

The Ageing Experience

Jan Fogg

Carrying the pain of others

I was listening to a radio interview recently with a researcher who was looking at burnout of those in medical professions; such people, it is recognised, are susceptible to suffering from burnout related to the stress they carry from working in their chosen profession.

Doctors, dentists, vets and others have high expectations of what they hope to achieve and also need to respond to the expectations of their patients (or, in the

case of vets, their patients' owners).

It occurs to me that parents experience stress in similar ways in relation to their children and, as we age, we find that those stresses don't diminish. Our adult children lead busy, stressful and sometimes painful lives, and our response might be to be stressful alongside of them. I remember my mother showing distress in a few stages of my life where I was in risk of 'falling off the track'. I didn't really understand this response in her, and it didn't help me a lot in the stresses I was trying to solve to think about her stress as well.

Now, I both understand her response but

also tell myself that my outwardly expressed stress is not helpful to my children, or others I am caring about. To a certain extent, when we carry the pain of others we need to do that in ways that are not adding to their distress. It was said of early Methodists that they prayed for a problem in their neighbours' lives so they could share their faith with them.

What are the things that might tell us we are stressed and what can we do about it? Changed sleep patterns might be an early sign, although our sleep patterns may normally change as we become older. Sleep is an important healer, so making sure we have seven to eight hours each night helps us in a variety of ways, including the health of our brain. Hopefully, in older life we know sufficiently about own self that we recognise the signs we show when we are stressed; individuals vary in the signs

they show. Like many problems, stress is better managed the earlier we know it is happening.

With our children, maybe we think back to younger days where we imagined that we could still manage situations, whereas at this later stage of life, we clearly cannot manage the life of our children.

Humans from early days survived because of their stress response: to fight the lion or take flight. Stress is a biological response to a perceived danger, but is it appropriate for the situation? Read 1 Samuel 18: 6-11 about King Saul's response at David's success.

In our faith journey may we walk the path of suffering in a more Christ-like way, a way that takes us to a quiet place to pray and build our spiritual strength. May we be persistent in hope, in the face of discomfort. 'Leave all your worries with God, because God cares for you.'

Caring for our people



Trudy Downes, Health and Safety Coordinator

Malo e lelei. Talofa lava. Bula. Greetings. Goeie dag. Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa!

Removing asbestos from your place

Many people won't know much about asbestos removal although Cantabrians who have been through their earthquake repairs may know far too much about it.

Asbestos is cheap, easy to mine and was so useful there is no definitive list of where it was used. It's heat-resistant, fire-resistant, resistant to chemicals and waterproof.

There are over 3000 known products containing asbestos. Asbestos use was not isolated to industrial applications but was often used as an insulating material in our homes, or to add strength to brittle building materials like cement boards.

Asbestos is still found where pounamu is mined and over two million tonnes is mined internationally each year.

Asbestos bans in NZ are a relatively recent occurrence. A ban introduced in 1984 was limited to some raw asbestos types and a subsequent ban in 1999 applied to all other raw asbestos. Both bans were poorly regulated and, even

worse, surplus stock continued to be used by companies and tradesmen after the bans were introduced.

Finally, in October 2016, it became illegal to import any products containing asbestos. Unfortunately, that was too late for many home owners in Christchurch as parallel importing resulted in large amounts of asbestos-containing materials coming in. We don't know how much or where it went.

We need to get rid of asbestos.

Initial steps involved in asbestos removal:

- Develop an asbestos management plan to identify suspect building materials.
- Ensure the suspect asbestos is not disturbed and the risk of asbestos dust remains low.

When planned building works are about to start:

- Get a licenced practitioner to take test samples of suspect material - an accredited laboratory will do testing. Results will include: a unique laboratory reference number, location of the site where asbestos was found, and sample weight and size. The result will be either no asbestos detected or identification of the type of asbestos detected ie. chrysotile, amosite or crocidolite.
- Share test results with the building owner, building tenant, contractors etc.
- Keep contaminated area secure. If the material is damaged then the area may have to be isolated (keep people away). If the material is stable, ensure it is not disturbed.
- Display test results to ensure building visitors are aware of the asbestos risk.
- Contract a specialist licenced contractor to remove the offending asbestos. Licenced contractors have an Asbestos Removal Control Plan. They double bag the removal area,



Photo Oregon Department of Transportation

control and filter air flow, limit access to themselves until the removal work is complete, double bag waste material, wear disposable clothing, respirators and other protective equipment that ensures no asbestos dust goes home when they leave the site, and dispose of waste in a controlled and safe manner.

- Retest for asbestos clearance. An independent laboratory must always carry out the testing - never the removal contractor.
- Post before and after results for everyone to see. Communicate those results with all site visitors.

When work resumes:

Update your asbestos management plan - and advise MCPC. Include all test results with your records.

And that's it.

Easier said than done!

If you have concerns or questions about your asbestos status, call me on 03 366 6049 ext 823; mobile 027 457 4196 or email trudyd@methodist.org.nz

Information for this article was sourced from Mike Cosman Webinar August 2017, WorkSafe and personal experience.

Healing Canterbury Lakes

Concerned Cantabrians are invited to spend a weekend (5 - 7 October) cycling and reflecting on two of our country's most polluted lakes - Wairewa Lake Forsyth and Waihora Lake Ellesmere.

'Two Lakes Healing' builds on the MCNZ 'Walk for the Planet - 7 Rivers, 7 Weeks' initiative and aims to focus attention on the two lakes over a 68-kilometre cycle journey that involves representatives from a range of groups and organisations with an interest in the environment. Organiser Rev Mark Gibson says, "Our focus is on how to heal these lakes and create momentum for a more hopeful future; it's about intentionally moving through the landscape softly, hence the cycling."

The event starts on Friday evening at the Wairewa Marae at Little River and finishes on Saturday night at the Ngati Moki Marae at Taumutu, Lake Ellesmere. The Saturday ride from Little River to Taumutu will include stops for presentation discussion and reflections.

"The journey begins and ends at the two Marae and that's very intentional because both of these water ways are hugely important to Ngái Tahu and it is essential we hear their stories and their visions for these water ways and the best place to do that is on the Marae."

To register for Two Lakes Healing email: manager@wet.org.nz by 16 September.