



6 April 2021

**Re:** In support of the ATAWHAI program, Kindness Institute, non-profit organisation

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is in full support of the funding application for the ATAWHAI program, a 12-months stress and monitoring intervention in response to the high needs of marginalised young people facing serious psychological issues, such as anxiety, self-efficacy problems, depression, and self-harm. This kind of intervention is exactly what New Zealand needs to improve the mental health of our youngsters in serious crisis and I truly hope that you will be able to fund this extremely worthwhile project, which hopefully can be rolled out throughout the whole country.

I had the opportunity to listen to a keynote presentation delivered by the former executive director (Kristine Cavit) and had many discussions with the current director Brady Polkinghorne and I can assure you that the psychological framework that drives the ATAWHAI program, based on mindfulness, self-compassion, kindness and caring for themselves and others, is sound and robust. In fact, two of my master students did a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the program and there was a strong significant improvement on most of the outcome measures.

The Kindness Institute presented at the ATAWHAI program at the Positive Psychology conference in 2018, and their approach was very well received by the delegates of the scientific community. I commend you for having attracted such a worthwhile and strong application - and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide you with more information (robert@isler.co.nz, mobile: 027 418 8423)

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. Isler".

Robert Isler, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, School of Psychology

University of Waikato

President of the Positive Psychology Association