



Te Reo Orooro

HEARING VOICES NETWORK AOTEAROA NZ

providing support & information on hearing voices and visions

www.hearingvoices.org.nz

THANKS FROM THE COMMITTEE

The HVN is growing slowly and steadily and we are constantly adding subscribers to our email list.

Thank you to all those people who send emails thanking us for the work we are doing. They are always a delight to receive.

We are grateful for the funds we have received from the Lotteries Commission and ASB Community Trust, enabling us to produce this newsletter. We are working on the website which we hope to launch later on this year.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Lorna Murray, who has supported the Hearing Voices Network from its inception. Lorna has been our co-chairperson for the last two years. Her knowledge and experience have been a great asset to the HVNANZ. Lorna is resigning from the committee this year-thank you.

Adrienne

Secretary HVNANZ

PROFESSOR RICHARD BENTALL'S NEW ZEALAND VISIT

Professor Richard Bentall, author of the book 'Madness Explained' and an expert on psychosis from the University of Bangor in Wales, was in New Zealand under the University of Auckland Hood Fellowship programme.

He volunteered to speak for the Hearing Voices Network regarding his work and research in his field.

The evening was held at ConnectSR's premises in Glenfield. Thank you Connect SR for the free use of this room again. His seminar was on the Psychological aspects of hearing voices.

We had a fabulous turnout with over 60 attendees, including voice hearers, family members and mental health professionals.

Bentall talked about the origins of psychological and psychiatric approaches to mental health. He discussed a technique that was used to adjust a person's sleep pattern back to normal.

His espoused the view that if medication was not working, simply increasing the dosage was not always effective and he favours patients being put on short term trials. If after that period the medication was not working efficaciously, to review and re-evaluate it, rather than prolong and increase it to very high dosages, stretching over long periods of time.

We were informed about Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and how successful it had been with a large number of voice hearers, creating long term success. He said that voice hearers had to be at a certain level of wellness to do this and spoke in brief how it could be implemented.

He shared his research on an early intervention programme in helping those with early signs of psychosis.

In line with the HVN's research he mentioned the 'Acceptance and Commit-

ment stage in voice hearing-when a voice hearer is able to come to terms with the issues, starts taking responsibility for their voices and becomes pro-active in dealing with them in a step by step process.

Bentall stressed the therapeutic importance of good relationships between clinicians and clients.

We were able to ask him questions and afterwards people lined up to talk one on one with our special guest. We all shared a cuppa and had lots of yummy supper and conversation.

We are very grateful for the support he has shown the network by donating his time and also by mentioning the Hearing Voices Network in newspaper interviews for the New Zealand Herald. Richard also appeared on the Like Mind Like Us radio programme with Adrienne from the HVN.

HEARING VOICES NETWORK LIBRARY

At our support groups we like to discuss all different aspects of voices and visions.

Our volunteer facilitators currently provide their own resources and books to share with voice hearers that attend.

We would like to start up a central library for the Hearing Voices Network. Filled with books, DVDS and resources that can be accessed by all

support group facilitators throughout New Zealand.

Knowledge of the voice hearing experience; books that tell of others recovery journeys; research on non medical alternatives and on other views on voice hearing including cultural considerations are very valuable assets within the group.

If you are able to donate any such books, DVDs, or resources such as this, we would be very grateful.

Knowledge, along with peer support is a very important tool for overcoming fear that often accompanies voice hearing. If you have donations please call Adrienne on 0211024151 or email her at hearingvoices@woosh.co.nz

RAIN OF THE CHILDREN

DVD REVIEW— of the NZ movie by Vincent Ward

Rain of the Children is a fascinating movie. It is the telling of the story of a Tuhoe woman Puhi. Vincent Ward stayed with Puhi and her mentally ill son when he was first starting out as a film maker. The movie includes footage that he took at this time.

This latest movie is his attempt to go back and tell the story of the life of Puhi and her son Nikki and to make sense of it. Puhi was the bride of the son of the Maori prophet Rua Kenana. The movie contains excellent photos of the settlement they built, creating a fascinating rendition of the life that Puhi led. It carefully illustrates the trauma and upheaval that the Maori people faced during the colonisation of New Zealand.

Everything about their former way of life was challenged- their religion, their beliefs and their very survival as many of their people died from diseases brought by the European settlers.

Amongst the trauma Puhi has many events happen that lead everyone to believe that she has been cursed. She is shown years later walking along constantly praying, to keep the curse from affecting her and her family.

Her son Nikki hears voices. According to the movie, one day he became lost in the forest and was missing for several days. When he was finally found and returned to his family he was hearing voices. This along with a special bond with animals led his family to believe that he had been taken by the 'Patupairehe' and explores some of these Maori beliefs.

It is a mixture of re-enactment and actual footage, which together creates a story that is well worth watching, if only to gain a better understanding of what Maori went through at the time and to wonder how these effects may be felt today.



HVNANZ LOGO COMPETITION WINNER

We recently held a logo competition, to search for a logo to use that would identify us here and overseas amongst our other HVN partners. We were pleased at entries we received in response.

We must acknowledge the wonderful imagery and writings that accompanied many of the logos. They were a pleasure to



The fern is a symbol of new growth and enfolding experiences; the ear is

read. Three of the committee members judged the entries. We chose the one inserted, submitted by Clarissa Ranchor for its look and for the symbolism inherent in the logo.

obvious as relating to Hearing Voices; the shades on the right symbolize the many types of experiences that people have hearing voices. The encompassing circle symbolizes wholeness, integration and inclusion.

We have coloured it green like greenstone and are pleased with its New Zealand look. Thank you to all who entered the competition.

PALMERSTON NORTH HEARING VOICES NETWORK SUPPORT GROUP.

There is now a Hearing Voices Network Support group in Palmerston North. Teresa Keedwell and Chris Hocken have been running the group. Both have completed the full training offered by Ron Coleman from Scotland, in his 'Working to Recovery' techniques. They have seen some wonderful progress within their group, which previously was run as closed

sessions. They have now made it open and welcome other voice hearers to come along. Chris and Teresa are the main speakers at our AGM this year. We look forward to hearing about their experiences running a Hearing Voices Support group. We welcome them to the HVN Network and look forward to sharing resources and information between us.

The support group is held on the first Friday of every month 11.30am—2pm with a shared lunch at Pathways to Wellbeing, Level 4, 151 The Square, Westside Chambers, PALMERSTON NORTH. For more information contact Teresa

tel: 06355 3387 OR

Email: tkeedwell@masstrust.org.nz

CREATIVE PAGE

I contacted Gary Platz after hearing some of his wonderful poetry at the ISPS conference in Wellington. He kindly consented to send us one of his poems to publish in our newsletter. Gary would like to say this about this particular piece of work entitled 'Lady Galadriel'.

"A few months ago I was in a supermarket near where I live. A woman with two children approached me. It had been 10 years since I saw her. She looked great so did her children. We talked. She spoke with passion about her life, where it was now and how she was loving being a mother. She was the woman with Lady Galadriel's skin.

A decade ago I was doing some weekend work as a support worker. She was in the supported residence where I was working. We had some conversations

about our experiences over a few weekends. She had beautiful skin and was always holding the book Lord of the Rings. I wrote the poem.

Our voices, our visions, our blackness, our blinding light, our fear, our distress, isn't just random misfiring of a chemically unbalanced brain. All those things come from us and the perceptions we carry about ourselves and our journey in life.

Madness: Some of the words dictionaries use to define madness are: aberration, craziness, delusion, dementia, derangement, insanity, lunacy, mania, mental illness, psychopath and psychosis.

I would now define my madness as the forced unleashing of the body's creative power, causing me to become aware of the vital importance of things I had ignored for too long. These experiences

are sign posts, pictures, stories or maps for healing.

'Lady Galadriel's Skin' was my attempt to capture a part of the essence of the healing that happens when two "Mad" people explore their experience of madness and discover their power for healing.

Peer support is **real** and has a beautiful and unique power."

If you have a poem or story about hearing voices, or your recovery journey, we would love to share it with others through our newsletter.

**SUBMISSIONS TO: HVNANZ
PO BOX 78-132, Grey Lynn
AUCKLAND 1245 or email**

hearingvoices@woosh.co.nz

Lady Galadriel— by Gary Platz copyright ©

We sat and spoke of Lunacy
This seventeen-year-old girl and I
The real thing
Not just a brown eye from a car window
Lunch-time Lambton Quay

She Said
I was standing naked on the window ledge
When he saw me
Screaming at the moon
For turning my arms silver
How could I jump with Lady Galadriel's skin

I said
I was the Prince of Peace
Right here in the valley
Till I chucked it in
The pressure, hell on relationships
I know why my predecessor was single

She said
He was quite nice at first
The one who saved me
But he turned out to be an alien
I have discovered that there has been some sort
of invasion
My life's been all laser beams
And black holes ever since

I said
Too many people
Things I had to do so right
And God laughed the way he does
Hey, don't worry perhaps some other time



Image of Lady Galadriel
from

www.josephinewall.co.uk

She said
One stood over me
Right there on the ward
While I was on my bed
Te Whare Ahuru*
I would rather die than go back to you

I said
I don't think I could be over taken
By anything I didn't want to do
For I once gave up everything
Because I had too much to lose

She said
It's not so bad now I can tell the difference
There is something in the way they smile
For I can walk down the street and say
They haven't got you
Well, not yet, anyway

I said
I know there is a God of free will
For without choices who could I possibly be
Imagine me becoming the Prince of Peace
Imagine the Prince of Peace
Choosing to become me

She said
Te Whare Ahuru
I would rather live than go back to you
I think I will search through all I have
Maybe make something new
Something I can feel comfortable in
Something to compliment
My Lady Galadriel skin.

What to do if your child is hearing voices.

Information from www.intervoiceonline.org copyright Sandra Escher.

Intervoice have made available a new leaflet on what to do if your child is hearing voices. It is based on the work that Sandra Escher has been doing with children that hear voices. I would like to share some of her advice here with you. I would recommend however, that you download the full version from the Intervoice website as above, which also includes recommended reading.

Dr Sandra Escher is from the Netherlands' and is an expert on the issue of children and young people who hear voices. She has spent the last 15 years talking to children who hear voices and to their parents and carers.

There is little practical advice available about children who hear voices- that addresses the needs of parents and family members. This is a shame because they are the most important form of support for a child. The leaflet was created to let people know of some common sense things that family can do to help their child.

To hear voices in itself is a normal though unusual experience. However it is possible that you can become ill as a result of hearing voices, when you cannot cope with them. It is the way that you are coping with the voices that is a problem, *not the voices in themselves.*

For most children the voices will disappear over time, as a child develops and as they learn to cope with life's problems (and the emotions and feelings involved with these problems) that led to the voices starting in the first place.

So if a child starts hearing voices there is a big chance that the voices will disappear.

Sandra's research has shown that in 85% of the children studied, traumatic experiences triggered their voices. Examples of the kinds of trauma that trigger voices include the death of a loved one, divorce, failing an exam and long lasting events like being physically, emotionally or sexually abused.

With children some of the traumas relate specifically to childhood, such as being bullied by peers or teachers; being unable to perform at a certain level at school; being admitted to hospital for long periods because of a physical illness. Sandra says that hearing voices is mostly a reaction to a situation or problem the child or person cannot cope with. It is a signal.

They found in their research that what the voices say often give an indication of the problem that a

child has. If attention was given to the problems the child was facing, they were able to start a more constructive relationship with their voices. As a result children become less afraid of their voices. When a child is able to think about the problems that caused their distress and the emotions and feelings involved, the voices stop being the children's only focus of attention. The voices may stay but the children can cope with them.

The most important element in changing the way a child copes with their voices is the support

their family gives them. Normalising the experience is important- if a parent is afraid of the voices, the child will be even more so. Sandra has provided a 10 point checklist.

Her tips include talking to your child calmly about the voices; telling them that many children hear voices and most of the time they go away; being ready to listen if they want to talk about their voices; use drawing, painting and other creative ways to help them describe what is happening to them. The full pamphlet is available for free download from www.intervoiceonline.org.

Hearing voices is mostly a reaction to a situation or problem the child or person cannot cope with. It is a signal

ISPS NEW JOURNAL. VOL I FEB 2009

ISPS are now publishing a journal that is sent free to all their members. The HVN received the latest copy which is full of interesting research. It is titled 'Psychosis. Psychological, Social and Integrative Approaches.' It combines research and experience based articles with opinion pieces. John Read is the editor.

One article is upon childhood sexual abuse, cannabis use and

psychosis. Of the 14% of first episode schizophrenia patients who had a prevalence of drug use 88% were cannabis users. Assessments among people with severe mental illness showed that cannabis was the most frequently and most commonly used illicit drug. Patients were also found to be twice as likely to have suffered childhood abuse in comparison to the standard population.

There was an interesting report

showing how viewing a positive film about schizophrenic patients substantially reduced stigmatization reactions in those who viewed it.

Ian Sparrowhawks' story about his journey recovering from psychosis was insightful and helps people to understand what a person who has psychosis goes through. I look forward to seeing what the next issue holds!

UNDERSTANDING YOUR VOICES

By **Adrienne Giacon** *facilitator of HVN support group*

Distraction techniques such as the use of MP3 players can be helpful to relieve distress from voices, but to be able to take control of your voices you must accept that there is some link with yourself. Once this happens you start to take responsibility for your recovery and can begin to work out the meaning of the voices. I would like to share some of my insights with you in the hope they may help to do this.

Voices can be similar to dreams and nightmares. You can have good and bad experiences, which can be very profound and very real. Some people describe hearing voices like dreaming when awake. Interestingly one of the triggers for psychosis is sleep deprivation. Just as in dreams the voices can be presented in a symbolic way that makes it hard to see the association with ourselves. The voices may have larger than life personas that exaggerate the emotion involved making it hard to understand. Just as Shakespeare tells stories that portray common themes and emotions, we have to see past the costume and language before we can understand what is happening.

Voices can be related to emotional issues or traumas that we are dealing with in the present, or in the past. For example, a job loss may create voices that make you feel powerless—encouraging conspiracy theories and scenarios where you are being ganged up on and can't do anything about it.

A relationship break up may cause voices that tell us we are ugly and unlovable, mirroring our own low self esteem in the aftermath.

Voices can be related to significant events that happened in our past that we suppressed the memory of in order to cope, or have visited so often in our minds that it creates a "mini series" playing all the scenarios we may have taken.

Voices can relate to events in the future that we are worried about,

or that reflect the path on which we are heading, good or bad.

Some voices offer spiritual guidance and comfort. Clairvoyants, shamans, gurus and many cultures communicate with spirits, power animals, angels, ancestors, deities and spiritual masters.

Voices may be people we know alive or dead. This can be confusing. You may think you are being telepathically attacked by another. Whilst telepathy is possible, especially

between people who are close, it can also be the voices showing you the way you feel about that person. Or using the relationship (however large or small) you have or had with that person, to show you something you need to learn about yourself. So it always best to be skeptical. For example, it may be a voice of someone we hardly knew that "didn't like us". Hearing it can be a symbol of the stigma or rejection issues common when hearing voices. It is advisable to examine your feelings about the person first and see if there is anything you need to address yourself. If you know them well enough, you may be able to talk to them about it. If it is a friendly voice, ask the voice to prove it is actually the person by telling you physically by phone or in person. Always use your good judgment. If you dreamt of someone you wouldn't accuse them of visiting you in person would you? But you may work out why it is that you dreamt of them at all.

If you are hearing spirits, please remember—because someone is dead it does not make them an expert on your life—or more powerful than you. Use your discernment at all times.

Voices can become worse when we have a physical illness or are stressed, just as some people hallucinate with a fever. Take note if this

appears so, because the voices may be a way of telling you to look after your health better. Research links voices to food allergies and nutritional deficiencies.

Voices can be our own self talk amplified, mimicking everything we are feeling and making us feel like we are being constantly watched. This can be an opportunity to see what you have been feeling about yourself good and bad and start working on liking yourself warts and all.

Voices can mirror the "energy" and emotions of other people you come in contact with. Some voice hearers are very sensitive and try isolating themselves to overcome this. Unfortunately prolonged isolation can exasperate the voices. Activities such as yoga, tai chi and meditation may be helpful to clear energies and strengthen the self. It may be the voices showing you that you need to set more boundaries in your relationships in the physical world. Take a more active role in what you want in your life.

It can be as if something has unlocked the cupboard of your unconscious mind and everything has spilled out all over the place. As a result you have to look over it all to see what to keep, what to throw away and then fit what remains back into the cupboard of your life. Good luck with yours.

Voices can be similar to dreams and nightmares - they can be good and bad and are often presented in a symbolic way

TECHSOUP

We wish to thank Techsoup www.techsoup.net.nz for the generous donation of Microsoft Software to the Hearing Voices Network. It is thanks to Microsoft Office Professional that we can create this newsletter and that some members can now read the documents we send them. Also the Expressions software we received will allow us to design our new website.

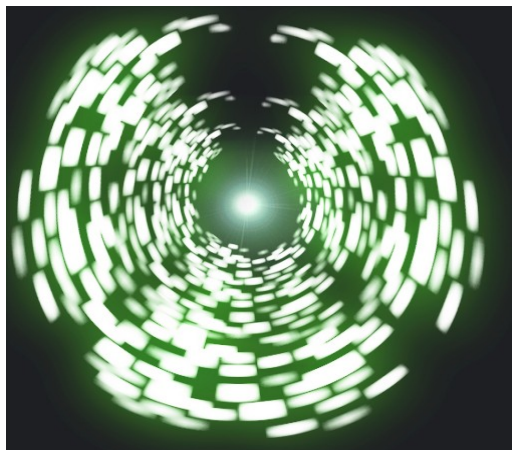
Tē Reo Orooro



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We are part of an international society of Hearing Voices Networks co-ordinated through INTERVOICE– the International Network for training, education and research on hearing voices. For more information see their website www.intervoiceonline.org



Your advert could be here. If you would like to advertise in our next newsletter please contact us. *Please note, the advert must abide by the principles of HVNANZ.*

MEMBERS & SUPPORTERS FORM

The Hearing Voices Network Aotearoa New Zealand is an independent society and as such relies on funding and donations. If you would like to become a member of our society and support our organisation please fill in this form and return to us with your payment. We are a registered charity and donations are tax deductible.

- **Voting Rights:** Whilst our services are provided to all, only paid members of the society may vote for or be part of our committee. As a society we are run by our members in the form of a committee that is voted in each year.
- **Newsletter:** Our newsletter is sent to all members. At present it's biannual. We welcome public contributions to it.
- **Internet:** www.hearingvoices.org.nz is currently linked to our blog. Our new website is underway. We host a yahoo discussion group to exchange information and ideas on voices. We also have an email subscribe list that is free.
- **Seminars and Events:** We will let you know you of any seminars or events we may be hosting and keep you informed of other relevant events.
- **Support Groups and Information to the Public:** Membership is not necessary to attend our support groups which we provide for free or at minimum cost. However membership fees do help us to better equip them with books and other resources

NAME:.....

ADDRESS

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WAGED \$20.00 • UNWAGED \$10.00 • Corporate \$60.00

Membership Amount \$.....DONATION \$.....'

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$.....

Please make cheque payable to:

Hearing Voices Network Aotearoa NZ, PO BOX 78-132, Grey Lynn, AUCKLAND 1245 Contact: Adrienne hearingvoices@woosh.co.nz

NZ EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS

AUCKLAND JUNE 27 1pm

Making Recovery happen & AGM for Hearing Voices Network. Held at Toi Ora Live Arts Trust. 6 Putiki Rd, Grey Lynn. Free entry. Ctc Adrienne 0211024151.

Hearing Voices that are Distressing– A Simulated Training Experience Monday 20th July 9-12.30 at Fickling Center, 546 Mt Albert Rd, Three Kings AUCKLAND. Ctc : Keepwell Ltd

email stop@fullstop.co.nz OR register online www.keepwell.co.nz

Working With Voices

This includes working within belief systems; coping strategies; voice profiling; using the voices workbook etc. Tuesday 21st July 9.30-4pm at Fickling Center, 546 Mt Albert Rd, Three Kings, Auckland. Ctc Keepwell Ltd or email: stop@fullstop.co.nz

Client Involvement in Goal Setting. Explore and challenge the notions of recovery solutions as they relate to the practice of goal setting. Thursday 23rd July 9.30-1.00pm. At Fickling Center, 546 Mt Albert Rd. Ctc Keepwell Ltd www.keepwell.co.nz email: stop@fullstop.co.nz

WELLINGTON

**Following to be held at Hutt Valley Hospital Learning Center, High Street, Lower Hutt. Ctc Keepwell Ltd or Email; stop@fullstop.co.nz www.keepwell.co.nz

Hearing Voices that are Distressing– a simulated Training Experience. Monday 27th July 8.30am – 12pm CTC Keepwell Ltd as above

Client Involvement in Goal Setting– Tuesday 28th July 2009 9am-12.30pm Ctc Keepwell Ltd as above