



HELP FOR YOU

Mar / Apr
2023

Overcoming a Loved One's Addiction

'Self-Care and Wellbeing'

By Rosemary Brown

It is difficult to imagine that we are nearly a ¼ through 2023 already. It seems time waits for no-one and if we are to take care of ourselves, we need to get into that and make a change now.

I want to introduce you all to the Model of Wellness & Wellbeing we here at Help for You - Rosemary Brown follow, and I encourage my clients to follow this structure too. The Model is simple and easily understood.

My beliefs lie in customary culture and the culture of the indigenous peoples around the world. You may be thinking - "look at the rates of the Indigenous peoples around the world in the wicked social issues our communities are facing", and I agree Indigenous populations are overrepresented in many less good social statistics, the reasons why this is, might be an opportunity to explore at another time.

My practice and my beliefs follow the foundation of Te Whare Tapa Wha, and that when considering wellness and wellbeing the principles of this model and Whanau Ora (Family wellness) shine through - through Family Led Change we can make a difference.

1. **Family wellness first**, as without family wellness, individual members of the family may struggle to get well and maintain wellness.
2. **How the family dynamic impacts** wellness and wellbeing, as family members what we think, feel, say, and do impacts the family dynamic.
3. **Empowering families and family members** to get well, make good choices that are right for them and to value family connection.
4. **Spiritual wellness is an important** part of wellness, it allows us to find peace and harmony within the chaos of life.

When I speak about Spiritual Wellness I do not talk about religion, unless that is right for you, I do however speak about a 'God of your understanding', as having a belief, having faith in your belief, and trusting your belief is a vital consideration on your journey forward.

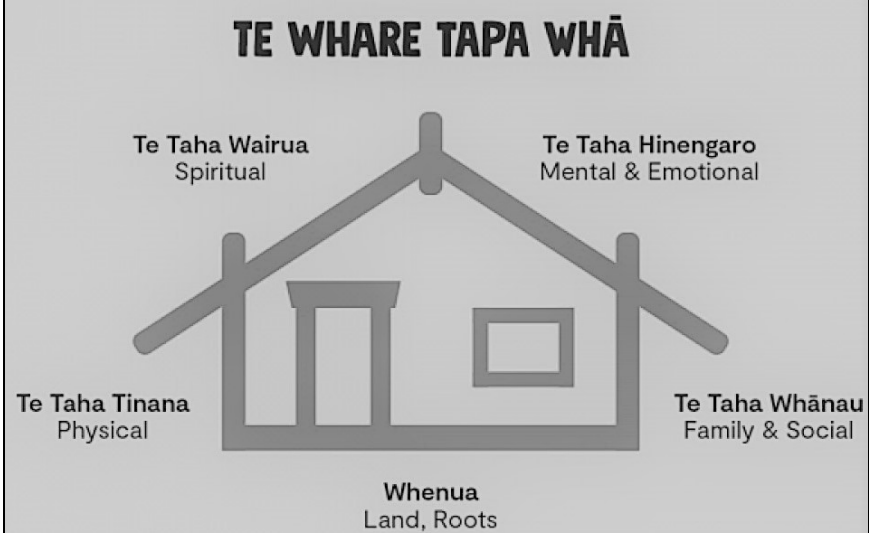
Traditional services, both addiction and mental health, prefer to ostracise the family, believing they are often the 'problem'. Family is a natural support, and that support will either be destructive or constructive to the wellness of the family members.

Mental Health and Addiction Services speak of holistic care being the physical, the psychological (thoughts and feelings) & proudly say the environmental areas of life.

Few consider 'Spiritual' wellness as important; people shy away from Spiritual wellbeing, primarily because they link it to religion, or they just don't get the internal connection.

I want to stress Spiritual Wellness has nothing to do with religion unless that is right for you. Religion is man-made and often contains a high level of judgement, blame and criticism of others, especially when they debate the rights or wrongs of religion.

The Four Cornerstones of Wellness Sir Mason Durie, (1982)



Sir Mason Durie is an amazing and influential man, he has worked as a psychiatrist, he is a highly regarded academic and pioneer for Māori Health, with a high level of focus on Mental Health for Māori.

In my years of practice, I have followed this model, and graduated from Auckland University Māori Health Stream, with a Post Graduate Diploma (with distinction) in Māori Health.

My years of practice in addiction and other areas have reinforced my belief that what works for Māori, works for Pakeha (westerners) but the other way around, what works for Pakeha, does not work for Māori.

Whanau Ora (healthy families) acknowledges the goal of intervention as family wellness. This model starts with the family's goals, and working in a way that acknowledges intersectoral collaboration.

The big problem in Australia is that not only do professionals miss the Spiritual aspect of wellness as being important, services and health professionals totally miss the value of collaboration between families, the client, and other services. Having a 'single case plan' model for a client is unheard of here, as is the value of family and community led change.

You can [listen to Sir Mason Durie here](#) - his interview talks about benefits for Māori but I can tell you his way of thinking and working is what is needed here.



Helpful Tips Self-Care

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‘Being proactive and well as a family is powerful.’

We live in communities that are driven by Privacy Laws, Confidentiality, and separateness. Individuality is valued higher than ‘collective wellness and wellbeing’.

You may not believe that you need to change or that you are supported by a Power Greater than Self - my suggestion is just act as if you do need all of this stuff - 'fake it until you make it' - what have you got to lose!!

There are four cornerstones to your wellness and wellbeing.

Physical - your body, food, exercise, fitness, sleep, support with disabilities etc

Psychological - how we think and how we feel, these things are impacted by our Physical & our Social & Spiritual wellbeing.

Social - our relationship with self and with others, family, community, friends etc

Spiritual

Our relationship between self & a ‘power greater than self’. The 12 Step Program is still the most successful program in recovery from addiction, and at its core is Spirituality.

The 12 Steps in a simple form -

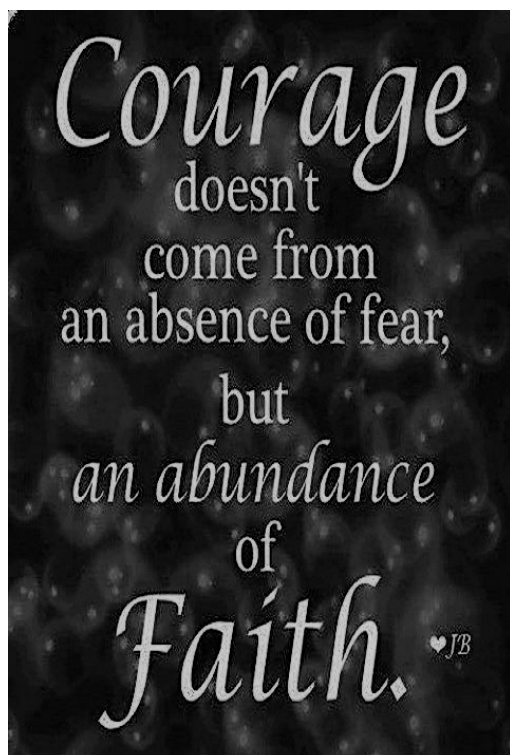
For addicts and strangely enough probably all human beings when there is a problem with what they are doing, or how they are feeling etc - the first attempt to change will generally be to - ‘do it my way’, I don’t need help.

Once they have tried to change ‘their way’, and have not been successful, then they may look for a ‘program’ or some type of support to help achieve change. At this stage usually they only take the bits out of the program or therapy that they want to take, again setting themselves up for failure. Or they listen, look like they are participating, and then when they relapse, they declare the program was a waste of time!!

When it comes to alcohol & drugs, to achieve long-term sustainable change, addicts will probably need a program or support that knows what works and what doesn’t. Being open to accepting such help takes time and a willingness to challenge self and their attitudes.

THE TWELVE STEPS

1. I can't
2. God can
3. Let God
4. Look within
5. Admit wrongs
6. Ready self for change
7. Seek God's help
8. Become willing
9. Make amends
10. Daily inventory
11. Pray and meditate
12. Give it away



Why do so many addicts & family members battle the need to do it ‘their way’?.

- **Accepting help seems to cross the borders of our Individualistic society** - there seems to be a shame-based label put on asking for help - if you were having a heart attack would you ask for help & support?
- **Fear gets in the way** - what if ‘they’ think this is my fault, what if they tell me I have to abandon my loved one, what if they say this is my fault, what if others think less of me because I haven’t been able to fix this myself...
- **Staying the same is easier than change** - let’s face it change is not easy, change can be hard work because what you are doing is something you have never done before. At least I know the rules & how to play the game, even if it does not bring me happiness and wellbeing

‘WHAT DOES A MODEL OF WELLNESS LOOK LIKE FOR YOU’?



A Parents Point of View

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As a Mum you like to think you can put your trust and faith in the 'professionals'.

I know that you know Addiction and Mental Health often go hand in hand but here is the reality for me and my family.



What happens when a vibrant young man at 18 years old, suddenly becomes crippled by the voices in his head. When the story is so real that your son believes the purpose of these voices and the plan that has been made for him.

What happens when his mother is desperate to find answers and all you get told is leave it to us, we know what we are doing. And you trust that - after all these people are the 'professionals'.

My son was so unwell, he was diagnosed with Schizophrenia and after two very traumatic involuntary entries into the Mental Health Ward, we were still no further along in getting on top of his 'unwellness'.

Different medication after different medication - nothing worked - so now it is a case of 'Treatment Resistant Schizophrenia'
A Community Treatment Order for a two weekly Depo Injection that fails to lessen the reality.

As a mother I believed Mental Health were the ones who knew how to fix this, who would keep my son safe and who would reassure me everything will be okay. In the really bad times, I was repeatedly asking Mental Health for support, and getting told there was nothing they can do.

No one seemed interested and after the first 5 years of going around in circles, I finally realised Mental Health would not step up, and I needed to find a better way.

I have researched, I have read numerous books and I have searched under every rock, behind every tree and in every direction to try and get an answer.

Three things that I finally found.

- ✓ **Rosemary** and her 'knowing' what both I needed and my son needed. She accepted my son's reality as his 'truth' - while working with him & being mindful of his diagnosis
- ✓ **Anosognosia** - a diagnosis for those who cannot recognise their unwellness, this was definitely my son & about 50% of all Schizophrenia sufferers.
- ✓ **AND** how I can best support my son, by considering a different way of being with him.



What was my son's reality -

Mental Health Psychiatrists changed on average 3 times a year, and every visit would start from a beginning assessment, no follow through, no family input and no Psychiatrist partnered with my son to work with him in a non-traumatic way.

Mental Health workers became bullies, the box they need to tick says 'provide psycho-education' and link patient with likeminded support group. How helpful is this to my son, who believes he is not unwell, and I do not need medication.

Psychiatrists said things like "maybe one day when you mature you will recognise you have Schizophrenia and that you need medication for the rest of your life".

Or another Psychiatrist when advised the voice was a real person, taunted my son, 'he can't be real, I cannot see him, if he is real where is he'?

Because we have not had a crisis in the last 12 months, Mental Health have interpreted this as the medication is working, which is not true, symptoms are the same or worse, but Rosemary supports us through these stormy times now.



My son was thankful for Rosemary, as she advocated in the meetings for constructive engagement and consideration for working with him in a way that would help him.

But alas Mental Health kept treating her as 'the problem' too

It is hard to see the pain our loved one's go through, and it's hard when traditional services cannot or will not help - we need to get 'self' and family well.



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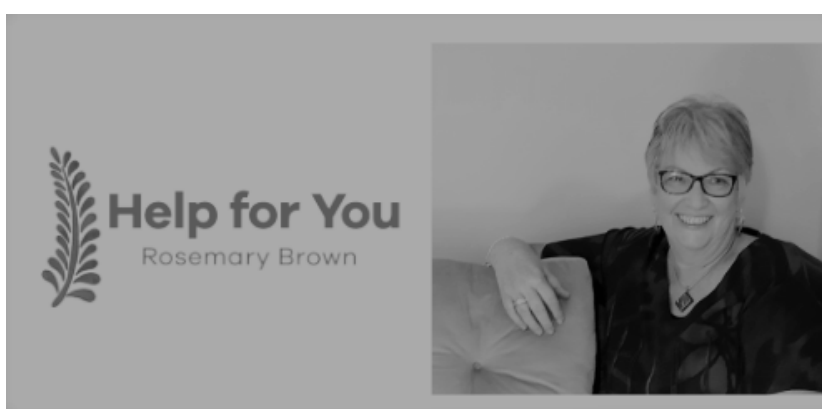
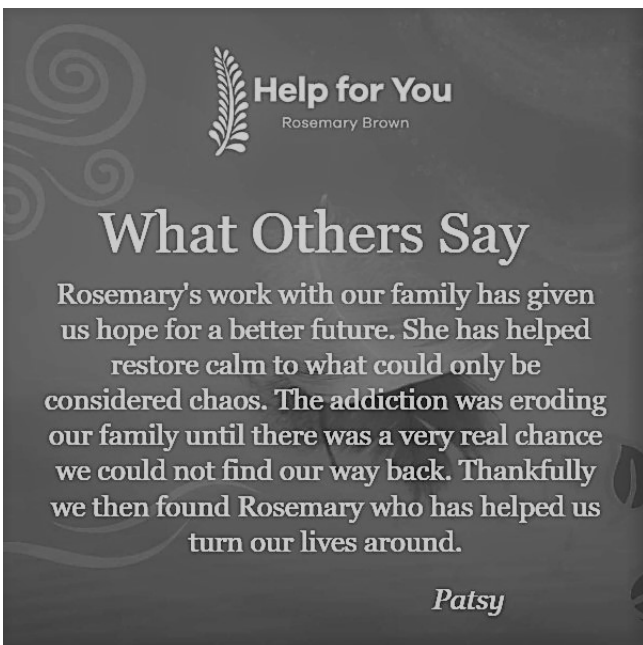
Nothing Changes if nothing changes.

Never has a statement been so true when it comes to addiction and those who are impacted by addiction. I am wondering are you ready to take the next step, a positive step toward turning things around for yourself.

What stops you from finding out about a different way, a better way, what keeps you stuck, is it your fears, is it you don't believe things can be better for you or is it just plain easier to leave things the same, rather than attempt positive change.

These are all the questions you may ask about your loved one in addiction, because these are some of the reasons they are fearful of stepping into the unknown.

Change is scary, change brings the unknown and change requires commitment to self and hard work at times - but change is not impossible, it is far more enjoyable than staying stuck in the hell of addiction.



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Rosemary is qualified
Post Graduate Diploma Māori Health
Graduate Certificate in Supervision
Bachelor of Applied Social Sciences (Counselling)

Master Practitioner in Neuro Linguistic Programming
Multiple Brain Coach

ACA Level 4 Registered Counsellor
Previous registration
NZAC Full Membership
DAPAANZ Registered Practitioner