



We know the work that God has begun in and through us at Transform Aotearoa He will be faithful to complete as we continue to serve the South Waikato community. We continue to see lives change on a weekly basis, and those who follow our “Heart-Warming Friday” stories will bear witness to the many lives that have been impacted over the year. The people behind the stories are heroes in their own right as they forge new pathways to greener pastures for themselves and their families.

2020 hit us with many unexpected disruptions, however we navigated each one of them as it came. During lockdown we were very encouraged by how we all managed to maintain contact with our clients, our clients maintained contact with us, and with each other. The internal support was breathtakingly beautiful, and demonstrated afresh to us the power of being present. From our end, we were able to keep the contact strong via social media, Zoom sessions for our regular programs and by phone. Our ability to be proactive was a bonus. We had past clients reconnect looking for support too, it was great they knew where to find us. It was pleasing to see how everyone grew through the challenges they faced, having the tools and support mechanisms they needed during this time of uncertainty. We were proud of them all.

From the outset Transform Aotearoa has been extremely optimistic about what 2021 has to bring. We hit the ground running when we opened our doors in January. We are ever mindful that circumstances can change in a heartbeat, so we must be ready to shift and adjust with very little notice as COVID-19 still causes challenges in our nation. We have chosen to soldier on with every precaution being made to make sure staff and clients remain informed and healthy.

## Newsletter April 2021

**Transform Aotearoa has people at its very heart.**

We are dedicated to building healthy whānau and helping people take the next step in their personal journey towards wholeness, by providing practical tools and support in provincial south Waikato.

Through our personal development programs, up-skilling opportunities and group support, we are calling out the greatness in each one, and in turn, seeing hundreds of lives and families impacted for good.

[www.transformaotearoa.org.nz](http://www.transformaotearoa.org.nz)



*“This program taught me to be more positive and to reach my goals”*

We continue to focus on helping people gain employment, either through apprenticeship opportunities with local businesses or via our Barista Coffee Course, HT license Class 2 and 4. We are excited to announce that several locals have successfully gained employment or better employment opportunities over the past year due to these programs. One gentleman quit his job on the Friday, did our HT 2 the next week, and started his new truck job the following week. A few weeks later he was passing through Putaruru and popped in, as proud as punch he said, "I'm living the dream!" He returned at the end of the year to gain his HT Class 4. He could not be happier.

One of the ladies who completed the Barista course was eager to change career, saw a Barista advertisement in Tirau and applied. The owner asked her to make her a coffee commenting that they really wanted someone with experience but were willing to give her a go. She is still there today and loving the new pathway she chose and grateful for the opportunity to better provide for her family.

Our core men's and women's personal development programs continue to see dramatic life change at Transform Aotearoa as individuals explore who they are and who they are meant to be. Watching people transform before our eyes is something that we do not take for granted. This year we added a new program for the women 'Tu Maia' to follow on from our highly popular Stage 1 and 2 Women's Programs. This new program further develops women to stand with courage and confidence,

**402**  
People reached through Transform Aotearoa in the last year

especially in the workplace. We assist them to see that they can enter or re-enter the workforce with confidence, grace and dignity.

Recently one of our men's program facilitators got married and it was a privilege to witness this event. To see the life change and what God has done in his life is nothing short of a miracle. We wish them all God's richest blessings for the new journey ahead.

Sadly we say goodbye to Debbie Trolove our Chief Financial Officer. She will be greatly missed. Debbie has been a part of Transform Aotearoa for the last 5 years in a range of roles. We wish her all the absolute best for her future.

We are so grateful for all our funders and supporters; Transform Aotearoa could not operate without your generosity and support. We passionately believe that you join us in the impact we are seeing in this region.



## From the Heart Warming Friday Files

### Future looks positive. . .

I had a conversation with one of our ladies this week who graduated our Te Moana Kura program last term. She looked amazing so I asked her some questions and I found out that she is exploring the new her. Her whole wardrobe has changed, she takes better care of herself, she has removed all negative people from her life, she does not care what people think of her anymore and her marriage is back on track. She said when she looks back over her past, she sees an empty person, a rock. But when she looks forward, she sees hope and life. This new person looks like she has a future. She mentioned she has applied for two jobs at rest homes as this is her field of training. She does not feel confident yet to study because when she was younger, she was addicted to drugs and alcohol and now she is facing the consequences of that choice and her brain does not retain information like it used to. Having the confidence to even apply for a job was a big step. She is radiant and loving life; this is so good to see as this particular lady was so shy and reserved, she could have given a church mouse a run for its money!

### Being accountable . . .

A lady who has done our programs half-heartedly a couple of times over the last year with no real commitment has realised that she really needs what Transform Aotearoa has to offer. Her downward spiral had led to self-harm and depression. This week she showed up in her dressing gown and apologised however she was commended for her commitment and that if she wanted to move forward, she needs to be accountable. Amber told her “come as you are, as long as you are here”. The love and value this lady feels even if she shows up in her PJ’s makes her want to return, and she has been on time every week this term and hasn’t missed a class. “Transform Aotearoa has literally saved my life” she said.



### REAL . . .

Lamen was telling me a story about one of his men who has sadly spent a lot of time in jail over his life but is determined to make positive changes in his life. He told the group that he has done many courses in the past in jail, as well as community-based ones but they just read out of a book and are boring, while Transform Aotearoa’s classes are “real” and he has gained more value from this one course than any of the previous ones. His gratitude was evident as he allowed himself to be vulnerable in front of the group. For this man to allow himself to open up and be so vulnerable with other men was a big deal. This has become a common story within Transform Aotearoa as the layers are peeled back and they feel safe in the environment to share matters of the heart, that they would not have had the courage to do elsewhere.



*"This course really encouraged us to explore ourselves as drivers and improve as competent road users.."*



*"I am right proud of myself for getting up and doing something for me.."  
-First time participant at a Transform Aotearoa program*

### Out of her comfort zone . . .

This week there were tears shed in the group as one lady completely poured out her heart for the first time about how she contemplated ending her life. But decided to come to Transform instead and shared how one of the sessions spoke directly to her, and changed her life. The ladies just loved on her and encouraged her while the tears flowed all around. She said she is now excited about life and says she has self-worth and that she realises that she needs to take care of herself. She is so excited to attend the next ladies program. The power of thought can make or break a person and we know that our sessions help to break old patterns and create new ones. This lady said she is so glad she got out of her comfort zone. So are we!

We never know where our people are at when they come to us. None of us would have ever known how low this lady was. We are so thankful that she kept coming and was able to overcome her negative thoughts.



*"I am really grateful to the funders who made this available for me for free"*



*"It helped me build a greater inner strength to cope with failure better."*



*"I have been inspired to regain control of my life and to be stronger and freer and more peaceful"*



## Our Supporters

We are extremely grateful to the individuals, trusts and community funders who financially support us, including:



Transform Aotearoa Charitable Trust is a registered charity. Our charities registration number is CC53205