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Newsletter of the Lower Hutt Women's Centre

Hongognoi 2012 Vol.20 No 3



Sandra Torrijos/ Isis International Manila

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Women's Centre Opening Hours

Monday to Thursday 10am – 5pm

Friday 9am – 5pm

Ph: 04 569 2711 Fax: 04 570 2820

Email: info@lhwc.org.nz

186 Knights Road, Waterloo

Lower Hutt 5011



Thanks to all the women that helped put the newsletter together, and to the women that donate the graphics to Isis International Manilla.

Website: www.lhwc.org.nz email: info@lhwc.org.nz

Friendship Group

We are a facilitated group who meet weekly for discussions and occasionally an outing.

Our focus is on learning about friendship, maintaining, developing and exploring the ideas.

Friendships are a vital source of emotional sustenance. As well as providing the pleasure of companionship, your friendship network offers you a sense of support and belonging.

The outings are on the last thursday of

the month. We often leave early.

This group is open to all women and you can join the group by turning up to the Women's Centre on Thursdays from 10am to 12noon.

Our ability to make and sustain friendships is influenced by our ability to develop and maintain a nurturing relationships with ourselves.

Facilitator: Yvonne Broadley

If you are interested please phone or come along.

All women welcome.

Free 1-1 Computer Lessons @the Lower Hutt Women's Centre

Learn how to....

- ***surf the net, keep yourself safe online, send email and connect with your family and friends on Facebook or with SKYPE, edit your photos and share them online.***
- ***use Word of Open Office, update your CV and cover letter, or do what you want.***
- ***Excel to manage your budget, Power point to present your work, smart presentation and branding - first impressions and look good,***
- ***maintain your computer, organise your photos and documents, avoid losing your work, keep those viruses and worms out, troubleshoot when it all goes wrong, and much more ...***

When? Tuesdays (9-12pm) and Thursdays (12-3pm)

Appointments with computer tutor 30 or 60 min

How? Phone 569-2711 for an appointment

Lower Hutt Women's Centre | 186 Knights Road | Waterloo

Free Access computer

The Women's Centre has a free public access computer available for all women to use during our opening hours. Phone to book your time.

WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

The Women's Support Group is for

- support or
- if you are having a hard time coping with stress,
- day to day hassles,
- depression,
- grief
- or oppression.

Do you want to unload, are you getting stressed out?

If you are feeling out of touch with yourself and other people around, or feeling isolated .. then the group is a time to get support in a caring environment while you work on looking at yourself, your feelings and how you are in life.

The group is open to all women and you can join the group by turning up to the Women's Centre on Wednesdays at 1pm. The group goes from 1pm to 2.30pm.

You don't need to book, just turn up.

Every Wednesday at 1pm - 2.30pm

Facilitator: Stephanie Brockman

Mosaics

If you want to learn how to mosaic and meet other women doing the same come along anytime from 10am to 2.00pm every Tuesday, Stephanie can show you what to do. We normally start with a paver, after you have made a paving stone you can progress on to a variety of projects. We do charge for materials - it does cost \$5 for a completed paver. If you want to work on your own projects you need to pay for materials.

This is an open workshop and costs are for materials used only.



Sandra Torrijos/ Isis International Manila

Assertiveness for Women

Assertiveness is the ability to express yourself and your rights without violating the rights of others. It is appropriately direct, open, and honest communication which is self-enhancing and expressive. Acting assertively will give you the opportunity to feel self-confident and will generally gain you the respect of yourself and your peers and friends. It can increase your chances for honest relationships, and help you to feel better about yourself and your self in everyday situations.

Dates: 6 Weeks beginning Wednesday 15th August 2012

Venue: Women's Centre, 186 Knights Road, Waterloo. Lower Hutt

Enrol: Only by payment or deposit

Cost: Waged \$40/\$20 Waged/Unwaged

Time: 7-9pm

Facilitator: Stephanie Brockman

Sleep Well for Women

In a world where "time is money", just about everything in life can seem more important than sleep.

Yet, our sleep and health are very closely linked. Parenting demands, caring for an elderly parent, or a restless partner can interrupt our sleep. Pain, worries, fears or our fluctuating hormones may keep us awake. Whilst sleeping problems are as widespread as they are diverse, this course aims to help participants to understand basic facts and to discover practical and workable solutions toward improved sleep and well-being. and your self in everyday situations.

We will begin with exploring important aspects of sleep, including;

- sleep stages and body rhythms
- the relationship between daytime busyness and quality of sleep
- the effects of sleep loss.

Participants will be invited to reflect on their own sleeping patterns and needs.

We will look at what helps, and what may get in the way of sleep. This includes;

- stress, worry and anxiety
- *food and other habits*
- *parenting and other caring roles*
- *hormonal changes, illness and changing patterns as we age.*

Handouts and information about other resources will be provided.

Dates: 6 Weeks beginning Thursday 27th September 2012.

Venue: Women's Centre, 186 Knights Road, Waterloo. Lower Hutt

Enrol: Only by payment or deposit

Cost: Waged \$40/\$20

Time: 7-9pm

Facilitator: Veronika Gabel

Enrol for this course through deposit or payment

Phone 5692711

Fire and Earth

A 6 week Meditation Course with Ruth Pink



Meditation is an ancient art with many possibilities for modern application. Using simple techniques of watching and being with the breath, it is designed to help people to calm the mind and to live well. In this respect it is one of the cheapest, most portable kinds of healthcare and self help around. Meditation can be used to manage stress, pain, anxiety and depression. It is also a way to connect more deeply with the richness and beauty that we are.

Taking inspiration from the elements of Fire and Earth, and their related qualities of Energy and Support; Ruth will tailor the course to the needs and aspirations of the women who attend.

During the six weeks we will also:

- learn some basic meditation techniques,
- explore ways to manage our thoughts and feelings (instead of letting them manage us!)
- discuss ways of living more easefully and more mindfully.
- explore some basic Buddhist principles that support meditation.

The course will include meditation practice, art work, gentle body movements, discussion and sharing. It is suitable for people who are new to meditation and those who are looking to revitalize their practice.

Please wear warm loose clothing.

Date: Beginning Thursday 16th August 2012

Time: 7-9pm

Cost: \$40/\$20

Enrolment by payment or deposit Phone 5692711 for a pamphlet or the bank account number

Ruth Pink is a writer, poet, counsellor and celebrant. She has been meditating and studying meditation for more than 17 years. A stressful job brought her to meditation and a serious illness helped her really practice it. Ruth is connected to the Wangapeka Study and Retreat Centre in Nelson, and has studied with the Venerable Tarchin Hearn, the Venerable Namgyal Rinpoche, Leander Kane and many other teachers whose wisdom has enriched her life. Ruth weaves together teachings from the Buddha and other spiritual traditions with art, science, ecology and poetry. While seeking to inspire others to change their lives and change their minds, she is also open-hearted, and down to earth.

Self Esteem Workshops For Women

Lower Hutt Women's Centre
186 Knights Road
Lower Hutt
5692 711

Now is the time for all good women to stand up and say who we will be

Self Esteem Workshops on a Friday morning and a Tuesday Evening.

Each workshop is separate. You may attend one or as many as you like. Creche is provided for **pre-school children only** without extra charge only on Friday morning. Please make enquiries about babies because they need a lot of attention and we have one creche worker. The workshop is for women only so try to avoid planning on taking your children into the workshop.

Time: Friday morning 9.45 - 12noon and Tuesday evening 6.30pm to 8.30pm.

The workshop starts right on time at 10am and 6.30pm and late comers can't go into the morning workshop.

If you have children you need to arrive about 20 minutes early to settle them in.

Cost: Friday \$2.00 and Tuesday \$5.00

All women welcome.

You don't need to enrol, just turn up.

Facilitators:

Friday Morning Stephanie Brockman

Tuesday Evening Julie Smart



Friday Morning

2012

Aug 3 Developing Self Knowledge

Aug 10 Self Love

August 17 Acknowledging Self

August 24 Enhancing self in terms of awareness

August 31 Acceptance and use of strengths

Sept 7 Positive thought and talk

Sept 14 Messages about self

Sept 21 Accepting responsibility about self

Sept 28 Coming to grips with feelings

Oct 5 Talking About Ourselves

Oct 12 Beliefs About Self

Oct 19 Expressing Pride in Self

Oct 26 Letting Go of the Past

Nov 2 Respecting Self and Others

November 9 Striving for pure motives

Nov 16 Putting Yourself in Neutral

Nov 23 Having the Courage to be Imperfect

Nov 30 Developing Courage

Dec 7 Willpower

Dec 14 Anger as a Strength

Dec 21 Developing Self Knowledge

Tuesday Evening

2012

Aug 7 Respecting Self and Others

Aug 14 Striving for Pure Motives

Aug 21 Putting Yourself in Neutral

Aug 28 Having the Courage to be Imperfect

Sep 4 Developing Courage

Sep 11 Willpower

Sep 18 Anger as a Strength

Sep 25 Developing Self Knowledge

Oct 2 Self Love

Oct 9 Acknowledging Self

Oct 16 Enhancing self in terms of awareness

Oct 23 Acceptance and use of strengths

Oct 30 Positive thought and talk

Nov 6 Messages about Self

Nov 13 Accepting responsibility for self

Nov 20 Coming to grips with feelings

Dec 4 Talking About Ourselves

Dec 11 Beliefs About Self

Dec 18 Expressing Pride in Self

2013 Letting Go of the Past

Opportunity for Healing from Sexual Abuse or Rape

These weekend workshops are designed for women that have in their life experienced sexual abuse or rape and are ready to use group work process to assist with this healing.

Interviews with the facilitator will be necessary before enrolment.

Dates: Friday evening, Sat and Sun. 24th, 25th and 26th August 2012.

Time: Frid 7-9.30pm, Saturday 10-5pm and Sunday 10-4.30pm

Cost: \$40/\$20 Waged/Unwaged/Low Waged

Facilitator: Ally Andersun Phone to register your interest, leave a message for Ally Andersun and she will phone you back. 5692711

Participants will be expected to attend all sessions in a weekend workshop
This course will have a maximum of 6 participants per workshop

Weaving with Harakeke (Attend one or both of the workshops)

Tutor: Makere Love

Dates:

Course One: 23rd September 2012 Kono

Course Two: 24th and 25th November 2012. Whiri bottom kete For this course you need to have attended course one or two at some stage previously.

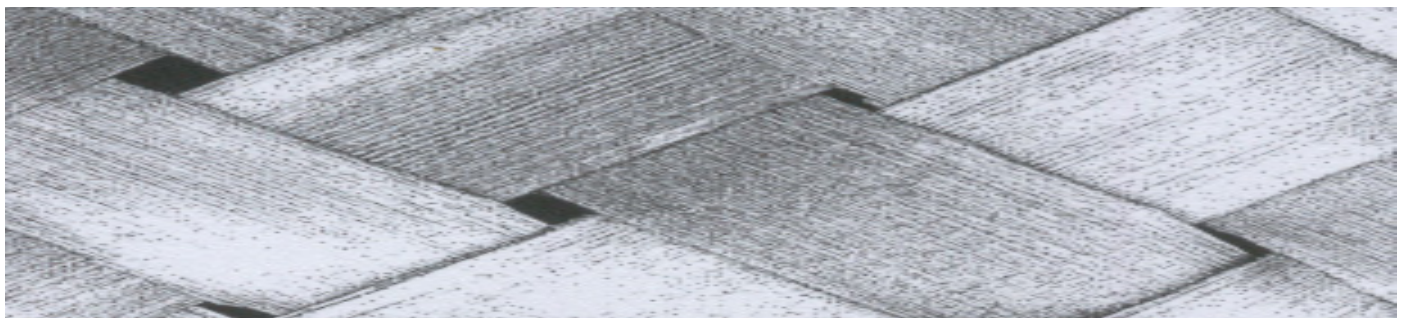
Time: 10-4pm

Cost: \$12 for the one day courses /\$24 for two day course

Venue: Lower Hutt Women's Centre

Enrol: By payment or deposit

Learn how make a kонаe and a kono, and how to prepare the harakeke using correct protocol, e.g. with cutting harakeke and the significance of karakia. We will also sing waiata



Support Group for Women who have experienced childhood Sexual Abuse and Rape

A monthly 3 hour support group for women who have experienced childhood sexual abuse and rape is being offered at the Lower Hutt Women's Centre. These will be held on the first Sunday of the month at 1pm to 4pm and are for women at any stage of their journey through abuse and recovery.

The group will be facilitated by an ACC accredited counsellor who is skilled in therapeutic group work.

"The traumatised child doesn't have the luxury of self reflection." (John Briere).

This group offers an opportunity for women to develop self awareness and self reflection at their own pace and in their own style, an opportunity to reclaim and retrieve split off hurt parts of themselves and allow them to heal.

Healing is not only possible but essential.

Facilitator:

Ally Andersun Bachelor of Counselling NZAC ACC accredited

Time: 1-4pm

Attendance: Enrolment not necessary, you can just turn up.

Inquiries: Ally Andersun or Stephanie Brockman Phone 5692711

Dates for the next 4 months

Sunday 5th August 2012
Sunday 2nd September 2012
Sunday 7th October 2012
Sunday 4th November 2012
Sunday 2nd December 2012

Venue: Lower Hutt Women's Centre,
186 Knights Road, Waterloo. Lower

Self Development Using the Psychodramatic Method

This weekend will give participants opportunity to explore personal issues using the psychodramatic method. This workshop will be useful for women wanting to expand and develop their experience of life and the issues that hold them back. Women new to the psychodramatic method are welcome.

Participants are expected to attend the full course

Weekend Course

Dates: Frid 7th December, Saturday 8th December and Sunday 9th December 2012

Time: Frid: 7-9.30pm 10-5pm Saturday and 10-4.30pm Sunday

Venue: Women's Centre

Enrol: Only by payment or deposit

Cost: Waged \$40 /Low or Unwaged \$20

Facilitator: Ally Andersun

5 Minimum and 7 Maximum for course to commence
Participants are expected to attend the full course.

Self Care versus Burn Out

This is a weekend workshop, and more information available in the next newsletter, or phone for a pamphlet to be sent out.

Facilitator: Ally Andersun

Date: Friday 9th November 2012, Saturday 10th November 2012 and Sunday 11th November 2012.

Cost: \$40/\$20

Time: Frid, 7pm-9.30pm, Saturday 10-5pm and Sunday 10-4.30pm.

Enrolment by payment or deposit.

Therapeutic Massage & Relaxation

Massage

Massage has many wide-ranging benefits that affect both our bodies and our minds.

When muscles are overworked, waste products such as lactic acid can accumulate in the muscle, causing soreness, stiffness, and even muscle spasm.

Massage improves circulation, which increases blood flow, bringing fresh oxygen and nutrients to body tissues. This can assist the lymphatic system in the elimination of waste products, speed healing after injury, and enhance recovery from disease. It eases tense and knotted muscles and stiff joints, improving mobility and flexibility.

Therapeutic massage can be used to promote general well-being and enhance self-esteem, while boosting the circulatory and immune systems to benefit blood pressure, circulation, muscle tone, digestion, and skin tone.

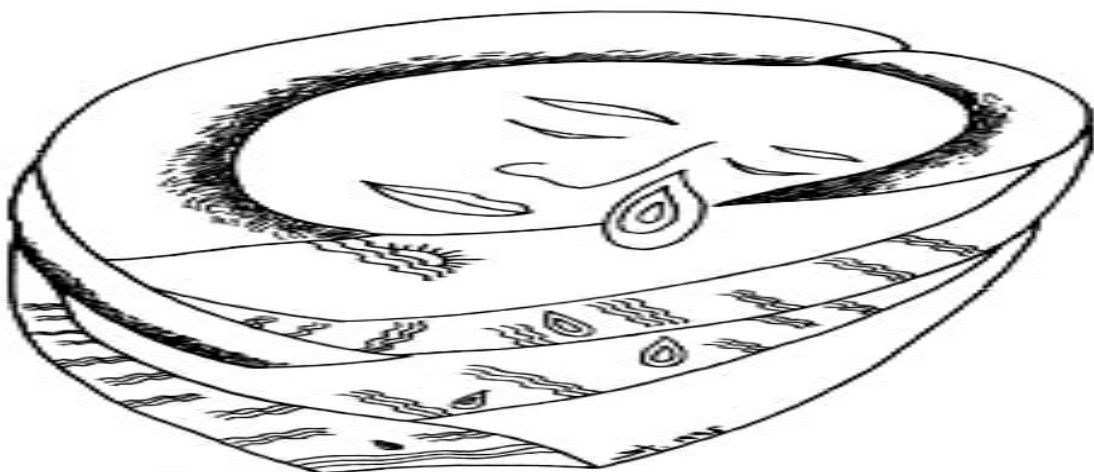
And it feels great!

Book a session at The Women's Centre with Rachel on: 04-5653119 or 0226988090 or email: therapeuticmassage@gmx.com

I take appointments at the Women's Centre on a Monday.

Price: 1 hour session for only \$30

I also treat clients at Aurora Medical Centre in 39 Pretoria Street, Lower Hutt which I charge professional rates. If you come to Aurora Centre as a result of referall from Women's Centre I will donate 10% to the Women's Centre.



Sandra Torrijos / Isis Internacional / Manila

Self esteem for women

Two one day workshops
Enrol for one or both.

The workshops will be experiential , discussion and activity based. Women new to group work welcome.

Self-esteem is used to describe a person's overall sense of self-worth or personal value. Self-esteem can involve a variety of beliefs about the self, your thoughts and feelings about yourself.

Self-esteem is an important part of development. Depression, anxiety, relationship problems and drug or alcohol abuse can be related to low self esteem. How we see ourselves has an effect on everything we do, every relationship and every interaction we have.

Self esteem can grow and develop.

Facilitator for both workshops: Stephanie Brockman

Workshop One: Focus: Acknowledging Self.

Date: Saturday 1st September 2012

Time: 10 - 4pm.

Enrolment: By payment or deposit.

Cost: \$10

Workshop Two: Focus: Accepting Responsibility for Self.

Date: Saturday 6th October 2012

Time: 10-4pm

Enrolment: By payment or deposit.

Cost: \$10

Maximum 10 participants and 5 Minimum. Enrolment necessary..



Seventy-Something - and Making it Count

Enquiries and Enrolments being taken now for this weekend Workshop to be held on 7-9 September this year.

This new Workshop, is for -

Women in and around their seventies,

Who are considering what this life stage means for them,

And who wish to do so, along with others in a group.

Workshop Themes - Life Stage challenges, opportunities, and personal skills and strengths.

Facilitator – Anne Horrill

*Dates and Times - Friday 7 September 2012 - 7-9 pm,
Saturday 8 September 2012- 10- 4pm
And Sunday 9 September 2012 10- 2pm*

Venue - Womens Centre, Lower Hutt

Fee - set your own rate

Group size –

p to 10 members, by pre-enrolment

Enrolment -

by payment or deposit in advance

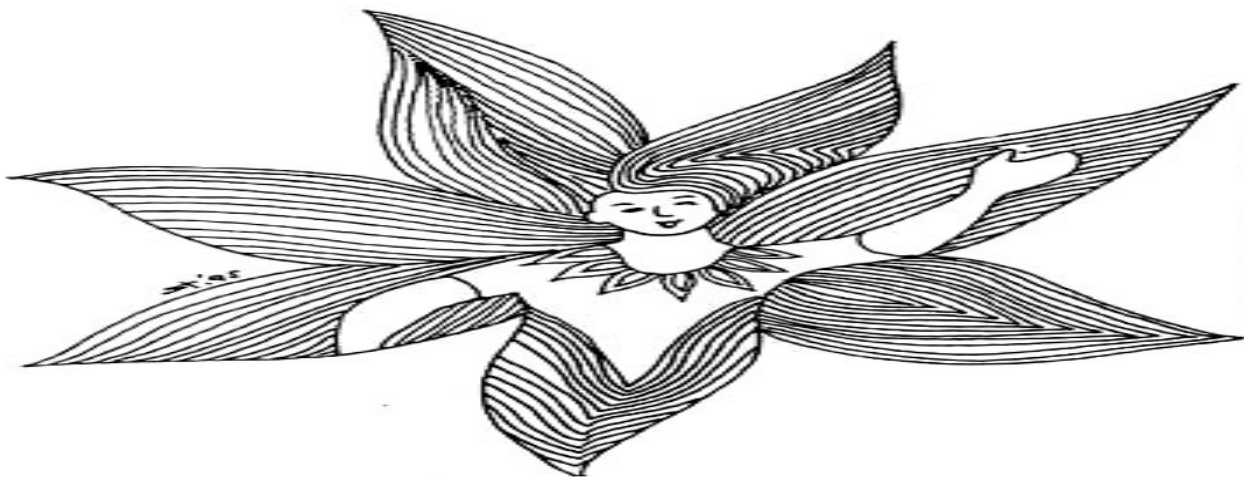
For Inquiries

and for Enrolments - please contact Anne

Horrill.

Anne Horrill - 5627544 - ahorrill@clear.net.nz

This is a private workshop run by Anne. For all information please contact Anne directly.



Sandra Torpøst Isis International Māhā

Where the HeArt is by Pat Rosier

Published: Jan. 22, 2012 Price: 4.95USD

Blurb

Will travel fix Ann's broken life? Suddenly bereft of both partner and job, Ann needs to find a new direction. Connecting frayed threads of family and finding herself in what she calls "art events" in America is rewarding, but no preparation for the totally unexpected—in more ways than one—things that happen in London. Ann returns home to New Zealand both shaken and stirred.

Extended description

It was her mother's idea that forty-year-old Ann should go traveling. Ann's parter has walked out and she's been made redundant from a university job she enjoys, teaching the Romantic poets. She can combine her love of art museums with visits to family members in Washington DC, New York and London, mending frayed connections. A final few family-free days in Paris will round off her trip. Travel will give her a break from well-meaning advice and a chance to think about future directions for her fractured life. After all, she has a willing father to take care of the sale of her once-shared house, and the dog was always more her partner's.

Unexpected "art events" begin in New York, where her experience of the art works she admires take on a whole new dimension. In London, Ann finds that her cousin's competent wife could actually use some help with two-year-old twins, so she extends her stay and her knowledge of young children. A decidedly non-familial encounter with a dynamic librarian in London and an impetuous mistake in Paris mean that Ann returns to New Zealand and her future both shaken and stirred.

For sale for 4.95 US Dollars as an ebook on both the smashwords site and the kindle site. The URLs are:

<http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/125647>

This is the Smashwords site, where you can get versions for all different kinds of readers, (including Kindle) including a pdf for your computer if you want. One purchase gets all versions.

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B0073O5DVC>

This is the Kindle site itself. You can buy it here, but only the Kindle version.

Pat Rosier

<http://peajayar.blogspot.com>





Sandra Torrijos/ Isis International Manila

We are the Women

We are the snails,
Slow in our approach, hindered by such a weight upon our shoulders.
Predators swoop upon us as we retreat inside our shells, silence, darkness, and
for this we are labelled obedient.

Or perhaps we are the spiders silently twisting up and down a flimsy thread;
foolishly hoping those we lust after will become tangled in our web, and for this
we are labelled delicate.

Could we be the fantails? Beautifully formed, flitting graceful in and out of sight,
watching, and adored for our beauty not our song.

Maybe we are the lizards, shrugging off old skin tempted by a new life, abandon-
ing our memories of a harsh dry existence.

We are the Women, bare of our shells, entangled in a web of your labels, grace-
fully weaving a finer path, shrugging off a bruised and battered history, moving
forward but always watching, waiting for the predator to land upon us.

We are the Women who carry the scars, who sweep the slate clean, who bare
the children, our versatility a threat to your world. And for this we are labelled
second best.

Emily Wood

Violence against women in New Zealand focus of UN Committee

Friday, 20 July 2012, 2:45 pm

Press Release: Women's Health Action

20th July 2012

Violence against women in New Zealand focus of UN Committee

'Violence against women was a major concern for the UN Committee reviewing the status of women in New Zealand, when it met yesterday' says Julie Radford-Poupard, one of the non-government representatives at the United Nations this week.

'Committee members questioned whether current changes in New Zealand such as legal aid restrictions, the introduction of fees in the Family Court, the restructuring of family violence funding, and a trend towards encouraging the resolution of relationship disputes out of court, may be increasing the barriers for women seeking to leave violent relationships and risking their safety' says Ms Radford-Poupard.

'Committee members also questioned the government on the lack of progress in implementing the recommendations from the report of the Taskforce for Action on Sexual Violence. The report has called for changes to New Zealand legislation to reduce stress and trauma faced by complainants in the criminal justice system', says Julie Radford-Poupard.

Hon. Minister of Women's Affairs Jo Goodhew was also challenged by a committee member, Ms Halperin-Kaddari, of Israel, on the way she talked about sexual and domestic violence as she presented New Zealand's seventh report to the United Nations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Ms Halperin-Kaddari expressed her concern that the Minister appeared not to acknowledge the gendered dynamics of domestic and sexual violence in her choice language. Ms Halperin-Kaddari also stressed that it was important not to shy away from a 'very gender specific problem' and warned that camouflaging that fact would cause further risks for women', says Julie Radford-Poupard.

Domestic Violence is Terrorism With More Victims

Domestic abuse is a form of terrorism that comes from within our own society, says Lucy Berrington in this news analysis, resulting in mass casualties and extremely high costs. But for its victims, no big-budget homeland security effort exists.

(WOMENSENEWS)--Carissa Daniels is a terrorism survivor. For years she lived in a state of chronic fear and watchfulness, restricting where she went and what she did. "My system is still in hyper-drive," she said. "Terrorism changes your behavior in the moment and for the rest of your life." The terrorism that Daniels suffered did not take place in New York or London or Madrid. She wasn't a victim of al-Qaida. The attacks took place repeatedly over nine years at her home in Washington state. They were physical, emotional and sexual, and inflicted by the man she lived with, the father of her child.

Although Daniels left her abuser more than a decade ago, he remains a threat to her safety and that of her daughter. Now 55 and 18, they struggle with long-term effects that include poverty and serious health problems.

"Even the simplest things are no longer simple," Daniels said. The loss of freedoms, self-sufficiency, safety and emotional tranquility are the same outcomes that global terrorists aim for, though evidence suggests that abusive partners achieve them more effectively.

The stories of survivors from different countries and circumstances are strikingly aligned. A British study released in early July draws on such stories to make the case that domestic abuse functions psychologically in the same way as global terrorism.

"Framing domestic abuse as 'everyday terrorism' helps us understand how fear works," writes Rachel Pain, the study's author and a professor of geography at Durham University in England. The report, "Everyday Terrorism: How Fear Works in Domestic Abuse," confronts the assumption that, at some level, victims of domestic attacks choose their fates. Pain's findings indicate that entrapment is not a byproduct of masochism or misguided love, but of women's rational fear (validated by research) that they and their children are never so at risk as when separating from a violent partner.

More Long-Known Findings

The findings confirm what advocates for domestic abuse survivors have long known. "This is where domestic abuse is the same as any other kind of terrorism. She is terrorized because he has conditioned her to be," said Ruth Jewell, president of the board of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, based in Washington, D.C., in an email interview. "Not only do the victims of both forms of terrorism share the same painful consequences—the terrorists use the same tactics," said Trese Todd, president of the Thrivers Action Group, a Seattle nonprofit that addresses domestic violence. Pain's study underscores a powerful disconnect between public perceptions of these two types of terrorism. Global terrorism looms large as a defining horror of our times while its domestic counterpart is relatively overlooked. One is seen as an outcome of mass religious zealotry, the other as a matter of private melodrama and personal failings.

Our inadequate response to domestic abuse is satirized in a video starring Lauren Luke, a young British woman whose make-up technique videos have launched her international career. In a public service announcement released earlier this month by the British charity Refuge, Luke demonstrates how to conceal the bruises inflicted by a possessive boyfriend.

Domestic abuse is endemic in the U.S. Nearly one in four women is beaten or raped by a partner during adulthood, according to the National Violence Against Women Survey in 2000. This is fairly consistent with European rates.

This abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional or psychological, usually in combination. More than three women and one man are murdered by their current or former partner every day in the United States (in 2005, this meant a total of 1,182 women and 329 men, counting only direct homicides). The floundering economy is said to have exacerbated the frequency and severity of domestic attacks.

Cost of Terrorism

Such statistics present domestic abuse as a series of incidents affecting individuals and our societal response, inadequate as it is, tends to be organized along these lines. But the processes that

link those incidents cause far broader social harms. Domestic abuse is a major driver of the break up of families, the loss of self-sufficiency of victims, the perpetuation of poverty, intergenerational trauma and the rising public costs of housing, health care and legal services. The cost of this "everyday terrorism" was estimated at \$8.3 billion in

2003 by medical economist Wendy Max and her colleagues at the University of California San Francisco. But this is probably an understatement. The impact of domestic abuse is far-reaching and poorly delineated; such calculations involve numerous decisions about what to include. In 2009, the Academy of Violence and Abuse, an interdisciplinary organization based in Minnesota, assessed the annual U.S. health care costs arising from domestic abuse at \$333 billion to \$750 billion (between 16 percent and 37 percent of total health costs).

In Britain, which has a population a fifth the size of ours, the sociologist Sylvia Walby has estimated the cost per year at the equivalent of \$25 billion.

"If these casualty figures and costs represented the impact of al-Qaida, they would generate media saturation and political drama," said Pain, commenting on her study.

And also vast expenditure. The U.S. military response to 9/11 in Afghanistan and Iraq has cost up to \$4 trillion, and homeland security an additional \$1 trillion-plus. (In the same period, terrorists have killed 33 people in the United States.)

A 'Perfect Storm'

The funding to organizations working with domestic abuse victims, meanwhile, has substantially declined, a trend highlighted in the Mary Kay Truth About Abuse survey this year of agencies nationwide. "Across the U.S. we're seeing a 'perfect storm' of funding challenges at the same time that demand is higher than ever," said Cindy Southworth of the National Network to End Domestic Violence, based in Washington, D.C.

A national census of domestic violence agencies in September 2011 found that more than 67,000 victims were served in a single day. More than 10,000 requests for services, two-thirds of them for housing, could not be met. Terrorism survivor Daniels called shelters multiple times a day to find a spot and spent four months moving between refuges – a typical experience.

Yet the cost-benefits of such services have been demonstrated by research. (The advocates interviewed for this story emphasized that victims should keep calling shelters and help lines until they get a response.)

Despite the clear need for shelters and the other services offered by agencies, they cannot solve this problem. They are a "social placebo," said Thrivers Action Group's Todd, a poor substitute for our societal refusal to hold abusers accountable for their criminal behavior. But they remain the only option for thousands of women and children. While we relentlessly place the onus on the victims to get out, we're closing off their precious few escape routes.

Lucy Berrington is a writer based in Boston and a friend of Durham University's Professor Rachel Pain.

<http://www.womensenews.org>

Marrying for social change

July 30, 2012 Blog Luddite Journo <http://ludditejourno.wordpress.com/>

Homosexual law reform in the mid 1980s was hugely formative for me. In my mid-early teens, it was the first time I realised I wasn't always going to agree with my brilliant father.

I was convinced consensual sexual activity between men should not be criminal. Dad broadly agreed, but, like households all over Aotearoa, debate raged. He "didn't know any gay men" and "didn't want to see New Zealand go too far."

I was yet to think about my (hetero)sexuality, or have any attractions to women that I called sexual. But my out gay chemistry teacher was repeatedly verbally abused for "taking it up the arse" by some of my classmates, and his classroom defaced with spray-painted graffiti hate.

The pinnacle of the arguments between my father and I involved my asking him how he would feel if a male couple moved in next door, and we could see them kissing one another good-bye in the morning, in the same way my parents kissed each other good-bye, every morning.

Dad said that wouldn't be ok with him. When I told him he was homophobic, he laughed and said "no, I'm not. We wouldn't move." My relationship with him changed, because I thought he was wrong and I found his views truly offensive. Much as I continued (and continue) to love him.

The debate Aotearoa is about to have about Marriage Equality (and yes, that phrase is deliberate – everytime it gets called "gay marriage" we leave out trans people, lesbians and bisexual people) is going to be heated, make no mistake.

Queer people will have to listen to homophobes telling us there is something wrong with loving someone of the same gender, that "homosexual relationships" are not normal. This will be painful and horrifying and dangerous for queer people in ways it will be difficult to describe to our straight and/or cis friends.

I don't want to get married. I don't want the state to have anything to do with who I share my bed with, or my life with. I don't believe monogamous long-term relationships are "better" than other ways of loving. For me, a relationship's worth comes from how the people involved treat one another, the room there is to grow and explore together and independently, the joy that comes from connection.

But I know that this Bill will make a difference for queer people in Aotearoa. Just as Homosexual Law Reform did in 1986, the Human Rights Act in 1993, the Civil Union Bill in 2004. We would not even be able to have this discussion, in 2012, about marriage equality without the activism that set the context for those earlier legislative changes. Every time we have these debates and voices for increased equality win, the world becomes a little safer for queer people.

But the debate itself won't be safe for us, which scares me. Not for myself – I have a privileged – which should be an ordinary – existence as an out queer cis woman. I have control over where I live, and who I live with. My employers know my sexuality, so does my family and everywhere I volunteer and participate in activist work, and I am surrounded by beautiful, loving friends with all

kinds of identities.

For that gay kid coming out in Te Awamutu, this debate will be terrifying. For that closeted bisexual public servant, this debate will be painful. For that lesbian who wants to leave the church and her husband with her children, this debate will be life-threatening. For all of us who don't look like the gender norms we're supposed to, this debate will be dangerous.

Social change comes at a cost. Activism isn't always easy, or safe. Let's look after each other while conservative New Zealand tries to argue we're not the same as everyone else. And let's remember this is just one step to respect, justice and equality – not the step. We have more work to do yet.

Save the Whales *(Kath Read's presentation at the Conference: Reflective Intersections – New Zealand Fat Studies Conference) Massey University July 2012 Taken from her Blog. Fat Heffalump - living with fattitude.)*

An Examination of the Relationship Between Academics/Professionals and Fat Activists

In the world I grew up in, girls were considered an inconvenience on a family. Ugly girls were considered an embarrassment as well as an inconvenience. And ugly, fat girls were considered a punishment. It was believed intellect was wasted on girl children, and considered stolen or unlawful in an ugly, fat girl child, as though she had somehow robbed one of the other children of what was rightfully theirs.

I fought for every scrap of my education. It was rarely encouraged, regularly discouraged. My voracious hunger for reading was ridiculed and often blamed for my fatness. Consequently I barely scraped through my senior year of high school, believing the barrage of messages at home and in school that told me that I was worthless because of my fat, female self.

I don't have a string of letters after my name. I have never attended a fine university such as this one. The years that many young people spend working hard to fill their heads with an education, I spent scraping a life up on my own from whatever tools I had at hand – elbow grease, that voracious hunger for reading and a base of kind friends who believed in me all along, even when I didn't believe in myself.

But what I have done, is spent a lifetime in this fat body. I have spent almost 40 years learning exactly what the world thinks of fatness. I have lived in this fat body, loved in it, laughed in it, cried in it and tried to erase it through almost every method available. I have spent most of my 40 years being the one of the fattest bodies in any given room.

I am the world's leading expert on life in this fat body.

Yet despite growing media attention on fat bodies, actual fat people are in the minority of the people who get to speak on the topic of fatness. People who have no connection to fatness, either personally or professionally are given forum to express their opinions on fatness. While we have Phil the marketing executive denouncing fat people for being angry and aggressive while not taking responsibility for their bodies, and Ryan the lecturer in politics declaring that fat people are unwilling to "conform to the societal standards of eating" and therefore earn discrimination, we have very few actual fat people who are given space to tell their stories and speak their truths, and when they are, vitriol is poured on them with no support or even acknowledgement of this vitriol from the media that published them.

With this growing media attention on weight and health, more and more opportunities arise for grassroots fat activists like myself to collaborate with academics and professionals in these fields. These can be powerful projects that shed positive light on life in a fat body, and can also open up a world of opportunities for fat activists. But there is still a chasm between how academics and professionals in these fields are treated in comparison to how fat people are treated. To

start with, it is as if, for any information about life in a fat body to have merit, it must be validated by an academic or professional, preferably a thin one.

There is a direct relationship between the amount of power and privilege an academic or professional has and how valid their voice is in the media, regardless of any motive or bias that the academic or professional may have.

In the words of Dr Linda Bacon, author of “Health at Every Size: The surprising truth about your weight.”:

“People seem to give more credence to my words than if they were spoken by a fatter person – after all, I’m not just saying them to rationalize my existence.”

For fat activists and fat people in general, these topics are deeply personal and often emotionally charged. Our passion for the topics of life in fat bodies are borne of how deeply we carry the societal assumptions about our fatness. When fat people are vilified or dehumanised, it is personal and we are justified in our emotional reaction to the highly toxic messages that are sent to us about our bodies.

When our voices are dismissed in favour of academics or professionals with thin privilege, it further stigmatises us as human beings, yet even further damage is done when those academics or professionals dismiss us themselves, ignore their privilege and treat our lives and realities as case studies or mere data. Even when making the same arguments that we fat activists make ourselves, the failure to acknowledge their privilege does harm. It gives agencies like the media unspoken permission to dismiss the voices of fat people as well.

It is important for academics and professionals to acknowledge that they are also often in a position of power when working with fat activists. They usually have the decision as to what is published, the ability to choose which media outlets they engage with and resources that grassroots fat activists do not have access to. It is important for academics and professionals to regularly “check in” with fat activists they are working with, to ensure that they are comfortable with the way they are portrayed in the media, that they consent for personal information to be shared at any time and that they have the right to choose what level of engagement they make.

After all, this is not just research to us, this is our lives. Our lived experience does not belong to greater academia to investigate, disassemble or pathologise, it belongs to us. We are not whales to be rolled back out to sea. We do not need conservation. Pity is no more welcome to us than disgust.

But most importantly, no human being wants to feel discarded, and once the research or project is over, and the academics or professionals move onto their next body of work, they must acknowledge that we fat activists don't get to hand in the paper and walk away. We must continue on fighting for our right to a life of dignity and respect. We must continue on, living in a body that general society treats as diseased and defective.

Collaborations between grassroots fat activists and academics or professionals, when conducted ethically, with clear communication and understanding, can result in powerful changes to the quality of life of not just fat people in general, but the activists themselves, as you can see by these incredible images that have been playing behind me. But academics in positions of power and privilege must be conscious of, and acknowledge that power and privilege.

After all, it is not their stories that are being told. They are ours to tell.

In the words of the character Aminata Diallo from Lawrence Hill’s book “Someone Knows My Name” in reference to the scholars supposedly fighting for her liberation:

“They [the abolitionists] may well call me their equal, but their lips do not yet say my name, and their ears do not yet hear my story. Not the way I want to tell it. But I have long loved the written word, and come to see in it the power of the sleeping lion. This is my name. This is who I am. This is how I got here. In the absence of an audience, I will write down my story so that it waits like a restful beast with lungs breathing and heart beating.”

Newsletter Collective Statement

We would like this newsletter to be:

- ✘ a creative outlook for writers and artists and that means you
- ✘ a publication that provides information relative to women
- ✘ a publication that informs women on Women's Centre activities and other activities for women in the region.

We know we will make mistakes but hope we can learn from these and be open to criticism and change, and to sharing skills and resources with other groups.

The newsletter collective reserves the right not to publish letters which conflict with Women's Centre philosophy. We may not agree with the views expressed in letters. Some letters are edited in consultation with the writer. We do not publish personal attacks. Letter addressed to the newsletter collective are assumed to be intended for publication. Please indicate clearly if they are not.

Women's Centre philosophy

The Women's centre:

- i) recognise and work in the spirit of the Tiriti O Waitangi;
- ii) confront women's oppression and empower women to take control of their own lives
- iii) oppose discrimination by those who have power against those who do not. This includes discrimination against women, especially Maori women, Pacific Island women, women of colour, lesbians, those who are differently abled, young, old, working class and those with different spiritual beliefs.
- iv) promote a safe supportive environment for all women and children;
- v) promote the sharing of power and resources;
- vi) act as a resource and information centre for the community.

The news letter is free to Women's Centre members and women's organisations. To join the Lower Hutt Women's Centre, send \$27 waged, \$15 unwaged, \$10 teenage, \$5 children to 186 Knights Road Lower Hutt. Membership also entitles you to borrow books, magazines, tapes, videos etc from the library for up to one month.

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