

A wellness garden

Rosalie is taking part in Pathway's Project Patch – an initiative that supports people using Pathways services to start their own garden and grow their own vegetables. Pathways Taranaki support worker Lynnley Kirk talks with Rosalie about the difference Project Patch has made to Rosalie's lifestyle.

"On a recent visit to see Rosalie, we started discussing how she'd been keeping herself well. Rosalie said she attributes her level of wellness to two things - the support she's receiving from Pathways team and her Project Patch garden.

Rosalie talked about how having the garden to work on has given her a distraction from concerns. Getting out in the garden and digging the ground helps her release tension so lets her concentrate on others things. She explains the real sense of achievement every time she picks the vegetables from her garden and takes them inside to make herself a meal.

Rosalie is on a very tight budget. Her benefit just covers the mortgage on her home, her bills and food. Rosalie and I talked about how her garden has really helped her with this. By freeing up some of the money she'd usually use to buy vegetables, Rosalie has been able to keep her phone on, pay the power bill and even get the internet. This has all contributed to her increased independence and ability to look for a job.

Project Patch has also helped Rosalie's health. Rosalie is a pre-diabetic and has high cholesterol. Eating from her garden has helped keep her cholesterol and blood sugar levels down. The garden has even helped Rosalie stop smoking. While out in the garden most of the day, Rosalie doesn't think of lighting a cigarette and when she goes inside, she doesn't smoke in the house. She's been smoke free for more than three weeks!

Rosalie's used the original garden supplied by Pathways and even built her own raised garden. Her Project Patch garden has given her a new lease on life and a reason to feel proud. I reckon she's an inspiration!"



Project Patch
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