



LOOKING BACK...MOVING FORWARD

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"To be apathetic is literally to be without passion."

Erwin Raphael McManus

I was surprised and concerned to learn a few weeks ago that MNZ was struggling to get a quorum to run the Executive (and therefore MNZ). How could we possibly have got to the point where only two Executive Committee positions were filled? Is it because we didn't have a full conference this year which then transpired into a poor turn out at the AGM? Is it because everyone's businesses are booming and we won't or can't commit the time? Is it because people don't feel they have the skills required to be part of the Executive? Maybe it is a little of all the above. I know that as this goes to print to the Executive situation has been resolved and MNZ is back up and running. However the situation that arose deserves consideration to ensure that it doesn't happen again and also so that we the members can help to make MNZ a strong robust organisation that serves our and the community's needs.

I think apathy sums up best what is at the heart of MNZ's problems. Not only is there a lack of interest shown by many MNZ members to actually serve MNZ as an organisation but also many therapists who choose not to join in MNZ in the first place. Sadly neither of these scenarios is new.

There is no doubt that we are all committed and passionate about the massage services we provide to our clients and the wider community. We know that massage plays a powerful and important part in the lives of our clients. Yet there have been several times over the life of MNZ (and previous massage organisations) where members have not been forthcoming in filling committee positions or volunteering their services to run events such as Massage Awareness Week or the annual conference. This indifference to contribute to the organisation means the bulk of the work falls back on a dependable few. Unfortunately the apathy doesn't stop

there, with many therapists choosing not to join MNZ upon graduating. Ask around your colleagues who don't belong to MNZ and the most common answer as to why they don't join runs something along the lines of "I don't know what they would do for me or I don't see any value in joining".

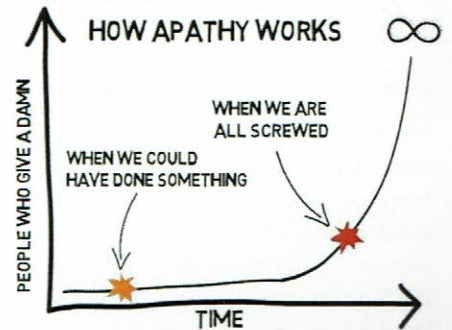
At the end of the day our profession is not going to progress in NZ nor get the recognition it deserves from the public or the wider health professions if we don't have a national professional body. If there are insufficient members or there isn't a constitutional Executive, there is no professional representative organisation... end of.

So what needs to be done? We all have a role to play in this. MNZ as an organisation needs to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of its members and is a professional body new graduates want to join because of what it offers. More member benefits, regular annual conferences, easier payment options, greater public profile and the like may all play a part in attracting new therapists and keeping a healthy membership. At the end of the day, the more members, the more \$\$ in the kitty to invest back into our profession.

We as existing members also have to do our part and mostly that means get involved instead of sitting on our backsides and waiting for it to be done for us. Whether that be:

- putting our hands up for executive or committee positions
- offering to run or help out at the MNZ conference
- attending the local MNZ massage network meetings
- recruiting new members
- promoting MNZ as an organisation to our clients
- offering to write articles for the MNZ magazine
- identifying a new member benefit
- thanking the Executive for the endless time and energy they put into MNZ

There is something we can all do to ensure that MNZ remains a healthy and viable professional organisation.



You only have to attend an MNZ conference and listen to the lively discussions, networking and collegiality that takes place to see that we are all passionate about what we do. Now it's time to take that one step further and support the only massage organisation we have in NZ that can represent and unite us and further the recognition and demand for our services in NZ.

So my challenge to all who read this is, by Christmas, show the passion you have for your profession and do one thing to help make a difference for MNZ. Get involved however great or small and as Nike quite succinctly puts it

'JUST DO IT'.

I would like to say a huge thank you to Jo Smith for all that she has done for MNZ especially over the last few years as Research Officer and President and best wishes for the future. Plus I don't think members would have any idea how much Odette, our Executive Administrator, has done for this organisation, so a huge thank you to her also and all those on the Executive over the last few years who have worked tirelessly, usually with little thanks.

Wishing you all a safe and happy festive season and some well earned chillax time.

Pip Charlton

(These are my personal views).