



MEET JOURNEY KAHUKURANUI



At the beginning of 2014 sixteen year old Journey had dropped out of school, was in and out of court and had a difficult home life with two alcoholic parents. All he could see was a future in a gang.

However, Linda Pye Assistant Principal at Taita College in Lower Hutt did not see a young man without hope. She saw a young man with untapped potential. Linda encouraged Journey to return to school and consider taking part in Outward Bound's Strive course, one of seven regional fully funded programmes offered to students of our partner schools.

It wasn't an easy decision for Journey. "I was scared this was something way too different for me. I was like, man can I do this? But I trusted Miss Pye, so I agreed to go to Outward Bound."

"On my first week I hated it, I come from a background where no one has taught me how to have respect. I was ignorant, I didn't listen, I didn't want to get up early, I didn't want to do PT, and I didn't like anyone telling me what to do. But in week two it all changed. Our watch started doing team building games with the other watches and we were one of the best. We bonded and started calling each other brother and sister and trusting each other. From that moment I didn't hold myself back and I loved it."

The real lightbulb moment came for Journey when he captained the cutter. At first, he was reluctant to take on a leadership role. "I thought, I am a bad boy back at home. I can't lead people!

I will only have a negative influence on them. But my watch said I was the best captain because I was slow and clear, and they could understand what I wanted them to do. They made me stay on longer even when it was time to change. I couldn't believe it, I was actually a positive influence on them!"

When it came time for Journey to return home, things were not easy. He still had some legal issues to resolve, and his family weren't interested in hearing about his time at Outward Bound. But his friends did and so did his school. Journey realised his life could be very different from what it had been.

Journey started to achieve at school, he earned his first excellence in PE running the 10km faster than his whole year group. He enrolled in a sound engineering course in Wellington, and he studied and achieved a certificate in youth work.

Now aged 21, Journey has a bright future ahead of him. An employee at Fuji Xerox for the past year, the company has recognised his excellent work ethic and promoted him to train to become a technician.

Journey still lives in Lower Hutt where he and his partner rent a comfortable home and participate fully in their community.

"Growing up, no one in our neighbourhood told us right from wrong but me and my friends are trying to change that. We have become the role models. People know us and respect us. I work as a leader at our youth group Chosen. I tell the kids you can't help someone if you aren't prepared to help yourself. You can't change the world if you can't change yourself, Outward Bound taught me that. It taught me that I can change and care for myself and more importantly care for others."

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, each year over 100 teenagers from schools in Northland, Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Hawke's Bay, Wellington, Christchurch, Otago and Southland take part in our Schools Programme.

"I bought the book 'The Challenge of Words'. I had never read a book in my life, but I read that one from cover to cover. The quote I always remember is from Henry Ford":
Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're right.