

# MHAW 2023 GUIDE

Helping you bring MHAW to life  
in your workplace, school or home.

**TAKE  
NOTICE  
ME ARO  
TONU**

**GIVE  
TUKUA**

**BE ACTIVE  
ME KORI TONU**

**KEEP  
LEARNING  
ME AKO TONU**

**CONNECT  
ME  
WHAKAWHANAUंगा**

**Mā te whakarongo, ka mōhio**  
through listening, comes knowledge

**Mā te mōhio, ka mārama,**  
through knowledge, comes understanding

**Mā te mārama, ka matau,**  
through understanding, comes wisdom

**Mā te matau, ka ora**  
through wisdom, comes wellbeing

# KIA ORA!

This year's Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW) focuses on the **Five Ways to Wellbeing**. This guide is designed to provide inspiration and activities to help bring MHAW to life in your workplace, school or home.

Life has been a rollercoaster lately, with stress and overwhelm hitting us from all angles. We've faced uncertainty, unfamiliarity, and hardships that have left us with mixed emotions. That's why we're bringing you the **Five Ways for the Five Days** of MHAW, to give us a set of proven tools to boost our mental health when we need it. These practices are backed by evidence and can be easily incorporated into anyone's life at any time.

Put the **Five Ways** into practice this Mental Health Awareness Week: Take notice/Me aro tonu. Give/Tukua. Be Active/Me kori tonu. Connect/Me whakawhanaunga. Keep Learning/Me ako tonu.

## What is mental health and wellbeing?

We all have mental health. It's a taonga/treasure, something to look after so we can lead our best and most fulfilling lives.

The World Health Organisation defines wellbeing as 'a state in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community.'

Put simply, wellbeing is about how we feel and how we function.

**One in five Kiwis experience a mental illness and/or addiction each year** and it's important to remember that with the right tautoko/support many people can and do recover. Wellbeing isn't just for people who have not experienced mental illness – it's for everyone. For those who manage a long-term illness or distress, levels of wellbeing can determine quality of life and our ability to recover. Higher levels of wellbeing can make us more adaptable and resilient.

Wellbeing doesn't happen by accident, it needs nurturing and protecting. Mental Health Awareness Week is a timely reminder that we all go through ups and downs in life and that's okay. Introduce the Five Ways into your life this week to feel the benefits they can bring. **Whakatōkia ngā rautaki māmā nei ki tō ao kia rongō ai koe i ngā painga.**

# Five Ways to Wellbeing and Te Whare Tapa Whā

The daily 'Five Ways, Five Days' activity ideas on the following pages are inspired by the Five Ways to Wellbeing, which are simple strategies proven to boost wellbeing. Each day of MHAW will focus on one of the Five Ways. For further information on the Five Ways to Wellbeing visit [www.mentalhealth.org.nz/wellbeing](http://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/wellbeing).

## Take Notice | Me Aro Tonu – Monday

Take Notice refers to the practice of mindfulness. Mindfulness can be thought of as open and receptive attention to, and awareness of, what is occurring in the present moment.

## Give | Tukua – Tuesday

Give refers to actions based on kindness, altruism, or generosity. Carrying out acts of kindness boosts our happiness, life satisfaction, and overall wellbeing.

## Be Active | Me Kori Tonu – Wednesday

Widely recognised as being crucial for physical health and fitness, being active is also a powerful mood booster. Being active can not only make us feel good, it also enhances our thinking and learning abilities.

## Connect | Me Whakawhanaunga – Thursday

Connection is the ngākau/heart of our wellbeing. It weaves us together, making us feel seen, heard, and understood. When we nurture meaningful connections with others, we fuel our own happiness.

## Keep Learning | Me Ako Tonu – Friday

Keep Learning refers to 'exercising our mind' – almost like taking our brain to the gym. Any activity that challenges our thinking and expands our consciousness improves our ability to think.



Each of the daily activity suggestions in this guide are also informed by a Te Ao Māori perspective and Te Whare Tapa Whā, a holistic model of health developed by leading Māori health advocate and researcher Tā Mason Durie in 1984.

Te Whare Tapa Whā describes health as a whareniui/meeting house with four walls. These walls represent taha wairua (spiritual wellbeing), taha hinengaro (mental and emotional wellbeing), taha tinana (physical wellbeing) and taha whānau (family and social wellbeing). Learn more about [Te Whare Tapa Whā](#).



## Take Notice | Me Aro Tonu

A fresh week, blank slate and a new beginning. Let's start the week by setting purpose and intention, today is the day to take stock – how have you been feeling recently, are there any events or stresses that you need to sit with and unpack?

Developing the ability to be fully present and conscious without being overly reactive or overwhelmed is no easy feat, it takes practice to achieve the delicate balance of awareness. When we take notice or practice mindfulness, we're creating space for ourselves – space to think, space to breathe, space between ourselves and our reactions.

Use today as a reminder to pay more attention to the present moment, to your thoughts and feelings, and to the world around you.

A few ideas to help you **take notice** today:

- Take some time to really notice the emotions you're feeling – consider jotting down your whakaaro/thoughts to gain clarity on what you aim to achieve this week.
- Unplug for a few hours – sign out of social media or turn off your device notifications. Take this time to tune into yourself, pay attention to physical sensations, your feelings and what's happening around you.
- If you have work meetings today, begin with a karakia/prayer or short reflection (eg. an inspiring quote) followed by a brief silent period, allowing your hoamahi to breathe mindfully and bring their full attention into the room. End in a similar fashion.
- Get out of your usual work environment during your lunch break. Go for a walk to a nearby park or tātahi/beach and listen to the sweet sounds of the manu/birds. Notice how taking a quiet moment for yourself makes you feel.
- Head along to a yoga class or find one on YouTube.
- Take a moment for your wairua by trying these [mindful breathing exercises](#).
- Tamariki can try this '[How Am I Doing?](#)' activity by Sparklers to encourage them to think about how they can support their own wellbeing. They might also like to try the [Favourite Spaces](#) activity to take notice of their surroundings and how they make them feel.
- Plan to look up at the night sky to observe the marama/moon and the whetū/stars. Refer to the [Māori maramataka](#)/lunar calendar to learn about the phases of the moon.
- Head out for a mindful hīkoi/walk after mahi/work or kura/school. While you're out, watch the sunset and take notice of the vibrant colours as the sun sets on the first day of MHAW.

# How will you take notice today?





## Give | Tukua

Today is all about kindness. When we give selflessly to others, whether through our time, resources, or support, we create a positive ripple effect that extends beyond the people we engage with. Carrying out acts of kindness boosts our happiness, life satisfaction, and overall wellbeing. When we help others, it gives us purpose and a sense of belonging – it's a win/win!

Think about how you might be able to brighten the day of someone you care about, or even a complete stranger. A small gesture might mean the world to someone else, and you'll get a bit of a boost, too!

A few ideas to help you **give** today:

- Bake something yummy to share with your hoamahi/colleagues at morning tea time.
- Do you have a friend, hoamahi or someone in your whānau who could do with a helping hand? Give them a few hours of your time today – maybe you could take some kai to your kaumatua's house, mow the grass verge of your neighbour's property, or offer to mind your friend's tamariki for the afternoon.
- Take a moment to stop and kōrero with your neighbour, bus driver or the checkout assistant at the supermarket. Ask 'how are you/kei te pēhea koe?' and really listen. It might make all the difference to their day.
- Get crafty and create something for someone who could do with a little aroha. It could be as simple as drawing them a picture, or writing a thoughtful letter telling them what you appreciate about them. Tamariki might like to try this **Sneaky Thank You Cards** activity.
- If you have fruit trees pop your excess fruit out on the street or take it to mahi, with a "help yourself" sign.
- Join a community clean-up day – it could be a local awa/river, tātahi/beach or park, or a whakatō rākau/tree planting project with friends, hoamahi or whānau.
- Donate toys, books, sports equipment or clothes that you are no longer using to a local charity.
- Stop to let a car into the traffic in front of you. Watch the chain reaction of courtesy!
- For tamariki, check out the **Compliment Posters** and **Everyday Kindness** activities from Sparklers to help them understand the importance of being kind and giving to others.

# How will you give to others today?





# RĀAPA | WEDNESDAY



## Be Active | Me Kori Tonu

Physical activity stimulates the release of endorphins, the “feel-good” hormones, which can uplift your mood and increase feelings of happiness. It reduces stress and anxiety levels, promotes relaxation and enhances overall mental resilience. It can even sharpen our thinking and boost our creativity.

We’re nearly over the midweek hump and are inching closer to the weekend. Today is the perfect opportunity to give yourself a refreshing boost by engaging in some physical activity. Are you ready to get the blood flowing through your tinana/body?

Being active doesn’t always mean high-intensity cardio workouts. Move your tinana in a way that works best for you, have fun with it and feel those endorphins start to flow. Choose to do something that is purely for feeling good or having fun, and dedicate it to your wellbeing.

A few ideas hei āwhina/to help you **be active** today:

- Get into the great outdoors – go for a hīkoi in the bush, breathe in the fresh air of the moana/ocean or walk up your local maunga/mountain.
- Have an impromptu kanikani/dance party with your whānau, flatmates or pets. Play your favourite tunes, sing as loud as you can, and get your body moving.
- Hīkoi, oma/run or cycle to mahi or kura today. Try parking a little further away from the tari/office or get off the pahi/bus a stop early and hīkoi the rest of the way.
- Instead of having hui in the tari/office, get some fresh air and go for a walking meeting outside. Increase your step count by taking the arapiki/stairs instead of the lift.
- Get your māra/garden ready for raumati/summer. Pulling some weeds or planting something new will help you work up a sweat.
- Grab your mates and organise a friendly sports match at a local park. Not only will you get a good workout, you’ll be able to have fun and connect with your friends too – bonus!
- Get your heartrate up by learning a TikTok dance, or try a new YouTube workout.
- Encourage tamariki to get outside and move their bodies with the Sparklers **Nature Moves** and **Curious Kea Scavenger Hunt** activities.

# How will you be active today?





## Connect | Me Whakawhanaunga

Connect refers to making social connections, or whakawhanaungatanga. A sense of feeling connected, loved or belonging with others is strongly associated with better wellbeing by providing a sense of meaning, safety, support and purpose.

It's nearly Friday – why not kickstart the weekend early and carve out some time for some meaningful connection?

A few ideas to help you **connect** today:

- Is there someone that you haven't spoken to in a while? Why not send a message, have a kōrero, or arrange a catch up in person. Get tamariki to write a letter or draw a picture for someone they'd like to connect with.
- Organise a potluck dinner, barbeque or shared lunch with your whānau, friends or hoamahi. Bring your favourite dish and connect over some delicious kai.
- At the end of the day, ask a friend, your whānau or hoamahi what the best thing about their day was and listen with interest when they respond.
- Get to know your hoamahi a little better by using our **kōrero card set**.
- Introduce yourself to a new parent at your child's school, new kaimahi/employee at your workplace or a new neighbour in your community. Ask them if there's anything you can do to help them settle in.
- Reach out to someone who may be lonely and invite them to spend time with you.
- Have a whānau WIFI, TV and phone free evening and bring out the old board games.
- Have a think about whether there is someone in your life who may be going through a tough time. Reach out and ask them how they are, empathise and listen. You can find more information about how to have a safe and supportive kōrero **here**.
- Help tamariki connect with other taura/students with the Sparklers **Common Ground** and **Being a First-Rate Mate** activities.

# How will you connect with others today?





## Keep Learning | Me Ako Tonu

Today is the last day of MHAW - the perfect time to reflect on what you've learnt this week and implement those tools into the weekend and beyond.

Evidence suggests that learning or trying new things creates a sense of achievement, competence and stimulates engagement with the world around us.

A few ideas to help you **keep learning** today and every day:

- Join a class or group – learn an instrument, join a book club or put on your dancing shoes and learn some new moves.
- Organise a lunch and learn session with your hoamahi. Arrange for a speaker to come in, or ask a colleague to present on a topic that they are interested in.
- Learn something new about your hometown or local area – talk to your whānau and neighbours, check out local history societies, pukapuka/books or do an online rangahau/search.
- Is there a new skill you'd like to develop or a hobby you're interested in taking up? Take the first step by watching a YouTube tutorial or playing a kōnae ipurangi/podcast you've been meaning to listen to.
- Make a list of pukapuka you'd like to read and aim to read one new thing a month. Pick something off your list and start reading it today!
- Look up a new recipe and have a go at making it. Get your mates or whānau over to enjoy your creation.
- Put up post-it notes of kupu hou/new words around your whare or office to help you learn Te Reo Māori. Help tamariki learn Te Reo greetings with the **Kei Te Pēhea Koe** activity from Sparklers.
- Do some puzzles! Crosswords, sudoku, riddles are all great ways to exercise the mind.
- Ask tamariki to teach you about something new they learnt at school today.

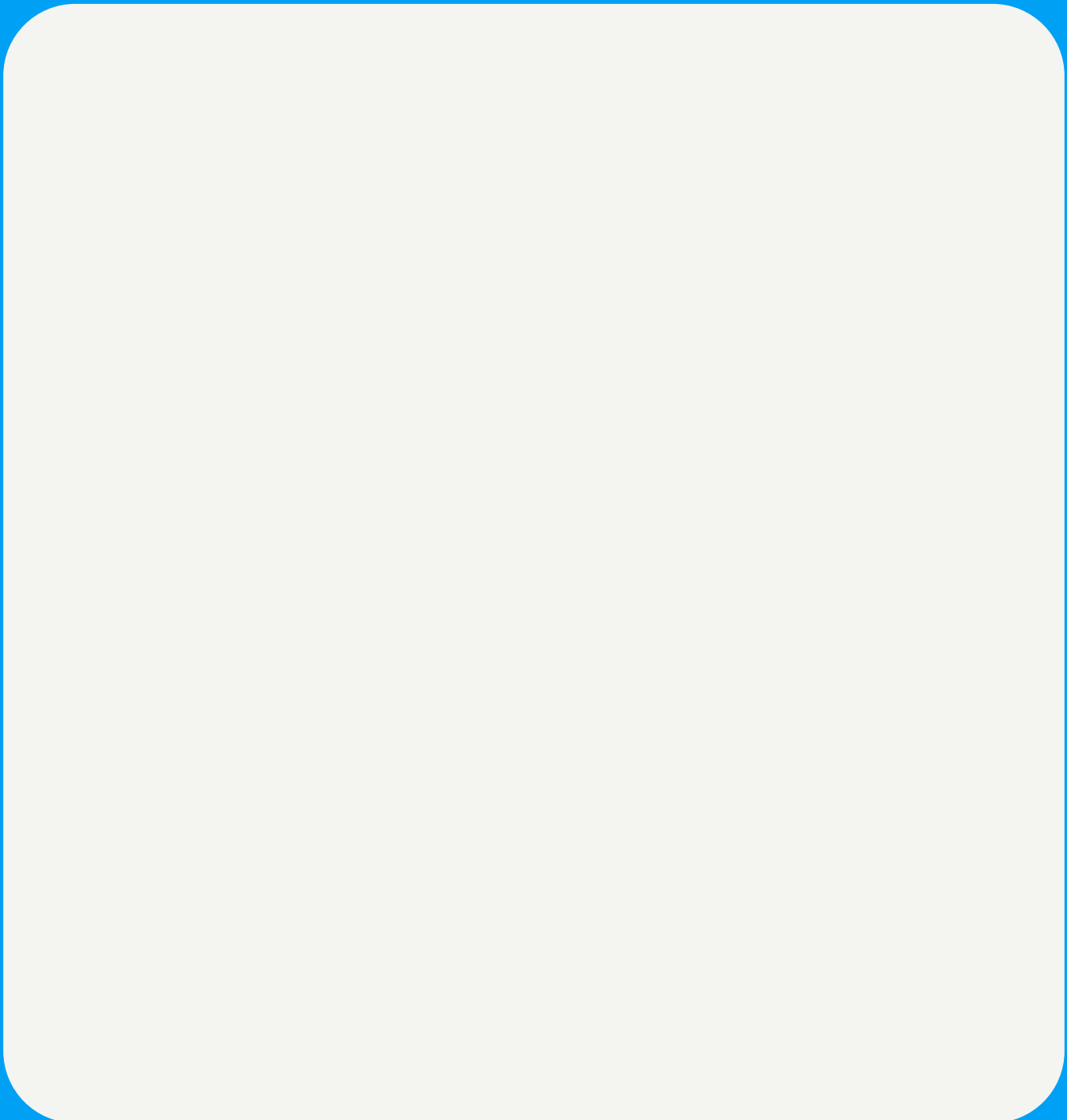
# How you will keep learning today and beyond?



# REFLECTING ON THE WEEK

Now that it's the end of the week, why not take some time to reflect on how practicing the Five Ways to Wellbeing have made an impact. What have you noticed? What felt good? How will you keep using the Five Ways to boost your wellbeing in the weeks and months ahead?

**What are your reflections on the week?**



# WHERE TO TURN FOR SUPPORT

For some people, this week might have brought up some sadness or distress. If you've had a kōrero with someone and you think they need further tautoko, or if you're worried about yourself, it's okay, there is help available – no one should go through a tough time alone.

The best first point of contact is to visit your GP/tākuta or offer to go to a GP/tākuta with your friend or whānau member. They can help assess what further support might be needed.

Below is a list of some of the services available in New Zealand that offer support, information and help. All services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week unless otherwise specified.

## In crisis

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call 111.

## National helplines

**Need to talk?** Free call or text 1737 any time for support from a trained counsellor

**Lifeline** – 0800 543 354 (0800 LIFELINE) or free text 4357 (HELP)

**Suicide Crisis Helpline** – 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO)

**Youthline** – 0800 376 633, free text 234 between 8am and midnight, or [webchat](#).

Remember it's okay to get support for yourself when you're supporting someone you care about. [Yellow Brick Road](#) provides support for the loved ones of people experiencing mental distress or illness.

The action plan on the following page is designed to help you take notice of the things that make you feel good and do them more often.



# WELLBEING ACTION PLAN

**How does practicing the Five Ways to Wellbeing make you feel?**

*e.g. Calm, connected, happy*

**As MHAW draws to an end, how will you continue to take notice in your daily life?**

*e.g. Practice daily yoga*

**In the coming weeks and months, how will you give to others?**

*e.g. Prepare kai for my whānau once a week*

**What things will you do to be active after MHAW?**

*e.g. Go for a walk in a nearby park each day*

**Who are some people that you would like to connect with, and how will you do it?**

*e.g. Send a message to a friend I've lost touch with*

**How will you keep learning after MHAW?**

*e.g. Try out a new recipe once a week*

**What helps you to stay mentally healthy at work, school or home?**

*e.g. Getting outdoors at lunchtime*

**What's something new you'd like to do to boost your wellbeing?**

*e.g. Doing regular mindful breathing exercises*