

Finding hope and peace

Joanne felt lost, alone, broken and in pain. Child, Youth and Family had just removed her toddler and baby from her care. She desperately needed to find hope that she and her children could be together again.



Read how your support helps parents rebuild their lives and families.

"I was a child of the system too," says Joanne. "I was taken off my parents when I was young. It was a continuous pattern. I didn't want that for my children."

"I thought, 'No way. I am going to break that. I am going to get them back. I am going to be a good mum, and love my children and give them what they need and want and what's good, right and healthy for them.'"

She enrolled in an anger management course and referred herself to Iosis. There she attended the Family Resilience and Getting a Grip on Communication programmes. Both are group classes. Listening to the other parents' stories, Joanne realised she was not alone.

"Not only that, [the] teaching gave me belonging and identity, and grounded my soul. It made me reflect on history—past things that had happened, that I needed to rectify, and people I needed to go see, to forgive, in order to get that peace within me. I had to go back to go forwards."

Through the Communication course in particular, Joanne came to understand how carrying past hurt and anger had calcified over time into a defiant attitude. "All I knew was to hit first and speak later. The course taught me that using my fists and physical violence was wrong. But I was brought up like that. That's all I saw."

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"Iosis created the Family Resilience Programme because we saw the need for a course that addresses identity, and not just parenting and relationship skills. Understanding what has shaped them and where they belong is something few of our clients have grappled with before. However it is essential 'to go back to go forward,'" says Iosis CEO, Tunumafono Tracey-Leigh Peters.



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“Doing the course let me know it was OK to speak. If you get angry, just speak it out. Use positive words—words that would speak, not to them, but to their heart.”

After completing the losis programmes, her children returned home, although Child, Youth and Family continued to monitor the family for another 18 months. Just before Christmas 2016, Joanne visited losis, to tell us she had regained full custody. She had achieved her goal of family restoration.

“When I lost my children, I thought, ‘This is the end. What do I do?’ It was like a death. I was grieving.”

Those memories of heartache and disempowerment are still fresh. However, Joanne says her journey of self-discovery, as an individual and as a mother, was transforming.

“I walk with my head up now. I speak from the heart and I feel people from the heart. I can understand people more, on the same level.”

To parents who have also had their children taken into state care, Joanne urges them to persevere in their efforts to restore their families.

“It’s hard, it’s tough, but hang in there. Don’t give up on the good fight. Believe in yourself. Only you have the keys. Know your values and beliefs, everything that you are built on. It all comes back to identity, really. Identity and belonging—knowing who you are—and forgiveness and love.”

When you donate to losis you are helping to run free programmes that give parents encouragement and tools to transform their family lives for good. ©



CEO's message

When I think about Joanne, Reuben and Sonya, whose stories are featured in this newsletter, I am reminded of the deep human need for hope. As the Bible says, “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.”

Of course hope that is mere wishful thinking is different to one that is expectant. The former requires little effort; the latter compels you forward, no matter what the obstacles. The journey each of these parents went down was incredibly ‘heart-sore’, as Sonya described it to us. But oh what joy when their yearning for family restoration was fulfilled!

At losis we like to say that we hold hope for families when they do not yet have the strength to hope themselves. But without your prayers and financial support, we could not do this.

[Thank you for joining with us in this mission to see families find the kind of hope that draws them onward to a transformed life.](#)

Tunumafono Tracey-Leigh Peters
CEO



**Please read me,
then pass me on.**

Prayer needs

- We have several key staff vacancies and are also searching for new Board members to replace David and Jan. Please pray we find the right people for these important roles.
- Pray for the success of our collaborative financial mentoring project (see News) and for the families who will be impacted through it.
- Pray for a new ‘Supporting Safety’ programme beginning this term for women who have experienced domestic violence. This is a pilot project that we hope will continue beyond the first two semesters. Pray for the women who enrol for the course and for funding to continue it.



News

Farewell to Board members

David Moorman and Jan Jones officially stood down from the Iosis Board at our AGM in November 2016. Both David and Jan served on our board for 10 years. They made a significant contribution, especially in their respective fields of commercial law and human resources.

Our 2016 Annual Report was presented at the AGM and can be downloaded at www.iosis.org.nz/about-us/performance. If you would like a hard copy mailed to you, phone 09 269 1407 or email supporters@iosis.org.nz. ©

Building Financial Capability

Iosis is partnering with Presbyterian Support Northern and the Anglican Trust for Women and Children, to provide financial mentoring to families. Our three organisations provide the majority of Social Workers in Schools (SWiS) services in the wider Auckland Region.

Families already trust our school social workers, so placing this new financial mentoring presence alongside our existing SWiS service makes sense. ©

Reuben & Sonya's story

When Reuben's wife Sonya told him he needed help with anger management, he dismissed it. Everyone gets angry, he thought. But things at home deteriorated. Child, Youth and Family and the Police got involved, and a constable recommended Iosis to the family.

Reuben met regularly with an Iosis Men's Development facilitator, and Sonya with a counsellor. However, Sonya eventually left home with their daughter, and took out a protection order against Reuben. While they were separated, Sonya continued her counselling at Iosis and completed a Parenting Toolbox course. Meanwhile, Reuben remembered something the MenD facilitator had said to him about identifying what was triggering his anger.

"Anything that appeared to challenge me, I would always stand up and react. That reaction was not because of the person, but because of a situation I had been in 30 years before, where I could not defend myself. Looking through the different phases of my journey, that monster was growing inside of me. Every time my wife pointed out I had an anger problem, I turned into the incredible hulk," says Reuben.

That humbling realisation was a turning point, and the couple eventually reunited. However, they knew they needed help with communication. They returned to Iosis and signed up for the Family Resilience Programme.

"Family Resilience has given me so much strength and wisdom on how to deal with the situation at home and any situation outside the home. I don't want to lose that. My house fell once. I don't want my house to fall again," says Reuben. ©

If you are involved in a business or service organisation and have an idea how you could support the work of Iosis or the families we work alongside, please call us on 09 269 0050 or email supporters@iosis.org.nz



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Meet our staff

Alfred, MenD Facilitator



My role is to provide effective programmes particularly to teenage boys and men who are seeking to change patterns of violence, addiction and offending so they can improve their family relationships and be better fathers and partners.

I am a qualified Community Social Worker and have been in that field for 14 years. I am also a Court Approved 'Living Without Violence' Programme Facilitator. 95 per cent of clients who come through that service are from the court. I am also a qualified translator in the Samoan and Tongan languages.

The greatest challenge in my role at Iosis is to get the men to attend the programme and to make positive changes in their lives. This is hardest with those who never had good male role models around them when they grew up.

When their wives and partners tell me about the positive changes they are seeing in the lives of their men as a result of the programmes, I am filled with joy. ☺



I want to help transform family life for good.

Four ways **you** can help:

1. **Donate online** by Mastercard or Visa. www.iosis.org.nz
2. **Deposit into our bank account**
Account name: Iosis Limited Account number: 02-0192-0285062-00
and email us at supporters@iosis.org.nz so we know the details for your receipt.
3. **Send a cheque to Iosis**, PO Box 98840, Manukau City, Auckland 2241.
Include your name and address details for your receipt.
4. **Become an Iosis Partner** by making a regular contribution by automatic payment.
Contact your bank to arrange this. Our bank account details are above. Please use your surname as a reference and contact us on Ph 09 269 0050 or email supporters@iosis.org.nz to advise us when the AP has been set up.

All receipts will be sent as annual tax certificates at the end of the financial year unless otherwise requested.

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