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Taveta's Psychiatric Experience Helps Him Produce A Book Of Poems

Publishing his first poetry collection after 20 years of writing is a major relief for Luke Taveta. The 53-year-old was lost for words when his workmates from the Psychiatric

By Mere Satakala, Suva

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Finally Achieving his Dream of publishing his poetry, Luke Taveta (L) and Communication Volunteer, John Brookes (R) with copies of the book in Suva. Photo: Mere Satakala

Publishing his first poetry collection after 20 years of writing is a major relief for Luke Taveta.

The 53-year-old was lost for words when his workmates from the Psychiatric Survivors Association (PSA) surprised him with his own publication yesterday.

A psychiatric survivor, Mr Taveta had a nervous breakdown when he was 21 while he was a member of the army officer's cadet corps with the Republic Fiji Military Forces in 1985.

"I just got tired mentally and physically and just fell apart at this stage of my life," said Mr Taveta.



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He got admitted at the St Giles Hospital where he found solace in his writing that became a therapy for him to survive during this difficult time.

The humble Ono-i-Lau man a co-founder of PSA, in 2004 attributes his wiliness to fight through his mental illness through the support of his family, friends and his PSA family.

“The belief in life, the legacy of a fighting spirit and my belief in God has kept me going all these years,” he said.

John Brookes, a communication volunteer from Australia, helped Luke with his poetry publication said he was just blown away by his writing. The first time they met was four months ago.

“One morning I just got talking to him and he told me about his time in the army, his family background and was very vocal about his mental illness journey,” Mr Brookes said.

Four months later, the publication has become a reality, with a collection of some of Mr Taveta’s favourite pieces mostly focused on experiences he had gone through.

“I want people to read my poems and be able to identify with it and give hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel and to break the stigma in our society,” he said.

In 2015, Mr Taveta went through another life-threatening ordeal where he nearly died but his faith in God pulled him through.

“I’m just so happy his dream of publishing his book has become a reality, as his sister I’m just so proud of him,” said an emotional Kelera Taveta.

The book titled *Creative Expressions* is available now on www.amazon.co.uk and search for Luke Butler Taveta.

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