

Te Whare Tangata

How to be Calm in the Storm: Abuse, Trauma and Recovery

A participant workbook with Sharon Clair

Hands Up Community Services Trust

Māori perspectives on wellbeing, connection and regulation

Nau mai, haere mai. This seven-day workbook offers space to explore breathing, kai, movement, sleep, emotional awareness, wairua and reflection. It builds on the original Hands Up programme and its mātauranga Māori foundations.

Use it alongside the programme videos or audio, or as a starting point for personal reflection. You can move at your own pace, repeat an activity, adapt it or leave it aside.

Your choices matter

You do not need to become perfectly calm, disclose personal experiences or finish every exercise. Support, safety and connection matter alongside individual skills.

Original programme: 2020-2021

Updated participant edition

Based on the original v0.4 programme workbook. Contemporary safety and inclusive practice updates have been added. Maanu Paul's original attributed kōrero is retained separately, without alteration.

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Before you begin

Safety comes first

Abuse is the responsibility of the person causing harm. Breathing, mindfulness or becoming calmer cannot make another person's abuse acceptable or guarantee your safety.

Leaving an abusive relationship can increase risk. A specialist family violence service can help you consider a safety plan whether you are staying for now, considering leaving or have already left. You deserve support without pressure or blame.

If someone is in immediate danger, call 111. Women's Refuge offers a confidential crisis line on 0800 733 843. For wider family violence support, see areyouok.org.nz. Hands Up is not an emergency service.

Make this workbook work for you

Choose a comfortable place and a time that suits you. Short sessions are fine. You can write, draw, record a voice note or reflect quietly. If keeping a journal could expose you to harm, do not store sensitive notes where someone else may find them.

Keep your eyes open if that feels better. Do not force breathing, touch, stillness or eye contact. If an exercise increases distress, stop and return to an activity or person that helps you feel more settled.

This is an educational resource, not a diagnosis or treatment programme. Persistent distress, sleep difficulties or health concerns deserve individual support from an appropriate professional.

Your starting point

There are no right answers. Notice what fits your life today. You may revisit these prompts at the end of the week.

What helps me feel connected and supported?

How do I notice that I am becoming overwhelmed?

What makes everyday tasks harder?

What is already working for me?

What would I like to explore this week?

Day 1: Mauri Ora

Breath, presence and balance

The original programme draws on Kuia Pauline's kōrero about breath, life, knowledge and experiences passed through generations. Notice what stands out to you as you listen.

If comfortable, place your feet on a surface or notice the support of your chair. Let your breath be gentle and regular, without forcing it. Counting slowly may help, but it is optional. If breathing exercises do not suit you, notice three things around you instead.

Thoughts may come and go. You can notice them and gently return your attention. You do not need an empty mind.

What did I take from today's kōrero?

What helps me return to balance?

Something I appreciate today:

Day 2: Mauri Kai

Nourishment with kindness

Listen to Casey's kōrero and reflect on what nourishment means for you and your whānau. Food can connect us with culture, people and everyday routines.

Access, cost, sensory preferences, disability, health needs and energy can affect eating. These are practical realities, not measures of your worth. Work with what is available and seek tailored advice when needed.

Choose one manageable action: prepare a familiar meal, have a drink of water if appropriate for your health needs, arrange a snack, or ask someone for help. Follow any medical guidance you have about food or fluid intake.

What nourishes me and connects me with others?

What makes meals easier or harder?

One practical step I would like to try:

Day 3: Mauri Mahi

Movement that suits your body

Movement can be a way to change pace and reconnect with your surroundings. Choose something comfortable and accessible for you: a short walk, seated movement, gentle stretching, gardening or moving to music.

There is no required number of squats, minutes or steps. Rest is also a valid choice. Adapt activities to disability, pain, fatigue and health needs; follow any advice from your health professional.

Try a small amount and notice how you feel. Stop if you become unwell, dizzy or experience pain that concerns you. You do not need to push through discomfort to succeed.

What kinds of movement do I enjoy or find accessible?

What did I try, and how did it feel?

What support or adaptation would help?

Day 4: Mauri Moe

Rest and recovery

Sleep and rest are part of caring for yourself. Your needs and circumstances may differ from someone else's. Shift work, parenting, health conditions, stress and an unsafe environment can make sleep difficult.

Choose one realistic change: a familiar wind-down activity, a more comfortable sleep space, a regular routine where possible, or sharing a nighttime responsibility. Avoid treating a difficult night as a personal failure.

If you regularly struggle to sleep, sleep much longer than usual or remain very tired, speak with your GP. Sleep needs vary; this workbook does not prescribe a target for you.

What supports my rest?

What gets in the way?

One change or request for help I can make:

Day 5: Mauri Aronganui

Emotional awareness and regulation

Notice feelings and body signals with curiosity. Being overwhelmed, needing time to process, communicating differently or finding tasks difficult does not establish poor character or emotional immaturity.

Neurodivergent people may prefer different sensory environments, communication methods and kinds of support. Ask what helps. Do not require eye contact, touch or a particular appearance of calm as proof that someone is listening.

Try naming a feeling, reducing one demand or asking for a break. With tamariki, offer co-regulation: a steady relationship, predictable support and practice together. Keep safety boundaries clear while acknowledging feelings.

For example: “It is okay to feel angry. I won’t let you hit. Would you like space or for me to stay nearby?” Adapt your words to the child and situation.

What are my early signs of overwhelm?

What helps, and what makes it harder?

How can others support me?

Day 6: Mauri Wairua

Identity, belonging and spiritual connection

The following two pages reproduce Maanu Paul's attributed kōrero from the original programme. His words are preserved as a historical contribution and personal perspective. The original page numbers remain visible.

Reflect on whakapapa, whanaungatanga, culture and the beliefs or practices that matter to you. You decide how you relate to the kōrero; no particular faith or belief is required to use this workbook.

Spiritual or cultural support can sit alongside practical safety planning and professional healthcare. Recovery does not depend on adopting a belief, and different people may find meaning in different ways.

Who or what helps me feel that I belong?

What cultural, spiritual or community connections would I like to strengthen?

DAY 6: MAURI WAIRUA

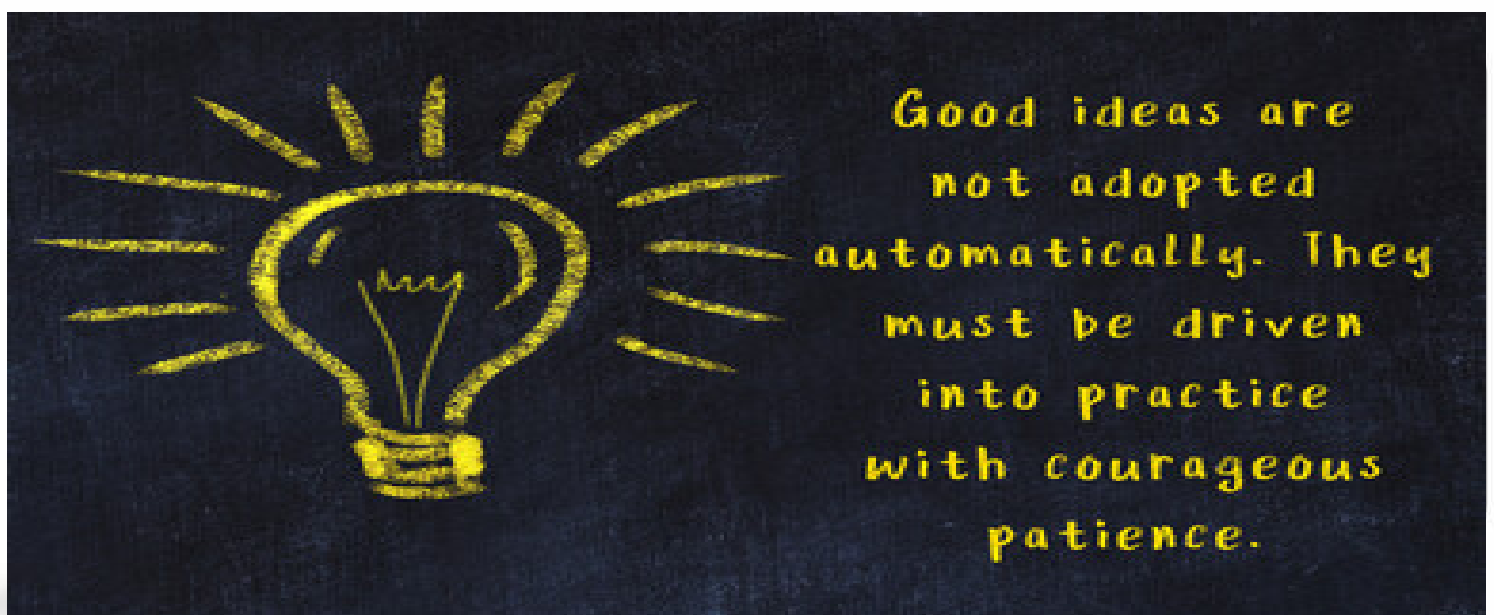
"The journey we travel in our lives is characterised by our connections with our past as we try to find our place in our present lives as Maori so that we can navigate ourselves forward to a future where we can say we truly belong,

In order to find out who we are we need to ask ourselves

Why do we do the things we do in the way we do them?

When our ancestors left Hawaiki and sailed across Te Moananui a Kiwa we island-hopped and visited Rapanui, Hawaii, and the Cook Islands where we adopted their cultures, values, customs, clothing, housing, and their ways of living including the observance of their spiritual practices and beliefs - when we arrived in Aotearoa we adapted our ways of living, ie culture, so we used harakeke instead of pandanus because no pandanus grew here and built our houses half in the ground because it was so cold here and so on but we enhanced our spiritual beliefs to accommodate our celestial (Ranginui) and terrestrial (Papatuanuku) worlds to make sense of our environment and the relationship we had through the familial connections of our whakapapa.

This whanaungatanga gives rise to our understanding of our place in our world which is fashioned by the two heartposts of adoption (**pumautanga**) and adaption (**takaturiatanga**) so that when the Pakeha came we have adapted and adopted to some of their ways and culture and spiritualism to suit our ways and culture and spiritualism. This above process is described by me as **Te Ngakau Maumaharatanga mo ake ake - Continuity of Consciousness (CoC).**



How do we apply this to the condition we find ourselves in today where we are traumatised, through abuse, (physical, mental, and spiritual) that leaves us as victims who through time come to believe that this behavior is the norm?

We must reach out and seek physical, mental, and spiritual health.

We need to know our whakapapa, practice whanaungatanga, believe that by knowledge of why we do the things the way we do them ie CoC.



Everyone has a Wairua with which they were born.

Trauma affects our Wairua negatively. We must renew our faith in a Higher Power or Diety which some of us have adopted as Jesus Christ others as Io Matua Kore, others as Allah, and so on.

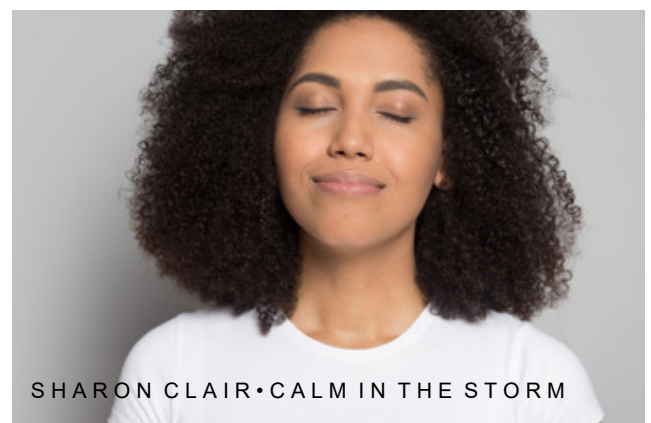
Everyone's belief is renewed by prayer and personal request.

We are all blessed by the knowledge and strength of the way in which we practice our faith AND how we exercise our Ngakau Maumaharatanga mo ake ake.

Why should people take on board this korero of mine? In the early70"s my wife was instrumental in setting up the Whakatane Women's Refuge and I have vivid memories of picking up abused women and children in the middle of the night and transporting them to the Refuge. Secondly, I have developed this Continuity of Consciousness to validate the veracity of Kaupapa Maori. This means we now have a way to have Kaupapa Maori valued as a legitimate practice that can be used to assist both Maori and Pakeha to acquire a healthy way of life devoid of trauma. The digital world of computers puts the power in the hands of everyone who can access a computer or smartphone, by going online and clicking on to this video. Instant access to information gives one instant power that can change one's life for the better - a press of your fingers is all that is required. It's an easy and private way to lead a better life which is physically and mentally and, spiritually healthy."

Kia Kaha mai!

C Maanu PAUL. JP, ONZM



SHARON CLAIR • CALM IN THE STORM

Day 7: Huritao Whaiaro

Reflection and your next step

Look back gently. You may have noticed something new, found a useful practice or learned that an activity does not suit you. All of these observations can help you make choices.

What was most helpful?

What would I change or adapt?

What is one small step I want to continue?

Who can support me?

For non-urgent enquiries: info@handsup.co.nz | 027 425 5980
handsup.co.nz. Share only what you want to share, through a contact method that is safe for you.

Sources and acknowledgements

Programme foundation: Te Whare Tangata Workbook v0.4, Hands Up Community Services Trust. Original contributions acknowledged in the workbook include Sharon Clair, Kuia Pauline, Casey Huiarangi and C Maanu Paul.

This edition revises participant instructions and exercises. It does not certify the original programme as a clinical treatment or research-validated intervention. It retains Māori programme headings and the original attributed Maanu Paul pages.

Further reading

Women's Refuge: Get help and safety planning

NHS: Breathing exercises for stress

Co-Regulation From Birth Through Young Adulthood: A Practice Brief

For further Hands Up articles, visit handsup.co.nz/news/.

Thank you for taking time for yourself and your whānau. You can return to this workbook whenever it is useful.