



#ChooseToChallenge

About International Women's Day

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. Significant activity is witnessed worldwide as groups come together to celebrate women's achievements or rally for women's equality.

Marked annually on **March 8th**, International Women's Day (IWD) is one of the most important days of the year to:

- celebrate women's achievements
- raise awareness about women's equality
- lobby for accelerated gender parity
- fundraise for female-focused charities

A challenged world is an alert world. Individually, we're all responsible for our own thoughts and actions - all day, every day.

We can all choose to challenge and call out gender bias and inequality. We can all choose to seek out and celebrate women's achievements.

Collectively, we can all help create an inclusive world.

From challenge comes change, so let's all **choose to challenge.**

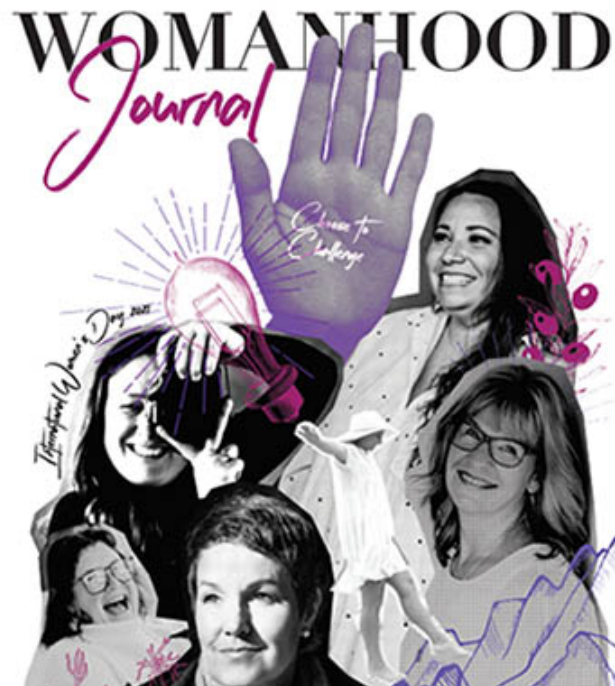
Women's Empowerment



There is no tool
for development
more effective
than the
empowerment
of women.

IWD hopes to shine a spotlight on activity encouraging and uplifting women to pursue goals without bias or barriers.

There are many ways to explore this goal:



The power of sharing women's stories.

Creators of the Womanhood Journal felt there would be power in sharing stories - for inspiration, education, and to uplift others. So, they chose to share authentic stories from a diverse range of local women in business. Each woman bravely contributed their story in their own words, stating their own truth in the hope of encouraging others. A further goal of the journal was to support fundraising for local female-focused charities.

The Journal features 25 local women in business from the Horowhenua / Kāpiti area in New Zealand. To cover print and design costs, and to provide a donation to the Kāpiti Women's Centre and Palmerston North Women's Refuge as they help women rise, the women paid to feature in the journal.

500 copies of the Womanhood Journal were printed and distributed across the region, including at the Kāpiti Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary International Women's Day lunch.

Further copies have been distributed to local businesses and a digital version is available to amplify reach and messaging supporting International Women's Day.

"#ChooseToChallenge to me means challenging myself to be more visible in the community with voicing and sharing women's stories and not being afraid to celebrate success. Before embarking on this project of delivering the Womanhood Journal I was fearful of what people might think of me, or if women would want to be involved in the project. The major challenge was being brave enough to have the confidence to lead this project," says Anna Colville-Smith, the Journal's initiator.



Every woman's liberation looks different.



“Being in the water gives me freedom. It’s where I belong,” says Beth French.

Every woman’s liberation looks different. For Beth French – multiple record holder and champion in extreme outdoor swimming – it looks like the open water.

A film about her life, *AGAINST THE TIDES*, reveals the extraordinary story of a single British mother of an autistic son, and living with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue

Syndrome (M.E.) herself, sets out to swim Oceans Seven, the ultimate extreme swimming challenge – to show her son that anything in life is possible.

Beth is a self-starter in the world of her sport. Inspired by the way the water alleviated symptoms and memories of her chronic illness – Beth decided to undertake the immense training of extreme outdoor swimming herself. Although she utilized a small, close-knit team for the Oceans Seven challenge - Beth takes the strategy of her survival on the open water into her own hands.

The documentary explores the special bond between mother and son in a nuanced way. Dylan is on the autistic spectrum. And due to her own life experience with disability, Beth wishes to show her son that he doesn't have to limit his dreams to suit anyone else's expectations of him. Dylan's anxieties and stresses on dry land played a huge part in her organisation of the swims. In Beth's view, the Oceans Seven challenge is as much Dylan's journey as hers, and the accomplishment of each new place reached was ultimately a shared one.

Beth's challenge was less about a world record or a certain width of water crossed. Instead, it was one woman's personal experience - for herself and for her family.

Women are thriving on their own terms.

"Though she be but little, she is fierce!"

A famous quote from William Shakespeare that's now true of women owning and running micro-businesses - and it is women, not men, who are often dominating the micro-business world, according to smallbizgenius.

Micro-businesses are by definition small - with only up to nine employees, and often just run by one person - but they're certainly making a big global impact, including massive contributions to world economies. It's a trend that could keep growing - thanks to the changing workplace landscape and new technologies.

There might be a good reason why women are starting more successful micro-businesses. Studies show that women are better at spotting entrepreneurial opportunities than men. According to The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 'Women's Report', in developed economies women are over 3.5 times more likely to start businesses of opportunity rather than necessity.

Meanwhile, research from British Chamber of Commerce concludes that women are better at seeing gaps in the market than men, creating innovative products, and using technology in their businesses.

With a greater focus on the importance of good mental and physical health, many women are becoming aware of the damaging effects of some workplace environments. The long commute, the late hours, being inside an office. Women are looking towards new ways to work while also being happy and healthy.

Micro-businesses can help women achieve their desired work/life balance because of the all-important flexibility. Owning a micro-business means women can be their own boss. They have complete control over when, where, and how often they work. Less stress, less demands on their time means a healthier and happier state of mind.

When women think of microbusinesses, it's often the creative industries that come to mind, such as photographers, writers, and web designers. However, the most popular industries for microbusinesses are business, food, health and beauty, all in line with modern trends. **There are 582 million entrepreneurs in the world - could you be next?**

Empowerment quotes from women leaders

A gender equal society needs empowered women and girls who take control of their lives, make their own decisions, and succeed in their chosen pursuits.

So from innovators to activists and leaders, enjoy these empowering quotes from women who've made a considerable impact across society.

Empowering further women

Women's empowerment promotes a sense of self-worth, an ability to determine one's own choices, and a right to influence change.

How do you continue to empower the women in your life?



"Think like a queen. A queen is not afraid to fail. Failure is another steppingstone to greatness."

Oprah Winfrey

"A woman with a voice is, by definition, a strong woman."

Melinda Gates



"I say if I'm beautiful. I say if I'm strong. You will not determine my story — I will."

Amy Schumer



“A girl should be two things: who and what she wants.”

Coco Chanel

"There is no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish."

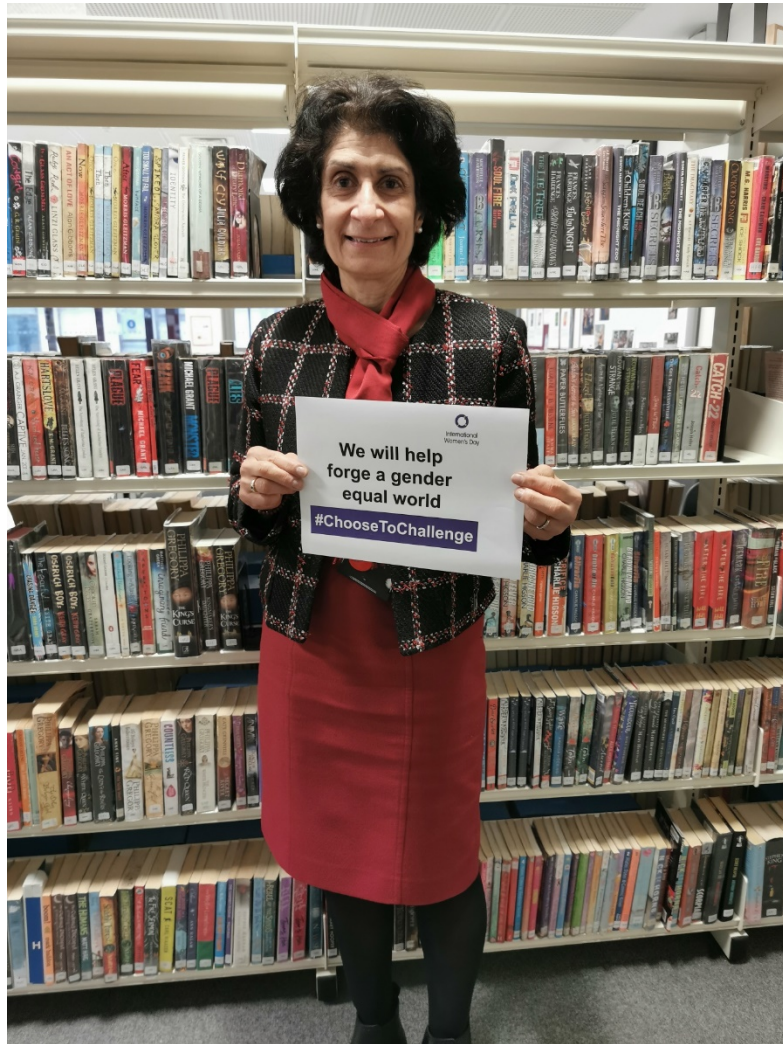
Michelle Obama



“What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”

Jane Goodall

Kendrick Leadership Team Chooses to Challenge





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