the end of the world, and I won't get sick. But when I was younger, I found it hard to explain the difference between the two. I decided to call them allergies because it was easier to clear up.

Back then, I didn't have a word for reactions, so I wasn't always taken seriously when I said, "I just get exhausted, and everything feels too hard." Some people will just nod and accept my answer without question, but others give me weird looks or don't take me seriously, saying, "Oh yes, that happens to all of us". Now, 4 to five years later, I say that my body is hypersensitive to cane sugar, apples and beetroot.

They are also hard to explain because gluten gives me a sore stomach, and dairy gives me eczema. When I eat sugar, apples or beetroot, I get lethargic; these are three different reactions I get from three other foods. It makes it hard to find things I can eat, and they are precise when we do. It makes things like birthday parties and sleepovers difficult because I'm hard to feed. Luckily all my friends have known me for a long time and have gotten used to having food I can eat.



In the supermarket, I would get excited every time I saw something that said sugar-free, hoping that maybe, just maybe, it was something yummy I could eat. But often, if something had no cane sugar, it would be sweetened with an apple. It made me mad. Why did people have to put so much sugar in everything? And if not sugar, why apple? I knew the answer: because apples have high sugar content. That's why my body reacts to them; they are good sweeteners.

"Although, at first, I felt like I would never eat anything yummy again, I have found ways. "

I can still eat coconut sugar, which at first was very strange, but now I barely remember when I didn't eat it. I will never forget the day I discovered sugar-free chocolate, lollies, and dairy-free cheese. They aren't quite the same as traditional food, but they are a start.

I have always liked baking, but I got into it when I volunteered to make my brother's birthday cake. I made the cake using coconut sugar as a sweetener and Olivani as a butter replacement. My favourite part of baking was the icing. I loved piping it to make fancy patterns. The only icing recipe I knew I could eat was coconut ganache, which uses coconut whipping cream and sugar-free chocolate. But it was hard to pipe because the chocolate would set in the cold and melt in the heat. It needed to be thick and clumpy to hold an excellent shape or too runny and would slop all over the place.

One day I watched my cousin making icing. She brought the softened butter and icing sugar to a boil. I had long since become used to being around food I couldn't eat, so it didn't bother me too much that I couldn't eat the cake I was helping her bake.

As she mixed the ingredients, I thought about stevia, a sugar replacement I use to make meringues because coconut sugar is too heavy. It was coarser than my cousin's icing sugar, but it might work the same if I put it through the blender.

Art/Abi Street





Then I thought about the butter. The Olivani I use in baking is much softer than butter. However, I realized we had just spent a few minutes softening the butter in the microwave until it was the right consistency- and it was about the same as the Olivani! Maybe, just maybe, I could reinvent this icing so I could eat it.

A few days later, I tried it out, and it worked! I couldn't believe it. I had just made icing that would pipe easily, had a pleasant texture, and, best of all, I could eat it!

A few weeks later, I followed an Edmonds cookbook recipe for biscuits. I used the measurements in the book for the icing instead of adding more Olivani and stevia until it was consistent. The recipe said to add two tablespoons of cornflour. Initially, I was hesitant, as I didn't want it to taste like cornflour, so I only added a bit at a time. I soon discovered that the cornflour bulked out the icing and took the edge off the intense sweetness. It improved it so much!

I realized that, even though it is challenging having allergies and sensitivities, I have found ways to help me through the hard times, and I have learned so much about myself through my journey. I am getting better; I can eat a little dairy and gluten sometimes and, very occasionally, sugar.

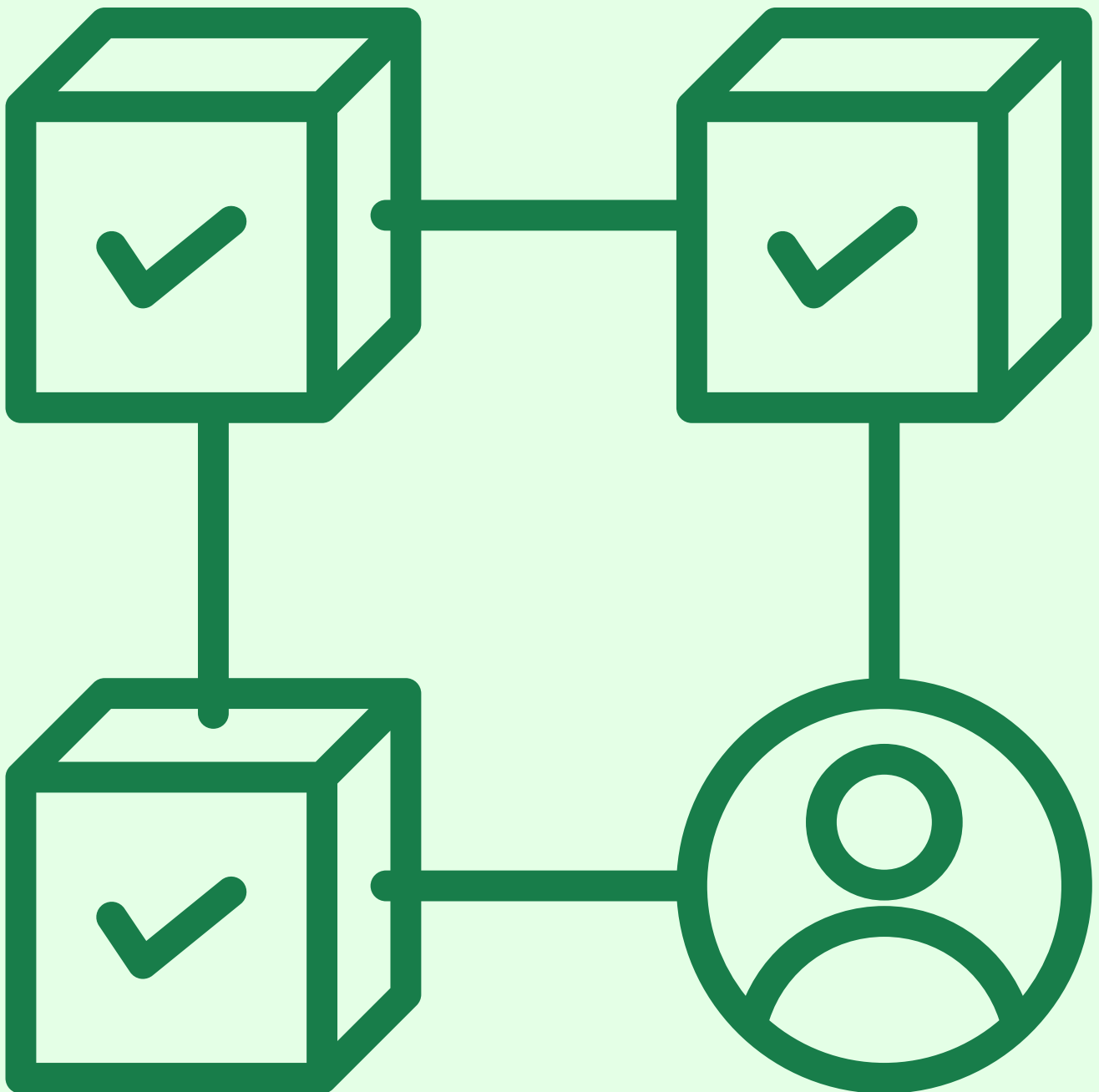
"It wasn't easy and still isn't. I still get upset sometimes because food is a big part of our culture and lives, and I can't share it."

But I'm proud that I can make food that I can eat. One day, I think I will publish a cookbook with all the recipes I have made so other people know it's possible.



Section 3

Acceptance



But where are you really from?

WORDS BY CASSIE TAULELEI

Recently, I was sitting in the chair at my hairdresser as she prepared to begin my appointment. There was another woman in the chair opposite mine, halfway through her appointment and chatting cheerfully to her hairdresser. She appeared to be having a good time, I was having a good time. But then she asked the dreaded question.

'So, where do you come from?'

I was taught a long time ago how to approach this question, asked in bad faith. To glance confusedly at the person asking and respond, 'Oh, I'm from Wellington. Where are you from?' To place them in a puzzling position where they have really only two options: to stop, or to continue their inquiries and risk causing further offence. It all works perfectly well in the mind. You have your script written out, your responses prepared and ready to go.

But it seems that once somebody places you into that position, you lose all functioning, the script dies, the responses flee your memory.

It happened to me at that moment. So I just gave them what I knew they wanted to hear.

I told her my ethnicity, my race; but funnily enough, I mentioned nothing of my European side. I imagined she didn't care much about that, she wanted only to know about my non-European side. The pacific islander side.

Essentially: what kind of brown are you?

This is not an attack against her, against that woman who asked that question of me in the hairdresser. Nor is it an attack against anyone else who has inquired about my ethnicity in the past. But there is a fine line here, and so often, it is trodden over entirely.

There is nothing inherently wrong with the question, 'where are you from?' In certain situations, it can be used to build connections, to find community, and to develop close relationships with the people around you.





This was not one of those situations.

The woman who asked me this time was white European. It would have veritably made more sense for her to inquire about the European side of my heritage. But the reason she asked this question was neither an attempt to build connection, nor to find a community. It was to 'other' me.

In most societies, people of colour are a minority. We already live in a place where often, we feel as if we don't belong. To ask us 'where we are from,' without the intention of connection or community, is a microaggression, whether intended or otherwise. To be told that we aren't 'from here,' to question our belonging, only reinforces that idea that again, we're not like you. Still, the defence for people asking this question persists. 'I'm just curious.'

For one thing, I must say: Does your curiosity come at the pain and expense of somebody else? For if it does, that curiosity is not justified. It is not acceptable.

But for a second thing, I ask, why are you curious? Why is it that you, as a white person, wish to know what kind of brown we are? You need to think about what you want to gain from asking the question, because it is not to form connections. Then if you discover that your intention is to 'other,' stop asking the question.

If you really wish to know what our ethnicity is, where we come from, to ask the question in good faith is very simple. You just have to get to know us first. Our main fear is that you would place stereotypes upon us before getting to know us. So to avoid that, it is simple. You just need to get to know us before you ask. Find out who we are as a person, find out what our interests are, what we love, who we love, before you ask us about where we come from.

Then if we react negatively, if we are offended at the question, do not push further. Apologise. Move on.

It really is that simple.

homebound

VIRA PAKY

my new home is a liminal space
it sits inbetween born and raised
despite my peace and calm with it
my playful saunter across warm gravel
becomes a stand-out spectacle
so their mature eyes pierce my cool

between the buzz of schoolchildren
bustling towards the cornerstore
they begin to follow me like there is a debt
suspicious sight turns to touch
touch turns to critical words
into where are you from into
why why why are you here

expectant eyes and grin wait patiently
for a biography, for plane tickets, for a reason
their silent stare begin to serenade me
be grateful to be here but don't make us regret
remain behind and remember your place
my pride holds itself tight and close

my thick lips licks themselves into nothing
because no answer could begin to hold
the conflicting histories that lie in my chest

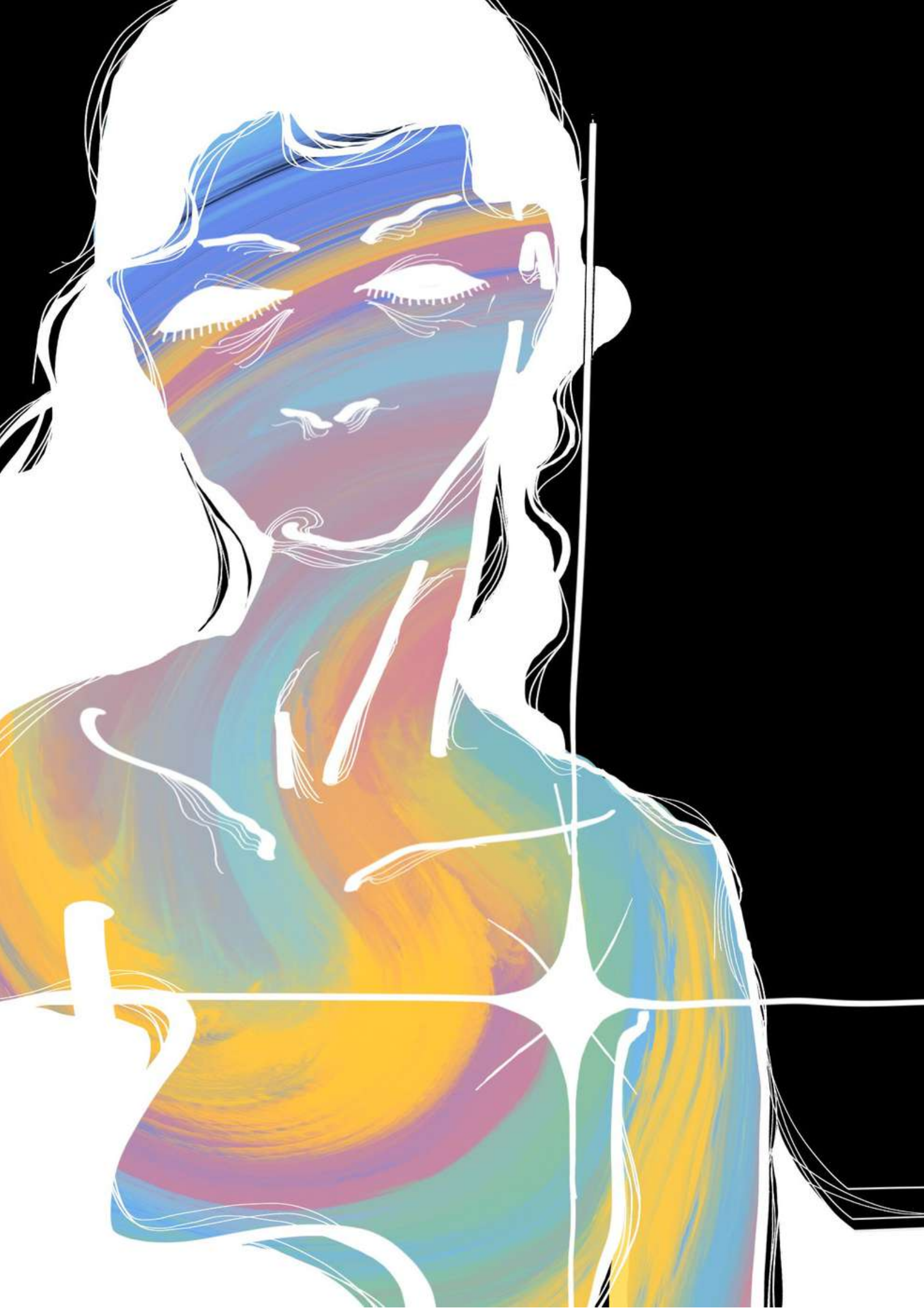
my ancestors, their dreams atop my shoulders
the harmonizing choir upon my crown
historic bloodstreams pumping in my veins

because who are you to know
to hold my greatest treasure before even
holding the weight of my name on your tongue

maybe if you were kind and
it was gentle sight that turned into warm touch
warm touch into soft, curious words
you could have joined me on my saunter
and heard the story of my heart



Vira Paky is a first-generation Congolese-Kiwi storyteller, raised and based in Tāmaki Makaurau. A Community Engagement Specialist with engagement experience in mental health and civics advocacy and refugee youth support, she works alongside local and central government to amplify the voices of young people. However, her true calling lies in storytelling, where she acts as an emerging poet, playwright, and arts programmer. Her belief in the profound power of art for driving transformative social change fuels her work as a politically engaged storyteller. Through her art and advocacy, she weaves together the threads of creativity, compassion, and activism, leaving an indelible mark on the local communities that she engages with.



BE YOU

Words by Audrey Goh

Wherever and whenever you are reading this, YOU are beautiful just the way you are. You may think that changing yourself to fit society's standards, acting like someone else because they are successful, and thinking being pretty will make your life just like theirs, but that is not always true.

When you are your unfiltered self and embrace your natural qualities, this can lead you to your own unique happiness. Even though this confidence might not come naturally to you initially, be bold and build your confidence!

Trying to be someone you are not, whether to fit in with a particular group or meet other people's expectations, can lead to feelings of anxiety and stress. Be yourself to everyone, and you can boost your confidence and find more genuine relationships. You can attract people who appreciate and value you for who you truly are rather than who you are pretending to be.

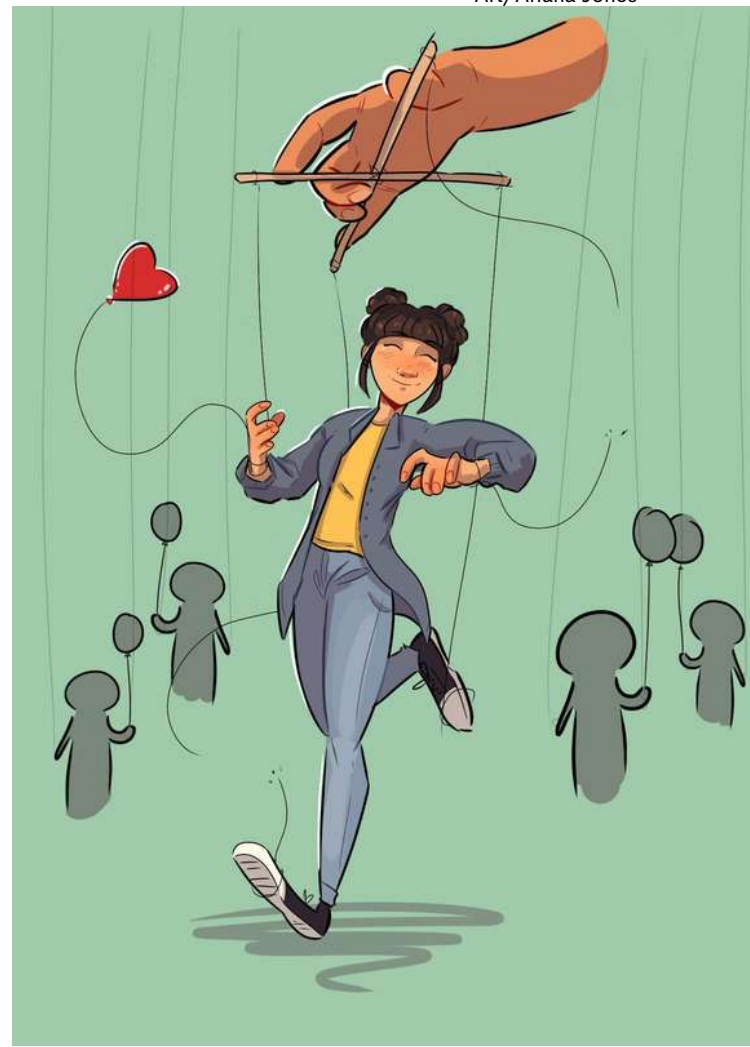
In doing this, we can discover new unique strengths and talents by simply being ourselves. It allows us to work on the spots we want.

Although it is good to continue being your natural self, if you want to be someone else, that's not always a bad thing - this is a part of the normal brain developing and finding out who you are!

Stay happy, healthy and positive.

Audrey

Art/Ariana Jones



From Passion to Action:

Sophie Weenink's inspiring journey as a climate activist, leader and volunteer.

WORDS BY LILY DUTTON

Sophie Weenink has been a social justice and environmental activist since 2019.

Passionate about the environment since a young age, her first official event at age 13 was a beach clean-up that she posted on Facebook. Organising free food and drinks for volunteers on a budget of \$0 dollars, she thought she might get ten people at the most, but 200 people came. The support of the community around her has driven her ambition for change. Since then, Sophie has organised large events such as beach clean-ups, river clean-ups, fundraisers and organised volunteers, all on a non-existent budget. She is currently studying at Pearson College UWC (United World College) in Canada and is about to start a new program called the 'Climate Action Leadership Diploma'. Studying with UWC means Sophie gains credits for university courses early by simply focusing on what she loves best.

Sophie has faced many challenges along the way due to her age and gender. She has been taken seriously on some boards where everyone wants to hear a young woman's voice. However, on other boards, Sophie has been used to simply make others look better – like a token. Despite all the ups and downs, she has carried on and overcome these challenges in order to continue her work in areas she feels strongly about.



"I hope that in the future we can preserve our beautiful environments in general as we are so lucky to live in Aotearoa and to be able to live and work in this environment. I think that we often forget it as we get so used to it, but a trip overseas can make you realize how beautiful it is here and why we need to fight to protect our environment."

Sophie's decision to become heavily involved in Giving Aroha was established way back during the start of her activism journey - her river clean-up. Unlike the other river clean-ups she had done before, they came across a tent and sleeping bags that belonged to someone; it was clear that whoever they were, they were living in very harsh conditions. This shocking discovery and the sad realisation that some people in NZ were forced to live this way inspired Sophie to find ways to help the homeless. She is a core volunteer for Giving Aroha, a community-led group. "I realised that there was a lot more I could do to help so over the last couple of years while I have been a volunteer I've done fundraisers with people donating thousands of dollars" The money has been put towards food, warm clothing, tents, sleeping bags and toiletries.

Sophie claims there are many issues in NZ, but the housing crisis and climate change are some of the major problems today, alongside the hundreds of intercepting problems that go into both of those issues. Through her work, Sophie has attempted to make an impact by finding solutions to these issues, but as they are such huge issues, she says it helps to find a community of people who want to make change as well. As a group, it is much easier to create collective change and create a huge impact.

However, just one person can also make a massive impact... just educating one person on one of these issues, helps us to understand why we need to make a change and inspire them to make a difference rather than leave it to future generations.

Sophie's top suggestions everybody can do to positively impact the environment include:

- Being mindful of the products that you're buying, if you have the ability to buy sustainably, then she encourages shopping more locally. Sophie says going vegan is probably one of the biggest things you can do that will positively impact the environment, as dairy is one of the biggest polluters in NZ.





ACCEPTANCE

It is also one of our biggest economic drivers, so she says we need to be looking at sustainable alternatives and being able to look at ways for the future that can also support people who are in these industries to start anew.

- Try to buy sustainable clothing or items. When buying, think about how often you are going to wear or use the item in the long run. Fast fashion is a huge polluter (with a majority of it being carelessly used and ending up in landfill), so rather than buying trendy clothing, purchase clothes that you love. Whilst fast fashion is the most affordable option for many, being conscious about what and how much you're buying will reduce waste.
- Changing your mindset. If you want to be part of the solution to protecting the environment or helping people, we need everyone to be 'doers' rather than people who are 'naysayers'. Align yourself with people who will uplift and support you rather than put you down or make you feel like something isn't cool or isn't worth your time.
- Joining community groups and volunteering with them. If you have the time to scroll on social media every night, you could use that time to volunteer somewhere for an hour a week. Sophie knows it can be the last thing anyone wants to do after a long day at work or school, but it can truly, positively impact someone's life or the environment.

Right now, Sophie is looking into Universities in Europe, and she plans on moving there next year; specifically, she plans to complete environmental science and sustainability degrees and/or law. At some stage, she will likely come back and live in NZ, but for now, her studies in Canada have made her realise that she needs to see more of the world, experiencing first-hand solutions and impacts being made globally before she returns.

Sophie says "being passionate and strong about what you're doing because people often look to others who are stepping up" first. Often they want to act themselves, but obstacles such as a lack of time or experience stop them from doing so. For people wanting to start taking action, she says just "start small", doing grassroots actions either in your personal life or your community.

One final piece of advice from Sophie is to not "let what others say get in the way of what you want to do." It can be hard at the start, but once you achieve your first goal, take time to celebrate it and then start working towards the next one; you can achieve anything with some hard work and passion.



Accepting the fight

WORDS BY ELLA SAGE

Our generation is coming of age while facing more battles than we know how to fight. While everyone has to prioritise these fights differently based on their own personal circumstances, an increasingly prevalent fight we are all facing is that against climate change.

Climate change affects everyone, and still, our leaders find new ways to ignore the fact that our generation is fighting for our very future. It is easy to feel like Sisyphus – rolling, always rolling a rock up a hill, only to have it fall back down – when trying to take a stand for climate justice.

Art by Abi Street



This feeling creates hopelessness which, when paired with uncertainty about the future, generates a certain anxiety, sometimes called 'eco-anxiety' or 'climate anxiety.' We, as young people, feel betrayed, angry, and unheard by the people who are supposed to be leading us. In 2021, [RNZ reported on a global survey](#), writing that "nearly 60 per cent of young people approached said they felt very worried or extremely worried.



More than 45 per cent of those questioned said feelings about the climate affected their daily lives. Three-quarters of them said they thought the future was frightening.” Figures like these are somewhat of a comfort to the pacing mind – they help to reaffirm the validity of climate anxiety, as well as acting as a point of inspiration – if all the young people who have these feelings of anxiety act together, surely there is some difference that can be made to the state of our climate, or at least a message that can be sent to our so-called ‘leaders.’



Groups such as the Aotearoa Climate Strikes (a coalition between School Strike 4 Climate and Fridays for Future) are working to assemble people, young and old, from across Aotearoa to take a stand for climate justice. There have been two national strikes this year, taking place in big cities and small towns across the nation. The compassion and care that everyone who attends these strikes has for the environment and each other is a really special thing to behold.

Participating in action like these strikes is excellent for surrounding yourself with people who genuinely care about the future of our environment, which is a beautiful way to not only soothe feelings of climate anxiety and reaffirm that this is not a battle you must fight alone, but also to have your say and make a difference. Other ways of being a part of climate action include gestures such as participating in community planting days, writing letters or signing petitions to politicians, and encouraging people to vote



(or voting, if you’re eligible) for the future and with the climate crisis in mind. On a personal level, there are always things you can do to minimise your environmental impact – such as ‘reduce, reuse, recycle’ – but these will not win the war. That isn’t to say that making personal decisions based on environmental values isn’t important, but we can just as easily be active parts of the solution, rather than trying to avoid being a part of the problem. As mentioned above, accepting the fight doesn’t have to be big.

Climate Action Week

NATE WILBOURNE / @[NATEWILBOURNE](#)

From September 18th to 24th, Aotearoa will come alive with a wave of climate activism as School Strike 4 Climate NZ (SS4C) hosts their much-anticipated 'Climate Action Week.' This event is set to be a dynamic showcase of our nation's dedication to addressing the urgent issue of climate change.

SS4C's Climate Action Week promises a lineup of eco-conscious events that will inspire communities to take action against climate change. With the event information available through SS4C's Instagram bio link, it's easier than ever to get involved.

There will be events across the country during the week, Tree Plantings, Beach Cleanups, you name it!



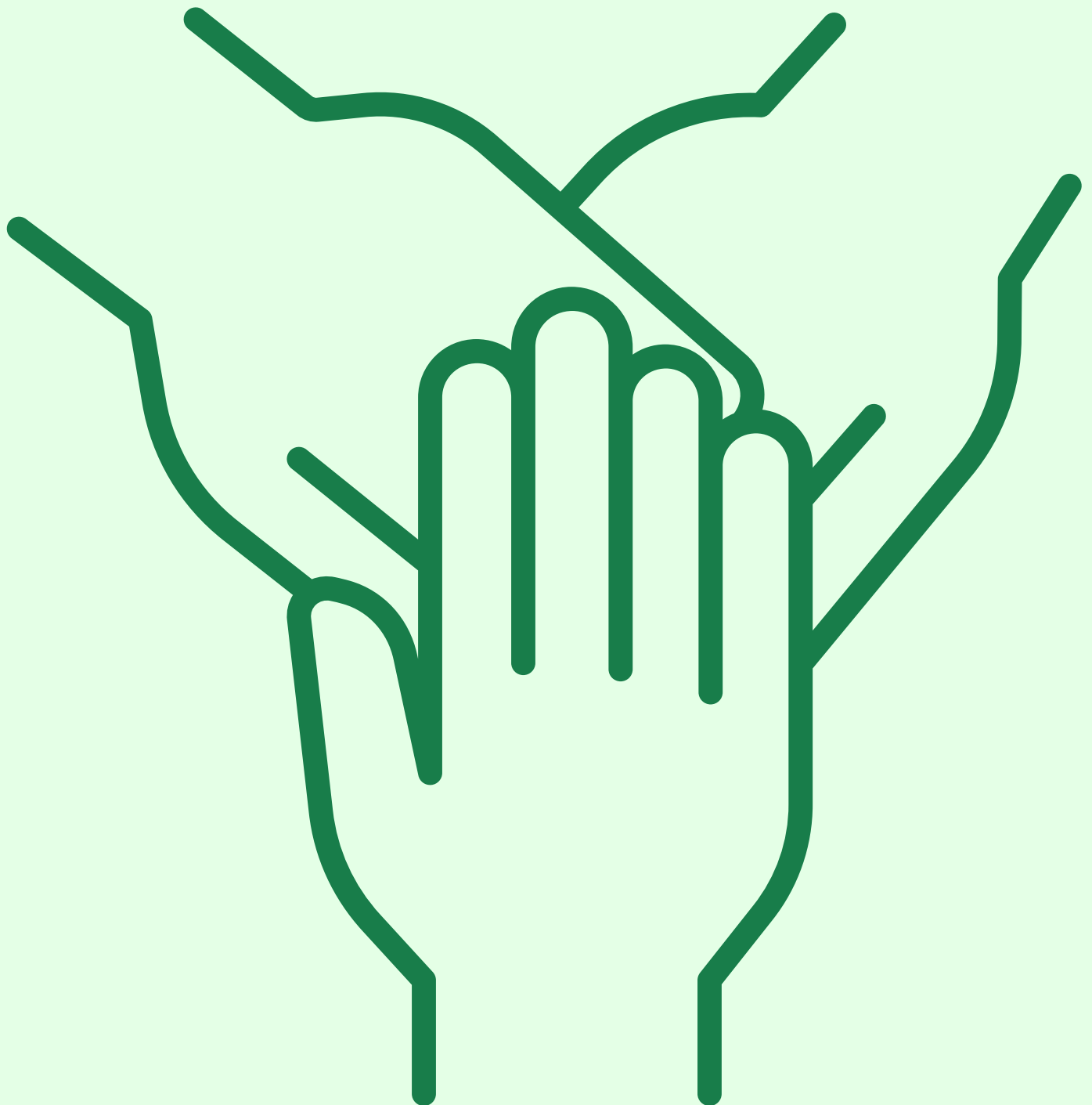
But, the crescendo of Climate Action Week is undoubtedly the national strike planned for September 23rd. On this day, thousands of New Zealanders, young and old, will take to the streets to demand immediate and decisive climate action. This strike is a call to policymakers and leaders to prioritize climate action (aka safeguarding our future).

So, mark your calendar for **September 18th to 24th**, and join the ranks of climate activists in New Zealand. Together, we can make a difference, one tree planted, one voice raised, and one strike attended at a time. Check out the link in SS4C's Instagram bio for more details and join the movement for a sustainable future.



Section 4

Communication



The history of communication

WORDS BY ELLA MOONEY

What is communication? Why is it so essential? And how will it change in the future?

To begin with, communication is the way one being transfers knowledge to another. It could be knowledge that a being is hurt, conveyed automatically by simple pheromones, or it could be knowledge of a being's thoughts about communication, conveyed by points of light on a screen that other beings recognize as letters, words, and sentences such as this one.

The most basic forms of communication don't require consciousness. Chemical signals, sent and received automatically, still count as communication. Plants and bacteria use these, among other basic signals, to 'talk' to each other.

A level up, animals conveying emotion with movements and noises (eg dogs conveying unhappiness by putting tail between legs and whining) is communication similar to that of humans, but still not language.

Another level up, and we see spoken languages—using sounds to represent concepts, not just indicate an emotion. We have only detected true spoken languages in humans. Parrots repeat phrases, but 'Polly wants a cracker' and 'Polly wants to rule the world' are both equally indicative of no wants on the parrot's part. Some animals may be able to convey 'we'll hunt now' but not 'we should hunt tomorrow, it's raining' or 'the river looks like a silvery moonbeam'.



Also known to be attained by humans alone, is written language. This not only requires a spoken language with distinct sounds combined to make distinct words, but also requires each sound to be represented by a fixed symbol, and for the beings using it to be able to relate the meaning, sounds, and symbols at a glance. No wonder written languages are so rare!

Note that sign language (e.g. NZSL) is equivalent to spoken language, only using a visual to represent concepts rather than a sound.

It is entirely different to body language, as used by humans or other animals. Body language is angry people frowning, a scared dog cowering, a sad person crying, and is automatic.

Long-ago humans discovered the ability to transfer immense amounts of knowledge across time using written language. Today we can read books, playscripts, and essays written centuries ago, and understand what the world was like then. In a thousand years, people will translate our translations of these texts into the next language, and be able to understand the world in the years 1023 and 2023. Without books, we would have very little understanding of history.

How does technology affect communication?

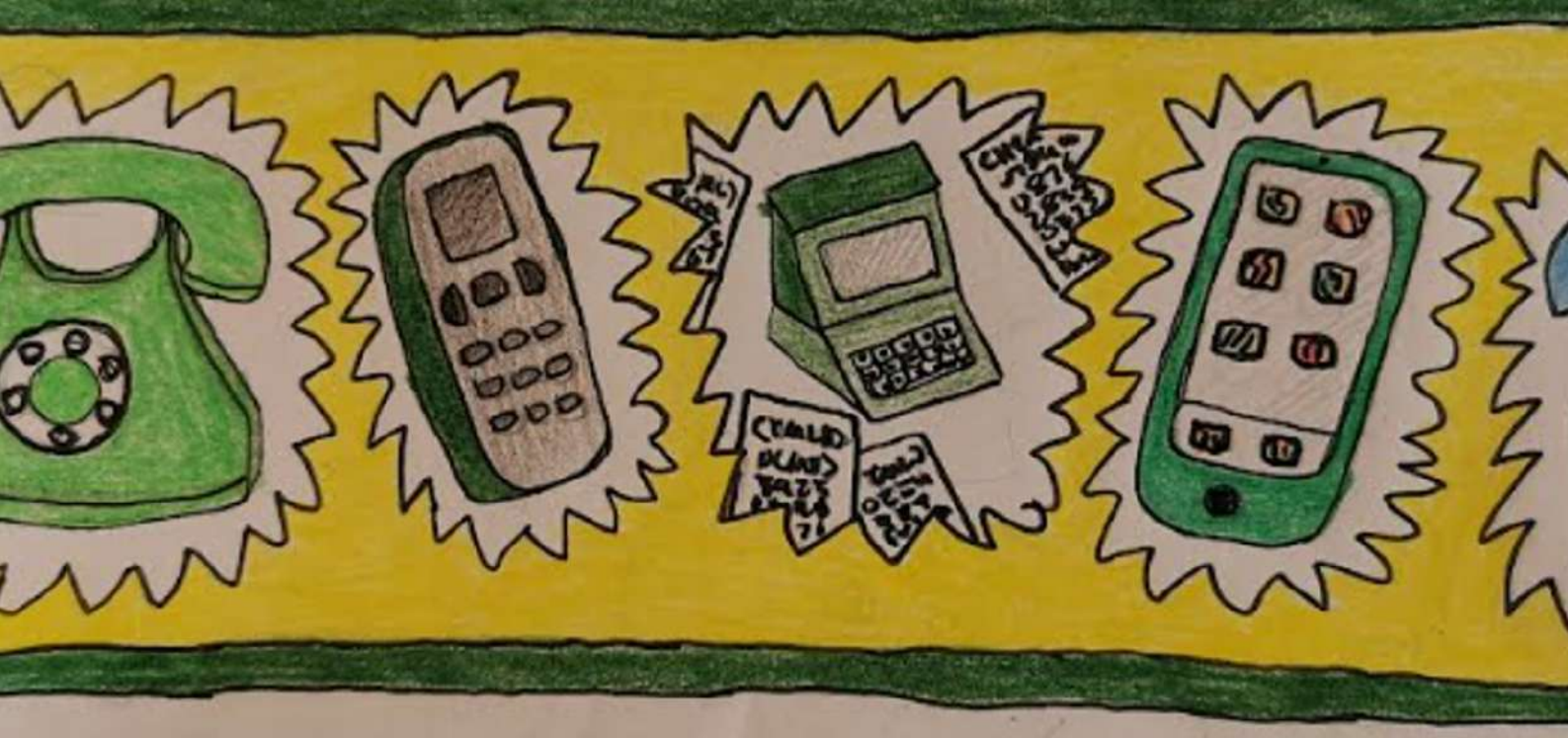
We begin in the 1830s with telegrams- not the app, but the way of transporting words over distances via electricity pulses representing a code.



You had to write 'stop' to end each sentence, it cost 5 cents a word (almost \$2 today) and could take many days or weeks to be delivered. Yet the telegram caught on, and quickly.

Until the telephone was invented, that is. It could transmit sound, in real-time, across continents. The early telephone used the vibration that a sound caused in a needle to scratch out patterns on a metal disk, which another needle could then trace over to replicate the sound. The telephone allowed friends living in different countries to talk as though together, at the admittedly prohibitive price of \$45 per three minutes (approximately \$550 today).

Around the same time- late 1800's- the radio was invented. It used electromagnetic waves sent out in specific patterns, which were then received by the radio antennae at the destination.



This allowed news broadcasts to be made quickly to a large number of scattered people, the month's top music to be heard (constantly, whether you enjoyed it or not), soldiers to gather information about wars, and something approximating modern podcasts to be invented.

In the 1970s, the telephone evolved from the landline to the portable cellphone, capable of calls, texts, and thumb damage from pressing a key four times for one letter. Although it started evolving, phones weren't popular until 1990s. People could talk anywhere, from businesspeople to angst-ridden teenagers. The world started to speed up. Things took minutes instead of hours, and everything became more efficient, more like the world today.

The first recognisable computers were large boxes with external keyboards, capable of internet connection (which scared the living technological daylights out of anybody who heard it, and for all that didn't even have cat gifs yet). They did allow more text-based communication over distances, and access to much more information for the everyday person.

And at long last, we arrive in the modern world, equipped with laptops and smartphones, Email and Instagram, podcasts and Zoom calls. Welcome to the future, my friend. We can talk with friends we've never met, get teachers from England to help with assignments given in NZ, and ask strangers how they deal with having the same disorder we do without ever knowing their names. Look up any obscure problem, and someone has made a video resolving it. We may be living in a golden age of communication.

Are we, though? Is having a conversation carried around in our pockets 24/7 negatively impacting our 'real' relationships?

Some say yes. Our phones distract us from the most valuable conversations we can have, namely those with our 'real life' family and friends.





Perhaps we'll all know every language in existence, and humans from all sides of the earth will speak kindly, as equals.

Then again, perhaps we will stop reading and return to hieroglyphics in the form of emojis. Perhaps AI will be better at conversation than us, and we'll stop talking to anyone but chatbots. Perhaps only one universal language will be permitted.

We can't know how the future will turn out. But somehow or other, we will keep communicating, sharing experiences, jokes, and plots to take over the world. Humans are just like that.

Some, myself now included, say no. Online friendships are just as real and important. Connecting with people who think like you and support you is as important as connecting with people nearby who you've met. And if some of those supportive people ARE close to you, if they're your own family- all the better!

For humans, communication is essential to survival. We evolved to rely on others, and to require support, ideas, and conversation from fellow humans. It's important to remember this. Being lonely is common, and though it's easy to think everyone has friends but you, that isn't true.

Perhaps in future, we will be able to teleport across continents to meet friends. Perhaps school classes will be composed of students who are certain to become friends, learning together in spaceships or underwater or orbiting another star.





FINDING YOUR VOICE

Words by Cassie Taulelei

"I have a loud voice, my questions could not be ignored."

This is a quote from a book called *The Wind in My Hair*, an autobiography written by Iranian journalist and women's rights activist Masih Alinejad. At this point in the story, Masih discusses her expulsion from the Majlis as a journalist and the censorship she faced whilst working there. And this one part of the story has remained in my mind since.

Masih Alinejad had been working for *Etemaad*, a reformist newspaper published in Iran, where she had made quite a name for herself as an outspoken critic of the government of the time.

Her articles often drew front page publication, and her name was well-known in Iranian journalistic and political circles.

At this time, she had written a piece on corruption inside the government – an unfathomably brave topic for her as a journalist in Iran, a country where dissident reporters often simply disappear. Her article suggested that whilst government officials had widely claimed they had experienced pay cuts, they were, in reality, being paid vast sums of money in bonuses. For this, she was expelled from the Majlis; Iran's parliament, barred from reporting from there ever again.

But this expulsion, a fate which would destroy most journalists, only emboldened Alinejad. She refused to be silenced. For the following years, she continued to open light onto the dark side of the Iranian regime, scandal after scandal, infighting, and incapability.

She continued even after fleeing Iran for the United States, following the Green Movement of 2009, and in 2014, beginning her protest movement: My Stealthy Freedom. Now, she leads a coalition of opposition figures intending to dispose of the clerical regime.

The lives of Alinejad and myself share very few similarities. We grew up in entirely different countries, under entirely different systems, and forced to fight different battles. But there is one thing that I, and most people, share with her—a deep, powerful yearning for justice.

But here again, she possesses something critical that many do not: a loud voice

I used to have a loud voice. Like many, as a child, I screamed from the rooftops with little care for the judgement of others. My statements were not something to be ignored because it was impossible not to hear them. I was not afraid to express myself.

But our world has a peculiar way of dimming candles, of snuffing out the flame in all of us, before it burns its brightest.

Again, like many, I lost that. I lost the loudness, the boldness, my confidence in my voice. Suddenly I was being ignored in all forums; my questions went unacknowledged, and my contributions went unnoticed. I shrank back into the shadows.

And then I stayed there. For many years, behind, without contributions, a simple cog in the machine. I threw in no spanners; I attempted to change nothing.

Funnily enough, it was Alinejads' story which inspired me to change that.

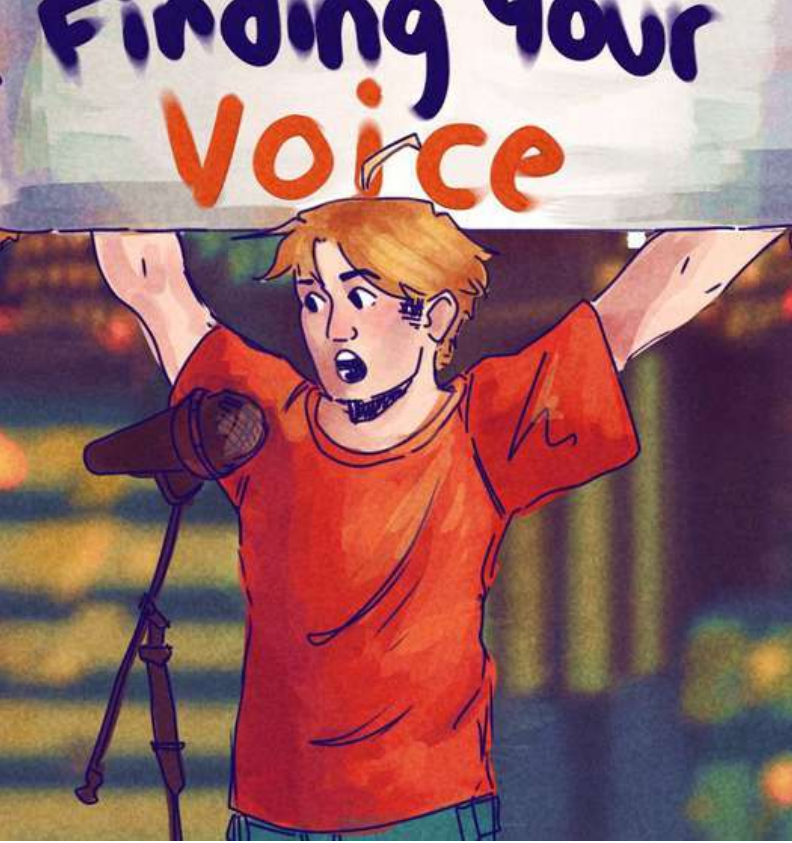
I started speaking up, physically speaking louder, ensuring it didn't go ignored when I had something to say. My questions now received answers, and my contributions were noted. It was truly a liberating feeling to finally be heard.

There are many like me, who want to speak up, but do not know how to. Who wants their contributions to be heard? So let me give you some advice.

Speak from your stomach, not from your throat.

Art/Annabelle Waters





Art/Annabelle Waters

I want you to take a deep breath and make a simple 'Ah' sound like you are at the doctor's. Take note of your body; where do you feel the sound coming from? Your nose, the back of your throat, your chest, or your stomach? To be loud, the sound must come from your abdomen; use your diaphragm. If you feel the sound in your nose or your throat, try to move it down. Don't be scared of being loud; that is your intention. Your voice may get slightly deeper as you speak from your stomach; that is okay. It is easy to change the tone and pitch of your voice once you have handled producing that sound.

You've got it? Good. Now, speak slower.

Many of us speak at high speeds, whether for fear of being heard or simply because that is what we have accustomed ourselves to. But this speed is toxic for our endeavour. You need to speak clearly, slower so that everyone can understand. Don't be afraid to take breaks; pause after you make a point to let it sink into your audience.

COMMUNICATION

Now, be confident.

You have to go for it. Self-doubt is okay; it's natural. But you cannot let it get the better of you. I know it feels like cold comfort, but the only way you will discover your voice and rekindle your spark of confidence is to let your voice be heard. If you have something to say, say it.

And don't be afraid to repeat yourself.

Learning to speak up is a long marathon, and you likely can't even see the finish line. There will always be more challenges. Once you've spoken up in class or at work, do it on social media. Once you've spoken up on social media, organise an event. Give a speech at a protest. But wherever you end up, remember that you *do* have a loud voice.

Don't let your questions go ignored.

If you wish to hear more of Masih Alinejads' story, her book is *The Wind in My Hair, a fight for freedom in modern Iran*. It is available from most libraries in major cities across Aotearoa.

Art/Annabelle Waters



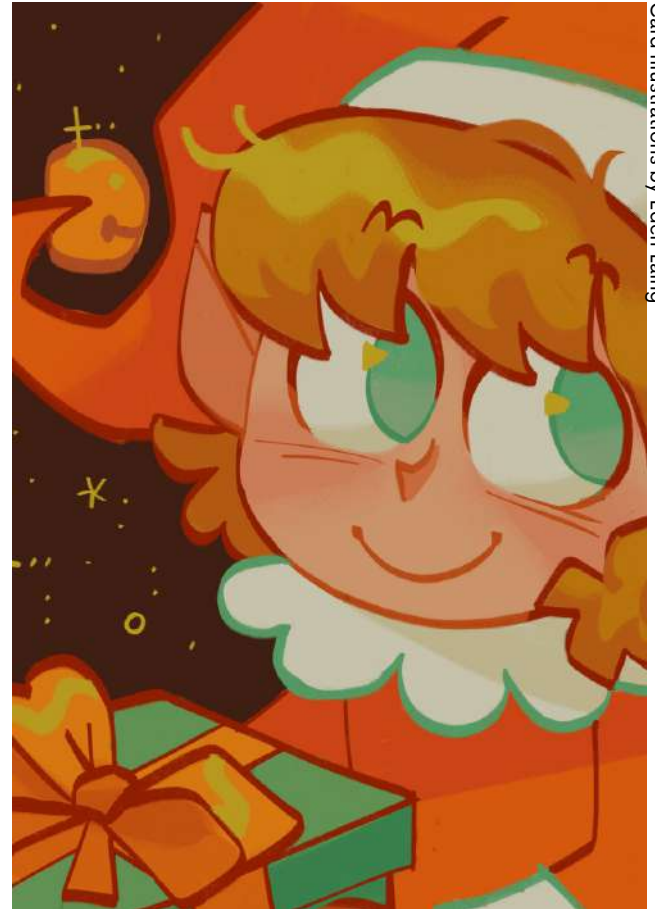
Creating Christmas Chaos

WORDS BY DENIKA MEAD

Do you love playing board games?

Lachlan Mead is a 15-year-old who has always been passionate about games. "I've loved playing and making board games for as long as I can remember." He's so passionate that last year he dusted off an idea he had, and then began developing a Christmas-themed game called Christmas Chaos.

"I made copies of Christmas Chaos to give to my cousins for Christmas. After seeing how much fun everyone had playing it, I decided to continue developing the game. It was fun seeing my grandparents, young cousins, and uncles and aunts enjoying playing the game," he said. He describes the game as "a fun, family card game for 2-4 players. There are three ways to win the game. Either, you collect 10 presents, you play the Santa Token, or you have the Santa Token when the draw pile runs out. There are other cards in the pack that help you steal presents or gain the Santa Token. One of my favourite cards in the game is Bossy Mum, which makes everyone share their presents."



Card illustrations by Eden Laing

But having an idea is one thing, making it come to life is another. To make his dream a reality, Lachlan needed a supportive team to help. So Lachlan reached out to find a community to support him. "It's important to work with people with skills that you don't possess," Lachlan said.

One of the people who has been crucial to the development of the game is L-J, Lachlan's mentor who works as a product designer at Vivita's Vivistop Welly. L-J describes Vivita as "a global, child-led studio space. Their goal is to support innovation with, for, and by kids." It was the perfect organization to support Lachlan in developing his game. L-J talked about why having a community is essential when trying to complete a project.

"At the end of the day, we are all human," she said. "We're not good at everything. One person can't do it all, no matter how much we would like to think so."

To get a project from start to finish, you need motivation as well as support. "Working with Lachlan, I can really see his passion for games shining through," L-J said. "He's just a prime example of someone who is really passionate". One of the things that Vivita put in place for Lachlan was an industry mentor, Jarratt Gray, to advise Lachlan on game designing.

Jarratt, who works professionally, developing video games and board games, has been an important mentor to Lachlan throughout his process. Jarratt says he has been "designing games probably since I was around ten or eleven." He believes there are lots of different skills you can gain from undertaking a project like this. "You can make a board game by yourself, but the community - the people that you playtest with or the people that you work with to make the art - all of those things are so important."

Card illustrations by Eden Laing



Card illustrations by Eden Laing

Lachlan wanted Christmas Chaos to be a game that would bring people together and encourage families to share Christmas memories. Jarratt agreed that games were a great way of connecting people. "Any type of hobby brings people together," he said. "It's all about making sure that people have a place".

"Jarratt let me know about the opportunity to playtest games at Wellycon and encouraged me to book in and do it." Lachlan said

He knew how important it was to get feedback from players to strengthen his game so contacted Pike, an organizer of Wellycon, the largest boardgame convention in New Zealand, to ask to be involved in the prototype testing. Having the opportunity to playtest his game at Wellycon has been a great way to build a supportive community. "I've playtested my game twice now at Wellycon," he said. "It's been great to see people playing the game, getting their feedback, and hearing people's suggestions on how the game could be improved." Pike's advice for gathering a community is that "it's important to give as well as receive.

If you're willing to help other people with their projects and their interests, they'll be more interested and able to help you as well."

After Lachlan had revised the game a few times, he started to consider an important element - the artwork. Lachlan reached out to a designer, Eden Laing, who is currently studying concept design. Eden was excited to help work on the project. Board games have been an important part of her life. "My dad is really obsessed with board games and he's always used it as a way to spend time with people." Eden was drawn to the game, saying, "The cool thing with Christmas Chaos is I feel like it's the kind of game you can have in the background while you're talking. It doesn't take over everything. Anyone can connect to it." This was Lachlan's intention - to create a game that was fun for everybody.

"Lachlan told me a bit about his game and all the different elements," Eden said. "I helped visualize that narratively because, with games, you can talk a lot about rules, but if there isn't a narrative for someone to latch onto, it can get hard to memorize all the rules."

When completing a project and gathering a community around you, Eden said, "it's really important that you have people who are honest with you, and who are also your number one fans. When you don't have a community of people who you're friends with, it means that you end up either having people who are really rude to you or people who just want to be nice and they just say it's good and you don't learn."

So if you're looking at starting a project, know that you don't have to do it alone. Bringing in other people will strengthen your idea and help you move from a concept to a prototype and then a finished product. Gather a community of supportive people, and don't be afraid to jump in and get started!

Lachlan is now planning the next steps towards completing and producing the Christmas Chaos game.

If you want to follow Lachlan's journey, follow him on:
Instagram **@christmaschaosgame**.
To learn more about Vivita and Wellycon, check out their websites: vivita.kiwi and wellycon.org.nz

Photography by Vivita Vivistop Welly



Photography by Vivita Vivistop Welly



They told me I had low self-esteem

Poem by Ella Mooney

They told me I had low self-esteem:

They told me I had low self-esteem

And I said no

No, because I don't flip the bird at my reflection as I brush my teeth

No, because I don't repeat acidic words as a mantra before I fall asleep

No, because I don't wish I was that pop star or astronaut instead of myself.

But that's not what it is

It's that little voice that tells me a merit is a failure

That voice that says if I don't save the world I'll have wasted my life

It's my reply when Mum tells me something suits me-

"But you would say that, you're my mother"

And it's my thoughts when I'm not immediately good at something-

"I suck at this. I must suck at everything."

It's my certainty that compliments are nothing but pity

"Your writing is good"

As if they would actually mean that

It's me saying no, I'm fine, how are you

Can I help?

But not letting anyone help me

It's the feeling that whenever I beat someone in a game
They must have let me win
My creeping doubt if I place first in a competition
There must have been nobody else competing
It's my comparison of myself only to those who do better
Because there is no excuse for my work not being university-level
It's how I always look to others for reassurance
Because surely they must know better
It's my reflection on every mistake in my life
How I, at 5, ought to have understood it all
My complete inability to take a compliment
Or even believe it was genuine
It's my guilt when someone spends money on me
And my pausing when someone interrupts me
Because surely what they have to say is more important?
It's the way I'm jealous of my future self
Because she must be better than me
And the way I apologise for everything
I'd apologise for existing if I could
It's me being terrified of failure
When failure just means achieving the ordinary
It's that feeling of expectation sitting heavy on my shoulders
And though some of it was placed there by others
The worst of it is my own.

PHOTOGRAPHY: A TOOL FOR ANIMAL CONSERVATION

Interview by Aotea Taylor

At just age 17, Ava Thomas has already been awarded the 2022 DBB Photography of the Year Award. Ava has shown compassion in volunteering with the use of her award-winning photography, and shares her experience in volunteering, in alignment with her passions for conservation and wildlife.

“I’ve always had a love for animals and the different species in the world.”

“Although I believe it is not the perfect place for animals to live, I do see them as necessary to conserve and re-establish species.”

“Wellington Zoo is a world-wide leader when it comes to conservation, with many programs such as The Nest Te Kōhanga (Native Species Hospital), Cambodia Free The Bears (saving sun bears from

illegal animal trade), Wildcats Conservation Alliance, Madagascar” Flora and Fauna, and much more. What I most like about Wellington Zoo is that it is a place made around the needs of the animals, centred around their conservation and educating people about these species.”

Fun Fact: Wellington Zoo is the world’s first CarboNZero certified zoo

“By volunteering at Wellington zoo I have been able to use my photography to help conserve species, such as the chimps and snow leopards, and educate people on the lives of these endangered animals.”

Photos/Ava Thomas





Photos/Ava Thomas

Ava strengthened her photography journey with Click Happy, the photography programme. This was how she ended up getting the photography gig at the zoo.

“I first entered into Click Happy after I bought my camera.”

“By then I had an idea of compositional skills and was introducing myself to manual settings, Click Happy helped to strengthen my use of manual mode. Click Happy also helped me to make links to places and people like the zoo to spread my photography. Now I am able to give back to Click Happy by volunteering to help out with mentoring the students!

What has been your favourite part of being a volunteer?

“My favourite part of volunteering at Wellington Zoo was the fact that I was able to use my photography to address such important issues, help educate people and spread awareness of endangered and threatened species.

Mandi, the Click Happy founder first introduced me to one of the people who worked for media at the Wellington Zoo. My role as a volunteer at Wellington Zoo was to provide them with images that they could use for promotion. My first project was to photograph their baby Chimp, Akida, that was born a near a year ago.

When spending time with Akida and his troop I could definitely see the resemblance, they have the most characterful faces, human-like hands and each chimp has its own personality.

Chimps are considered an endangered species and their numbers are rapidly declining, mainly due to habitat loss, human introduced diseases, and hunting. By photographing Akida and his troop I am able to support the zoo's efforts in conserving the wild chimp populations and help spread awareness of this species (and show off how awesome they are!).

Photos/Ava Thomas



What were the challenges that came with volunteering?

When I was shooting for the zoo I would sit and wait for the animals to get into the right position, or come out for ages. I spent most of the time waiting rather than shooting! And a lot of the time when the animal would come out, I would miss it or it would be out of focus, or a child would run past my camera etc. for every photo I took there were about 10 crappy ones! When photographing, animals especially, I believe it's important that we take into consideration the nature of the subject matter we are shooting, we can't expect that an animal will be posing perfectly for a photo every time!

Photos/Ava Thomas



I think that understanding your subject and having patience are some of the most important things in making a good photo! With me living in the Manawatū which is about a 2-hour drive from Wellington it has been hard to get down there all the time.

I did about 3 giant full day shoots surrounding the chimps (ending up with about 4,000 RAW photos and videos per shoot, which was not fun to deal with post-production-wise!), from these trips I got to know the chimps and understood that each has a different personality and a different role within their troop. This experience has helped me become more involved in the conservation of the chimps. Even though these were challenges in the volunteering position, I feel I learnt loads from these challenges and it just helped me develop my skills as a photographer. My images of Akida and his troop have so far been used on multiple social media posts, and across billboards promoting the zoo.

My next project was the one that I was initially asked to shoot for, and that was the introduction of snow leopards to the zoo. Earlier this year two snow

leopards, sisters Asha and Manju, were introduced to the Wellington zoo.

Snow leopards are considered most-endangered with roughly only 3000-4000 left, mainly due to habitat loss to farming, over hunting of prey species, poaching, climate change, and human-wildlife conflict. Similar to how I felt with chimps, when photographing the snow leopards, I was promoting their conservation and educating people about these ghost-like cats. So far I have only done 1 shoot with the snow leopards, and the photos have been used on [the zoo's] social media posts. The snow leopards are amazing, I wish that I could have seen them in the wild rather than in the zoo, but I understand why it is important to have animals in captivity like this.

I have also photographed the zoo's other residences such as the lions, otters, giraffes, servals and cheetahs etc. almost all of the animals that I have photographed there are either endangered or threatened (due to human actions).

Many of these photos have also been used to promote the zoo and the conservation of its inhabitants on social media."

When volunteering, you will not be paid in money but in experience, and will give you a sense of purpose. When asked what she attributed to the development of her photography, Ava shares her early experience with photography:

"I developed my photography skills by persistence. I photograph as much as possible, so I can get lots of practice. I try different techniques, and if they fail then I just keep working on them. I've been doing photography for quite a while now but I still have loads to work on.

I started photography when I was about 9 years old when I picked up my mums phone and took some photos around the garden. After that I was addicted! When I was about 12/13yrs old I was approached by the local arts centre to have my first solo exhibition.

Photos/Ava Thomas



“I would recommend to everyone to do at least a little bit of volunteering in their lifetime.”

“So I collected the best photos that I had taken, and printed them. I was also the first young person to exhibit there. I pretty much sold out and used that money to buy my first camera, a Fuji-film x-t100 with a little prime lens. After this I kept photographing, I'd take any jobs offered, often free of charge just to get my name out there.”

“What I love about photographing birds (or any other animal) is that it is almost like looking at a different world. When I'm out photographing - my stresses melt away and I'm just focused on listening for a bird or watching the undergrowth in hopes of seeing one.”



Photos/Ava Thomas



Photos/Ava Thomas

“I found photography is a great way to explore the things I love and have led me to these opportunities, such as volunteering at the zoo, and figuring out what to do in the future (sort of!). When starting out in photography (or any other passion you may have!) I suggest you keep it simple but still stay ambitious, don't push yourself to be better than others, just work to improve your own skills.”

Who are your biggest supporters?

Probably my mum and dad. My mum used to work for Stuff as an arts reporter, so she met a lot of amazing artists, which has helped me with finding places to exhibit etc. And my dad also loves animals and the outdoors so he has always supported me with the wildlife side of my photography.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to pursue their dreams?

I would suggest for them to find something they are passionate in. As you can probably tell I'm passionate in animals so I do wildlife photography, volunteer at a zoo, and will hopefully be studying something along the lines of zoology next year. Find what works for you and pursue it! I found photography is a great way to explore the things I love and have led me to these



“When photographing wildlife I hope to capture something different in a way that people haven’t already seen. I try and capture the story of the animal. It doesn’t necessarily have to be beautiful, but all that matters to me is that it tells a good story.”



Philosophy of Te Whare Tapa Whā

WORDS BY LILY DUTTON

Te Whare Tapa Whā is a Māori model of health developed by leading Māori Health Advocate Sir Mason Durie in 1984. The model is designed to look like a meeting house with four walls. These walls represent taha wairua, your spiritual wellbeing, taha hinengaro, your mental and emotional wellbeing, taha tinana, your physical wellbeing, and taha whānau, your family and social wellbeing. Like any good house, it needs a good foundation. On the model, the foundation is represented by your whenua, your land and your roots.

In order to thrive and live a good life, all five dimensions of your Te Whare Tapa Whā need to be balanced and in unity. If one of these sides is damaged in some way, it leaves you unbalanced and impacts your overall well-being.

Whenua represents your land and roots. You can think about this as the place that you belong and feel connected to.

This could be your marae, your river, your mountain, or a special place where you feel comfortable and respected – maybe your workplace, home, or in nature. The roots are all about you feeling connected to your ancestors and all who will come after you.

The beach is a special place to me, so one way I look after my whenua is by taking time to walk along the beach every so often, admiring the beautiful landscape around me.

Another way you can keep your whenua foundation strong is by listening to older generations in your family tell stories about their life, so you can learn about your heritage. In doing this you could also learn a language or traditional cooking style so you can feel closer to your ancestors.

The whānau dimension of Te Whare Tapa Whā highlights the importance of heartfelt bonds with our family and friends

To establish these relationships with others, we must first find good connections within ourselves by nurturing ourselves. We can then learn to have deeper and more meaningful relationships with the people around us. In time, this leads to an overall sense of social wellbeing.

Some ways I keep my whānau dimension strong are by making the time to message an old friend, calling a relative I haven't seen in a long time, or by making plans with a group of friends that don't all go to the same school. One positive effect of phones is that you have the power to talk to anyone you want with just the click of a button, so do take the time to stop for a moment and talk to someone.

The wairua wall dives into our spiritual wellbeing. This wall is more complex to understand, and many people have different views about what it means. Some people believe that the wairua dimension is tied only to your faith and religion. Whilst I do believe that this dimension is about your beliefs, I don't think it is solely defined by the amount of times you go to church or pray, because we are living in a modern world where not everyone believes in a god or gods. What everyone does have are values, which help to inform our beliefs.



AI Art by Lily Dutton

Your spiritual wellbeing is about standing up for yourself and what you believe in, staying true to yourself and not compromising your values in order to please others.

You can improve your spiritual wellbeing by practising mindfulness. Being mindful can look different for everyone. It is about finding the right thing for you so that you open a deeper connection to your spiritual self by creating meaning and reflection. This could look like meditation, drawing, journaling, praying, writing lists, and more.

Taha tinana revolves around your physical wellbeing; the way you look after, nurture and treat your body. Having a positive mind about your appearance is crucial. This can be tough at times, but in order to have a good relationship with your body you need to love it. Always remember – your body is made especially for you. It is perfect. Learning how to listen to how our body feels, and responding to it accordingly, is a very useful skill to have.

For instance, after a long day at school/work or an intense workout, take a moment to unwind, reflect and chill by reading a book. This simple act of self care will help to recharge and nourish your body.



AI Art by Lily Dutton



AI Art by Lily Dutton

Make sure to think about what you fuel your body with, but don't cut everything out of your diet. It is also good to maintain some sort of exercise in your life. Your physical wellbeing can be enhanced through yoga or a short walk, it doesn't need to be a full-on hike.

Further ways you can strengthen your tinana wall are by having a spa day, saying positive body affirmations, getting a massage, dancing to your favourite music, and not eating out as much. You could also practice a body scan meditation.

To do a body scan, you lie down and close your eyes, working your way down your body, taking the time to notice how each part of your body is feeling, releasing the tension you find as you go.

Taha hinengaro wraps itself around your mental and emotional wellbeing. It is the core of how we feel and process our emotions. To keep your taha hinengaro strong, you must be open to feeling your feelings and trying to understand why you are feeling them. It is crucial to communicate with people about your feelings, whatever they are. I think some people associate hinengaro with only negative emotions, but that isn't true. It is about all of your emotions. Learning how different people make you feel, how emotions impact your ability to make good decisions, maintaining healthy relationships, and personal growth are all key parts of upholding your hinengaro.

“To keep your taha hinengaro strong, you must be open to feeling your feelings and trying to understand why you are feeling them.”

I find my Hinengaro wall the hardest to keep strong, as I like to keep my emotions to myself.

A few things that help me are colouring in, reading a book, poetry, music, doodling, journaling, and drawing, as they all focus my mind on something and help me to express feelings. Other things you could do include creating a vision board, hanging out with people who make you feel loved, scrapbooking, or using grounding techniques to soothe you and keep you in the present moment. Just remember: if it ever gets too much, always talk to someone you trust.



Ask Mandi

Dear Mandi,

Sometimes I feel so lonely. How can I make more real friends?

"If you judge people, you have no time to love them." – Mother Teresa.

When was the last time someone heard you down to your soul? They heard you tell your story and then showed you that they were listening and that you mattered to them. They felt your feelings as you said the story and stood shoulder to shoulder with you. The lifeblood of good friendship is the capacity to listen empathetically to the other person. But this is easier said than done.

So often, we think we are listening, but are we really?

Sometimes we learn unhelpful communication patterns in our family and community, or it can be how we respond when stressed out.

We are so busy thinking about the next thing we will say that we miss what they said. We are so focused on our needs that we miss seeing the person in front of us has real deep feelings and needs.

I went to 4 years of nursing school, and empathy was something we were taught to show, but I never learned the list I will share with you.



There are multiple ways to break a connection with someone, where you leave them hanging, feeling like they just wasted their breath on you.

Just remember the key to friendship is connection. As a friend, you want to know that you matter to your friend, and they matter to you. Especially if you are the more introverted of the two, it is hard to feel heard if they constantly interrupt. Or if you are an introvert, are you listening or are you more tuned into your thoughts?

Here are some best conversation habits to break if you want a deep connection with others.



The most common “killers” of empathy are:

- **Analysing:** “You probably feel frustrated because...” “Don’t think for me...feel with me.
- **Agreeing with the person you listen to:** “You’re right, I can’t believe they did that!” – This seems so benign, but they lose their flow, and you have just taken back the mic.
- **Advising:** “If I were you, I would do it like this...”, “I think the best solution would be to...” “Why don’t you...” Advice offered that isn’t requested is one of the hardest things to break... we want to contribute to fixing it...but they just want to be heard. If they wish for advice, they will ask for it. Until then, just sit on it.
- **Over Consoling:** When they just want to talk about it. This one feels like it could be a good thing to do, but it cuts them off before they can finish their thoughts. And how do you know it will all work out? It is telling them not to feel so profoundly. For example: “It wasn’t your fault”, “It will all work out.”
- **Evaluating:** “You are so clueless.” “How could you have thought that was a good idea?” Judging, and they are doubtful to share with you again.
- **Comparing:** “Your sister is a natural. I wonder why you find it so hard?.” Well, this is just being rude
- **One-upping:** “That’s nothing. Let me tell you about the time!” This is diminishing their experience and making it about you.
- **Pushing feelings away:** “You don’t need to be angry.”
- **Showing sympathy:** “Oh, poor you! I am so sorry...” Interrupting and removing yourself from being with them and just kind of, in a way, saying, “It sucks to be you.”
- **Storytelling:** “That reminds me of the situation when...” Making it about you and not them.
- **Correcting:** “She didn’t say that” “I am sure he had good intentions; why don’t you see it?” This will likely push the person you are listening to get defensive.

Some seem counterintuitive, like the agreeing one in the beginning. But it is more about interrupting someone when they are speaking. You can nod but give them the microphone and don't quickly take it back. Practice mindful listening. You are tuning in. Then when they have stopped talking, show them that you were listening by guessing how they must have felt. Then when they are feeling heard, it is your turn. Then hopefully, you will find someone willing to listen empathetically to you to help you be seen as deeply as you should.

Can you think of the last time you felt heard? If recently, cool. Count your blessings because it is a truly good friend who can be there empathetically for you. If you can't even remember the last time someone listened to you, consider developing the skill yourself to model it. And begin by giving yourself empathy. You can do this best by having a bleat in your journal and then answering yourself as if you were a 20 year older version of yourself who loves you deeply and knows you intimately. Let them reflect on what emotions and needs they heard.



Support Lines

Kokiri Te Oranga Pai -

07 895 5807

Whats Up (youth 5-18 years) -

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.

YOU'VE
GOT
THIS



