VOICES OF HOPE

Media Kit
Voices of Hope aims to create and implement change for mental health while spreading hope through the voices of those with lived experience. We aim to provide a safe place for people facing mental health challenges, so they can feel inspired, supported and empowered.
At Voices of Hope, we believe in the power of sharing your lived experience to create positive change. Our storytelling platform exists to bring better understanding of mental health challenges, promote help-seeking behaviours and useful resources, and ultimately spread hope. Voices of Hope (VoH), a mental health charity, was founded in 2017 by Genevieve Mora and Jazz Thornton, individuals who have personally battled mental illness. Using their past experiences and their passion for content creation, they built a new narrative around mental health. Over the years, VoH has grown into a community of people around Aotearoa and the world, who contribute to the ever evolving mental health conversation. Our aim is to inspire and educate others, fostering empathy and understanding around mental health.
Genevieve Mora spent most of her teenage years battling Mental Illness. As part of her recovery she has made it her mission to offer hope to those fighting mental illness. Genevieve co-founded Voices of Hope and through this uses her lived experience to show people that recovery is possible and that there is no shame in having a mental illness. Genevieve is the author of ‘Bite Back – a compassionate guide to navigating Eating Disorders’ and is the co-creator of Love your Kite, a global eating disorder resource app. Alongside Jazz she was named in 2023 Forbes 30 under 30 Asia and uses the power of social media to advocate and meet people where they are.

Having overcome childhood adversity and multiple suicide attempts, Jazz Thornton has now dedicated her life to speaking hope and creating change in the area of mental health. Jazz co-founded Voices of Hope and her unique experience and practical message has gained worldwide recognition, being shared through media, international speaking engagements and through documentary feature film, The Girl on the Bridge (directed by Leaane Pooley). Jazz is also the award-winning director of Jessica’s Tree and author of Stop Surviving Start Fighting, My Journey Starts Here and Letters to You. She also won the 2021 Young New Zealander of the Year award, was the winner of 2022 Dancing with the Stars and alongside Genevieve, she was named in 2023 Forbes 30 under 30 Asia.
Chris is a lawyer with extensive experience practicing in both private and public sector organisations and in governance roles for not for profit entities in New Zealand. He is committed to seeing Voices of Hope develop and grow its reach to make a genuine difference to people of all backgrounds by spreading a message of hope and advocating for change.

Stephanie is a General Practitioner who has worked in primary care for over 20 years. Stephanie is passionate about shaping the future of mental health care in New Zealand and has both the enthusiasm and experience to ensure that the Voices of Hope can continue to give hope to those that are struggling. Stephanie is also a mother of three, a Director of Genpro (General Practice Owners Association of NZ) and the Clinical Director of the medical division of Green Cross Health.

Wayne is an international multi-award winning music producer, director of an Auckland performing Arts School, and an ordained pastor who has been caring for people of all ages for over 30 years. He is passionate about the mission of Voices of Hope, about mental health and seeing this generation of NZers rise to an unprecedented level of hope, life and wellness.

Kirsten (known as KP) is the Chief Executive of the Institute of Directors. She is a lawyer and a Distinguished Fellow of Human Resources. KP is actively involved in supporting not-for-profit governance and is a Board Member of the New Zealand Rugby Foundation and Wellington Homeless Women’s Trust. KP is a mother of two and is passionate about teen mental health. She is committed to helping Voices of Hope provide love and hope to young people across New Zealand and the world.
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

WHAT’S YOUR MESSAGE TO SOMEONE STRUGGLING?

GEN: Fighting a battle with your mind is incredibly hard; so I want to start by saying I see you, and I am so proud of you for waking up every day and continuing to fight, no matter how impossible it feels. Healing takes time, and it’s a linear journey, so please be kind to yourself. You are not an exception to healing, and the world is truly a better place with you in it. You can do this. I believe in you. One step at a time.

JAZZ: Hope is real and change is possible. I believe in you and the world matters to me. Waking up each day is the most significant thing I’ve ever done. It’s simply the fact that I’m happy and now able to help others.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO HAVE OPEN CONVERSATIONS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH?

JAZZ: There is often a lot of fear around discussing mental health, especially the fear of saying the wrong thing. However, it’s crucial to remember that asking someone if they’re struggling doesn’t make them struggle; it simply opens the door for them to talk about it. People who are struggling often just want to feel like they can reach out, but they may need someone else to take the first step and ask, “Hey are you okay?” Don’t worry about getting an idea in their head—you’re just showing that you care and are willing to listen.

GEN: For me, battling mental illness came with a lot of shame due to the stigma surrounding it. At Voices of Hope, we combat this by sharing people’s lived experiences through storytelling, creating a safe space for others to do the same. This is a powerful tool because it helps people feel less alone in their struggles and encourages them to open up rather than fight by themselves. It’s crucial to find someone you trust and to be there to listen if your friends are struggling. While it’s not easy, it’s an incredibly rewarding journey.

JAZZ, THINKING BACK TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF, WHAT DO YOU THINK SHE WOULD THINK OF ALL THAT YOU’VE ACCOMPLISHED, WOULD SHE BELIEVE YOU?

JAZZ: Absolutely not—she would laugh in your face. We have spent time visiting people in the psychiatric wards, many young people, and often, it feels like I’m looking at a reflection of myself. The way they express themselves, it’s exactly how I used to talk. What we’re able to accomplish now is truly remarkable, and the opportunities are astounding. But what truly matters to me is waking up each day with a sense of love for my life, feeling happy and excited for the future. That’s more significant to me than anything else. And being able to share this perspective with someone who’s struggling, is incredibly special. That’s why I can confidently say that, regardless of the challenges you’re facing, hope is real. If you could ask the nurses who cared for me back then, they would tell you about the deep, dark place I was in, where I was certain that things would never change. I was trapped in that cycle. But now, looking back, I would have never believed that I could reach this point of happiness. It’s not about my achievements or hobbies like dancing; it’s simply the fact that I’m happy and now able to help others.

WHAT ARE SOME EARLY WARNING SIGNS THAT SOMEONE MAY BE STRUGGLING?

JAZZ: It’s really hard as everyone is so different, but there are some key warning signs like starting to isolate or disassociate, enjoying things less that used to excite you. Personally I started sleeping a lot as it was the only time my mind got a break. In my opinion, the most significant action we can take is to proactively engage in conversations with our friends. By doing so, we create an environment where individuals feeling distressed feel comfortable discussing their feelings before they escalate into a crisis.

WHAT ARE VOICES OF HOPE’S HOPES AND GOALS? WHAT’S NEXT ON THE AGENDA FOR VOICES OF HOPE?

GEN: We aim to remain a platform that empowers people with lived experiences to share their stories and help others in the process. Our goal is to continue creating meaningful, impactful campaigns that reduce stigma and ultimately drive change but on an even larger scale.

JAZZ: I love directing and helping people share their stories in a safe and inspiring way so one of our big goals is to do this on a more regular basis as we know the impact is huge!

WHAT HAS THE EXPERIENCE BEEN LIKE SHARING YOUR STORY AND BEING A MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCATE?

GEN: I felt a lot of shame for what I went through, and I struggled to talk about it even after I recovered. Taking the vulnerable step to open up through Voices of Hope was difficult, but I did it because I knew it would help others. This experience made me realize I wasn’t alone—many people are fighting battles we know nothing about. Sharing my story not only helped others but also allowed me to find closure for what I went through. I took back control instead of letting shame control me. Now, I can proudly say, “Yes, I’ve been through this, and I’m proud to be a survivor of mental illness.” Through this journey, I’ve met incredible people, and every day we receive messages from individuals thanking us for sharing our stories. They tell us it made them feel safe to share their own.

HOW DO YOU LOOK AFTER YOURSELF?

JAZZ: I love spending time with my dog, taking her for walks, and hanging out with my friends and flatmates. I really value alone time and, when I’m watching a good TV show, it’s a great way to recharge. Therapy is also important to me, as having someone to talk to makes a real difference in my well-being.

GEN: Self-care is incredibly important to me, and I’ve learned to prioritise my own well-being. Now that I have a healthy relationship with exercise, moving my body helps me stay well and focused. Throughout my journey, I’ve also learned the importance of asking for help when I need it. Whenever I start to feel overwhelmed, I reach out for support. Setting boundaries has been crucial as well, ensuring I dedicate time each day just for myself.

LEARN MORE ABOUT JAZZ AND HER STORY IN HER BOOK:

STOP SURVIVING, START FIGHTING

LEARN MORE ABOUT GEN AND HER STORY IN HER BOOK:

BITE BACK
**FAQS**

**WHERE DO MY DONATIONS GO?**

**SHARING LIVED EXPERIENCE STORIES:**
Donations help us produce and share powerful stories of lived experiences related to mental health challenges. These stories create awareness, reduce stigma, and provide hope and inspiration to individuals facing similar struggles.

**FUNDING MEDIA PROJECTS:**
We use donations to fund media projects, including video productions, podcast episodes, and written content. These projects allow us to reach a wider audience and provide valuable resources and support to those in need.

**ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT:**
A portion of donations goes towards essential administrative functions, such as managing our website, organising events, coordinating campaigns, and ensuring smooth operations. These administrative efforts are vital in enabling us to continue our work effectively.

**COMMUNITY SUPPORT:**
Your donations contribute to initiatives that support the mental health community. This may include funding workshops, support groups, educational events, and resources for individuals seeking help and guidance.

**GROWTH AND EXPANSION:**
Donations help us expand our reach and impact. They support efforts to improve our online presence, develop new programs, and collaborate with other organisations, all aimed at providing hope and support to more people struggling with mental health challenges.

**HOW ELSE CAN I SUPPORT VOICES OF HOPE?**

**SHARE OUR CONTENT:**
By sharing our content on social media platforms, you can help spread our message of hope and raise awareness about mental health challenges. Sharing our posts, videos, and articles allows more people to access the valuable resources and insights we provide.

**ENGAGE WITH OUR CONTENT:**
Interacting with our content by liking, commenting, and subscribing to our channels helps boost visibility and reach. Your engagement signals to others that our content is valuable and worth exploring, encouraging them to join the conversation.

**REFER OTHERS TO VOICES OF HOPE:**
If you know someone who could benefit from our resources, direct them to our website or social media platforms. Encourage them to explore the content and find support through our community.

**DONATE FINANCIALLY:**
Contributions play a vital role in enabling us to continue our work and expand our reach. Consider making a donation to support our media projects, events, and initiatives aimed at fostering hope and empowerment.

To find out more about how you can get involved and support Voices of Hope, please visit our website. There, you’ll find detailed information about various opportunities, including volunteering, fundraising, and collaborating with us to make a positive impact in the mental health community.
Media

For more of our notable media coverage, including links, quotes, and excerpts from news articles, interviews, and features, please visit our website - [MEDIA](http://www.thevoicesofhope.org).

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