

I have noticed that water sports have been my main sport for the last 8 years probably because I was bought up by the beach. When I was a toddler my parents always took paddling at the beach. After I learned to swim aged 4, my parents started to take me body boarding when the surf was small. Often we spent time snorkeling in a rock pools around in the next bay. I loved looking at the small fishes and marine life. All through my primary school years I spent a lot of time snorkeling, surfing, body boarding and body surfing with my parents and family members.

1

I did have some involvement in mainstream organised sport too. When I was 9 -11, I played netball but didn't like relying on other people so I stopped playing team sports. While swimming not seem like an organised sport it was as the trainings were very structured but this worked for me because I was the only one influencing how successful or not I was...

Because I was involved in swimming and surfing at intermediate I also started hanging out with people doing surf lifesaving which then encouraged me to try this too. As soon as I was in the water I felt relaxes and enjoyed myself due to a love of being in the water... by travelling around with my family I made new friends in the community which led me to new sports like surf lifesaving. I was able to travel to training due to close accessibility of the beach. My family supported me financially and gave me all the money I needed to compete, forequipment and to travel.

The role of family in my sport has been big influence because they would always go away to surf spots and encouraged me to get into surfing and other water sports...

Because I was bought up in South Africa in a small coastal town, our school was small and only offered traditional sports such as rugby, netball, swimming, tennis and cricket...at intermediate gender didn't matter, if you wanted to take part you did, ...e.g. girls playing cricket with the boys, and due to this attitude more people, including me got involved.

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...I realised I was talented and enjoyed the social interaction...made me want to train and improve to be in the same squad as all my friends. I realised that this was one of the main reasons I liked participating, because of the social benefits of getting to hang out with my friends. They also influenced me to take part and to train as it was also a fun time to hang out.

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...when I got a sponsor my focus changed as I had to train to perform to my best to keep the sponsor and local community happy. This encouraged me to train harder and strive for success. However this affected my hauora as I was not getting rest days and ended up over training and getting injured. Because I relied on swimming for my exercise I had 2 months off training and my physical wellbeing was negatively affected. I became depressed as a consequence, gained weight and became a bit isolated from my friends (in swimming circles). Once I got back into it slowly me overall sense of wellbeing felt like it improved.

4

...I don't think you need to be good at sport for it to have a positive relationship to wellbeing. I am not overly good at surfing...but getting a good wave makes me feel happy and confident in myself. I find myself striking up conversations with other surfers and begin to make new friends...conversely being good at physical activity can also have a negative relationship with wellbeing which I have explained above when I got injured and had to stop all activity. This affected my taha tinana, taha hinengaro and taha whanau. Because swimming was also part of who I am, when I wasn't allowed to train I felt like I wasn't

myself and got mood swings and took it out on others. My Wairua therefore also seems to have been negatively affected.

...Next year I will be studying a BCom degree at Otago University...I will join the social teams for the fact that I enjoy situations where I get to meet new people but will also make sure I get out to the beach to be by the water and surf...Making sure I continue to be active will help me relax and improve all aspects of my wellbeing. I will be able to stay fit and maintain my healthy body weight and my social wellbeing will be enhanced by the sense of belonging to a group. Being in a new environment it will also be important to maintain some of what gives me a sense of my own identity and belonging, like being around the water.

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...won't have much money as a student which could be a barrier as I am used to my family paying...could get a job.

...will definitely include swimming and some other form of individual activity, perhaps like yoga... clear my mind and relax. I have realised from my past experiences that over training fatigues your body and it essential to give it time to repair and relax. Doing this type of low impact, flexibility exercises will be good for this aspect as well as calming for my overall spiritual and mental wellbeing.

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