

# on mas

SPRING 2018

We talk to MAS Members

## The fresh faces of a plant-based future

**Greater good** Business / lessons from doctors for managers

**Good living** Technology / the rise of digital wellbeing

**Professional life** Profile / the all-singing, all-dancing doctors

mas'



## CONGRATULATIONS MARK BODDINGTON

MAS Young In-House Lawyer of the Year Award

Congratulations to Mark Boddington who was the recipient of the MAS Young In-house Lawyer of the Year Award at the ILANZ In-house Lawyer Awards this year.

As legal counsel for Scientific Software and Systems Limited (SSS), Mark provides services in all areas needed by SSS’s multinational group of companies involved in complex intellectual supply and services contracts in IT Security and Finance markets.

Mark has been employed as legal counsel at SSS since 2014 and it’s his first role as an in-house lawyer. SSS has staff located in Wellington, Sydney, Melbourne, Italy and Scotland.

“The services provided by Mark as SSS’s in-house legal counsel has significantly contributed to the company’s performance,” says managing director, William Tonkin.

“Mark is highly regarded both professionally and personally at all levels throughout the organisation.”

Mark also continues to tutor at Victoria University of Wellington’s School of Accounting and Commercial Law and was awarded a Winston Churchill Fellowship in 2016.

As recipient of Young In-house Lawyer of the Year, Mark received a scholarship package of \$5,000, which he said would enable him to attend this year’s Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom’s summer school on media regulation and digital technology at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy.

# on mas

The information contained in *OnMAS* is of a general nature and should not be used or relied upon as a substitute for detailed advice or as a basis for formulating business decisions. The opinions of contributors are their own and not necessarily those of the publisher or editor.

©2018. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be reproduced in whole or part without the prior permission of the publisher.

### PUBLISHER

MAS  
Level 3, PWC Centre  
10 Waterloo Quay  
Wellington 6011

### PHONE

0800 800 627

### WEBSITE

mas.co.nz

### EDITOR

Sophie Speer

### MAILING ADDRESS

OnMAS  
PO Box 13042  
Johnsonville  
Wellington 6440

### HEAD OFFICE

+64 4 478 8863

### EMAIL

onmas@mas.co.nz

### DESIGN

eightyone.co.nz

### THE CONTENT HUB

For more stories, videos, and to share your views, visit the MAS Hub at [hub.mas.co.nz](http://hub.mas.co.nz). The hub is the go-to site for features from *OnMAS* magazines, as well as helpful information and useful tips on all the things that matter to us – and to you. You can easily share stories from the hub with friends and family, see videos that delve deeper, and have your say on issues affecting you and your community.

### SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION

Every effort has been made to guarantee the pages of *OnMAS* are sustainably sourced and produced using paper that meets the environmental standards shown below. It is then packaged in an eco-friendly degradable wrap for protection in transit.



ISBN 2230-5823

# In this issue

on mas /  
spring 2018

mas

## On the cover

We talk to MAS  
Members about  
the rise of veganism  
and the future of  
plant-based diets

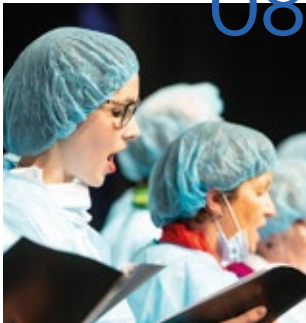
*Our cover model is MAS Member  
Vania Tan*

04

### P professional life

02 News briefs / Wellness

08 Profile / Christchurch Artist  
Doctors



16 Life insurance / Four  
things to know

17 MAS updates / AGM and  
Project Koha

26 Student news / Updates  
from association presidents

28 MAS in the wild / NZVA  
Conference and Awards

### G greater good

04 Cover story / A plant-  
based future

11 Staff story / The golden  
age of adventure

14 Business / Lessons from  
doctors for managers



### L good living

18 Technology / The rise of  
digital wellbeing

21 Travel / Yoga and wellness  
retreats in Bali

24 Health / The gut is the  
second brain

30 Motoring / Electric bikes

32 Food & drink / Wellness

36 Entertainment / What to  
read, watch and download



## From MAS

As we move into spring and look forward to warmer temperatures, more sunshine – hopefully – and longer evenings, we’re looking at wellness in this issue: the things we can do to make us feel better physically, emotionally and mentally, whether that be at work or at home.

In August, MAS Members voted at the AGM on our proposal to establish a charitable trust and I’m thrilled to say that Members gave us a strong mandate to proceed (read more on page 17). We look forward to updating Members on how we’ll roll this out, as well as profiling some of the funding recipients in future issues of *OnMAS*.

We’d also love to hear from you: what would you like us to feature in the magazine? Please send through ideas for stories, let us know what’s happening in your area, and tell us about any MAS Members who should be profiled. Ideas can be sent to [onmas@mas.co.nz](mailto:onmas@mas.co.nz)

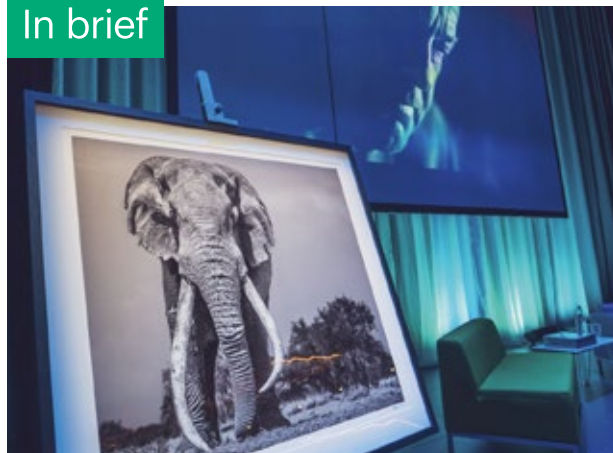
**Mike Davy**  
MAS, General Manager  
Marketing Products



# News briefs

Wellness

In brief



## Animal auction

An auction held in Auckland, at the end of wildlife photographer David Yarrow's series of talks across the country with MAS, raised \$34,000 for Wild Ark. Yarrow enthralled audiences in Wellington, Christchurch and Auckland as he told tales of his adventures capturing images of the world's rarest animals. He generously donated one of his pieces, *Colossus*, which was auctioned off to raise funds for Yarrow's charity of choice, Wild Ark, which aims to protect the wildlife and natural environment of some of the world's wildest places.



01



02



## Quick Qs

In 2016, Wellingtonians Sarah Tuck, Bop Murdoch and Jody Burrell launched CoLiberate, a social enterprise that's working to improve mental health. Tuck explains how New Zealand's first mental health gym launched and its ambitions to make Kiwis more equipped to manage their own emotional health.

### What is CoLiberate?

CoLiberate operates in two different ways. Our 'gym' offers 'emotional workouts' to anyone who wants to actively engage with emotional and mental health. And we offer a Mental Health First Aid Course where we equip people with vital skills, confidence and understanding to respond to someone experiencing mental distress or moments of mental health crisis.

### What are you trying to achieve with CoLiberate?

Our mission is to get people to value their mental and emotional health just as much as their physical health. CoLiberate aims to take 'self care' out of the niche 'arty-spiritual' realm and make it gritty, grounded and available to the mainstream. We're generating the equivalent of a 'gym' culture for mental health, so that everyday people, even non-creatives – heck, even your average 'Kiwi bloke' – can do a workout for their mind, and develop a proactive relationship with their mental health!

### How big is the problem with mental health in New Zealand?

We notice people excluding themselves, saying 'I don't have mental health issues', which speaks volumes to us that culturally we do not engage with mental health as being something we all have. We all have physical health, and we all have mental health – we just need to work out how to identify with it.

### What are your goals for CoLiberate?

We have some big plans. We already offer our Mental Health First Aid courses nationally and we want to see the culture shift towards valuing mental health go national too. We want to see a world where everyone has their own badass self-care practice – so that people everywhere know how to both keep themselves afloat and reach out for help when they need it. If we can create a feasible solution here, we may be able to translate it across the world to make a global impact.

01 / Improving mental health is the goal at CoLiberate  
02 / Kiwis in the country's first mental health gym



## Let's plog

The latest fitness trend to come out of Sweden improves the health of the planet along with your own. Plogging is part jogging, part picking up rubbish along your route. Its name is a combination of jogging and 'plocka upp', the Swedish term for 'pick up', and this eco-friendly workout has

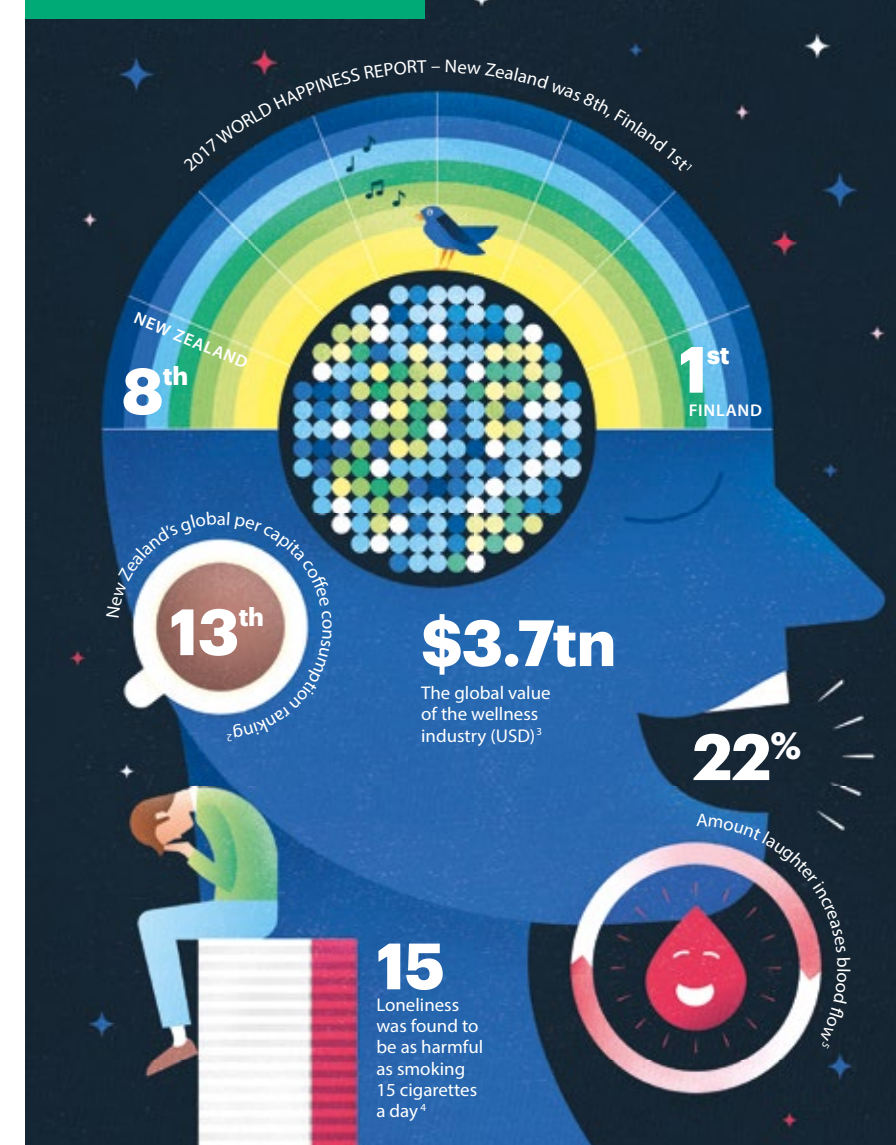
been sweeping the globe: more than 19,000 people have posted plogging images on Instagram, with ploggers found across Europe, North America and Mexico. It's a feel-good fitness trend that costs no money to take part – just bring a bag or receptacle along with you on your next run or walk to start plogging.



## Cutting hospital wait times

A pizza delivery app was the inspiration for a healthcare app that's already saving thousands of hours waiting for medical care and reducing overcrowding in busy hospital emergency departments. Emergency Q was developed by Morris Pita of Healthcare Applications Limited, who said he wanted to adapt the user-centred approach of the pizza app, which allowed you to customise, pay and track delivery. Emergency Q connects Kiwi patients with healthcare facilities and practitioners, allowing users to find out where they need to go for treatment, the wait time and the cost. Emergency Q is in the process of transitioning from pilot mode to commercialisation, but a pilot at North Shore Hospital over the past year saw it reduce emergency department volumes by 12%, saving patients with minor medical problems 30,000 hours of wait time. Other hospitals, including Middlemore, are looking to adopt the technology in the future, and Pita believes the solution is equally relevant for international markets.

## Fast facts – Wellness



View this graphic online with a full list of sources at [hub.mas.co.nz](http://hub.mas.co.nz)



# A plant-based future

Environmental issues, animal rights and health concerns are leading to a rise in plant-based diets and veganism

When chef Tom Riley returned to Christchurch after working overseas for almost a decade, he built his business on the plant-based food movement.

Two years ago he launched Green Dinner Table, a plant-based food subscription box that provides everything people need to make three or five meals at home.

“We’ve been operating out of the old British Hotel in Lyttelton, which had been abandoned since the earthquake. We started pretty small and didn’t really know how it was going to go, but I’d seen this growth in people eating vegan or plant-based overseas, and in New Zealand it’s just grown from there.”

In their first week they delivered 12 boxes, but now they deliver more than 200 weekly across Christchurch, and Riley hopes to launch the service in more New Zealand centres such as Wellington.

He says most of his customers are choosing to integrate plant-based eating into their diets rather than adopting it as a one hundred per cent lifestyle choice.

“About 85% of our customers aren’t vegan, which surprised me; I thought the number of vegans would be higher. But I think most of our customers inherently understand that eating plants is healthy, and it makes sense; it’s what grandma always said: ‘eat your vegetables’. So they’re eating their veggies three to five times a week and then they don’t feel bad having a steak on Saturdays,” he says.

Veganism is nothing new; records show abstaining from eating animal products was present in the ancient cultures of Greece and India. The term vegan was coined in the 1940s to depict a vegetarian who doesn’t consume dairy products. As the movement grew through the 20th century it became tied to the animal-rights movement and is often seen as a fringe movement, leading many to be wary about calling themselves vegan due to negative connotations.

Enter plant-based diets – veganism rebranded and relaxed. A plant-based diet is usually based on consuming fruits and vegetables, whole grains and legumes, while minimising or totally excluding meat, eggs and dairy products.



**I’m about 95% vegan. I want to eat predominantly plant-based but if I’m at a friend’s house and someone makes a cake with eggs or dairy I’m not militant about it, I’ll eat it and enjoy it.**

Tom Riley



More and more Kiwis are choosing to eat entirely or predominantly plant-based.

Research from Roy Morgan in 2016 found the proportion of Kiwis who say the food they eat is all, or almost all, vegetarian grew 27% between 2011 and 2015, most sharply for a few key groups: 14–34-year-olds, North Islanders, and men.

There are three typical gateways into veganism or eating plant-based – animal welfare, environmental concerns and personal health. The modern vegan isn’t as strict; plant-based can encompass everything from those who eat predominantly vegetarian through to those who abstain from all animal products in food, clothing and household items.

Tom Riley is a good example: “Personally I’m vegan at home, so I’m about 95% vegan. I want to eat predominantly plant-based but if I’m at a friend’s house and someone makes a cake with eggs or dairy I’m not militant about it, I’ll eat it and enjoy it.”

House surgeon and MAS Member Vania Tan is similar. She eats a vegan diet when practical and supports vegan products and businesses.

“It’s practically quite difficult to follow a vegan lifestyle to the letter because you don’t always know what’s going into your food or what animal products are used in the manufacturing of food, clothing or other household items. So most people just aim to do what is possible for them.”

Reading Australian bioethicist Peter Singer was Tan’s introduction to veganism. In 1975, Singer posited that there is value in the lives of all sentient creatures, in the fact that they possess a will to live; there’s sanctity in their lives in that they have experiences of pain and a connection to other beings.

“I guess in recognising this, the logical next step was to not endorse the suffering we cause to all the animals we currently use in food, farming, manufacturing, clothing and entertainment,” she says.

The 24-year-old Wellingtonian has been plant-based for three years and says not eating meat makes her feel better physically.

“I feel physically healthier, but for me, a big part of it was choosing a lifestyle

>>



<<

that aligns more with my values. Once I thought about it properly, it was hard for me to make any other conscionable choice.”

Tan might be part of a generation that’s changing the way New Zealanders – and populations across the globe – eat.

In the UK, Veganuary has been running for four years. It encourages meat eaters and vegetarians to consume solely plant-based for the month of January. In its first year, 3,300 people participated; in 2018 that number had swollen to 168,000.

“I think our generation has grown up with more media attention highlighting the benefits of a whole foods plant-based diet and more exposure to the ethical concerns and also the environmental and sustainability concerns behind our food choices,” Tan says.

Christchurch student Meg Wilks agrees. The 23-year-old, who is finishing her degree in health sciences majoring in public health at Canterbury University, says she decided to become vegetarian when she was 18.

“So I was vegetarian first just because I’ve always had a heart for animals, and always cared about them. Then I went to uni, and I saw a YouTube video and it was talking about veganism, and I decided ‘Okay. I’m going to go vegan.’ And since then, yeah, I’ve just sort of been getting more and more interested about it, and over the years I’ve learnt more and more.”

What about the argument that we have evolved as omnivores and we were designed to eat meat and plants?

“In terms of our human biology, we are actually definitely more fruitarian or herbivores, than carnivores or omnivores. Our digestive tract, our teeth, we’re designed to eat plants. We’re not designed to rip flesh apart



01

**I think our age group has grown up with more media attention on the benefits of a plant-based diet and more exposure to the ethical concerns.** *Vania Tan*

and our bowels are longer for digesting plants,” she says.

Meg’s parents, MAS Members Rob Wilks and Sally Murdoch, have been adapting their diets based on Meg’s preferences and their own research.

Both locum GPs based in Christchurch, Rob says they’ve been vegetarian for more than two years now, and are slowly moving further toward becoming vegans.

“It was basically because within our family it was easier to be vegetarian or vegan, then there’s the animal welfare side of things and as we progressed we got more information about the huge environmental impact like how unsustainable agriculture is.”

But Sally says evidence is suggesting it’s the health benefits of a vegetarian or vegan diet that are the most pressing issue.

“I’m finding it increasingly difficult to know how to deal with people’s diets, for instance, their high cholesterol. Nowadays, the food guidelines all still say low fat, high carbohydrate, but there just seems to be more and more evidence out there which goes against that, but that’s not being reflected in the current guidelines,” she says.

She says as GPs they’re stuck between a rock and a hard place when it comes to advising patients.

“I find it a struggle as a GP now to give dietary advice because of what the Heart Foundation’s guidelines are, and our



02

**Eating vegetables, mostly plants is probably a very good starting point, and as people move along some might decide to be wholly plant-based.** *Rob Wilks*

food pyramids are, and as a GP we’re almost obliged to give the advice which is the current best practice.

“Turn the food pyramid upside-down and it might be closer to the truth, but that is not currently what we’re still being advised on. And from a medico-legal point of view even, I wonder, if you give people different advice, and then they go and have a heart attack, and you haven’t followed current best practice, where does it leave you?” Sally says.

But in a time when there are more choices for those choosing to eat vegan, it doesn’t mean they’re all the answer.

Auckland University of Technology Professor of Public Health, Grant Schofield, says processed foods are bad, no matter if they’re made from animals or plants, so vegan diets can only be considered healthy if they’re packed with real, whole foods.

“With lab-grown meat and plant-based burger patties, at what point is that not just another piece of highly processed food? If that’s what a plant-based diet turns into, what’s the point?

“I strongly suggest the HI - or human interference - factor as basic filter for healthy sustainable eating. If it was recently running around in nature or growing in nature, then you can probably eat it.”

Co-author of *What the Fat?*, Schofield believes the answer isn’t that the world goes plant-based but rather that we cut out processed foods, heavily cut back sugar consumption and focus on eating foods, not nutrients.

“We don’t eat food because it has this amount of this nutrient and this amount of that. Food is part of life, we celebrate with it, we commiserate with it and we need to remember that.”

Rob Wilks says caring about animals, the environment and your health doesn’t mean giving up everything overnight.

“Eating mostly plants is probably a very good starting point, and as people move along some might decide to be wholly plant-based and some won’t.”

He’s managed to cut out almost all animal products from his diet, bar one.

“I’ve struggled giving up milk in coffee, that’s been a really hard one. I almost would have to give up coffee to give up milk. And I do occasionally have yoghurt and cheese, but I’ve cut out most dairy.”

In all things moderation is key. Food writer Michael Pollan, who has dedicated much of his adult life into researching diets and food, said in 2007 the best diet is to: “Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants.”

“That, more or less, is the short answer to the supposedly incredibly complicated and confusing question of what we humans should eat in order to be maximally healthy,” he wrote in the *New York Times*. ♥

01 / Vania Tan (MAS Member)

02 / Meg and Rob Wilks (MAS Member)





01

## Christchurch Artist Doctors

# The all-singing, all-dancing doctors

01 / (from left) Rosie Grant and Tory Aebli

02 / (from left) Andrew Earl, Howard Livingston, Bill Olds,  
David Lovell-Smith, Nigel Salisbury and David Merriman

03 / (front from left) Morag MacPherson, Mike Hurrell and Angela  
Pitchford (back from left) Robyn Bisset and Tim Wilkinson (Orchestra)

04 / Mike Shaw

05 / David Roche

06 / Manpower

Christchurch medical professionals swapped a hospital theatre for a creative one last month.

Supported by MAS, the annual concert of the New Zealand Association of Artist Doctors was a chance for those working in medicine to flex their creative muscles, says the vice-president of the association, John Gillies.

“Very simply, the association has been established to promote creative activities among doctors and to bring members of the medical profession together to share their creative talents on a platform which takes them out of their comfort zone a little.”

The annual concert, held in Christchurch on August 18, showcased a variety of creative disciplines from orchestral and rock music to flamenco dance and even manpower strip tease. It was complemented



02



03



04



05



06

## We want superb mediocrity.

by an exhibition of visual arts and crafts that featured painting, photography, drawing, weaving, ceramics and woodwork.

“The fostering of creative activities is very important, because here we are in a situation where medicine doesn’t have all the answers; creative minds are essential if we are going to offer a better service in medicine. This is one way we can do that.”

Gillies says the secret to the group’s success is that while they’re professionals in their careers, these cultural pursuits are hobbies where they don’t need to be perfect.

“We have some that are so incredibly good that they could be professional. Now, that

can be a problem. It sounds great, but if you stage people who are so good, what happens to everyone else? They look at it and say, ‘Oh, they’re too good. I shouldn’t be amongst this group. I would be terrible.’ So then it ruins the society. So my battle cry is ‘we want superb mediocrity,’” laughs Gillies.

As well as providing entertainment, and giving doctors the chance to perform, the annual concert also helped foster relationships amongst doctors at all levels of the profession, which helps them when they’re at work, he says.

“Whether you like it or not, there’s a hierarchical structure within medicine, and I guess there has to be. And the problem is that the people at the top are almost kind of remote in their ivory tower. And this breaks that down. You can’t be isolated. See, you have to show, ‘I’m a real person,’ and it’s so great.

“I can remember the days when I was on call, and middle of the night I would be rung up by another doctor who was having trouble with a patient. And it would be so-and-so who was part of our choir or something, and they’d ring up and say ‘Oh, so-and-so, how are you?’ ‘No, no. Oh, I’m fine.’ ‘Great. Look, what can I do to help?’ It changes the whole transactional process.”

MAS has supported the New Zealand Association of Artist Doctors for many years, and Gillies says without this support, it would be too expensive to put on the annual event.

“I’m so grateful for MAS for so many things, for their support over the years. It’s just incredible. And what really impressed me was, during the stressful times of the earthquake in 2011, they didn’t abandon us – they continued to support us – and that was magic.” ❤️



This year's MAS Movie Night is a chance to return to J.K. Rowling's wizarding world in ***Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald***. The second instalment in the ***Fantastic Beasts*** series follows the adventures of magizoologist Newt Scamander and stars Eddie Redmayne, Jude Law and Johnny Depp. This year's movie night is on 15 November, screening at 10 locations nationwide. Keep an eye out for your invitation.

# MAS MOVIE NIGHT RETURNS 15 NOVEMBER

SAVE THE DATE



greater good /  
staff story



01

## The golden age of adventure

Conquering the Everest marathon



02

A group of 40-to 60-somethings are proving you're never too old to challenge yourself as they complete one of the world's toughest endurance races.

However, upon arriving triumphant and exhausted in the small Nepalese village of Namche at the end of the race, they discovered that their gear had not made it down from Base Camp. So the hot shower was demoted to a wipe down with a wet wipe. And as they collapsed into their beds – their first proper mattresses in more than two weeks – their dreams of a peaceful night's sleep were disrupted by the sounds of Nepalese house music as the town celebrated the 65th anniversary of the first ascent of Mount Everest.

Huddled in a tent at 5,300 metres altitude and in subzero temperatures, Colin Thomson dreamed of a hot shower, and a warm comfy bed. Thomson, along with three friends, were waiting to compete in the world's highest marathon, the Tenzing Hillary Everest Marathon, and their eyes were on the prize: the finish line and those simple creature comforts that now seemed like the ultimate luxuries.

01 / The climb to Base Camp at about 4,500m above sea level as it starts to get into alpine scenery  
02 / A porter carries between 60 and 70kg on his back up the steep track





03



04

**03 /** The New Zealand contingent at Base Camp ahead of the race  
**04 /** The highest point of the journey – the summit of Kala Patthar  
**05 /** Approaching Gorak Shep at an altitude of 5,150m  
**06 /** At the finish line: freezing cold, foggy and lightly raining

<<

“The DJ, apparently a well-known act who had been flown in specially from Kathmandu, set up in the local soccer field some way from our lodge but, because his music was so loud and the village located in such a natural amphitheater, the windows in my room were shaking with the thumping bass until 4am. Thankfully I was so exhausted I managed to sleep through most of it,” he says.

Thomson’s journey to Everest started just three years ago. For five decades the now 55-year-old Head of Investments at MAS had never been hugely active. The demands of work and family life filled his days, but when, according to his wife, he had a mid-life crisis upon turning 50, he discovered mountain biking and tramping and fell in love with being in nature and the sense of adventure it offered. To say he fell head over heels in love

might be accurate – broken bones caused by mountain bike crashes meant his focus moved to tramping – and then adventure racing became his passion.

He made friends with three like-minded men – Colin Chapman, Russell Simpson and Paul May – and they began seeking out races around New Zealand to complete together.

“We kept one-upping each other, saying ‘let’s do this event’, ‘let’s do this’ and it just got bigger and bigger,” he says.

One of the guys had a long-standing list of events around the world he wanted to complete; among them was the Everest Marathon.

“He’d pitched it to us a number of times and we said no, then he tried to get us to do the Antarctic Marathon, which is even more extreme. He’s a persistent bugger and one day he rang me and said ‘I’ve got the two others to do the Everest Marathon with me, if you don’t come along you’ll spend the rest of your life hearing us go on about how great it was’. I made the fatal mistake of telling him ‘I’ll bring around a bottle of whisky and we’ll talk about it’. I ended up signing up a year out. Then I had to break the news to my wife the next morning.”

The Everest Marathon is one of the most challenging races in the world. As well as dealing with freezing temperatures, and rough, uneven terrain, the runners have to adjust to the extreme altitude, which renders fit people breathless after the most minor of activities.

Thomson says this was the most challenging thing to overcome. “We had to walk ten days to get to Base Camp at 5,300 metres above sea level, and we had two days there to acclimatise a bit more. But as soon as you do anything remotely physical, like getting into your sleeping bag or getting your shoes off, you’re gasping. Then you have to put on all your gear and try and run; I’ve never experienced so much effort to go so slow.”

“The race itself was incredibly hard. Within a few metres you’re gasping for breath and you’re thinking ‘how am I going to cope with



nine hours of this?’ We took turns leading, which helped push us as we didn’t want to let the team down. After six hours I had blisters and a stress fracture in one foot.”

Thomson says it was as much a mental challenge as a physical one.

“I adopted a strategy to just focus on one kilometre at a time and not worry about how much further we have to go. I target that one kilometre and when I get to the end of that I congratulate myself, tell myself I’m doing well and I can do this.

“As soon as you find yourself thinking ‘oh my God I can’t do this’ you have to slap yourself and really catch the thought and try and find something to distract yourself with. It’s a massive mental game,” he says.

Ranging in age from 42 to 60, Thomson says the group aren’t spring chickens. He says it adds to their sense of pride and satisfaction that they can complete extreme races alongside those in their 20s and 30s.

“That’s part of what we as a group pride ourselves on. We’re still having adventures, still having challenges, we’re not retiring to the golf course. We deliberately want to set new challenges and keep active.

“We had a bit of a chuckle at a headline in the media ahead of our race calling us the ‘aging adventurers’ rather than the ‘ageless adventurers,’” he says.

Thomson’s next race is completing the 60km Kepler Challenge in Fiordland later this year. As a group they’re thinking about their next grand adventure, perhaps the Jungle Ultra Marathon in Peru in 2020.

“It labels itself the world’s hardest ultra marathon with 230km of swamps, rivers and jungles. It looks incredibly hard, swimming across rivers and bashing through jungle when everything wants to bite or sting you.”

It took them more than nine hours to complete the Everest Marathon, and the group had added incentive to complete the race, raising \$226,000 for Heart Kids New Zealand, the largest amount ever donated outside corporate donations.

After their night of restless sleep from the Nepalese dance party happening throughout the town, Thomson and his friends woke up dirty and stiff, but hugely satisfied with what they’d achieved. They treated themselves to a cut-throat shave and a strong whisky.



05

06

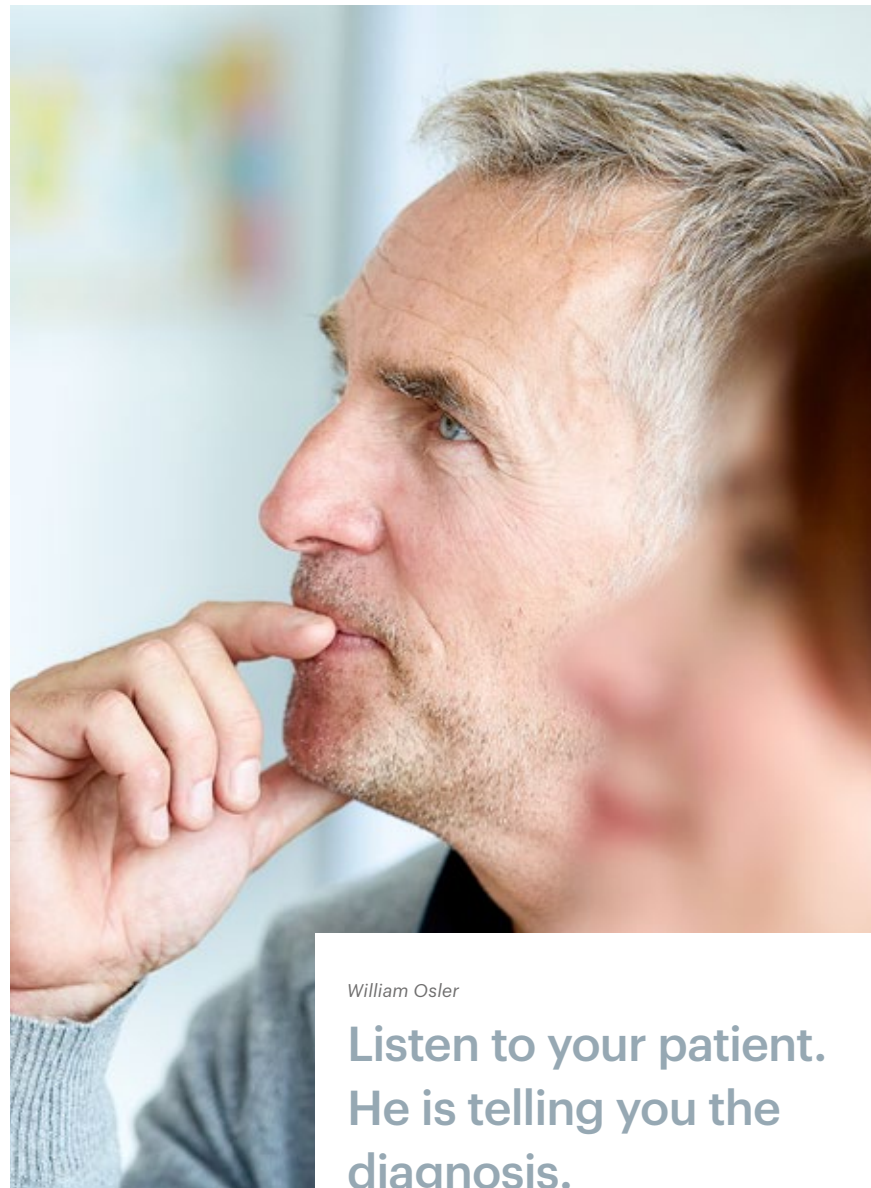
Before leaving there was one last purchase Thomson had to make: a pair of jandals, as his feet were so blistered and swollen he couldn’t put his shoes back on.

“I had to walk out for the next three days in jandals, avoiding rocks and yak poo. As I walked into the final village on the last day, I was stopped by an incredulous young American who couldn’t believe that I was trekking in jandals. I think he thought that I had gone all the way to Base Camp and back wearing them,” he says. ❤

**To donate money for Heart Kids New Zealand, visit [everydayhero.co.nz/event/runningeverest](http://everydayhero.co.nz/event/runningeverest)**



# Lessons from doctors for managers



William Osler

**Listen to your patient.  
He is telling you the diagnosis.**

Are you an 18-second listener? It could be harming your relationships – and your business, writes Chris O'Reilly.

I've often thought that business owners should look to doctors for insights into how to be better managers. We could start with the father of modern medicine, 19th century Canadian doctor William Osler, whose greatest line applies equally to doctors and managers: "Listen to your patient. He is telling you the diagnosis."

Nothing could be truer for a business leader, no matter the size of the company. If it's underperforming we should be asking the people within "why?". Equally, if part of the company is doing better than the rest, we should be asking the people "why?". As Osler put it, they will tell us the diagnosis.

If you're looking for high-profile advocates of listening in business, you don't have to go far. One of the cult figures of the current generation of business leaders, Richard Branson, has long regarded listening as his most critical business skill.

"Having launched hundreds of Virgin companies across a number of different industries, we've learned so many valuable lessons. One that always rings true, regardless of the industry, is that the best way for a company to succeed is to listen to its people," he wrote on his blog.

Management guru Tom Peters goes even further. He says that as a business leader, listening is your profession. Peters says: "The single most significant strategic strength that an organization can have is not a good strategic plan, but a commitment to strategic listening on the part of every member of the organization: strategic listening to frontline employees, strategic listening to vendors, to customers."

## THREE TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR LISTENING

### Summarise

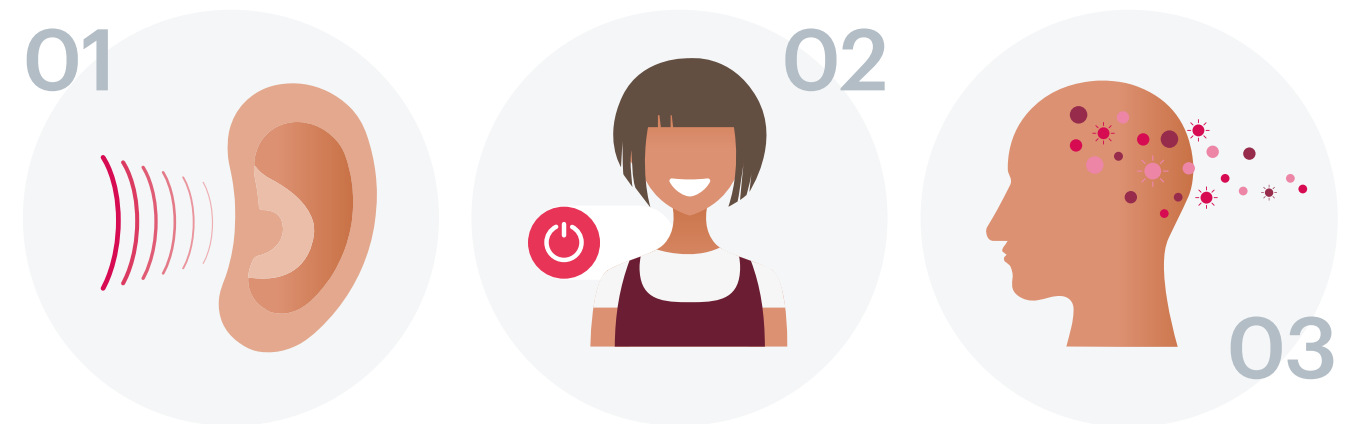
When a colleague or employee is speaking to you about an issue, respond by summarising what they've said, such as saying: "So you're upset that you're not being given credit for the overtime you've done this week?" This shows you're listening and trying to understand their concern.

### Remove the distractions

If someone comes to speak to you, turn away from your computer, put your phone in your pocket and actively focus on the person. This indicates that you are actively listening to the person, making them feel valued and respected.

### Keep an open mind

Try and focus on what the person is saying as they're saying it, rather than jumping to conclusions. Let them finish their thought without you interrupting or making assumptions.



It's one of those points that's so simple it almost sounds trite. Of course listening is important. But listening can be surprisingly difficult. Especially for the kind of people who tend to become leaders and business owners in today's highly competitive world. They're ambitious people, they're driven, they demand a lot of themselves. They're used to being right and they expect to have all the answers to every question they encounter.

It's not surprising that most managers and business owners don't listen enough and leap to conclusions about the root causes of issues without bothering to listen to the people who are at the heart of the problem.

It seems the more experienced we are, the faster we leap to hasty judgements – both managers and doctors. It's a natural human tendency that was exposed in a study by another doctor, Dr Jerome

Groopman, a Harvard Medical School professor who published a 2007 book called *How Doctors Think*.

Groopman quotes a study of doctors in general practice and in hospital settings. This study observed doctors with their patients and measured how long after the doctor sat down with the patient before the doctor interrupted the patient with a diagnosis.

How long? Eighteen seconds. Just 18 seconds of listening until the doctor interrupted and formed an opinion.

That same pattern is repeated in business. Truth is, most of us are 18-second bosses. We listen for 18 seconds and then leap to a conclusion based on what we know from another situation, claiming we're using the benefit of our experience. Except all we're doing is increasing our chances

of making hasty judgements based on incomplete understanding and presumptions, not objective facts.

Helping managers listen to their teams more effectively has spawned an entire new category of online business survey tools. One of these is a Kiwi-made Continuous Involvement System called Ask Your Team ([askyourteam.com](http://askyourteam.com)), where I am CEO. We've been operating five years now, and we're building up a data set that convinces us more than ever about the power of listening. It seems there's a correlation between listening and taking actions that lead to better sales volumes, staff retention, and productivity.

If you do one new thing at work this week, make it a vow to speak less and listen more. ♥





## Four things about life insurance



MAS General Manager of Sales David Chote explains the different types of life insurance and who needs it.

### 01

What is life insurance?

"Life insurance" isn't one thing. Most people know about the traditional life insurance that pays a lump sum on your death, but there are also a number of policies under the life insurance banner that focus on your survival, not just your death. Life insurance is a broad category of cover that is designed to maintain your income if you become unable to work because of sickness or injury.

### 02

What kind of life insurance products are available?

Life insurance covers a wide range of products that offer different benefits across a range of scenarios – from death to temporary inability to work because of injury or illness. The two broad areas would be more accurately called "death insurance" and "living insurance". Rather than focus on the different policy types, it's more important to think about building a personal insurance plan that incorporates both living and death insurances. Insurance that pays a lump sum if you die is a good start, particularly if you have personal or business debt. You should also think about adding to that a combination of income protection, sickness and injury products to provide for your income needs if you're unable to work through illness or injury. We recommend you contact your MAS adviser to help create a plan best suited to your specific needs.

### 03

Does everyone need life insurance?

Not necessarily, but everyone needs to consider life insurance. It's important to think about the financial consequences of you or your partner dying prematurely or being unable to work permanently or for a short time. What financial position would your family be in if your income stopped suddenly? How would the mortgage be paid? Does your business have debts that need to be repaid? How would your children's education be funded? If your partner was left alone, would they be able to fund the kind of upbringing you want your children to have?

### 04

How do I know how much I need?

In most cases, we recommend working off an income level that you want to maintain. MAS Members are professionals, and most have carefully made plans for their futures – family plans, retirement savings plans, business development plans. Whatever the plan, it probably depends on the continuance of your income. Through various insurance products, it's possible to protect up to 100% of your income through your working lifespan, and, if you die, to ensure all your debt is paid off and your family is at least as well off as they would have been had you not suffered any misfortune, and that your business debts are covered. Again, every individual's situation is different, so it's important to talk through your personal situation with your MAS adviser. ♥



MAS update

## Members vote strongly in favour of charitable trust proposal

For some time now we have been working on an initiative to reorganise MAS in a way that would allow us to play a much greater role, in partnership with our Members, to support the communities in which we live and work. Over the past two years we have shared this idea with Members through a number of forums and used your ideas to help shape its final form.

This work culminated in a vote by Members at the 2018 AGM that overwhelmingly supported the proposal to establish a charitable trust with the purpose of funding health research, promotion and education in New Zealand. As a result of this strong mandate from the membership, with more than 88% voting in support, MAS will now continue the process of applying for charitable status and income tax exemption.

Over the coming months, the MAS Charitable Trust will be established with an independent Board of Trustees. The trustees will decide how the funds will be distributed, and there is plenty of work to be undertaken establishing policies and processes for accepting funding applications and making contributions from the Trust.

We'll keep you posted as we make progress, but in the meantime updates can be found at [mas.co.nz](https://mas.co.nz)

## A new director

MAS welcomes Dr Douglas Hill, who was elected to the Board of Directors at the AGM to replace retiring director Dr Helen Rodenburg. We'd like to thank Dr Rodenburg for her service to MAS and the membership over the last 22 years and wish her every success for the future.

Dr Hill is a general practitioner and a director of Broadway Medical Centre, Dunedin. He has a special interest in GPSI medicine in dual roles of orthopaedics and skin cancer surgery. Dr Hill's roles outside of general practice include Chair of Columba College Board of Proprietors and Chair of Wellsouth Primary Health Network. He is a member of the NZ Advisory Board of the Skin Cancer College of Australasia.



# The rise of digital wellbeing

How to tame your  
smartphone without  
having to retreat to  
the woods.



**Writer** Alex Beattie / Having deleting his Facebook account over four years ago, Alex is a PhD candidate at Victoria University of Wellington and is studying new ways people are disconnecting from the internet.

Here's an etiquette question your well-mannered grandmother didn't have a position on: When is it socially acceptable to ask for someone's WiFi password? After taking off your shoes, during the cup of tea or after you've had cake?

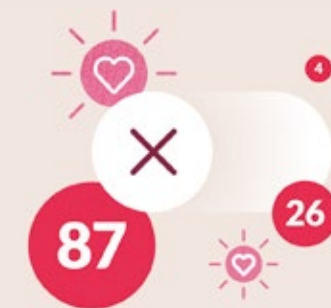
This may be a small dilemma of modern manners, but it's symptomatic of much bigger questions that our society is having to answer as we adjust to our new age of technology-enabled hyper-connectivity.

Perhaps the biggest question is, are we too connected? 'Smombies' (smartphone zombies) lurk in public spaces, creating new safety hazards. In the German town of Augsburg, the local government has installed traffic lights on the ground, so pedestrians never have to look up. *The Walking Dead* anyone?

However, it's not all one-way web traffic. The emergence of concepts such as 'digital wellbeing' suggests that there's a growing number of people questioning the hyper-connected craze. Digital detoxes, #deleteFacebook, and the comeback of the Nokia brick phone are some of the ways people are disconnecting from the internet.

I know because I'm one of them. Over four years ago I deleted my Facebook account. For someone in his mid-to-late twenties at the time, it was a move far more radical than tattoos or facial piercings. I had grown tired of mindlessly trawling through the lives of faux-friends and distant relatives. My newsfeed began to resemble the dreaded high school reunion: endless gloating and trite stories. So I took the plunge and fled Facebook.

## FIVE TIPS TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TECH



**01 Turn off notifications**  
Alerts are big distractions. Turn notifications off except those from people.



**02 Create phone-free spaces**

Carve out some quiet in your life. Think about charging your smartphone outside of your bedroom and having phone-free dinners.

## Digital detoxes, #deleteFacebook, and the comeback of the Nokia brick phone are some of the ways people are disconnecting from the internet.

It turns out there are many who feel this way. In a study on social media in the United Kingdom, the Royal Society for Public Health concluded that social platforms like Instagram and Snapchat can inspire feelings of self-loathing and inadequacy.

The social pressure created by social media suggests a reason why rates of anxiety and depression among young Kiwis is rising. No longer does the ideal body shape, holiday, or job promotion sit only in the glossy magazines; it's now in the newsfeeds of our peers on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. And, thanks to smartphones, we can compare our achievements at will.

The mobility of smartphones also means we're working much more. The temptation to check emails outside working hours is too strong, as is the urge to send one. Instead

of using smartphones to work flexibly, we're choosing to never stop working.

This has led to a rise of digital 'detoxes'. In the United States and Europe, burned out workers attend tech-free summer camps hoping to find balance in their lives. Camp Grounded in Texas offers yoga, locally sourced meals and art workshops all rolled into one wholesome package.

It's understandable that detoxing is the default response to managing the digital highs and lows. Neuroscientists say our brains fire a dose of dopamine when we receive an exciting email, much like the feeling of anticipating a delicious slice of cake. After dietary indulgence, we often strive to live virtuously; it's why gyms are



## The problem with comparing technology to food is that they're nothing like each other. Digital technologies are by no means 'unhealthy'; they are utilities.

&lt;&lt;

packed in January. Similarly, digital detoxes seem like the natural way to rebalance after overdosing on Instagram.

But the problem with comparing technology to food is that they're nothing like each other. Digital technologies are by no means 'unhealthy'; they are utilities. Trying to detox from the internet is like taking a break from electricity. It's possible for the privileged or for a short period, but impossible for anyone who requires having a connection to undertake their job or livelihood.

Similarly, platforms like Facebook are used for more than just keeping up with the Joneses. With over two billion users, Facebook is the world's premier events-management tool. School activities, study groups and community events are all organised via social media. Abstaining from Facebook risks being kept out of the loop.

The most feasible response to constant connection isn't to undertake the digital equivalent of a one-off Dry July. Instead, it's learning how to live comfortably with tech by shaking the digital dependencies little by little, on a day-to-day basis.

Ironically, it could be worthwhile taking a cue from the makers of these technologies. The Guardian reported that Silicon Valley executives send their children to tech-free schools, and even Steve Jobs famously

banned the use of iPhones and iPads at various times in his own home. If Jobs was reluctant to 'get high on his own supply', perhaps we should also learn to carve out tech-free spaces, such as during meal times.

Removing the smartphone from the bedroom is another useful step that encourages healthy sleep, as is downloading a productivity app that blocks access to the internet to assist when trying to focus.

Even Google and Apple have announced 'digital wellbeing' settings for their respective operating systems. Users of both iPhones and Android phones now have dashboards that offer to set time limits on their favourite apps, as well as the option to batch notifications to eliminate distractions.

These tools are a recognition by Silicon Valley of their responsibility to deliver more sustainable tech experiences that don't encourage playing games of Candy Crush into the wee hours of the morning. Most curiously, these new 'digital wellbeing' apps suggest an emerging market for a new type of tech-savvy: tech-life balance.

So, to answer the dilemma of asking for the WiFi password, maybe it's better to keep the phone in your pocket. Who knows, it might just mean you enjoy the cake and the conversation that little bit more. ♥



### 03 Go cold (tech) turkey

Removing the itch to check social media or emails can improve productivity. Check out Self Control (for Macs) or Cold Turkey (for Windows). These free desktop applications block access to listed websites or mail servers for a specified time.



### 04 Greyscale your phone

To make your smartphone as appealing as a cup of cold soup, toggle the display settings to greyscale.



**3h 16m**  
on your phone

### 05 Nudge yourself

Try deploying some psychological tricks on yourself to encourage healthy tech use. Check out Mute or Moment – free apps that provide daily feedback about how much time you spend on your phone.

## Yoga & wellness retreats in Bali

Want a bit of wellness with your holiday? Head to Bali, where you can get your wellness goals back on track.

For Elizabeth Gilbert it started, like so many things do, with a crisis. In the early 2000s, the American author was reeling from a divorce, a volatile romance and depression. The cure, she thought, was to spend a year travelling in Italy, India and Bali.

That spiritual and emotional pilgrimage resulted in the 2006 best-selling novel *Eat, Pray, Love*, which was later turned into a blockbuster film starring Julia Roberts. That was what started me thinking that one day I would be ready for my own Balinese pilgrimage.

Fast forward 12 years and now I'm finally heading to Bali. Unlike Gilbert, though, I'm not visiting the lush, tropical island to eat or pray. And I'm certainly not in search of love.

Instead, my needs are much simpler: I want to escape a long, cold Wellington winter, recharge my batteries and become better, fitter and more chilled. And I want to do it in places with a few stars after their names.

In Bali, they're not hard to find: far from the tourist tangle, luxury wellness resorts are stitched into rice paddies, beaches and Jurassic-like rainforests all over the most accommodating of Indonesia's 18,000 islands. Private plunge pools, award-winning restaurants and indulgent spa treatments are a given; others come with 24-hour butlers, cultural activities and holistic wellness centres, because there's nothing wrong with paving the road to mindfulness with a bit of luxury.

If, however, your Bali is one of cocktails by the pool, clubbing until dawn and the Denpasar-Sanur-Kuta triangle, then fear not, the 5,780sq km island still has your back. But if you're keen to experience another side of Bali, you're in luck. I checked out a couple of wellness resorts and left with my chakras aligned, my body pummelled into shape and my wellness goals back on track.

### WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT BALI



A few basic words of Bahasa Indonesia will take you a long way in Bali. Try selamat pagi (good morning), tolong (please) and terima kasih (thank you).



Be mindful of Bali's rainy season (January–April and October–November). Fortunately, the rains are usually limited to brief afternoon showers.



Bargaining is an essential part of shopping in Bali. When buying something from local vendors, ask for 30% to 50% discount. And don't buy anything until you've checked out what the other vendors are offering.



Writer Sharon Stephenson

## I want to escape a long, cold Wellington winter, and recharge my batteries.



- 1/ Como Shambhala Estate, Ubud
- 2/ Escape Haven, Canggu
- 3/ Denpasar





01



02



03



04

<<

## COMO SHAMBHALA ESTATE, UBUD

comoshambhala.com

I'm sprawled across a white bed, wearing nothing but warm almond and sesame oil, trying not to yelp. Legi, who weighs as much as a bag of sugar but has hands of steel, is pounding my shoulder blades, trying to erase months of stress.

I walk out of the 90-minute massage energised, glowing, taut and feeling like a new woman.

This is Como Shambhala Estate, a stylish private wellness retreat 15 minutes drive from Ubud. However, it takes slightly longer than that to get, here because this 9.3ha rainforest property is so secluded that my driver, the GPS and several passers-by have trouble finding it.

But it's worth it to arrive at this holistic sanctuary strung across the lip of the Ayung River, above hills clothed in rice paddies and populated with chattering macaque monkeys (they line up on the fence to watch me when I use my private outdoor shower, an audience of curious and slightly unnerving simians).

Billing itself not as a resort but as a "retreat for change", Como employs a small army of Ayurvedic doctors, nutritionists, yoga masters, energy healers and personal trainers to help guests make "informed life changes". There are four programmes – Ayurveda, Be Active, Bespoke and Cleanse – which run from three to eight nights, and, although not a regimented boot camp, the goal is for guests to make realistic changes that last beyond their stay.

That includes everything from pilates and rock climbing to meditation, life-coaching sessions and mountain biking in the nearby rice paddies. A highlight is the estate walk, where guide Mudra leads us on an energetic

journey around the property's steep paths, pointing out the unique flora and a sacred spring. Or you can just hang out in the infinity pool, swimming to a soundtrack of the river.

To ensure you're where you need to be, guests have access to a personal assistant who rolls up in a golf buggy (did I mention the estate is ranged across steep hills?) to ferry you to your next destination.

In a previous life, the retreat was a favourite with the glitterati, who would book the five villas for hedonistic parties. But in 2005, the Singapore-based Ong family bought it, added another 25 rooms and turned it into a posh holistic sanctuary whose fans include Katy Perry, Annie Lennox and designer Donna Karan. Based on the five Japanese elements – wind, water, fire, earth and sky – the rooms are a mix of traditional Balinese and classic design, and the dense forest wraps around each room, so you feel as though you're floating in greenery.

All that activity in tropical heat makes me hungry, and Como Shambhala has two restaurants, one serving regional Indonesian cuisine, the other appropriately healthy, fresh food, including nut milks, yeast-free breads and more fresh fruit and veggies than I've ever seen.

It's probably no surprise Como Shambhala has won a number of awards, including Condé Nast's Best Spa in the World, and last month *Luxury Travel Magazine* named it Best Overseas Health and Wellness Retreat 2018.

## ESCAPE HAVEN, CANGGU

escapehaven.com

I'm trying to contort myself into a pretzel-like shape while sweat and sunscreen drip into my eyes. Luckily, the upbeat music and peppy Australian yoga instructor help to keep me going.

I'm at Escape Haven, a women-only health and wellness retreat on the outskirts of the bustling town of Canggu. If the traffic is kind, it's a two-hour drive from Denpasar. But down a dusty lane, behind enormous frangipani trees, is the sprawling 32ha retreat which was last year named Best Luxury Wellness Retreat and Best Boutique Retreat in the World Luxury Hotel Awards.

Former Aucklander Janine Hall swapped her high-powered corporate career a decade ago to start Escape Haven (there's also another one in Uluwatu and she recently launched a more budget-friendly option, The Palm Tree House). A maximum of 14 women each week choose from surfing, fitness or relaxation programmes run by Antipodean expats who teach guests how to catch a wave, work up a sweat or discover their inner yogi.

The goal is for guests to make realistic changes that last beyond their stay.

But this is no boot camp – it's okay to do as little or as much as you like. One morning, for example, I simply can't get out bed, so I sleep in, have a leisurely swim and join the others for an insanely healthy breakfast later (think tropical fruits, chia seeds and smoothie bowls). The Escape Haven food philosophy is sugar- and gluten-free, wholesome, healthy and clean living. The aim over the week is to help break bad habits and encourage participants to see what a difference eating like this can do to their sense of wellbeing. All the produce is organic and local, and the three resident chefs charmingly cater to every dietary requirement.

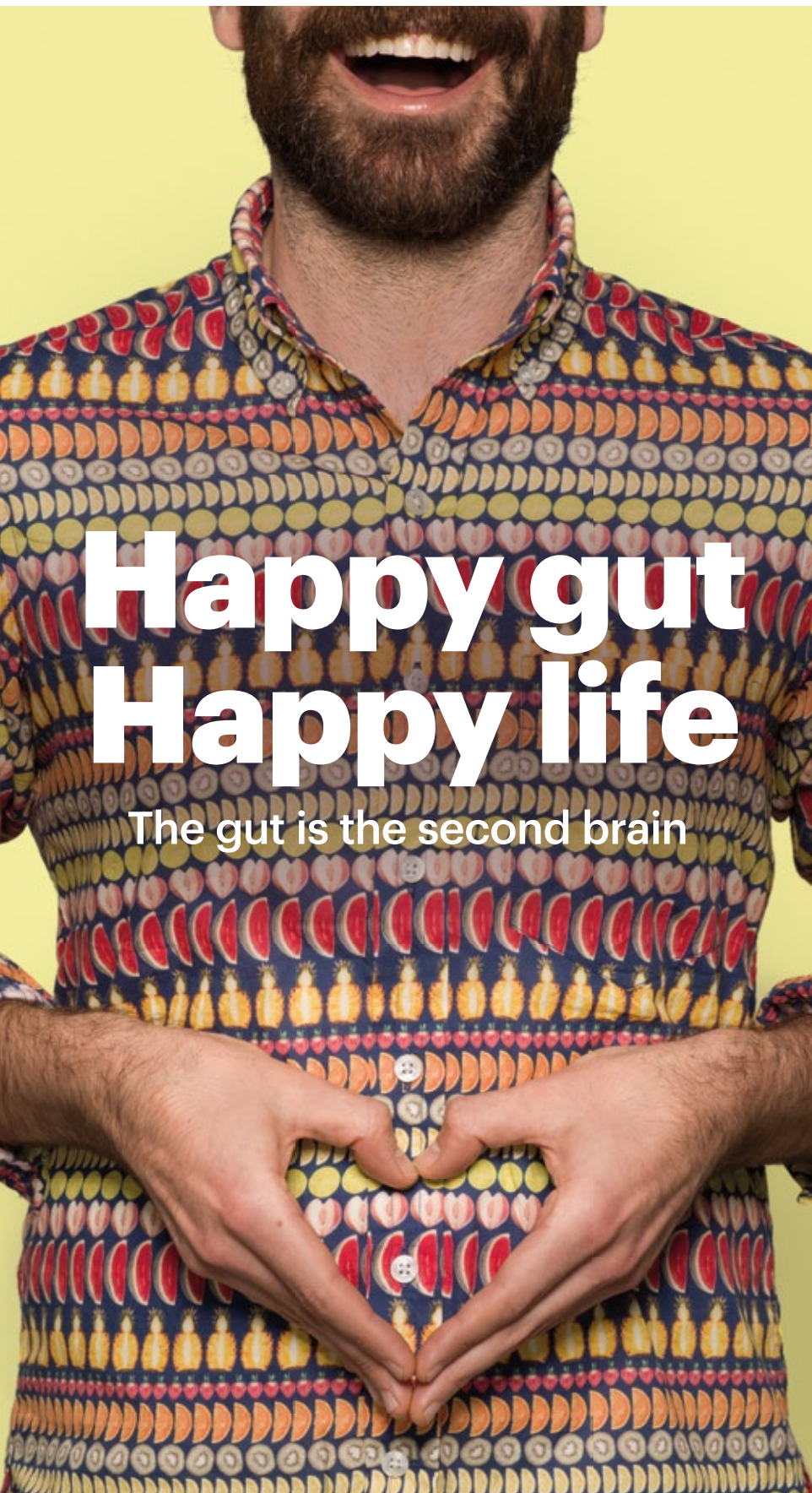
If mornings are for stretching and sweating, then afternoons are for lying by the pool, or working our way through an extensive list of spa treatments. I also get the opportunity to go horse riding, snorkelling, white-water rafting, visit a Balinese healer and have a tarot card reading (I'm thrilled when the Hungarian reader predicts there will be more travel in my future). And, should I want to visit nearby Canggu to shop for souvenirs, that's also possible.

But my room for the week is so comfortable, it's hard to tear myself away. Decorated in traditional Balinese style, the large villa reaches into the dense forest and is so gloriously private, it's like being marooned on an island.

More than 5,000 women have stayed at Escape Haven since it opened. The week I visit, that includes an American privacy lawyer, a Kiwi publisher and an Australian nurse. And, as cheesy as it sounds, we all bonded and still keep in touch.

My only regret? At the end of six nights I have to go home. But I'll be back. ♥





# Happy gut Happy life

## The gut is the second brain

Our gut and our brain are in constant communication, suggesting those ‘gut feelings’ are worth listening to.

We’ve all made decisions based on a ‘gut feeling’. Whether it be deciding to start a business, end a relationship or buy that outlandish pink coat, we know something is right in our gut and trust that feeling.

But more research is showing just how integrated our gut is in our decision-making processes and how it can affect our emotions. Whether you’re happy, sad, angry or excited, your gut knows about it – maybe even before you do.

Until recently, just how the gut affects our emotions, wellbeing, decision making – and vice versa – was widely unknown. The brain and the gut are in constant communication via thick nerve cables, transferring information in both directions.

The signals that travel from the gut to the brain indicate feelings of fullness, nausea and other physical responses and reactions. The brain also sends responses to the gut, causing reactions, says Dr Emeran Mayer, gastroenterologist and author of *The Mind-Gut Connection*.

“The brain doesn’t forget about these feelings either. Gut feelings are stored in vast databases in the brain, which can later be accessed when making decisions. What we sense in our gut will ultimately affect not only the decisions we make about what to eat and drink, but also the people we choose to spend time with and the way we assess critical information as workers, jury members and leaders.”

The idea that there is a second ‘brain’ setting up camp in our gut is hard to believe. While it may not be the same size or shape as the brain in our heads, the second brain exists and is otherwise known as the enteric nervous system. It’s contained in every part of the gut, extending from the oesophagus

to the anus, and contains 100 million neurons, which is as many, if not more than the number found in the spinal cord.

The vagus nerve is one that carries information from the brain to the gut and back again, but experts in this area have said that most of the information is going from the gut to the brain instead of the other way around, neurogastroenterologist Dr Michael Gershon told *The Wireless* in 2016.

“A huge amount of information is going upstairs and we don’t really know what all of it is but we know it can affect mood and wellbeing.”

Eating probiotic yoghurt, drinking kombucha and adding fermented foods to our diet is good for our gut bacteria, while excessive use of antibiotics wipes out both the bad guys and the good guys in our gut.

The bacteria that makes up a person’s population of microbes is known as their microbiota and is unique to each person.

“The microbes present in your gut depend on many factors, including your genes, your mother’s microbiota, which all of us take on to some extent, the microbes that other members of your household carry, your diet, and your brain’s activity and state of mind,” Dr Mayer says.

**95% of the body’s serotonin is actually contained in specialised cells in the gut.**

Imbalanced gut microbiota have now been linked to depression and anxiety disorders. With serotonin referred to as the ‘happy hormone’ and dopamine coined the ‘motivator chemical’, their combined presence in such high volumes in the gut, speaks to the theory that the gut is an emotional hub, affecting the emotions we feel and why we feel them.

“We know today that 95% of the body’s serotonin is actually contained in specialised cells in the gut, and these serotonin-containing cells are influenced by what we eat, by chemicals released from certain species of gut microbes, and by signals that the brain sends to them, informing them about our emotional state,” says Dr Mayer

When we’re stressed, we naturally reach for high fat, sugar-laden, unhealthy foods. However these are proven to reduce our satiety response, the feeling of being full and knowing when to stop eating. The bad bacteria in your gut thrive off high-fat, nutritionally void foods.

“The emerging knowledge of an integrated gut microbiota-brain system and its intimate relationship with the food we eat is revealing how the mind, brain, gut and the gut’s microbiota interact. These interactions can either make us vulnerable to a growing number of diseases, or they can help to ensure a state of optimal health,” explains Dr Mayer

When we have a job interview, our stomach ties up in knots, and sometimes we have to make an awkward last-minute dash to the bathroom. When we’re feeling down in the dumps and can barely drag ourselves out of bed, things often get blocked up in the bowel department. We all know that our emotions affect our gut, but the concept that our gut may be contributing to or even prolonging these emotional states is hard to wrap your head around.

So what can we actually do to make our gut a happy and healthy space? While

### DR. EMERAN MAYER: HOW AND WHAT TO FEED YOUR GUT MICROBES

**Aim to maximise gut microbial diversity by maximising regular intake of naturally fermented foods and probiotics.**



**Reduce inflammatory potential of your gut microbiota by making better nutritional choices. Cut down on animal fat in your diet. Avoid processed food and select organically grown food.**



**Eat smaller servings at meals. Avoid eating when you are stressed, angry or sad. Become an expert in listening to your gut feelings.**

there is no way to change our microbiota, with the proper knowledge, diet, lifestyle and supplements, we can cultivate an environment in which our gut bacteria thrive and we are best prepared to fight off disease and live a healthy, happy and balanced life.

With more and more research being done in this space, there are sure to be more discoveries in the crazy world of gut health that can provide more concrete evidence and recommendations for those interested in providing a comfortable home for their newest unexpected guest – the second brain. ♥



# Students on wellness

With end of year exams looming, the student association presidents look at the ways wellness can help with managing stress and deadlines, and they provide an update on what's been happening in their faculties.

## Jibi Kunnethedam

*President / New Zealand Medical Students' Association*

**How do you prioritise wellness when you're focused on studying?** Prioritising your wellbeing as a student can be a difficult balancing act. As busy students we can often keep pushing and stretching our limited time and energy over several different areas of our lives. We end up becoming so caught up in our own deadlines and activities that our wellness drifts to the bottom of our growing to-do list.

The trick to prioritising wellness in our chaotic lives is incorporating wellness in the form of a daily or weekly habit. Each of us will have our own wellbeing activity, whether it's reading a book, going for a walk or meditation. If we can ensure that we put aside half an hour each day for this at a moment that slots into our timetable, eventually it will become a habitual behaviour.

**What's the most important thing to remember when it comes to your own wellness and that of your classmates as you face end of year exams and assessments?** The most important thing is to ensure you don't neglect yourself when you are in a high-pressure environment such as facing daunting assessments. It's easy to say you won't go to the gym or to skip some sleep when you're stressed and studying is the only thing on your mind. The key is to remember that if you're not at your best, then your performance is more than likely not at its best. A balance of eating well, exercising and having adequate sleep will make sure you can achieve some quality study and also deliver a quality performance when it comes to crunch time.

**What's been happening in the medical faculty over winter?** Winter has been yet another busy quarter for us. We proudly announced the EFTS extension to 10EFTS, which has been a long-term goal for our association;

we confirmed the new student representative on the NZMA board, we completed our submission for the Zero Carbon Bill, and we continued to deliver some outstanding events in the form of our annual sports exchange and the clinical leadership forum. Our AGM also introduced the incoming 2019 executive team. Once again thank you to MAS for your ongoing support; bring on the longer days and warmer weather.

## Alisdair Eddie

*President / Massey University Veterinary Students' Association*

**How do you prioritise wellness when you're focused on studying?** This is always a tricky one around exam time. The pressure is on, stress levels go through the roof, and you see colds and flu sweep through the Vet School. It's really easy to become completely single minded and focused on study, study, study.

So it's at this time that it's even more important to remind yourself to eat properly (not just study snacks), get enough sleep (not pulling all-nighters) and do something other than study. The last one can be hard to justify, timewise, and is often associated with feelings of guilt about not studying, but for me I find I'm happier if I've taken the time to exercise. For others it's going to the stress-buster events on campus like puppy cuddles, getting out for a coffee, or even retail therapy.

**What's the most important thing to remember when it comes to your own wellness and that of your classmates as you face end of year exams and assessments?** We all need to be mindful of the fact that we're all pretty stressed, and tensions can be running high.

Jibi Kunnethedam



Alisdair Eddie



Charlotte Kenny



Checking in on each other and treating each other more kindly are key at this time of the year.

Use your support networks. The vet students have a Vet Wellbeing Initiative group to provide support and a means to anonymously vent. Massey also provides some great services, and we're lucky in the veterinary degree to get lectures and workshops on managing stress.

**What's been happening in the veterinary faculty over winter?** Years two to four got a well-deserved break post exams, while the fifth years passed their 200 days to go milestone, so freedom is just around the corner for them. In a similar vein the third years headed off a weekend in July for Halfway Day to celebrate in style for reaching the halfway point in their degree.

Our new intake of first years began their professional phase of the degree in July. The inaugural Green Overall ceremony was held to welcome them to the vet profession. Now it's all hands back on deck as we ramp up the second semester and start looking forward to summer.

## Charlotte Kenny

*President / New Zealand Dental Students' Association*

**How do you prioritise wellness when you're focused on studying?** I make sure I get enough sleep, eat well, and keep active. Doing these three things not only aids my physical wellbeing but also my mental health, providing me with the energy and resilience to tackle my next challenge.

The best way to manage my busy workload is to keep a schedule, and my diary is always within arm's reach. During my week I make sure I timetable opportunities

to catch up with my social and support networks. These people keep me grounded and make sure I don't take myself too seriously.

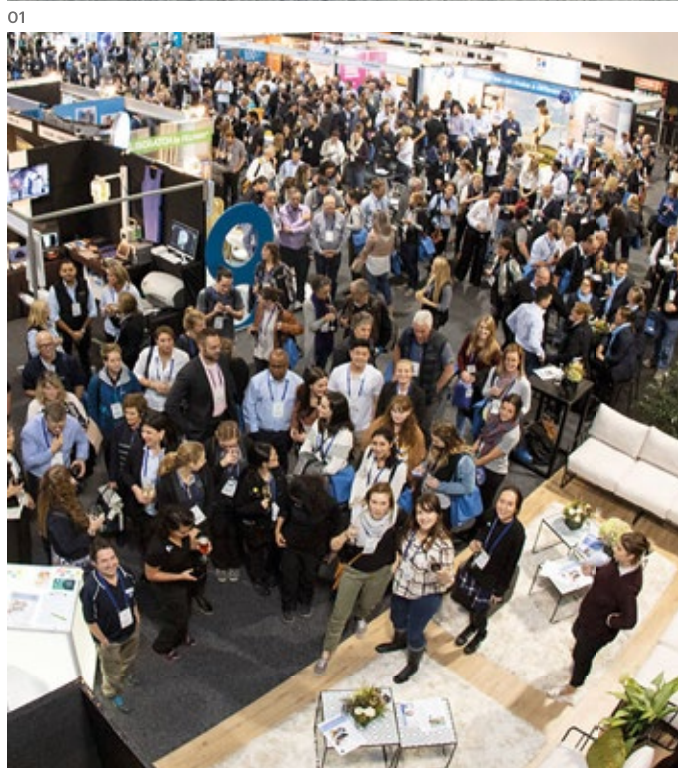
**What's the most important thing to remember when it comes to your own wellness and that of your classmates as you face end of year exams and assessments?** A demanding course such as dentistry can lead to stress and anxiety. Stress is a normal part of life, so it is important to recognise how you react to it and when you are reaching your tipping point. It pays to have some self-care tools under your belt that you can employ in this type of situation, although already having good habits and self-care, year round, can head off trouble before it starts.

At the end of the day, realise that you are more than just a student and your trials and tribulations during university do not define you. Reflect on your diversity as an individual and employ it to look after your hauora (health & wellbeing).

**What's been happening in the dental faculty over winter?** To promote a good work-life balance the NZDSA has hosted a number of events, ranging from its first ever Cultural Night featuring a food festival and talent show, to the annual Dental Ball. At the most recent Staff and Student Drinks we awarded the winners of the 2018 Colgate IADR NZ Section Poster Competition for student research, and we are now looking forward to such events as the Dent Ski Trip and infamous Dental Revue. We would like to thank MAS for its continued sponsorship, which allows us to host such an array of events throughout the year. ♥

Visit [hub.mas.co.nz](https://hub.mas.co.nz) for more advice for students, such as how to juggle responsibilities and keep a positive mindset.





## NZ Veterinary Association

More than 1,100 people attended the New Zealand Veterinary Association Mega-Conference, to see some of the changes facing the industry over the next few years. Along with talks, workshops and networking events at the conference – held in Hamilton in June – there were displays from companies and organisations working within the veterinary sector. MAS was at the conference showcasing the ways it supports its NZVA Members.

- 01 / Four-legged friends joined the veterinary audience
- 02 / More than 1,100 people attended the annual conference
- 03 / The conference is a chance to mix and mingle
- 04 / A vet explores how VR will be used in the industry
- 05 / Brittany Hanff from Animates VetCare Group
- 06 / NZVA President Peter Blaikie (left) and Pieter Verhoek
- 07 / Delegates enjoy some entertainment







# Loving the carless days

A Wellington MAS Member has sold her family car and is living a carless lifestyle as she brings up three small children – and loving every minute of it.

01 / Sarena riding through Wellington streets with Helene (left) and Finn-Oskar  
02 / (from left) Sven-Aksel, Sarena, Finn-Oskar and Helene on a biking holiday

01

Wellington chiropractor Sarena Sypher's journey to a carless lifestyle began when she put her back out on the beach on a family holiday in Tonga a year ago.

"I was pulling a lounge across the sand on the beach and suddenly I felt a zing. I ended up spending the holiday lying on a bed, which was actually good enforced rest in the end," she says.

When she returned to Wellington with her husband Dan Mikkelsen and their three children, she found she couldn't sit in a car for prolonged periods without terrible pain returning, but riding her bike stretched out her back and eased the pain.

So she resolved to change her life permanently. She decided not to drive the car again, bought an e-bike that could

transport her three children, and began her new life without a car.

"I love living like this. I was fearful before because I thought it would be too much hard work. But now I really enjoy riding to work every day and coming home. It's that little release of endorphins and release of stress and energy," she says.

Sarena's decision was music to husband Dan's ears. He was brought up on a bike by an intrepid single mother in the 1980's so the carless lifestyle seemed the normal way to live. He'd been gently encouraging Sarena to go carless for a number of years.

"You have to make a decision as a family to do it. If it's just going to be one person's adventure then no one's going to have a very good time," he says.

Adventure is a word the couple use a lot to describe their new life.

"When you decide to live carless, the idea of getting from one place to another becomes an adventure in itself. We'll take the kids to swimming practice on the bikes and then they'll decide they want to run across the fields all the way home," says Dan.

Sarena says the quality of time they spend with their children has improved exponentially.

"It's easier to say yes to life's little adventures when you're on a bike because you're right there."

"How many times are you in your car and the kids go 'can we stop at that playground?' and you say 'I can't be bothered finding

a parking spot'. But now we actually do stop. The kids play for maybe fifteen minutes then we move on."

Sarena says even the way she shops for food has changed.

"Before, we used to run errands with the kids – we'd pack them in the car and take them to their gym class or whatever and then on the way home we'd stop and do our big grocery shop once a week. Now we'll just stop in and fill our bags two or three times a week. So there's more time for the kids on the weekends."

The couple even go on holiday by bike. In February they spent a week in the Marlborough Sounds, riding their bikes from home to the Cook Strait Ferry, then to stay with friends in Kenepuru Sound.

"Our nine-year-old rode 65 kms on that trip. He was so proud of himself," says Sarena.

Sarena says having her beloved e-bike has been crucial to making the lifestyle possible for her.

"Having an e-bike is really important to me. I had a regular bike before and I could get up all the hills, but it was hard work and it took fitness. With this electric bike I know I'm fitter because I'm not catching my breath when I'm running up the stairs, but I haven't had to work really hard for it.

"It means I'm not going to wake up in the morning and go 'I have to work late tonight I'm not going to feel like riding so I'll take the car'. Now it's like 'I'll just ride and I know I'll get a little help on the way home'," she says.

A lifestyle like this could be seen as a highly political act, but Sarena is quick to note that they don't have any point to make other than quality of life.

"It's not like we're anti-car. We're doing this to get more out of life." ♥

**It's easier to say yes to life's little adventures when you're on a bike, because you're right there.**



02



# fizzy brews

alcohol  
alternative

Something's brewing in Helensville. Fizzy concoctions of fermented tea mixed with organic flavourings have filled the space previously occupied in an old butchery.

**THE KOMBUCHERY** is New Zealand's first kombucha taproom serving Mama's Brew Shop kombucha. Liv McGregor and Rene Schliebs established the brew shop to offer alternatives to alcohol, an area dominated by ultra sweet, artificially flavoured sodas. In comparison, Mama's Brew Shop kombucha is raw, organic and crafted without any additives or sweeteners like stevia.

The pair began brewing out of a small garage and selling at farmers markets before ramping up production at the Commercial Road site. Rene is a medical herbalist and qualified nutritionist and this background has allowed her to develop the flavours of their offerings such as Love, a blend of lavender, rosehip, hibiscus and Heilala vanilla; and Warrior, mixed with lemongrass, ginger, thyme and turmeric.

"The reaction to our kombucha has been better than we could have imagined. Our flavours are very unique, and we only use herbs and spices, rather than fruit or juice. This has been instrumental in capturing a more grown-up market in a night-time space," Liv says.

They've recently signed to a national distributor, so are busier than ever keeping up with demand across the country, as well as creating some new products coming out in the next few months, she says. ♥



## Why not try

Kombucha has been around for more than two millennia and is known as the 'immortal health elixir' by the Chinese. It's said to offer health benefits to your heart, brain and gut due to its high concentration of probiotics (although science hasn't yet backed up many of the claims). It's made by fermenting tea using a SCOBY (Symbiotic Culture of Bacteria and Yeast), a gelatinous mass of bacteria and yeast which turns tea water and sugar into a fizzy concoction – and looks like it's ready to colonise earth, creating more and more baby SCOBYs each week. Many commercially sold kombucha ranges are high in sugar, but those into getting funky in their own kitchen should source a SCOBY, and start making it themselves to keep the sugar content low.



## In season

**LUSH GREEN ASPARAGUS SPEARS** on supermarket shelves are the surest sign spring has sprung. Asparagus season is short and sweet, so best to gobble as many as you can before summer hits and they disappear. Fresh asparagus spears, a good source of folate, vitamin c and potassium – are squeaky when rubbed together, with a sharp snap when you break or cut off the woody ends. Store upright in a jar in the fridge with a little water in the bottom to preserve their freshness.

For those who experience the asparagus pee smell, it's caused by the asparagusic acid emitting sulphur-containing compounds. Curiously, for reasons scientists can't yet explain, between 20 and 40 per cent of the population either can't smell it or don't produce the smell, so if that's you, go spare on asparagus this spring.

**GRILL** on the barbeque or in the oven after coating with extra virgin olive oil and plenty of salt and pepper. Let them char for a few minutes before drizzling with more oil and a squeeze of fresh lemon juice.

**DON'T WASTE** the woody ends. They're packed with flavour and can be used to flavour a cream-based pasta sauce or whip up some asparagus ends soup.



## Feeding your brain

People talk about brain food, but what is it and why is it important?

For the cells in your brain to work efficiently they need calcium, sodium, potassium, the right balance of saturated and unsaturated fats, and glucose. These come from your diet.

Our blood sugar levels are determined by the food we eat. Unstable blood sugar levels (too high, too low, or spiking then dropping) compromises fuel to your brain, meaning it won't function properly. Stable blood sugar means balanced healthy brain chemistry and prevents neurodegeneration.

That means sustaining yourself on caffeine, sugar, and lots of carbohydrates isn't the most effective for study as it prevents your brain from functioning at its optimal levels. In all likelihood you'll become sleepy, irritable, and have poor memory. Not a recipe for success.

For healthier food choices, use ingredients such as oily fish,



avocados, green veggies and nuts or seeds in your salads and breakfast smoothies. Snacks such as boiled eggs, cashew nuts, or carrot sticks are easy to carry around and will sustain you longer than chips.

**On the run?** Instead of a burger, grab salmon and avocado sushi. Avocado has good fats and the oils in salmon are great for your brain. And if you carry around a bottle of water, you will be less likely to go to a vending machine and be tempted by sugary, caffeinated drinks.

**Eating at home?** Throw out those two-minute noodles, and choose a healthy and cost-effective meal that won't bog your brain down or totally strip your pockets. Aim for things like tuna, spinach, apple and walnut salad or quinoa cheese with broccoli and cauliflower.





## Quick Qs

For 10 years Kaibosh has been working in Wellington to redistribute surplus food. General Manager Matt Dagger explains how it all works.

**What is Kaibosh?** Kaibosh Food Rescue was the first food rescue organisation in New Zealand. Operating in Wellington and Hutt City, it rescues quality surplus food, diverting it from landfills and making sure it reaches those in the community who need it most. Each month we rescue about 20,000kg of quality surplus food – that's the equivalent of 60,000 meals provided to those who need it most – as well as a 15,500kg reduction in carbon emissions.

### Why was it established?

Healthy, nutritious food is the most basic daily requirement for physical wellness and yet many living in New Zealand communities are going without. This is at a time when food waste continues to be an environmental and social challenge. We wanted to redistribute quality surplus food to minimise waste and help those in need. Kaibosh started in 2008 and we're celebrating our 10th anniversary next month.

**What kind of need is there for services like Kaibosh?** Many in the Wellington community rely on drop-in centres, food banks and a range of other services to meet their most basic daily food requirements. Without Kaibosh's help, these services would have to spend considerable amounts of money and time sourcing and purchasing food for people in need, even though thousands of kilograms of quality surplus food are needlessly discarded every day.

### What should people do to help?

Become a Kaibosh Food Rescue Hero! Donate food, time or money to help us rescue and redistribute food to people in need. It's only because of the generosity of others that we're able to do our work. We'd love your support! Also check out what's happening in your local community, there are other food rescue organisations around New Zealand doing incredible work. For more information visit [kaibosh.org.nz](http://kaibosh.org.nz)



01



02



03

01 / A Kaibosh volunteer sorts boxes for charity  
02 / The Kaibosh Food Rescue truck collecting surplus food for redistribution  
03 / Kaibosh is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year



# If you want to go places, it's time you looked the part.

Talk to us today about our MAS Member special rate of 8.50% p.a.\* for Vehicle Finance Loans.

Talk to our dedicated team today on **0800 627 722**.

**\*Subject to change throughout the life of the loan.**

Available to MAS Members for personal vehicle purchases only. MAS receives a commission from Westpac upon the drawdown of any new loan. Interest rate current as at 1 August 2018 and subject to change without notice. Lending criteria, terms, conditions, fees and charges apply.

Westpac New Zealand Limited.

It's time.





# In review

Book reviews by Sarah Chandler



## FOREVER35 — PODCAST

Hosted by Kate Spencer and Doree Shafrir  
forever35podcast.com

As we are reminded at the beginning of each episode, Kate Spencer and Doree Shafrir aren’t experts; they’re just two friends who like to talk about serums. *Forever35* is a podcast about all things self-care. Hosted by Spencer and Shafrir, both freelance writers with a penchant for face masks and to-do lists, the bi-weekly podcast explores the things we do to take care of ourselves: everything from meal planning and scheduling time away from children and partners, to their favourite new skin care product or nightly ritual. But they don’t shy away from the hard stuff: they’ve been open with discussing their issues with mental health, anxiety, grief and fertility, and each week they answer listeners’ questions as well as inviting guests to talk about their self-care methods. Listening to their gentle voices is arguably a self-care act in itself.



## MOMENT — APP

Available on iOS

Many of us want to spend less time on our smartphones, but that can be easier said than done. *Moment* can help you get this under control. The app measures your usage, recording the overall usage, which apps were most popular and how many times a day you picked up your phone. These numbers are compared daily, and *Moment* will give you an idea about how much of your waking life was spent on your phone. Warning: this can be alarming. *Moment* can help coach you to use your phone less; you can set daily limits and be notified – or even forced off your device – when you hit it. There’s also an option to monitor family use (good if you’re trying to limit children’s consumption). And if you want a phone-free family dinner, you can set a 60-minute freeze on everyone’s phones.



## ON CHESIL BEACH — MOVIE

Directed by Dominic Cooke / In cinemas now

*Lady Bird* actor Saoirse Ronan stars in another adaptation of an Ian McEwan novel. After making her breakthrough in *Atonement*, she this time stars alongside Billy Howle in *On Chesil Beach*, based on the Booker Prize-nominated novella. The early 1960s claustrophobic, unsettling domestic tale centres around newlyweds Florence and Edward preparing for their first night together as man and wife on a beach in Dorset. The stunning sparse and untouched coastal vistas and awkward intimate scenes are juxtaposed with flashbacks to their lives leading up to this moment. *On Chesil Beach* explores what love means and how decisions made in a moment can affect your life for years to come.



## AFTER KATHY ACKER

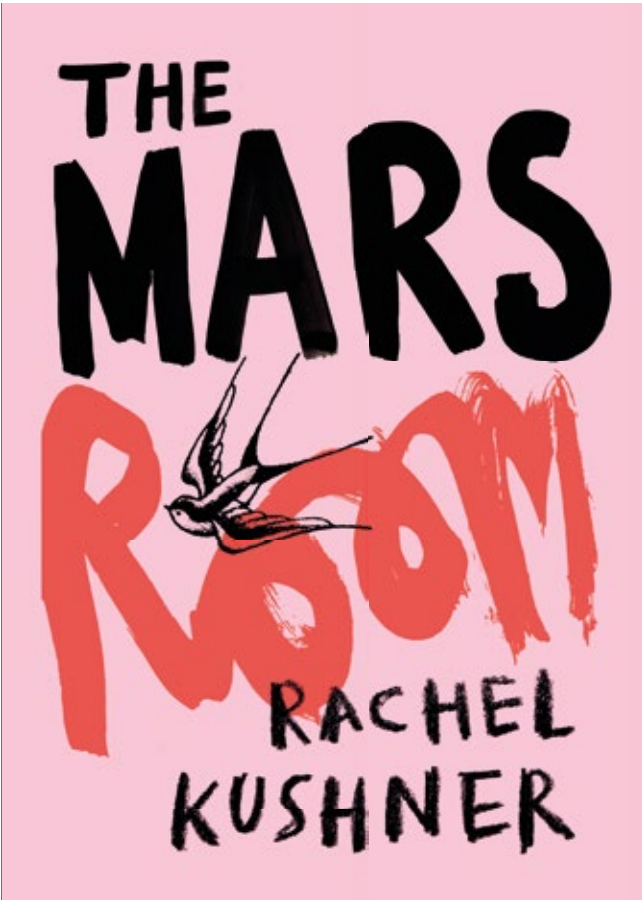
by Chris Kraus  
Allen Lane / RRP \$28.00

This Kathy Acker sounds like one out of the box. Dead at age 50 from breast cancer, she seems to have fit more into her half century on the planet (she died in 1994) than most people manage in a full lifetime. Chris Kraus (*I Love Dick*) is well placed to write this biography, since she and Acker were both part of the New York counter-culture scene and had many mutual friends and acquaintances. Vulnerable, sensual, intellectual, idealistic, ambitious – the so-called ‘post-punk princess’ Kathy Acker was evidently a mass of complexities and contradictions. Kraus doesn’t make much of a case for her subject as a brilliant writer, but she has produced a thorough portrait of Acker as an avant-garde icon whose myth continues to resonate twenty years after her death.

## YOU THINK IT, I’LL SAY IT

by Curtis Sittenfeld  
Penguin Books / RRP \$37.00

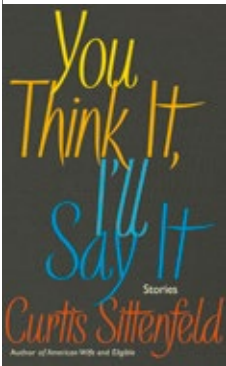
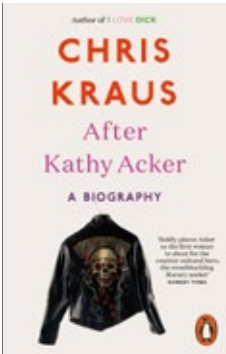
What a fantastic collection of stories this is. In her first foray into short fiction, the author of *American Wife* and *Eligible* has produced ten sharp, often funny snapshots of contemporary life featuring well-drawn characters who misinterpret each other’s motives, and who are usually deceiving themselves. From the mismatched pair playing the ‘You Think It, I’ll Say It’ game at parties to the long-term connection between a woman presidential candidate and a political journalist, Sittenfeld skilfully explores how we habitually make assumptions about others, and how we are very often wrong.



## THE MARS ROOM

by Rachel Kushner  
Jonathan Cape / RRP \$37.00

*The Mars Room* – the “very seediest” of San Francisco strip clubs – is the former workplace of Romy Hall, the novel’s narrator. When we first encounter the 29-year-old single mother she’s being relocated to Stanville Correctional Facility, where she is to serve two life sentences for the murder of a client. As Romy reflects on growing up on the roughest of San Francisco streets, we can infer that a combination of childhood neglect, drug addiction and abuse has propelled her towards the hopeless situation in which she now finds herself. Her court-appointed lawyer is useless and judges are unsympathetic. There is, Romy says, no point trying to pinpoint a particular moment when her life went off the rails: “What rails. The life is the rails. It is its own rails and it goes where it goes. It cuts its own path.” Rachel Kushner (who also wrote the acclaimed novels *Telex from Cuba* and *The Flamethrowers*) spent several years volunteering at women’s prisons, and by all accounts has an excellent understanding of California’s justice system. Kushner has executed *The Mars Room* with a great deal of style and empathy, reminding readers that the concept of choice is often illusory for those who have few options from the start.



**Sittenfeld skilfully explores how we habitually make assumptions about others, and how we are very often wrong.**





# Our commitment

At MAS, we're committed to doing what we can to make a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of future generations of New Zealanders, and to a sustainable future.

It's why we've implemented a socially responsible investing approach across \$1.6 billion of superannuation funds and insurance reserves and do not invest in the manufacture and sale of armaments, tobacco, or the exploration, extraction, refining and processing fossil fuels.

Talk to us about our socially responsible Retirement Savings and KiwiSaver plans today by calling **0800 800 627** or visit **[mas.co.nz](https://mas.co.nz)**

