

REIMAGINE WELLBEING TOGETHER HE TIROHANGA ANAMATA

Mental Health
Awareness Week
21-27 September

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Rāapa – Wednesday

Whenua / Connection to the Land and Roots

Return to nature: Hono ki te taiao

Today's whakataukī: *Ko te whenua ko au, ko au ko te whenua. I am the land and the land is me.*

What is whenua?

Whenua is our connection to the land. It's soil, plants, animals and people – tangata whenua. It's the earth through which we are connected to our tūpuna/ancestors. Whenua is a place of belonging and it's comforting that it is never too far away.

Why is whenua an important way to wellbeing at mahi/work?

In Te Ao Māori, everything has mauri/life force. When our natural resources are not looked after, this life force is weakened and this directly impacts mental health and wellbeing. If your place of mahi is not safe, welcoming and inclusive, it will also have a huge impact on wellbeing.

Reimagine wellbeing at mahi through whenua:

- Start your day with a karakia that acknowledges the whenua:
Korihi te manu - The bird sings
Tākiri mai i te ata - The morning has dawned
Ka ao, ka ao, ka awatea - The day has broken
Tihei mauri ora - Behold there is life.
- Ask your team to bring in a photo of a place they are connected to that gives them strength. Put the pictures up on a wall or create an online space where you share the photos.
- Get your hoamahi/colleagues together and explore your local maunga/mountain if this is possible. Getting outdoors helps to re-energise and focus on the tasks ahead.
- During your lunch break, go outside and see how many native plants you notice! Can you spot any harakeke/flax, pūriri, tōtara or rengarenga/native lily?

These activity ideas are from our MHAW 2020 Postcard Set. You can [download](#) it in Te Reo Māori or English.

