

Rebuilding  
Christchurch for  
Mental Health  
& Wellbeing

# A FLOURISHING ŌTAUTAHI





**The Mental Health Foundation works to create a society where all people flourish.**

**Christchurch has a unique opportunity to make decisions regarding the recovery that can have a significant impact on mental health and wellbeing for everyone.**

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**When someone is flourishing they experience interest and engagement in life, a sense of meaning, purpose and positive emotions most of the time. Resilience, positive relationships, vitality, self-determination, self-esteem, and optimism are also features of flourishing.**

Meaning, purpose, interest, engagement and positive emotions are core features of flourishing



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## Flourishing

Flourishing is a state where people experience positive psychological and social functioning and positive emotions most of the time. Flourishing is not just a simple measure of happiness, life satisfaction or positive thinking. It requires development of character strengths and virtues that are common to many cultures.

While addressing mental health goes some way to increase levels of flourishing, well thought out social policies are also necessary.

The benefits of a flourishing society include fewer days off work, better social relationships, lower risk of cardiovascular disease, lower number of chronic physical diseases associated with ageing, fewer health limitations and lower health care needs.

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## Wellbeing

The Mental Health Foundation promotes a holistic understanding of health and wellbeing. Te Whare Tapa Whā – incorporating psychological, spiritual, physical and family health – is a widely used and elegantly simple Māori understanding of health that can be applied in any cultural context in New Zealand.

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## Reducing Inequalities

For society to flourish, activities which support positive mental health and resilience must be made available to all. Flourishing requires certain positive qualities in one's life to be cultivated, and social and political environments must be organised to enable this. Studies indicate that in countries comparable to New Zealand, only a small number of people are flourishing. Poverty and social exclusion are inextricably linked to ill health and are priorities to tackle for the development of a strong recovery and a flourishing city.



The Mental Health Foundation acknowledges the Integrated Recovery Planning Guide for a healthy, sustainable and resilient future, developed by Community and Public Health, Canterbury District Health Board and Christchurch City Council. Considering this and each of the five environments of the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) Recovery Strategy, with regard to mental health and wellbeing, the following should be priorities.

For society as a whole to flourish, activities which support building positive mental health and resilience must be made available to all.



## Flourishing in the:

### Natural Environment

- Opportunities to spend time in nature and access to green spaces
- Transport redevelopment including safe multiple use options (cycling, walking, public transport)
- A city layout that promotes being active
- All rebuilding (housing or infrastructure) should have a low impact on the natural environment
- Better recycling and reuse of resources
- Reclaim damaged land for restoration of natural environments
- Green streets

### Social Environment

- An environment where people are enabled to reach their full potential and lead fulfilling lives
- Diversity and equal opportunity
- Accessibility and response to the needs of all marginalised groups

- A society of 'giving' that promotes community participation and active citizenship
- A Whānau Ora approach to service delivery
- Opportunities for people and communities to connect
- Community-led development, from street-level to the region

### Built Environment

- Affordable, low-density housing and mixed tenure
- Warm, dry housing
- Access to community facilities and social hubs
- Safe, well-lit areas
- Sustainable developments are seen as more important than short-term financial considerations
- Community participation in design of new developments
- Spacious, creatively designed public buildings
- Safe play areas

### Economic Environment

- Recovery progress measured with Genuine Progress Indicators
- Better income equality
- Employment opportunities
- Promotion of local economies and business
- Encourage and promote social entrepreneurship
- The value and growth of 'social capital', or social relations with productive benefits
- Promotion of alternative economic models (e.g. Timebanks) as repositories of social capital

### Cultural Environment

- A bi-cultural approach, based on Te Tiriti O Waitangi
- An opportunity for the expression of the stories, history and culture of Ngāi Tahu mana whenua
- Expressions of all the cultures and ethnicities that make up the diversity of Christchurch are valued and promoted

- The arts and creative sector are valued and resourced as important drivers of community recovery and flourishing
- Opportunities to access arts, culture and heritage for all
- Well-resourced and accessible libraries and archive facilities for learning and connectedness
- Sports and recreation (through activities, facilities and community-based clubs) are accessible to all to support active lifestyles and participation
- Heritage places, memorials and commemorative sites provides opportunities for reflection and connection to culture and identity

### Contact us



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