

## **OUTWARD BOUND**

*by Ross Hantler*

On Sunday 1 March, along with Jeremy, Andrew and Margaret, I left for a life long dream of attending a Course at Outward Bound.

Firstly, special thanks must go to the Stewart Centre for having me as a client, Mary Miller from the HB Brain Injury Association for putting me forward for the Course, and finally the NZ Brain Injury Association for making it happen.

The purpose of the Course was to do things out of your comfort zone, we certainly did that.

When we first arrived we were welcomed with a full Powhiri, which I had never experienced before. We were then shown to our bunkroom and introduced to the other members of our team. There were ten of us in the team who worked together for the duration of the course.

After tea on the first evening we had to make a speech in front of the other ninety people who were there on a range of courses, which was very challenging.

Some of the things we did over the eight days were, rolling in the mud, which was really out of our comfort zone. We built a life raft for the team and then went rowing on it, which was a great success! We were shown how to erect a bivouac in preparation for a camp out.

Then there was a walk to the high wire course, the high wire was very challenging but a great experience. The flying fox was fun once you had accepted the trust of the equipment.

The team had a night out under the stars which everyone enjoyed.

The weather was perfect for the day we went sailing and rowing in the Cutter, we all had a turn steering and rowing the boat. We sailed to a Bay in part of the Queen Charlotte Sounds and cooked our night meal and set up camp, once again we slept under the stars.

We were woken up and told we had to walk 16kms on a track back to Anakiwa, we walked back at the speed of the slowest person so everyone stayed together as a team. We all made it after walking for 7 hours.

After completing the walk we all had to jump off the jetty which was very refreshing. After a hot shower and a great meal we were told we would be going solo for the night, we were all taken to our solo camp sites and left alone until about 3pm the next afternoon, during this time we caught up on sleep and reflected on our time so far at Anakiwa. We then went back to base camp and did some housekeeping duties.

The next morning after an early wake up call, we went kayaking for the day, this was in White Bay near Blenheim, it was lovely and peaceful, we saw seals and paddled into caves, the sea was very flat and calm.

During the course, each morning we did PT and went on a run to whatever your capability was.

The food during the course was amazing, we were well looked after.

I would recommend anyone who gets the opportunity to go on this Course to take it up as you will have so much fun, laughter and memories, as I have.



Our 10 team members, instructors and support people

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