

International Women's Day: Balance for Better

Auckland, New Zealand - Lia Goijarts - March 9, 2019



Members of WFWP attended an International Woman's Day event organised by Anne Pala, Anita Keestra and friends. We were looked after well with tea and coffee on arrival and entertainment from Ambika Krishnamurthi. Several of the children of the participants provided entertainment throughout the day. Anne Pala introduced the theme of the day and the first speaker, Dr Camille Nakhid, Associate Professor at the AUT School of Social Sciences and Public Policy. Camille spoke on the need to strive for balance in the community, rather than trying to gain the power of men. "We don't want to become oppressors, nor do we want to play the victim card. We women are strong and resilient", she explained.

The second speaker was Roshila Prasad, who is the founder and director of Radio HummFM104. Roshila started the radio station in order to help her own children and the wider community to connect with their roots.

The third speaker was Sasikala Syed Niyamathullah, the co-ordinator for WISE Women, strong women entrepreneurs in enterprises. WISE Women teach skills to women so that they do not feel isolated in the community.



Felicity Cairns from WFWP NZ was the fourth presenter, and spoke on the need for balance in community decision making on all levels in order to make a better world. "Women make up half of the world's population, but they have different needs, for example health requirements. Men and women are different in order to complement each other", Felicity explained.

Mandeep Kaur Sidhu, a senior constable working with the Family Intervention Team was the fifth speaker. She is a mother and grandmother. When she came to New Zealand, she was thinking she had the wrong form to fill in, as it didn't ask whose wife she was. Mandeep shared that in India, as a wife, the husband is your identity.

Naima Ali, a Refugee Co-ordinator, was the final speaker. Naima spoke of the difficulties she faced in New Zealand, and the racism she experienced and is still experiencing. Her key message was that there is too much domestic violence in NZ. Naima urges all women to stand up for each other and challenge the practices that affect our well being.

Raffles were held throughout the day with most people receiving a prize, and we danced to the music of Abba!

A big thank you to the co-ordinators of this event. It was wonderful.

Report by: Lia Goijarts