

# Good Grief

Winter 2011

## News from the Board

Kia ora and welcome to our winter 2011 newsletter ! There's so much we want to share with you. We're celebrating 25 years of grief support, so here's a little history. We have new staff and a new board. And please come to our 25th anniversary lunch, Suicide Memorial Service and After Suicide Support Group.

### Thank you for funding and supporting us :

- Acorn Foundation
- Bay of Plenty District Health Board
- BayTrust
- Community Organisation Grants Scheme
- Lion Foundation
- Ministry of Social Development
- New Zealand Lottery Grants Board
- Pub Charity
- Southern Trust

Many thanks too to Shaaron Arnold, our volunteer counsellor.

### Contact details

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### 25 years

Grief Support Services was founded to support grieving community members in 1986.

It started in a church. Since then, Grief Support has been based in different venues, including 511 Cameron Road (opposite the former Pizza Hut), moving to the Historic Village in 1999, before arriving in Chadwick, Greerton, in 2008.

We have had at least three names. We were originally called Tauranga Grief Centre, then re-named Tauranga Support Centre for Loss and Grief. In 1998 we became known as Grief Support Services.

Recent highlights include

- growing substantially. There were well over 1,300 visits last year, up 71% from 2008. We also helped 350 new clients, a big increase from the 10 referrals a month initially.
- starting an annual Suicide Memorial Service in 2009, which participants describe as "healing".
- running regular Suicide Support Group meetings since 2008. They are popular and well received.
- serving the community for 25 years.

We now have four paid staff (three counsellors and a co-ordinator), a volunteer counsellor, and five students doing their practicums.

### New board

Congratulations to our new board :

- Chair Simon Lowe  
meet him on pg 2
- Treasurer Janie Hyde
- Secretary Donna La Fauci
- Member Emma Lowe
- Member Megan Gamble
- Member Shaaron Arnold

Heartfelt thanks to our outgoing Chair Rob Terry and board member Robyn Cavanagh, for their hard work and tireless support. We are sorry they are leaving.

We are keen to have more board members, so do contact us if you can help. It is enjoyable, thoroughly rewarding, yet not very time consuming voluntary work.

### New staff

Welcome, Ali Syme and Anne Opie. Ali and Anne are new part-time counsellors who have been specially employed for their experience with children. They are excited about their work with Grief Support and are eager to help clients on their journeys through grief.

We also welcome our new volunteer, Earnsy Liu, who is helping with our newsletter.

## What's happening

Please join us at these events.

### Suicide memorial service

- When 10th Sep. 2011, Saturday, 12 noon
- Where Edgewater Fan, the Strand (near the Kestrel)
- What Join us if you have been bereaved by suicide, or if you want to support others. We will release balloons and have lunch (see below).
- Who Richard Moore and Renee Wilton will speak.

### 25th anniversary celebration lunch

- When 10th Sep. 2011, Saturday, 1pm, after the memorial service
- Where Volare Restaurant, the Strand
- What Celebrate with us. Share your stories and memories about Grief Support.
- How Diners will pay their own way. If you are coming, please RSVP (578 4480) by 6th Sep. 2011, Tuesday, so we can make reservations.

### After Suicide Support Group

- When 6 consecutive Wednesdays starting in Nov. 2011, 11am-12:30pm
- Where Grief Support Services, 147 Chadwick Road
- What This is for those who have been bereaved by suicide to share their thoughts and feelings, and to find support in others. Please contact us for more details and to register.

### Living before Suicide

- Sun baked sand tip toe running
- Fun-filled waves play surfing games
- Driftwood seats for watching parents
- Seagulls cry with pride of their catch
- Family picnic under Pohutukawa shade
- Sand dune carpet hiding dotterels breeding
- Collecting whole shells gathered on the beach

### Existing after a Suicide

- Sun dried sand exposing cold footprints
- White horse waves without a sound
- Driftwood lingers with no purpose
- Flying gulls form shadows on the ground
- Twisted roots tell Pohutukawa's history
- Flax and dune shrubs spread across the land
- Sea shells all fragmented by the tide

### Moving forward after a suicide

- Sun warmed sand brings barefoot comfort
- Waves mocking overwhelming grief
- Driftwood floating towards new direction
- Seagulls glide over wide horizons
- Small but safe under Pohutukawa's branches
- Tuis peck the sap from flowering flax
- Rock pool crabs slowly emerging from their shell.

By Heather Powell



## Meet the team — Chair : Simon Lowe

Hello there ! I'd like to introduce myself and tell you about my time with Grief Support.

I am a qualified social worker who has worked in acute mental health services and with people with intellectual disabilities since 1984. More recently, I have focused on children and youths with co-existing disorders, such as mental health and drug or alcohol disorders.

I worked in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services for the Bay of Plenty District Health Board for just over two years. Much of my experience has involved managing social work and community teams.

In the last three years, I have been in private practice, offering one-to-one therapy, group work, clinical supervision and staff training. I am currently studying towards a masters in counselling and working with Otago University on a study on suicide prevention.

I stumbled on Grief Support Services in 2008, when I was looking for office space for my new private practice.

While I shared their premises, I learned about their mission and services and came to appreciate what they did. I joined the board the following year as Treasurer and Deputy Chair, and was honoured to be elected as Chair last month.

Grief Support has had to make some very difficult financial decisions and be very frugal in the last few years. Thankfully, we are now in a much better position, though we still need to be extremely careful with our funds. We are therefore delighted to have extra funding that allows us to take on two part-time counsellors for a year, to offer specific services to young people.

I am proud to be a member of the board, and I look forward to the challenge of chairing this wonderful organization as it starts its next 25 years.

