



Read our CEO **Jonny Wilkinson's** regular column in The Northern Advocate

"A different Light"

A Different Light - 14th March 2020 – “The Chicken is out to get me”

I can't stand touching raw chicken. I avoid doing it at all costs. I've had campylobacter twice through dodgy dealings with chicken. The first time was in my early twenties, when I had just started to teach myself how to cook. I tried a recipe I had seen on TV. Poaching a whole chicken in a casserole dish with a cup of water, bringing it to the boil, turning it off and leaving the lid on for one hour. What was I thinking! What were they thinking? In hindsight it was reckless at best, and at worst whilst being wracked with acute nausea and diarrhoea, I felt it was murderous! The second time was the result of a \$4 chicken curry which nearly ruined my life, desperately trying to get to the toilet when the food poisoning took a grip, falling over and smashing my shoulder which took well over a year to heal. So last weekend when I cooked a Fijian chicken curry I opted not to slice the chicken first, which would mean coming into direct contact with the evil raw bacteria. I put the chicken thighs in the curry whole and then started chopping it with a fish slice whilst reducing the sauce at a rolling boil. Good in theory until my hand slipped down the handle and plunged it into what felt like molten lava. Wistfully running my hand under cold water for the next 15 minutes, I contemplated the wisdom of my chicken chopping method. Not wise. I steeled myself against the burning discomfort and finished the curry which was destined for a diner party at our friends Robby and Bridget.

My daughter Chyna also had a pain searing culinary mishap the next day. She was prizing gluten free frozen muffins apart, with a seemingly innocent cheese knife which slipped out of the muffins and stabbed then sliced her thumb. This is on the morning she was scheduled to hang her art exhibition at the new Kari Ahua on Bank St. The exhibition called 'Body of Work' involved her inviting women to include themselves as models for a series of minimalist nude drawings. Her intention was "to portray the bodies of the models in all their glorious, diverse beauty". She was somewhat agitated with the timing of the mishap and the commitment to hang the work with the curator of Kari Ahua. However she deftly bandaged up her thumb ensuring no blood would leak onto the art work and forged ahead 'as the show must go on'. Chyna donated all the profit made from sales of the drawings to a New Zealand charity "The Aunties" who support victims of domestic violence. The Aunties

believe that everyone has the right to live with self-determination, dignity, and knowledge of their mana, in recognition of the value, joy and beauty of their true selves

Nearly all the drawings sold on the night of the opening. Acts of generosity and genuine support not only help those who receive it, it also bolsters the person who is giving. Being kind is a very powerful thing. Looking at my burn I sheepishly remind myself that the curry was enjoyed....

“FORGET INJURIES; NEVER FORGET KINDNESS” —Confucius

Jonny Wilkinson is the CEO of Tiaho Trust - Disability A Matter of Perception. A Whangarei based disability advocacy organisation.