

## July to September 2017 Newsletter

### “Hoki whakamuri, kia anga whakamua”

*Look to the past in order to forge the future*

The voice of those affected by brain injury  
*Te reo o ngaa taangata i paangia i te mate roro*

#### START CLOSE IN

by David Whyte

Start close in,  
 don't take the second step or  
 the third,  
 start with the first thing close  
 in,  
 the step you don't want to  
 take.

Start with the ground you  
 know,  
 the pale ground beneath  
 your feet,  
 your own way of starting the  
 conversation.

Start with your own question,  
 give up on other people's  
 questions,  
 don't let them smother  
 something simple.

To find another's voice, follow  
 your own voice,  
 wait until that voice  
 becomes a private ear  
 listening to another.

Start right now take a small  
 step you can call your own  
 don't follow someone else's  
 heroics,  
 be humble and focused,  
 start close in.

Don't mistake that other for  
 your own.

Start close in,  
 don't take the second step or  
 the third,  
 start with the first thing close  
 in,  
 the step you don't want to  
 take.



**“Bringing together those  
 in need with those who  
 wish to give”**

#### Healing your relationship after brain injury Page 2

Tips to heal your relationship.

#### Report from Marion Page 3

#### Information about our Singing Group Page 4

Find out when and where, so  
 you can be there

#### Fundraising / donating Page 4

Ways you can support us

#### Feedback from our Seminar held at Hamilton Gardens Page 5-6

Get information on the  
 different presentations done  
 by Professionals in their field  
 of expertise.

#### Meetings and events Page 7

Information about Support  
 Groups and Education Sessions

#### Thank you to our funders and supporters Page 7

A big THANK YOU to everyone  
 who supports us financially.

#### Membership/donation Pg 8

Your contribution impacts lives

## LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

Like us on Facebook and connect with like minded people from around the World!



BrainInjuryWaikato

## Healing your relationship after brain injury

Couples often report big changes in their marriage / partnership after injury. By understanding common post-injury challenges & learning to use effective coping strategies, you can improve & build a healthy, satisfying relationship.

### Tips to Heal Your Relationship

Take a step back & evaluate. Read, think about and try the suggestions below to improve:

#### Communication:

- Patiently listen to your partner and show a positive attitude. Are there parts of what he/she is saying that you can agree with?
- When your partner makes a statement, be cautious about disagreeing. Edit your thoughts to avoid saying only negative things that come to mind.
- Be willing to compromise.

#### Changing Responsibilities:

- To avoid misunderstandings, have an honest discussion and make a list of who is in charge of what.

- Once the list is agreed upon, expect that your partner will attend to his/her jobs in a different way or different time frame than you would like. Even when you think something could be done differently, avoid being critical.
- Always express real appreciation for the things that your partner does. People who feel appreciated are more likely to contribute their time & energy to help each other.

Make five positive statements about your partner for every negative statement.

#### A Change in Priorities:

- Make a commitment to having a good relationship, something you did well when you first met one another.
- Plan times when you & your partner can enjoy something fun; a movie on television, a board game or a walk and make this an activity that can't be pushed aside for something else.
- Focus on the positives in your new life. Couples that are happiest make five positive statements about their relationship or their partner for every one negative statement. Even if you are having a bad day, make sure to point out one or two good things about your spouse or relationship and say them out loud.

#### Emotional & Personality Changes:

- Look for opportunities to laugh with your spouse. Sometimes at first, laughter can feel forced. The more you try to have a good time with your partner, the more natural having fun together will feel. Couples who laugh together are lots happier.
- When your spouse does something you don't expect, see if there is a different way to look at it. Rather than feeling embarrassed, hurt, or angry, see if you can find a reason to smile.
- It is o.k. to expect and demand that your partner treats you with respect. Please do not tolerate hurtful behavior, even if it seems to make things easier for a short time. If this happens, calmly state "I will not allow you to treat me this way" and then leave the situation.
- Remember, brain injury or not, many couples do not agree on everything.

If your problems seem more difficult than you can handle, seek help.



Taken from [http://www.brainline.org/content/2010/09/healing-your-marriage-after-brain-injury\\_pageall.html](http://www.brainline.org/content/2010/09/healing-your-marriage-after-brain-injury_pageall.html)

## Report from Liaison Officer

by Marion

### Winter Greetings

I hope you are keeping warm and making the most of the sunshine when we get it.

It is a good time to get some inside tidy up jobs done such as sorting that pile of paper work. Decluttering our environment really does make our head clearer as well! If you can't get started on it you can get decluttering tips books out of the library, for motivation.

We continue to respond to a very wide cross section of needs for assistance and have enjoyed contact with our regular and or long standing clients. Support groups have brought some new people forward in some of our out of town centres, including Morrinsville and Cambridge. We also continue to receive Agency referrals.

It is encouraging to see peer support in action in our Support Group meetings and it is particularly appreciated by those who are having some difficult times. Of equal importance is the opportunity for shared laughter. We do hope that our Support Group meetings can continue through good attendance.



Events of note have been our Annual General Meeting, which was very well attended, thanks to everyone who made it along. Our outgoing Chairperson shared the work that our organisation has achieved over the past year, as well as the new developments with our name change and affiliation with Brain Injury NZ in Auckland.

On the ground in our region, it continues to be a small team consisting of Ella and myself and client / family volunteers, and Board members. As a Not for Profit group we are dependent on funding from a variety of sources, with Ella and Margaret (Board Member) constantly busy with that. Please consider becoming a member if you are not one already. Your support is much appreciated.

Brain Injury Awareness Banners were up in Tristram Street, Hamilton and Cambridge in June, and coincided with our successful Brain Injury Seminar at the Gardens for Health and Service providers. I was also interviewed on Radio Free FM; Connect with Community Waikato Show. A link to this is on our Facebook.

We are planning a public event at the Gardens on Concussion. Speakers are yet to be confirmed.

We have Gil Newburn, Neuropsychiatrist, on 21 September, who will share the topic of Neuroplasticity following a Brain Injury at our office, for clients and families. It will be an afternoon session at 3:30pm to suit Gil's schedule. So put the date and time in your diary.

We have great topics for upcoming Education Sessions, including Yoga & what it can do for mind and body. James will share his knowledge of yoga and the different styles in August.

We could have a regular group here if there is sufficient interest.

Congratulations to Luke, who is the winner of our mystery prize draw for financial members.

Wishing you a well season.  
Marion



Our Brain Injury car is great, and has made a difference to travel arrangements. You will see in this edition that we have been out and about in the Waikato.

## SINGING GROUP AT THE OFFICE

Research has shown that group singing has tremendous benefits for physical and mental well-being, leading some to campaign for it to be prescribed as a treatment for medical conditions.

Group singing has been found to boost oxytocin levels, which help control stress and anxiety. It is also fun.

We would love you to join us. Just bring some favourite songs and a willingness to give it a try. No musical ability is needed.

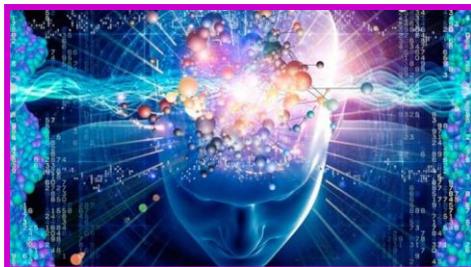
**When:** Monday, 17 July  
**Where:** 11 Somerset Street, Frankton, Hamilton  
**Time:** 2pm – 3:30pm



*“You may say that I'm a dreamer  
 But I'm not the only one  
 I hope someday you'll join us  
 And the world will be as one”*  
 John Lennon, Imagine

## Disclaimer

All care has been taken in the preparation of this newsletter. We disclaim any liability for information contained within. It is of a general nature and to be used as a guide only.



## Brain Injury Advocates

Staff members are advocates for clients. No one else can represent clients in an advocacy role or use the name of the organisation for other purposes not approved by the Board. Consultation with staff is recommended for any suggestions made by other brain injured people for treatment of a brain injury.

Brain Injury Waikato empower people and families affected by brain injury through the provision of advocacy, support and education. We also raise awareness and promote prevention of brain injury.

## Fundraising

[Please note we changed our Give a Little page](#)

### Give a Little

We are registered with givealittle. Support our work [www.givealittle.co.nz/org/braininjuryw](http://www.givealittle.co.nz/org/braininjuryw)



Why not consider donating through payroll giving? Your employer deducts a set amount from your wages and pay it directly to us. My **sincere thanks** to people who are currently donating this way.

### First Aid Kits



#### **77 Piece first aid kit - \$39.95**

Email & order your kit from the office today. We get \$12 for each kit sold. The 77 item kit has transparent fold-out compartments including a digital thermometer and instant ice pack. This kit is CE approved and follows Worksafe NZ guidelines. View this first aid kit at the office, or online at [www.fundraisingfirstaid.co.nz](http://www.fundraisingfirstaid.co.nz)

## Summary of our Annual Seminar held at Hamilton Gardens on 16 June 2017

We had a great team of presenters for our Seminar audience made up of a range of Health Professionals and Service Providers. Feedback received indicated it was a very positive learning and sharing day.

[Kelly Jones, Senior Research Fellow, AUT. Topic: Trajectories in health recovery in the 12 months following mild TBI in children](#)

Kelly and her team looked at what children's patterns of recovery from mild TBI (traumatic brain injury) looks like over time.

There are given difficulties when applying the TBI criteria to children (i.e., determining confusion in young children), behavioural changes immediately following the injury were required to confirm TBI (e.g., vomiting, persistent crying).

Studies confirmed what is already known about mild TBI:

- Risks of poor outcomes shortly after injury;
- Large degree of variability
- Not all children avoid long-term problems.

Findings indicated that overall recovery, continues beyond the first 6-months of injury,

providing a greater window within which to promote recovery.

The study suggested the importance of picking up behavioural and social difficulties early to enable early intervention to reduce the risk of these difficulties continuing.



Kelly Jones

[Dr Alice Theadom, Associate Professor, AUT. Topic: Sleep difficulties and their impact on recovery following mild TBI in children](#)

Sleep is vital for health, functioning and to facilitate recovery from illness and injury. Sleep is especially important for children, as it directly impacts on their mental and physical development. After injury, pre-existing sleep difficulties are likely to impact on recovery, reducing the body's ability to rest and recuperate.

Poor sleep can increase fatigue and increased fatigue can disrupt sleep - but they do not always co-exist. Disrupted sleep can affect mood, behaviour, ability to socialise, memory and concentration. Another factor in sleeping difficulties

could be flashbacks of the injury.

It was found that most recovery occurs in the first 6 months, when unresolved difficulties then become persistent.

Children who experienced a moderate or severe TBI have significantly more sleep problems up to 2 years after injury.

Suggestions to aid children to sleep better:

Make sure time in bed is spent preparing for sleep or sleeping. Do not allow children to use electronic devices which stimulate the brain before going to bed.

Sleep is rarely addressed in rehabilitation, but could help to facilitate recovery from injury.

### [Parent's story](#)

Louise shared her story of her son's concussions, and how it has impacted on him and the family.

He had his first injury from a fall at age three and sustained three concussions in four years. He is a highly intelligent 9 year old, but has problems with a range of symptoms that cause problems in the learning environment. When there are issues at school and at home, this impacts on his siblings.

*Continue on page 6*

However, they have remained loyal and understanding to their credit.

He has a teacher's aide in school, but he struggles with fatigue, noise levels, lights & keeping up with school work. Fatigue is a problem and when he gets overloaded, he can lash out and this has caused issues with peers.

At times it has been hard to get the school and other parents to understand and manage things differently.

Louise says her natural ability to plan and organise has been a saving grace, but she is always prepared for the next situation! The current help she now has in place is much appreciated. The close knit family provides vital love and support.

[Phil Morse, Ph.D. Clinical Services Development / Specialist Neuropsychologist ABI Auckland. Topic: Mayo-Portland Adaptability Inventory tool: Rehabilitation Pathway for the "whole person"](#)

The Mayo-Portland Adaptability Inventory assessment tool has been adapted and piloted within NZ at ABI, Residential Rehabilitation facility in Auckland. In NZ, this tool has been adapted to take cultural factors into account when completing this assessment.



Phil Morse

The assessment is completed by the client, their family and professional staff to set up goals for the client's rehabilitation. Through a rating scale, questions for assessments are being asked about Functional Independence rather than Impairment. Outcomes are measured over time, to gauge progress throughout all rehabilitation stages. It offers the possibility of providing a potentially more reliable and representative assessment.

**Mild brain injury does not mean the symptoms are mild**

[Maria Webb, Office Manager & Robyn Wilson, Registered Nurse, Frankton Park. Topic: Frankton Park Rehabilitation: a community based model](#)

Frankton Park is a client focused organisation that provides supported and independent living options.

Frankton Park has a team of health professionals working with clients. Maria shared the history of Frankton Park and Robyn referred to her experience in health and rehabilitation settings.

The primary focus is facilitating rehabilitation and goal achievement for people living with a brain injury, alongside people in the community.

A client from Frankton Park shared his story on how he sustained a brain injury after being assaulted at the age of 14 and had a stroke 2 weeks later. Things did not go well for him and he struggled with antisocial behaviours and other negative influences.

Whilst at Frankton Park, he wants to achieve a living standard for independence. He is with people his own age, learning to cook, clean and live with others. "it's chilled out and it just works". He is enjoying doing physical work and is full of hope for his future.



Robyn, Daryl and Maria

The Director, Daryl Brown, has extensive experience in the disability field and has worked hard to establish this new model with funding from both ACC and Ministry of Health. He has great vision for the growth of this needed service. It is a very exciting new venture.

## SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS



### Tokoroa

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 10:30am at Tolloch House, Gate One, Maraetai Road.

### Cambridge

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 10:30am at Cambridge Community House, 193 Shakespeare Street.

### Morrinsville

Third Thursday of each month at 10:30am at Morrinsville Community House, 43 Canada Street, Morrinsville. We invite people from surrounding areas to attend.

### Kirikiri

Last Tuesday of each month at 10:30am at the office, 11 Somerset Street, Frankton, Hamilton

### Huntly

Please contact the office if you would like to schedule a meeting with Marion in Huntly. Support Group meetings currently in recess.

## FEEDBACK /SUGGESTIONS

We welcome your suggestions / feedback. We want this organisation to work for you. Please forward your feedback to Ella at [admin@braininjurywaikato.org.nz](mailto:admin@braininjurywaikato.org.nz)

### Horsebirds over Waikato

A social group for women who have had a brain injury and a love of horses in common. Please contact the office if you are interested in attending.

Please contact the office for more information or if you want to be added to the mailing list to receive any of our notices.

### Education sessions with Healthcare Rehabilitation

Sessions for clients, families, carers, & anyone interested in the topic of brain injury.

**July: Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup>**  
Due to building renovations on the outside, there won't be a meeting in July

**August: Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**Topic: Benefits of yoga**

James Fowlie will talk about the different styles of yoga and the benefit of each style. There is an opportunity to put a few poses into practice.

There is the potential for a yoga class at the office, if there is enough interest. You are able to participate on a chair if you feel unstable on your feet. Please contact the office with your interest.

**September: Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**Topic:** Speaker to be confirmed.

Information about these sessions and meetings are available on our website [www.braininjurywaikato.org.nz](http://www.braininjurywaikato.org.nz)

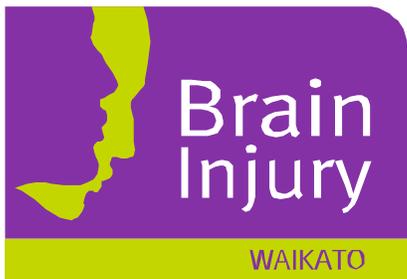
Our **SINCERE THANKS** to all our funders and supporters



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Thank you to everyone who has given a donation, but for privacy reasons cannot be named.



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[www.facebook.com/BrainInjuryWaikato](http://www.facebook.com/BrainInjuryWaikato)

## CC 23785

### NEW MEMBERSHIP / RENEWAL

#### We invite you to support our work

Brain Injury Waikato empowers people and families affected by brain injury, to make informed choices in ways that create a long-term and sustainable difference in their lives through the provision of advocacy, support, information and education. We also raise awareness and promote prevention of brain injury in the community.

I wish to become a member \$ 10  (Students, beneficiaries, seniors)

I wish to become a member \$ 50  (individuals waged)

I wish to give a donation \$10  \$20  \$30  \$ \_\_\_  (other)

Payment can be made by Direct Deposit into SBS bank account no 03-1355-0691730-00. Please use your name as reference or phone the office for a reference number.

**Name:**.....

**Address:**.....

**Contact numbers:**.....

**Email address:**.....

**YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND DONATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WE SUPPORT**

**Please note membership fees are now due**