

THE ESSENCE OF HOHEPA

OUR PURPOSE

The Hohepa trust deed states the purpose of Hohepa is "for the curative education and social therapy of children, young persons and adults with intellectual disability, inspired by the ideas of Rudolf Steiner."

These ideas guide our work through an understanding of Human Development in health & wellbeing, the principles of bio-dynamic farming, enabling social participation and autonomy.

THE AIMS OF HOHEPA

Through living and working in community life, people with a disability will grow to experience satisfying lives with as much independence as possible.

Curative education, social therapy, a rich cultural life and biodynamic land-use combine to make Hohepa unique in the way it encourages the development of body, soul and spirit for all.

We think of the essence of the human being as an individual and spiritual being. This unique essence of spirituality within each human being is recognized and respected.

The community grows strong through interest, participation, respect, co-operation and mutual support amongst its members.

Hohepa is part of an international movement of curative communities inspired by the work of Rudolf Steiner; they stand as inspiring beacons. Anthroposophy is the movement upholding the thinking of Rudolf Steiner, as an insight to human development.

A 'healthy social life' is the basis of a holistic life, " <i>a life fully lived</i> ", for all those who live and work at Hohepa.
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OUR CONTRACTUAL STANDARDS

Standards of service provision at Hohepa uphold the rights of the disabled as laid out in:

- The UN Convention of the Rights of the Disabled;
- The NZ Government "Pathways to Inclusion";
- The Health and Disability Sector Standards;
- The NZ Curriculum;
- Special Education 2000 Policy, and "Specialist Services Standards".

OUR VALUES

1. **Holistic human development based in anthroposophy.**

Therefore we work consciously with all dimensions of human life and experience: body, soul and spirit.

2. **Opportunities for dignity, independence and belonging.**

Therefore we foster a rich home and community living for people where the needs, choices and contributions of each individual are met.

3. **Protection of rights and responsibilities of citizenship.**

Therefore we ensure residents have access to a wide range of opportunities to learn, work, interact socially, express themselves and be of service to others.

4. Collaborative, affirming relationships.

Therefore we work positively with all stakeholders to progress the community for residents.

5. Environmental sustainability.

Therefore we ensure our lands and resources are well cared for and managed productively so they sustain and nourish us for the long term.

6. The Treaty of Waitangi

We acknowledge and respect the principles of partnership in the Treaty of Waitangi.

OUR PRINCIPLES

1. Our Foundation Purpose is for the care of the Human Being in body, soul and spirit.
2. Freedom of the Individual – in the context of Rights and Responsibilities – ‘freedom of the individual’ implies that the person will have choice and control in their life, without compromising the freedom/rights of others. In accepting employment, staff accept working within the context of the values, policies and practices of Hohepa.
3. Opportunities are created for residents/service-users to build their capacity for independence, so every person can participate in community with purpose – ‘Every Life Fully Lived’.
4. Development of each individual begins through Curative Education which develops communication, social participation, sensory awareness, and an understanding of the world we live in. Therapies assist the developmental path for each individual, and this, along with effective teaching & guidance gives special development based on the needs of the individual.
5. Social Therapy enables residents/service-users to develop a sense of belonging and worth that enables participation in Community life. Self-worth and belonging are built when residents/service-users learn, work, relax, and play, in harmony with their social environment. Education and learning happen best by positive role-modelling and in the context of a rich cultural life.
6. The therapeutic environment builds beauty & order, and opportunities for development & experience Routine through structure and rhythm to enable a life of opportunities is an important element of the therapeutic environment.
7. Physical well-being is nourished with bio-dynamic food. If appropriate, natural remedies consistent with complementary anthroposophical medical practices are given.
8. Hohepa is a place of the “Living Arts” - music, art and festivals that give joy and fulfilment.

9. The first focus of the Hohepa community is on residents/service-users. Yet this community is more than a place of work for staff. Hohepa is a place of belonging and development for co-workers on their own path of self-directed learning, and as well a place of connection and support for families.

Healthy Human Being – a basis for supporting the development of Intellectually Disabled children and adults through the IDP

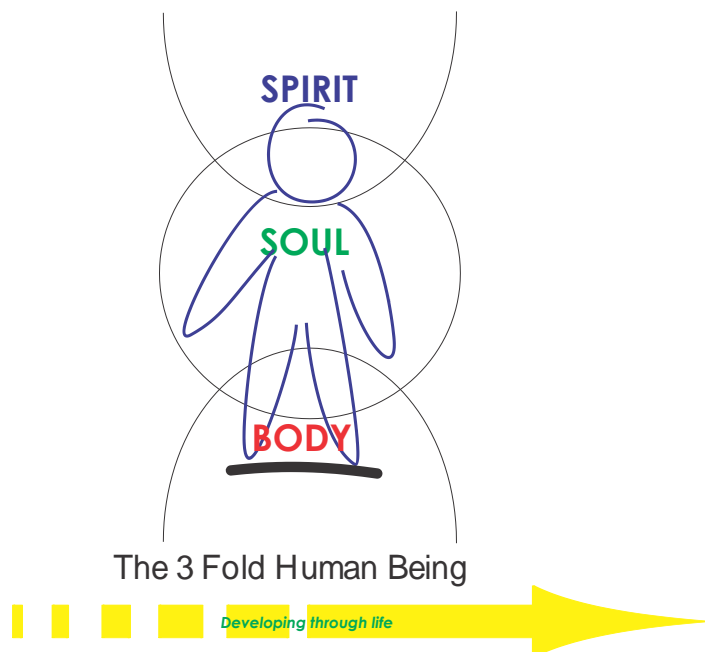
Hohepa is a community for children and adults who have intellectual disabilities. Through living, working and taking an active part in community life alongside co-workers, service-users grow to experience satisfying lives with as much independence as possible. For service-users and staff, our Vision is that 'every life is fully lived'.

The principles of Rudolf Steiner's work informs what happens within Hohepa. It is this understanding of the human being that creates Hohepa's distinctive approach to working with people with disability. Therefore curative education, social therapy, a rich cultural life, healthy life-style and work opportunities that give a sense of fulfilment/worth combine here to make Hohepa unique in the way it stimulates the development of body, soul and spirit.

The IDP (Individual Development Plan) is the mechanism for each adult service-users to signal to the organisation their hopes and aspirations in their journey towards growing independence. In essence it is a 'conversation' – an exchange between the organisation and the service-users about what is possible in the year ahead, and how it might happen. Working well, the IDP becomes a focus for how every person lives, works and learns each year. It is concerned with each body, soul and spirit. In turn it helps define how Hohepa can create value for every resident/service-user.

In the children's community the plan for every Hohepa child/young person is the founded on the IEP (Individual Education Plan), which includes learning & development in the home, with an emphasis on linking school and home learning in the context of capacities and therapies. The Combination of the school-based IEP blends with home-life goals to form the IDP.

Therefore, the foundation of the IDP is the understanding of the human as a being of Body, Soul and Spirit. In the diagram below we can see how these three aspects work together:



In developing an IDP with service-users we are interested in considering wellbeing with each of these aspects. So we need to first understand what Body, Soul and Spirit are, and what wellbeing looks like at each of these levels. The IDP intends to directly develop capacities at each level so that every Hohepa service-user takes positive steps towards greater independence. It means therefore that the focus at Hohepa is not only on

physical care and comfort but it is also about how the soul and spirit can be respected and strengthened so that every person can be more self-directing.

Physical

In the diagram above we can see that the physical body is what enables us to stand strongly on the earth. The well-being of our physical body has two aspects:

- The body itself (the 'home' for my individuality)
- The environment I find myself in.

To be 'well' the body itself needs feeding, exercise, care, hygiene and maintenance.

When it has these things the person develops a sense of belonging and a sense of trust.

Physical wellness is also created by the physical environment. This too nourishes the body.

A healthy environment is one that is:

- *beautiful* (aesthetically pleasing),
- *good* (cared for, clean, inviting, nourishing, wholesome), and
- *true* (quality materials and design so that it supports what happens there eg. it is spacious or natural).

A healthy environment is also a place that changes and develops eg. it reflects the seasons; it is changed and refreshed to meet changing needs.

In summary, our physical experience of the world through both our own body and our physical environment is the foundation for our well being. We can build this well being by:

- Providing the body with all it needs to be fit and healthy, and
- Creating physical environments for work and living that are good to experience.

Soul

If we look at the diagram, the soul is the middle realm and is the connection between our physical body and our spirit. The soul is where we meet ourselves and our world through our feelings. So the soul is all about relationships – relationships with ourselves and with others. Relationships create encounter which always generates a feeling response – either positive or negative. A healthy soul is one that has rich and full experiences (where we can connect to the world and people around us). For this to happen we need skills - social skills, communication skills, work skills – all of which are life skills.

The gateway to the soul and to developing our relationship ability in is through our senses such as seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting. It is our senses that enable us to take in the world, and to create our own inner experience and response. We can enhance our soul development by caring for the social environment, working consciously with things such as social space, how we connect and disconnect; it is all about taking care in planning how we meet, live and work.

Like the physical body the soul too needs nourishment. At this level it is a nourishment of the senses. This happens through human contact and communication, through art, colour, and music. Such experiences give us the possibility of a truly human response – across a spectrum that ranges from happiness to sorrow, or from excitement or dread, or from pleasure to pain. All are important and shape a 'life fully lived'.

Being in the 'middle' our soul is a place of movement – between the 'fixedness' of our physical being and the freedom of our spirit or individuality. We can recognise this in situations when we long to do something (this is our feelings speaking), but we cannot muster the energy to make it happen (the gravity of our physical being). It is only the strength of our ego – our individuality or spirit - that can overcome that resistance towards action and engagement.

So how do we strengthen a soul towards wellbeing? By:
Enlivening, and training the use of our senses, and
Developing skills and capacities in an environment that enables us to build and maintain relationships.

Spirit

In the diagram we can see that it is our spirit that reaches up beyond the earth, seeking existence that is beyond the physical world. Our spirit is our sense of self – our freedom, autonomy, identity, and resilience. It is where our hopes, wishes, aims and goals live – our inner hopes of what we might be and might become; and of what the world might become. It is also where we grasp time – the concept of yesterday, today and tomorrow. It is through the realm of spirit that we can recognise and respect one another as individuals. So spirit wellbeing is about:

- Having a sense of meaning and direction in my life
- Accepting myself and others as unique individualities.

We can build this spirit wellbeing through careful thinking – thinking that lets us make sense and meaning which leads us to understanding where we find ourselves in the world and the possibilities that are in front of us. Eg. knowing that from blossoms bees gather pollen and nectar, create wax to store honey. That their wax can be used for us to create candles that give out light - light the same as the sun gave the flower.

Our gateway to the spirit is through our soul's capacity to call up a sense of wonder, reverence, respect, gratitude and humility. And such practice in turn can create health in the physical body.

So how do we strengthen spirit wellbeing?

Through

- Finding connection to the essence of life that connects to our day-to-day experiences
- Expressing our goals, hopes and wishes so we can recognise our own meaning and direction in life
- Meeting life with the expectation of abundance, by being positive, and
- Being quiet and reflective, that the world might speak to us.

Spirit Well-being is about

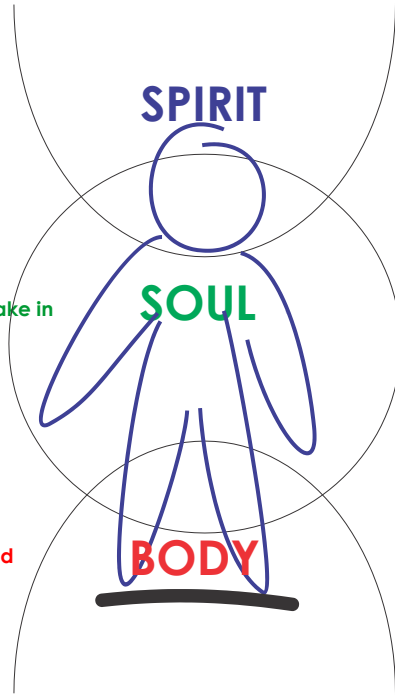
- ✓ Our freedom
- ✓ Our autonomy
- ✓ Our identity
- ✓ Our resilience
- ✓ What is meaningful.

Soul Well-being is about :

- ✓ Our senses (equipping them to let us take in the world in a balanced way), and
- ✓ Our effectiveness at running and experiencing healthy relationships
- ✓ Our sense of capability.

Physical Well-being is about :

- ✓ Our body (it's health and wellness), and
- ✓ Our physical environment
- ✓ Our belonging



Spirit Well-being can be built by:

- ✓ Having reverence for special things
- ✓ Discovering what gives our life meaning
- ✓ Expecting abundance and being positive
- ✓ Taking opportunities to connect with creative/ artistic endeavours - mine or others
- ✓ Finding time to be reflective and quiet.

Soul Well-being can be built by:

- ✓ Enlivening, training and using our senses' capacities, and
- ✓ Developing skills /capacities along with an environment that enables us to build and maintain relationships.

Physical Well-being can be built by:

- ✓ Healthy body care, that supports wellness
- ✓ A physical environment that is *beautiful* (pleasing), *good* (cared for), *true* (fit for purpose) and that changes over time.

Well-being in the 3-Fold Human Being



In Practice

CURATIVE EDUCATION

Essentially Curative Education is the promotion of a home life and schooling that enables the healthy development of children with special needs. Balancing the various developmental aspects within the child is the aim.

The approach in Curative Education is to identify specific learning abilities and

understand conditions in each child and to provide therapeutic experiences for development.

Working with a wide range of specialists such as Pediatricians, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, GP, Behaviour Specialists creates a therapeutic insight that can lead to specialized interventions that target specific developmental aspects.

This Curative Education approach includes :

- An individualized learning programme, based on Developmental Principles
- Schooling combines Waldorf school approaches with therapeutic intervention.
- Teachers, Therapists and Teacher Aides working with the residential team & families to support students to learn and be:
 - as independent as possible in their body skills, self-care and life skills
 - active participants in a home life participating with the chores of living together
- An "Individual Development Plan" ¹ sets out consistency in home & school life through common planning.
- Children's and Young people's homes function like an extended family environment.
- The setting of Hohepa provides opportunity for young people to function within an atmosphere of community life. This enables them to learn to make choices and learn about self management as they build their understanding of the physical and social environment.
- We acknowledge the principle
"No person should ever make a decision for another person who is capable of making that decision for him/herself" ² Therefore, involving young people in making choices and decisions is important their development.

Therapy programmes include:

- Nutrition and, and use of natural medications
- Nursing therapy, health care through the use of homeopathic medicines
- Speech and language -- communication.
- Movement and expression to aid coordination and communication (eurythmy).
- Movement, creativity, expression with music.
- Movement, creativity, expression with art.
- Riding For Disabled
- Motor development
- Pediatric in-put

The school works to develop the capacity in each student to 'step into' the adult world with

¹ Individual Development Plan is consistent with Individual Education Planning (IEP) used in NZ education, but is developed in Hohepa to more fully recognise the holistic development opportunity in the Residential setting of Hohepa.

² (Dr M. Gloeckler, leader of the Medical Section of the Anthroposophical Society)

awareness of self, and confidence through the competencies of the NZ curriculum.

SOCIAL THERAPY

Social Therapy refers to our approach to the way we support young people and adults with intellectual disabilities to live and work with others in a community.

This is about creating an environment that enables various social settings – where each person has an important place in the community and experiences personal growth. This concept is our implementation of the core principle of inclusion in our New Zealand Society (Pathways to inclusion).

At Hohepa we provide many life, work & cultural opportunities, as well as supporting participation & contribution in the wider community. . Successful interactions build confidence and capability- towards independence.

The objective is that each individual can progress towards a sense of fulfilment, that is, to have the experience of respect and acknowledgement as a human being and that his or her contribution to life is seen and acknowledged by others.

'Individual Choice' is a core aspect of Social therapy.

CULTURAL LIFE

Wellbeing is enhanced through marking seasonal changes and acknowledging important turning points through the year with festivals. This fosters a deeper relationship to the rhythms in nature.

The cultural life within Hohepa includes concerts, plays, the celebration of seasonal festivals and the Christian festivals through the year. Each season has its festivals, with its own purpose and mood.

Daily life can start and end with a gathering (or 'circle'). These gatherings provide an opportunity to connect with one another, to look forward to upcoming events or to review, celebrate and reflect. By the use of different poems, song & verses in circles we remind ourselves of the spiritual aspect of life of our own spirit and that of the others around us - fostering self-awareness.

Seasonal decorations and displays in the school, work-centres and in homes help to bring awareness of changes throughout the year.

Conclusion

From the Curative Education of the child to the full participation as adults carrying responsibility for the well-being of their Social Therapeutic Community, Hohepa strives to be a place to bring the five E's³ for all who live and work in the Community:

- Esteem

³ From '**Developmental Stages in Youth**' Transcript of a Lecture Given by Rev. Julian Sleight **Guidance & the Birth Of the Ego**, (From "Aspects of Youth Guidance" Edited by Cornelius Pietzner, Anthroposophic Press, 1999)

- Empowerment
- Engagement
- Experience
- Enjoyment