



THE
WELLINGTON
WOMEN'S
HOUSE

TE WHARE AWHI WĀHINE
O WHANGANUI-Ā-TAIRĀPŪ

"I was a mess. I was actually self-harming. I was just on the point of not being able to cope and contemplated suicide. I thought - I don't know what I'm doing, I don't know who to turn to"

Maree

Maree's Story

Maree remembers arriving at the house and noticing how peaceful it was and how safe it felt. She recalls being told "here's your food cupboard. There's some food to get you by, and if you haven't got something and you need it, just ask one of us and we'll see if we've got it." Many of the women at the house have been in similar situations, have come here for a break, have found that safety and that ability to be able to express themselves and tell their story..

"For me, initially going out of the house felt really unsafe in case I met him again."

But being told she could do it and given strategies by people who had lived through it themselves gave her the courage she needed.

"When I came back from having gone out, especially the first few times, it was like 'well done, you did it', That kind of support has helped me to face what really was a very challenging situation."

Maree had been at the house only a few months, but said that even in that short time she had changed so much.

"Every time people see me they say 'wow', 'you're smiling now', 'you look so much better in yourself', 'you're a different person'".

She also found that, even after just a few months, she could already start to give back and pass on the messages and support that she had received when she first came to the house.

*Maree is not the resident's real name.

Wellington Women's House is a registered charity that provides short term and emergency housing for single women. For more information or to donate please visit www.wwbh.org.nz