

Georgina's Story

Georgina is the 18 year old Uni student daughter of Donna Hill, a longtime stalwart of the Auckland Women's Refuge. For this reason, Georgina has been volunteering at or for refuge since "as long as I can remember." So typically, she represents the face of our whānau and reminds us to remember that, without them, our work would be a little bit harder. Giving back, via an Outward Bound Course has meant so much to this bright young woman. This is her story in her words.

From Georgina –

I had always known about Outward Bound and then mum told me I could apply for a scholarship. I was a bit reluctant at first because of the fitness level and I wasn't that confident, but I persevered and began jogging to reach the fitness goal.

I became a member of Cobham Watch which was a mixed gender 21 day course last June/July – gee was it cold but it was also picture postcard perfect!

Mum was able to get me some funding to get there which helped and it was my first time to the South Island. I have fallen in love with Queen Charlotte sound.



When I arrived it was straight into it with a run and before I knew it we were having adventures on sailing boats, kayaks, 2 and 3 day hikes, a rope course, rock climbing and plenty of reflection time and team challenges. Then we had our 'solo' which is some time alone to reflect and write stuff. I was anxious about this as you have limited rations, but it turned out to be a real highlight for me. I had time to think about myself, my goals and my dreams. I wrote a letter to myself and realised what I wanted to do.

Before Outward Bound I was drifting, no direction and not really trying. Now I have a path, I want to study psychology. I have been maintaining my fitness with exercise and I am trying to get my friends to do it.

I really got to know the people on my watch. They become almost immediately, your closest friends, it is a special bond we share now. We all went through personal hardships on the course but learnt to work as a team, to be ourselves and rely on the support of others. One girl really wanted to go home in the last week, but we supported her and she went on to finish the half marathon.

For me, one of my biggest fears is heights, and this was challenged on the ropes course. I kind of broke down up there but on the second attempt, with the support of my team I did it, it was a breakthrough moment.

I had the most fantastic weather on my course even though it was in the middle of winter. Rain only on the last day, this place really accelerates good ideas. Now that it is over, I have a new bunch of friends from throughout New Zealand and this weekend I am down to Christchurch for a reunion.

I recently got my report back, and my instructor agreed, I had reached my goal of becoming more confident. I am so happy about that as confidence was one of the things I wanted to get from Outward Bound.

My message to others contemplating the course – leave all your fears behind you. Go for it and you will come out of it a new and different person. It is just such a great feeling to complete the course.