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Burns don't discriminate



Tauranga man Troy Hall shows his burn scars. Photo: John Borren.

An annual Men's Day Out event in Tauranga City is giving male burn survivors a space to be themselves and connect with others that know what it's like to live with a lifelong injury.

Starting four years ago, the Burn Support Group Charitable Trust created the Annual Men's Day Out to give male burn survivors a space to share their stories and support one another.

“How they can help each other is really quite extraordinary because they know what it entails and obviously the bigger the burn, the longer the journey,” says events co-ordinator Michele Henry.

Attending the event this month is Tauranga man Troy Hall, who sustained his burn injuries in 2011 when he was working as an avocado picker.

“I got electrocuted the first time through the head and it killed me instantly and the second one went through my chest and it brought me back, but lit me up – so that’s why I’m all scarred up,” says Troy, who was on a hydraulic cherry picker when he was struck by electricity from nearby powerlines.

Mental battle

Troy says it’s only been in the last six-12 months that he’s started embracing his burn scars. “It’s not really the physical anymore, it’s been more the mental so it’s trying to just embrace it and not be ashamed of it.

“That’s why the Annual Men’s Day Out – for myself especially – is really good because you’re talking to other men that have only just been burnt maybe a couple of years ago or some of them are like 20 years in and they still haven’t really connected or come to terms with it.”

This year the men will enjoy time out on the Wish4Fish fishing charter – Troy says for some of the men it’s the only time they get to be themselves. “A lot of people can’t connect with us because they don’t understand – they try to and there’s a lot of love out there but you’ll never really understand the psychological side,” says Troy.

To connect with the burn survivors community, visit: <https://www.burns.org.nz/>



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