



Supporting New Zealanders on a journey towards wholeness

It has been a privilege to be a part of a team that has been faithfully committed to helping people in the South Waikato to 'live their best life'. By shaking off the shackles of the past that have held them captive for years. Transform has assisted them to see that a trouble-free life is an 'illusion' and that living every day well is a more realistic option. The trees need the strong winds to make them strong, without it they would break. We are no different. It's the hard times that make us resilient. 2022 showed us that our people were extremely resilient, they have done themselves proud.

The men's life group has seen many of its attendees gain self-confidence to enter or re-enter the work force this year. Some have started businesses of their own, others taken over established businesses or had positions created for them. One young man was encouraged to study in the Te Pukenga formerly Toi-Ohomai Forestry Program in the second half of 2022 and he began his new career in February. Similarly, our women have also gained meaningful employment over the last twelve months. It is exciting for everyone involved when they announce to the group, they got a job.

Our Heavy Transport Class 2 and 4 graduates have made the most of their new endorsement. From being legally allowed to drive work vehicles; to going up a pay grade; to driving a fire truck; to getting ready to change career; to driving for Higgins or Downer; to

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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 New Zealand.

In seeking to walk alongside and foster healthy and whole communities across all generations, we are helping provincial communities in our nation to flourish. 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

going on to obtain a Class 5 and living the dream of driving log trucks is an outstanding effort for these guys and girls.

The two Barista coffee training sessions have seen 23 students get certificated and 8 students reported back that they gained employment around the region. It has also helped a few people get closer to their dream of owning and operating a coffee cart or food truck. We have really struggled to secure funding for this valuable course that provides an internationally recognised certificate. Sadly, this program will be put on hold until a long-term funder can be sourced.

With the success of the teen girls after school program we added one for the teen boys. The young men who had previously done Strength in the school asked

Danny if there was something more they could do. So Te Mana O Roto (Power within) was created to meet their personal development needs. Outside agencies got wind of this endeavour and were sending teens to the program which caused some interesting dynamics especially when they arrived 'high'. It was quite challenging for the facilitators, so it has been postponed until Term Two 2023.

In winter 2022 we added a van to our small fleet of vehicles. The signage is like a flag advertising who we are, it's impossible to miss it zipping in and out of town. It has been extremely valuable providing transport for the men's life group program getting them around the district to do jobs and visits to the gym to work out. The guys are very proud of their van, and it is well looked after by them all.



New Van Handover

At the end of 2022 we got word that Transform had been chosen by a local Trust to deliver the in-school driving program to help students obtain a learners and restricted licence while at school across six South Waikato high schools. With our almost perfect success rate of getting first time students their licences we were approached to be the regions licence providers. This initiative officially started in January.



Introducing Hori Wharepapa

Due to the SWIFT contract, we have employed another driving instructor. We welcomed Hori Wharepapa to the team. He came highly qualified for the position with the ability to cover all licences from learners, restricted, defensive, full, motorbike, bus, and heavy transport

531
 People reached through Transform Aotearoa in the last year

Class 2 and 4. This will be extremely beneficial to us if James Turney from All Drive NZ ever decides to fully retire. Hori is very excited about the new challenges ahead assisting high school students to obtain licences. Due to his appointment, Transform purchased another Toyota Aqua learner driver vehicle at the end of 2022 with funds donated by an interested Trust. There are now four Transform vehicles in operation.

During the year Howard our CEO was interviewed by Authentic Men's Magazine about his life, career, and how he came to be the CEO of Transform Aotearoa. It was printed in the December 2022 issue and was a lovely story of God's provision and promise that he will never leave or forsake you.

Danny represented Transform Aotearoa in Wellington at Parliament House. Transform is one of many Trusts that received funding from Trinity Lands and they were invited to showcase what is being accomplished in the South Waikato and beyond. Danny made some valuable connections that will be beneficial in the future.



Danny making connections at Parliament House.

*"Transform has changed my whole perspective also feelings towards my partner and others around me."
-Program Participant*



To promote to Parliament what we do, Trinity Lands had a film crew visit each Trust and made a documentary about us all. Feel free to visit our website where our contribution is posted. We were delighted with the final product and feel the essence of who we are was captured.

Recently we refurbished two of our front rooms by knocking down an internal wall to create another much needed larger classroom that could fit 12 students. It has refreshed the front room and made it more enjoyable to be in. Fresh paint, carpet, curtains, and a heat pump all adding to the ambiance. It made us realised how tired our space was after 8 years of constant use and we have slowly started updating the other areas.



DURING ...



... AFTER

Whanau Pai Koriri Trusts mental health practitioners have come on board in 2022 using our space to provide a service to the community. The bonus for Transform has been our ability to tap into their service for our clients and we have assisted them with programs for theirs. This service will continue into the next financial year but from the Putaruru Medical Centre.

After the cyclone Danny took a team of the life group men to the Hawkes Bay to lend a hand to those severely affected by the storm. They found themselves among the devastation in Esk Valley at what was left of a boutique winery and vineyard. They got to work digging the thick layer of silt out of the winery. The owners were so grateful for the help and commented that the job they were doing was the job everyone else didn't want to do. He also mentioned that it was regular Kiwi's from all over the country that were coming to help in their time of need. It was reported to me that it was like stepping into a war zone. It has been an experience the guys won't forget.



Mucking in at the Hawkes Bay vineyard.

I am very pleased to announce that we are in discussion with another area to commence a Transform Aotearoa there. This has been in the pipeline for many months. If everything goes to plan Danny will be traveling each Wednesday to train facilitators and deliver the men's evening program in that community. Communication with Police and Corrections have been made to establish a good working relationship just like the one we have in Putaruru.

There is a lovely Maori proverb...

*'ko tou rourou, ko taku rourou,
ka ora ai te iwi'*

*'with my contribution and your
contribution we will all prosper.'*

To every individual, Trust or organisation who have contributed to Transform over the last 12 months we can't thank you enough for your generosity and kindness towards us. Together we will continue to prosper and positively impact the South Waikato.

From the Heart Warming Friday Files

Join the fun . . .

Our after-school children's program Heroes and Giants had a couple of police officers join the fun this past week. They made an appearance and stayed to play games and get down on the children's level. It is important to us that even the children can build a positive relationship with the police instead of seeing them as the guys who take away their family members. If relationship can be built here, then when they need help, they have someone they already relate to who can assist them. Our local officers are very busy, but we are grateful that they made the time to pop across the driveway to participate.



Putaruru College
SHINEgirl program

So much positive support . . .

One of the ladies from the ladies group shared with me that she has never known so much positive support in one place. This lady did her Barista with us and heard about the women's program and her curiosity got the best of her. She said in a couple of weeks she has learnt so many tools to do life better. Meeting other women who are in similar positions or worse has been reassuring that she is not alone. Nothing gets in the way of her Wednesday program. She knew she had to do something for herself when her family started saying she had changed and lost herself and her mother kept offering to have the kids. She believes she is on the way to rediscovering who she is as a person.

We celebrate this when we see women who give out so much and finally come to realise that they need to invest in themselves. Many wonder, 'why didn't I do this sooner?' These women are our biggest advocates and advertise Transform to friends and family far and wide. Knowing the help, they have received at Transform is valuable for everyone.

In need of a miracle . . .

Danny and Lamien went to Court this week to support one of our men that had to appear. We had all been asked to pray at a specific time, because this gentleman was in need of a miracle. And a miracle he received! Amazingly the Court dropped all charges relating to this man's case. Lamien commented that he kept saying over and over "I don't understand! What just happened?" Lamien said "that is what redemption looks like." I don't think this guy will forget that feeling for a while.

I happened to be downstairs and watched as he got out of the car at Transform. He was jumping around like a jack rabbit in a veggie patch with his hands on his head, obviously still in awe of what he had experienced. I gave him a high 5 when he told me his verdict. I then told him that I had a team of people praying for him. Both his and his partners eyes lit up and he enthusiastically said, "I felt all of it!" As he walked away, he looked like he was ten foot tall. He proudly told the men at the evening group his good news and a hearty applause followed. Miracles do still happen.



Barista Training Course

Loudest voice in the room . . .

The Te Mana O Roto teenage boys group had a pleasant surprise. YMCA was unable to bring their group of young men however, one of the boys of his own accord showed up at the door. Even though the others had cancelled he saw value in what was at his fingertips and came anyway. He was happy to just have one on one time with the facilitators over a coffee. Danny said he was obviously seeking, and something has changed as three weeks ago he was the loudest voice in the room sprouting how cool it was to drugs, fight and be a gangster. In three short

weeks he has a new outlook that the facilitators are nurturing. This is exciting for the team to see someone so young change tracks and want a different life to the one they thought was cool and realised, it is anything but.

I passed . . .

Lamen shared with me about one of his men who was going to sit his full license this week. There has been trouble with one driving instructor in particular and Lamen was worried his client wouldn't pass. He got a text a short time later that simply said, "I passed!" For our clients, getting their license whether for the first time or for reinstatement is a big deal. Especially when it is more than just one's independence that is tied up in possessing that plastic ID card.

alone think they are worthy to secure it. It is so rewarding being party to transformational life change in people's lives on a weekly basis. To see these brave souls, stand up to 'giants of negativity' in their lives that have controlled them for years and watch them fall is a beautiful sight to behold.



Term 2 Graduation



Love bomb Putaruru

Tackle anything . . .

Belena filled me in on how two of her ladies will only be able to attend some of the program this term because they have secured full time employment. This is news we love to celebrate. One lady thought that she wasn't good enough or qualified enough to do a job she saw advertised, but after doing a few sessions with Transform, thought she would just give it a shot. To her amazement she got the position and starts in the next couple of weeks.

Another story of someone with low self-esteem who has come to a place of understanding that they are more than enough in every way to tackle anything that life has to throw at them. For those who come with this state of mind, this is a big deal to muster enough courage to even apply for employment let

Prodigal son returned . . .

This week we had a prodigal son returned. He knew this was a safe space to return to especially when there is a warrant for his arrest. Wanting to talk to the officer in the life group about the best way to hand himself in. Danny contacted the local Police on his behalf to ascertain the correct procedure. The Police were very supportive of his journey and instructed him how and when to present himself. He went at the allocated time. Danny was contacted later to be told that everything got sorted quickly and the process was painless, our client was very happy about the support he received. We are so grateful for the relationship with the local police. Where we can be a supportive middle ground between our clients and the Police. For this one guy it made all the difference this week.

Man style . . .

The men's graduation this week was the biggest one we have ever had at Transform. The sense of brotherhood was insanely high as hugs and high fives 'man style' were exchanged between these new mates. Comments from the men were how thankful they were for the support; that they were not alone; keep coming until you are strong enough; I'm on the positive island now; this ticks all the boxes for me; and I haven't been in trouble with the law for 10 weeks, just to name a few. Heartfelt confessions of positive life change from those who 10 weeks ago

couldn't have cared a toss. These men are all eager to return next term to continue what they started. Watch this space!



*"I'm now taking my life back and feel more in control of my life."
-Program participant*

Big pond . . .

We had a very encouraging meeting with Probation this week. It was a privilege for us to meet their team here at Transform and how they would like to work a little more closely with us over the coming months. During the conversation, we were told that the Regional Commissioner for Probations who covers from Springhill to Tongariro, has been informed previously and will be reminded again this week of our organisations impact on the region and how we assist each other to see positive life change in our joint clients. This is something that we do not take for granted as our reputation in the 'big pond' increases. I have said it before, that we are only a little fish, yet we continue to manage and hold our own alongside the bigger more experienced fish. And for one reason only - by the grace of God!

Eyes filled with tears . . .

Belena and Amber commented this week how we have moved to a whole new level with the ladies. The level of brokenness from past grief and trauma is at an all-time high in their group. Every woman is like a sponge and in only three weeks the facilitators can see massive changes happening before their eyes. One lady revealed that her past self would never have come to a place like Transform. She was encouraged to come by a friend who had previously done our programs. She said, "she was on her way out and thank goodness for Transform, she is blown away by what she has gained from coming". Amber gave her a gift at the end of the program. Which is something we like to do regularly even if it is only a

hand cream or body scrub. This lady's eyes filled with tears, and she cried on the spot. It had been a very long time since she had received a gift, and nothing was expected of her in return. We forget how impacting a simple gift given as an act of random kindness can be to someone who has been constantly upended by the waves of life. We are all looking forward to witnessing her blossom over the rest of the term.



*"Doing the Barista and HT is helping me to future proof my income."
-Program participant*

Real . . .

One of the professional women in the ladies group commented on how 'real' the Transform programs are. The personal trauma stories of the facilitators have helped them to make sense of their own lives. She said, 'having the courage to speak about past events that have never been spoken out loud before has been freeing'. She has never experienced anything like this course in her life and will be back next term for more. When one goes through hard times all you want is for someone to put the fire out. But we know at Transform that nothing in our lives is wasted. The character development of our life's trials, mountains, valleys, and detours is what has made us, the people we are today. Our stories may have been painful to walk through, but now these same stories are able to help others on their journey to find freedom. Being 'real' as this lady put it, is essential and one of the many reasons our programs have so much success.

Made my day . . .

I had a visit this week that made my day. One of our young men who came and sat his Class 2 with us about three or four years ago popped into see me. He told me in detail what he has been up to and the

different companies he has worked for, to get to this point. He proudly showed me a photo of his log truck and announced he will be sitting his Class 5 tomorrow morning. He is living the dream and said even his dad is proud of how well he has taken to the big rigs. He is super happy that James Turney who took him through his Class 2 is taking him through his class 5. He said James is great value and good for a laugh. He has only been with his current employer a few months, but the bosses have seen his potential and are prepared to invest in him. He said if he can stop buying vehicles he will start saving for a house. Such an accomplishment for a young man in his early 20's. I wished him all the best for tomorrow, and he vanished as quickly as he arrived. The following day he rang me to tell me that he had passed his test and he had already done his first load on his newly acquired HT. He said thank you to Transform for the opportunity of a life time, and we were a major part of helping him to fulfill his greatest dream.



*"Thank you for believing in me when I didn't believe in myself."
-Program Participant*

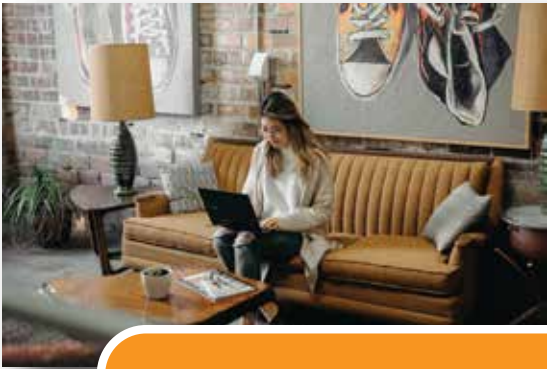
Bring to the table . . .

The Strength program in the school this week was very positive. Danny mentioned that a couple of boys were being disruptive, but their peers were the ones pulling them back into line. With students mentioning that this class is not like the others, and we come here to better ourselves and not muck around. Danny said the 'team spirit' was evident after that happened and everyone got on the same page. Danny was impressed how no one was shy and everyone was prepared to contribute to the discussions.

They talked about friendships and it's not only what you can get from a friendship that's important but what you bring to the table as well. Providing solid food for thought for these young men. Our hope is that what they learn, they can model to those around them and be positive influencers in their school.

Recent Graduates





If you would like to receive Heart Warming Friday stories in your inbox every Friday contact kim@transformaotearoa.org.nz to join our mailing list



"The program has helped me to remember who I am." -Program participant

Programs we offer

Womens Programs:

- Whakahonohono Mai
 - Te Moana Kura
 - Tū Māia
- Women Of Worth
 - Cooking on a shoestring

Mens Programs:

- Te Kaupapa
- Whakamana
- Te Ana Raiona
- Mens Life Group

Community Programs:

- Te Reo
- Driver Licencing
- Heavy Transport Licencing
- CAP - Christians Against Poverty
- Barista Training

Parenting and Whanau:

- Building Awesome Whānau
- Teenage Years

Youth Programs:

- ShineGIRL and STRENGTH
- Teen Youth Programs
- Heroes and Giants

Our Supporters

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

