

Vignette eighteen

This 50, maybe late 40s early 50-year-old tangata whaora wahine I work with. I have only been her kaiawhina for the last 2 ½ months. She was referred. The last 2 years she had had an operation, and she had a massive heart complaint that changed her whole life. Prior to the heart operation she was a woman who worked three jobs, single mother of two beautiful daughters. Her youngest one is about 15, who is quite a high academic achiever. She was a gunner. She was a mover and a shaker. After the operation she realised that she couldn't do anything. Nothing was the same. Her whole life had changed. From being a super-physical super-woman, down to a woman who would just be able to sit there and not do much with her life at all. She obviously became depressed and the anxiety levels and so forth went on. That is how she entered into our services. She has been a wonderful woman to work with. My process was to start from the very beginning. It is like the Maslow theory. I will make sure they have got plenty of kai and all of that stuff before I start to mahi with them. That is exactly what I did with this woman, though she was under another support worker previously. But none of those areas had been attended to, even to the point where she didn't even know what type of benefit she was on, and whether she was collecting or receiving the right type of benefits given her disabilities. So off we went on a wonderful journey within the space of two weeks. She had finally realised she was definitely on a sickness benefit. Had wonderful meetings with the GP. They accepted my referrals for her to go to physio, swimming, Bowen Therapy, but the thing was she was up for doing it. We managed to achieve all of the travelling assistance that she wasn't receiving prior to, networking with Salvation Army for the kai parcels, and the objective for that was about friendship, and coming out of a circle that she once belonged to and putting her foot over the other side of the fence.

She's doing all of that now. She was a great one for creative arts, so we would attend art group every Tuesday. Had a partner. They lived together when she was with the previous support worker, but found that she couldn't be very honest with the former support worker about the relationship because there was a bit of bias going on. So to me part of her healing process was to be able to korero openly, and it is not for us to judge. So I had to do a lot of that. What is doing now? From all of that time to the current day, this is what this gorgeous wahine is doing. She has also joined up with SF on Mondays. She is going to be forwarding an application to an education provider to begin the Mental Health Certificate because she also wanted to start this. That came about because she wanted to start a support group in her little region because we are so rural, and there was no support for her and others in this little district.