



**WORLD OF
DIFFERENCE**
He Ao Whakatoihara kore

Up-date on the World of Difference programmes

Kia ora koutou katoa

We have spent the last few months gearing up for what we hoped to be a most successful third year for the World of Difference programmes. However, the covid-19 pandemic, that is impacting us all in every aspect of our lives, will result in challenges to our work.

He aha te mea nui o te ao

What is the most important thing in the world?

He tangata, he tangata, he tangata

It is the people, it is the people, it is the people.

In accord with the Māori proverb, our greatest concern and focus at the present time is how we can best support the wellbeing of everyone involved with the World of Difference programmes and our colleagues and community more generally. At the beginning this was mainly logistical – staying up-to-date with the progressively limiting alert levels and the organisational impact of those on our work, our workplace and our people.

Since the lockdown we have shifted to a focus on how we can best support people to remain engaged and connected throughout this time where physical social isolation is required. This has included the setting up of virtual check-ins and social events to support people in this regard. Please also note the resources of the Mental Health Foundation on looking after mental health and wellbeing during covid-19:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help/covid-19/>.

We are also working to adapt the World of Difference programmes for on-line delivery and will attempt to continue delivery in this format wherever possible.

As I know many of you will be too, on a personal level, I am feeling a bit anxious, a bit overwhelmed, a bit paralysed (it has taken me most of the day to write this!), a bit unsure, a bit incredulous – a melting pot of emotions. I am comforted, however, in my absolute faith that together we can get through this. Being together just looks a bit different right now, but it remains what we are all about, so I extend my love and best wishes to you all.

Ngā manaakitanga.

Sarah Gordon, World of Difference programme lead.

In memoriam

Suzy Stevens died Sunday 12 Jan after a period of illness. She had been cared for at home throughout and at the end was with her partner Rob, her children Briale, Gan and Mana, and supported by her Waihi friend Jan, the district and hospice nurses.

A memorial picnic was held to celebrate her life on Friday January 17 at Queen Elizabeth Park, Paekakariki.



Suzy was a stalwart of the lived experience/psychiatric survivor movement from the very early days.

Suzy worked for many organisations, did a myriad of different types of work in a variety of capacities - she was an activist, an advocate, an advisor, a co-ordinator, a writer, an educator, a business owner, an instigator, an agitator, a strategist, a project manager, an author.

She embraced challenges and, as a result, she created change.

Suzy was an expert in her ability to advocate in a manner that was most appropriate and productive - always with respect - never attacking - but also never compromising of the values and goals of our work.

Her wealth of knowledge, values, and approach to our work served as a great source of wisdom and learning for many of us; and in this respect, we considered her a leader and mentor. Peers and colleagues held her in the highest of esteem, and yet she was always unassuming and humble in this regard.

Suzy was involved in the development and delivery of the World of Difference education programmes. A particular focus of Suzy's work in this area was the training of others to deliver the programmes and in this way, one of her many legacies was supporting the development of the user workforce, as she also did through so much of her other work over the years.

Suzy leaves an extensive legacy of work, support and mentorship that has had a significant impact, past and present, and that will continue into the future. This will be treasured and remembered by many of us. Thank you Suzy.



Notification of publications:

Gordon, S., & Higgins, M.J. (2020). The perspectives of a service user academic and a psychiatric trainee on engagement in supervision. *Irish Journal of Psychiatric Medicine*, <https://doi.org/10.1017/ipm.2020.6>

Newton-Howes, G., & Gordon, S. (2020). Who controls your future: The convention on the rights of persons with disabilities from a service user focused perspective. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 54(2), 134-137

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