



Tapatahi
integrity

Pono
honesty

Kawenga takohanga
accountability

JUNE NEWSLETTER

WENDY'S WORDS

Everyone, I want you to know how much I care for you. It's not just about you being there for work, but about being there for you when times are tough. There's been so much hardship experienced by you – grief, relocation of your life, family troubles, financial worries, etc. I and my team are trying to get those financial worries elevated by pushing hard to get more work through for you. But the amount of grief through loss that has happened for a lot of you is just heart-breaking for me. I totally empathise with you and am here for you 24/7. You know this. I really do care and I am, along with my team, here for you. So please call if you need support

Hello from Catherine



Pipiri / June is here!

We've made it to the 6th month of the year and are now getting through a wet and wild winter. Please stay safe when out on the roads, and keep those vitamins up to keep your immune defence high.

It's also the time for Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) where you can feel down with the "winter blues". Even though I love winter, I know that I get affected by it when I go to work in the dark, come home in the dark and then the weekends are spent studying - very little light intake. I do try to get outside and get some sun into my day, and this does help - we weren't built to live in the dark, but to enjoy the sunshine when we can. Here's a great article I read about SAD sometime ago which made me think about the steps I can take to help lift my own spirits:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/seasonal-affective-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20364651>.

Further in this Newsletter is more info about mental health awareness which we are going to really focus on throughout the month of June.

Thank you one and all for turning up every time you go on shift with your focus in on the tangata whaiora you're there to support. It can be difficult to focus when there's lots going on in your life, but by taking care of the tangata is what you do so very well. Some of you are relaying back about how much you enjoy your work, what it means to you to be part of the change that can happen with our troubled people, to find ways to get through the barriers and find the hurt person within.

I love reading your Daily Notes where you can see the care and attention you give to those who are lucky enough to have you on their waka to help them on their journey for change.

Holidays

This month sees two public holidays.

The Queens platinum jubilee birthday on the 6th. No matter how you feel about the Queen being head of state here in Aotearoa / New Zealand, it's pretty impressive 70 years as the reigning monarch of any country. I hope, if you're not working, to have a wonderful day and enjoy some "me" time.

Then on the 24th, we have Matariki. I studied this last year at Uni and found it absolutely fascinating. I have known about the stars as Pleiades with the parents and their 7 children through Greek mythology.

But then found out about how they are recognised by Māori. There are the 9 main stars called Matariki, Tupuārangi, Waipuna-ā-Rangi, Waitī, Tupuānuku, Ururangi, Waitā, Pōhutukawa and Hiwa-i-te-Rangi.

The one I was drawn to the most was Pōhutukawa - I think that knowing where our spirits depart at Cape Reinga is important to me. Even though I'm not Māori, this resonates with my Irish roots of knowing about the afterlife (Tír na hÓige) and the reconnecting with the souls of ancestors gone before.

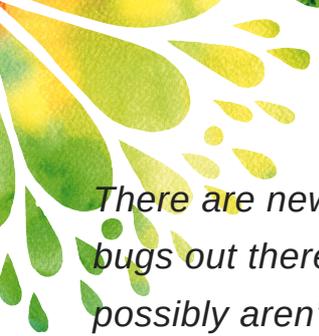
I hope you place a wish on Hiwa-i-te-rangi and learn more about Matariki and how it can affect our lives.



The nine stars of Matariki

| Māori | Greek | Gender | Provenance |
|-----------------|---------|--------|-----------------------------|
| Matariki | Alcyone | Female | Well-being and health |
| Tupu-ā-rangi | Atlas | Male | Food that comes from above |
| Tupu-ā-nuku | Pleione | Female | Food that grows in the soil |
| Ururangi | Merope | Male | The winds |
| Waipunā-ā-rangi | Electra | Female | Rainwater |
| Hiwa-i-te-rangi | Celaeno | Female | Growth and prosperity |
| Waitī | Maia | Female | Fresh water |
| Waitā | Taygeta | Male | The ocean |
| Pōhutukawa | Sterope | Female | The deceased |





Covid Update

There are new variants coming through now the borders are open, and there are other bugs out there which we've not had for a while – they're back in our lives and we possibly aren't as immune to them as before. So keep practicing safe hygiene, wearing masks and doing what we need to keep ourselves and our whānau safe.

Keep doing the RATs please – swab your throat and nose. If you're positive, let us know as we have a duty of care to inform any place you've been at recently. We also want to make sure we get you financial support. Remember to jump onto TheStaffroom under [Covid Guidelines](#) to find out how to order your RATs.

PRONOUNS

Being called he/she or him/her can be frustrating for transgender and gender queer communities. It can make them feel disrespected, invalidated, dismissed, alienated, or dysphoric (intense feelings of depression, discontent). We need to be aware of how our rangatahi identify themselves as part of your initial communication with the tangata whaiora. This is how we will show our continued care of the mental wellbeing of our tangata whaiora and help build those bonds. So when you're new to a rangatahi, try asking: "What pronouns do you use?" or "Can you remind me what pronouns you use?" It can feel awkward at first, but it is not half as awkward as making a hurtful assumption.

If you are asking as part of an introduction exercise and you want to quickly explain what gender pronouns are, you can try something like this: "Tell us your name, where you come from, and your pronouns. That means the pronouns that you use in reference to yourself. For example, I'm Catherine, I'm from Taumarunui, and I like to be referred to with she, her, and hers pronouns. So you could say, 'she went to her car' if you were talking about me." It is important to remember that by asking everyone you encounter which pronouns they use, you can help create a more normalized and safe way for others to share their pronouns, which they may not have been able to do before.

However, some closeted people may not be ready to publicly share their pronouns, so if someone does not supply them in front of a group, try asking in a more private setting. Asking someone "can I use these pronouns for you in front of other people?" is a good way of making sure you do not accidentally out or misrepresent someone.



NURSE SARAH'S CORNER

I just want to acknowledge the amazing work you are all doing in caring for our tangata whaiora. I have been chatting with some of you and learning so much from you and how you turn up each day to care for those entrusted to us. Just as important as it is to care for others, we need to make sure we are looking after ourselves too. With the challenging environment we work in along with the added stress of Covid and our everyday personal lives, it is vital to practice self-awareness to enable us to achieve a balance and prevent burnout.

Mental Wellbeing

Starting this month, we are going to provide more information to you on mental wellbeing.

Following is information on 2 aspects that may help with your mental wellbeing –

Self-Soothing and Gratitude

Below are some useful tips given by clinical Psychologist, Rajna Bogdanovic.

Self-Soothing:

First Aid for when you are stressed and burned out

Whenever you're anxious, sad or overwhelmed or simply need some soothing, it helps to have a collection of comforting and healthy tools to turn to.

Self-soothing refers to behaviours that we use to restore our emotional equilibrium when we've experienced stress or anxiety, to help bring calm to your mind and body.

The benefits of self-soothing are:

- § More groundedness
- § Deeper connection with your inner self
- § Enhanced self-love
- § Increased ability to be mindful
- § Ability to pause and see the bigger picture
- § Getting out of your mind and into your body/senses
- § Less anxiety and stress



EXAMPLES OF SELF-SOOTHING YOU CAN DO TODAY

Take a shower

Taking a shower to physically 'clean' away the days bad events or thoughts. Try doing it by being present and in the moment: pay attention to the sights, scents and sounds surrounding you.

Stretch out

Anxiety tends to hijack the body. While everyone stores anxiety in different spots, common areas are the jaw, hips and shoulders, so stand up and doing a full-body stretch. Reach your arms overhead then slowly fold forward and slowly open and close your mouth as you do.

Visualize a peaceful image

Try combining positive visualization with breath and repeating the sequence several times. As you inhale and reach your arms out in front of you, hold the image in your mind, then exhale and bring both hands to your heart, all the while thinking of the image.

Listen to soothing music

Create a playlist of soothing songs that help you to slow down or connect with memories or positive experiences. Pairing soothing tunes with deep breathing can help too.

Speak compassionately towards yourself

Being self-compassionate boosts mental health. Unfortunately, it doesn't come naturally to many of us. Fortunately, you can learn to treat yourself with consideration and care by: working with a supportive therapist or coach or learning how to through engaging in personal self-development.

Ground yourself

When stress strikes, some people feel lightheaded or like they're floating outside their bodies. Making a point to feel your feet against the ground can help, or naming three things that you can hear, smell or touch.

Take some perspective

Look at the situation or stressor from a birds-eye view. When you're in the moment, current challenges seem enormous, but placing your situation into the bigger picture of your life may help you realize that you may not need to give it so much emotional energy. Ask yourself: "Will this matter in one year? In five years?"

Give yourself permission to feel bad

Remember that you don't have to fix your feelings right away. Although it's important to have a toolbox of healthy strategies to turn, don't feel guilty for feeling bad or fault yourself if you aren't able to be positive or engage in any self-soothing immediately.



GRATITUDE

“Gratitude is the healthiest of all human emotions. The more you express gratitude for what you have, the more likely you will have even more to express gratitude for.” Zig Ziglar

Gratitude is essentially the recognition of the unearned increments of value in one’s experience - the acknowledgment of the positive things that come our way that we did not actively work toward or ask for. Gratitude is a feeling that spontaneously emerges from within. However it is not simply an emotional response; it is also a choice we make.

***Try and list 3 things you are grateful for every day for 2 weeks write them down. Psychological benefits of this are well researched.

I hope this information gives you some tips that may help you centre yourself in this chaotic challenging world we live in. I’m always available, as are the office staff, for you to call and discuss any matters. I will continue to contact you, especially when I know you’ve had a challenging shift, but please call me if you need to offload.





FREE AND USEFUL RESOURCES:

EAP - Employee assistance programme- provides free confidential counselling. Contact 0800 327 669.

www.justathought.co.nz - A free online tool that uses cognitive behavioural therapy to help with stress, anxiety, and depression.

www.depression.org.nz

1737 Need to Talk? - Call or TXT 1737- Front door for anyone dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, or just a need to talk to access support from a trained counsellor.

Depression Helpline - Call 0800 111 757 or Text 4202-Support tools and information for emotional and psychological issues.

Suicide Prevention Helpline 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO)

Shine Domestic Abuse Helpline- 0508 744 633 and webchat, available 24/7

Alcohol Drug Helpline- Call 0800 787 797 or Text 8681

Gambling Helpline- 0800 654 655 or Text 8006

For more useful resources go to:

www.mentalhealth.org.nz

<https://whakarongorau.nz/telehealth-services> (national telehealth services for mental health)





GENERAL BUSINESS

And now for some business – and yes, I know all of this can be boring, but it's required of us to operate under legislation. Not a nice to have, but a need to have. Please read and play your part in what's asked of you...any questions, either the 0800 # or phone me on 027 343 2347.

DAILY NOTES: Julia is often having to nag a few of you to get these Notes through – she shouldn't have to do this. It's part of your role to do this paperwork and we need you to do it – no exceptions. If absolutely necessary, you can take a photo of your written notes and send it through, Julia can convert to a document and send thru to the customer.

SITE SAFETY CHECKS: we are required as part of our H&S operational responsibilities to do a site safety check for new sites. This is mandatory – any time you are given a shift which is new to Apex Care e.g. Oranga Tamariki at a hotel or one of their residences you haven't been to before, do the online site safety check and submit. It's available on TheStaffroom under Resources, or save this link to your phone: [Site Safety Check](#)

POLICE CHECKS: another one of those mandatory tasks we need to do to be able to place you with our customers. If we don't get these done, we may have to start not offering shifts – so please, fill in the online form when requested and send it back to us.

SITE INDUCTIONS: if you go to a site and don't receive an induction, ask for one. This is the agreement with our customers that you are to be given this which will alert you to who likes what on site, what the H&S protocol is, etc. Please don't be shy and try not to make a fuss – make sure it happens.

MY VACCINE PASS: please get your updated blue-coloured vaccine pass through to us. You can use your NZ Covid Tracer app or go to www.mycovidrecord.health.nz and login there. Request your My Vaccine Pass and have this emailed to yourself and then to admin@apexcare.co.nz. Julia will ask you for it if your Pass is due to expire. So be proactive and get your new Pass through and update it onto your phone.

PROFESSIONALISM: keep up working on the non-gossiping, non-smoking, mobile-usage minimised/stopped for non-work-related situations, etc.

TRAINING: Please take up any offers of training when Sarah offers it to you. We want you to improve your skills so we can offer you shifts in line with what you're trained for. There are some mandatory training modules that have been sent to you – medications and infection control. These ARE NOT an option – you need to do them. This will affect us being able to place you on shifts if they're not completed. Please book out an hour in WIW and undertake these. These are paid for, so make sure you do them – with the questionnaire forms completed.

SELF-LEARNING: This is where you can talk with other support workers on specific themes and learning from your colleagues. This is about yourselves at the coalface talking and discussing how to/when to, etc. You're part of a team and we need to rely upon one another for different aspects of what we do. Contact Anna and take the time to learn from others – often the best type of learning!

AND LASTLY...Annual reviews are coming. This is where we get to review what was, look at what you want to accomplish for the year ahead, resolve any difficulties and get a clear understanding together. There will also be pay discussions as part of this. So please make sure you're up-2-date with your training, your processes, your documentation. I will send out invites to you via Zoom later this month and July – I'm really looking forward to working together on this.

AND THAT'S A WRAP

We're here if you need us – just a phone call away. EAP is available – just a phone call away. Please don't feel that you're isolated and can't reach out – there's always someone to listen okay. With the office staff there's a raft of experiences been had by us all – we can empathise and support you.

EAP is for the professional counselling that you may choose to use.

