

## **Honoured artist's music key to mental wellbeing**

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The Mental Health Foundation is delighted that Mahinarangi Tocker has been appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the Queen's New Year Honours 2008, for her services to music.

Mahinarangi, who alongside other famous New Zealand faces featured in the very first Like Minds, Like Mine TV ads, now works at the Mental Health Foundation as a Like Minds, Like Mine project worker, helping to reduce the stigma and discrimination of mental illness.

Judi Clements, Chief Executive of the Mental Health Foundation says: "We are thrilled that Mahinarangi's positive contribution to New Zealand's music has been recognised with this honour. We are also delighted that Mahinarangi is part of the Foundation's whanau. Her talents as an artist are matched by a passion for eliminating the discrimination often experienced by people with experience of mental illness. Her willingness to use her own experiences in a frank and honest way is exemplary."

Mahinarangi Tocker says: "Music making and word play is a huge part of my everyday life and the safest therapy for me to immerse myself in as a way to wear my experiences of mental distress. Music has helped me to keep my negative thoughts as just that, thoughts. It's a good feeling for me.

"Sound and music has always been my favourite way to communicate. I love how music can create self-understanding and therefore lead to kinder communication with people who come into my life."

Judi Clements adds: "When recovering from mental illness it is important that people find an approach that suits them. There are many options that can be beneficial including medication, talking therapies, physical activity, ensuring you have a well-balanced diet and taking the time to do the things that are important to you - as Mahinarangi has shown us through her music."



Mahinarangi Tocker - holding Te Hira Moewaka Kake (now 8 years old) - featured in the first Like Minds TV ads.

**ENDS**

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