



Project Welcome Home Troops

Bringing Peace of Mind to Veterans

a program of the International Association for Human Values

Veterans and Trauma

As veteran post traumatic stress (PTS) and suicide are on the rise, there is an urgent need to address combat stress. Traditional treatments are currently insufficient. Many veterans drop out of traditional therapeutic treatments because the process of recounting traumatic events is emotionally taxing. They often fail to continue drug treatments due to the drugs' side effects.

Research is showing that the only FDA approved drugs for PTS (i.e. SSRIs) are not helpful in addressing PTS. A recent study shows that of those veterans who actually undergo an entire course of treatment, only 50% show signs of recovery (Ballenger et al., 2000). There is clearly an urgent need to provide alternate methods of helping returning veterans reclaim their lives.



A man or woman with the courage to face war does not easily embrace the role of a victim with a diagnosis be it insomnia or PTS. Rather than depending on a drug or therapist, they value learning tools which they can use to help themselves. The Power Breath workshop allows veterans to regain a sense of self-mastery and control because they can self-administer the techniques. Research show that these programs are effective, safe, prevention-based and free of known side-effects. They can be scaled up to serve large numbers of veterans at a lower cost than many traditional interventions.

Power Breath Workshop

The Power Breath Workshop is a mind-body resilience-building program for returning veterans. It offers practical breath-based tools that decrease the stress, anxiety and sleep problems that many returning veterans experience.

About the Power Breath Workshop

A cornerstone of the Power Breath Workshop is the SKY (*Sudarshan Kriya Yoga*) Practice, a set of empirically validated breathing techniques. Through rhythmic breathing patterns, the SKY Practice brings deep mental and physical relaxation which research suggests can reduce symptoms of anxiety, anger, insomnia and depression. Through interactive discussions, the Power Breath workshop also teaches resilience and empowerment strategies, and develops self-awareness, connectedness and community. The results are a more positive outlook.



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Course Format

The Power Breath Workshop is taught over 7 consecutive days, in 3-4 hour sessions, and can include 2-hour follow-up sessions taught on-site and/or through teleconference sessions. The ideal workshop size is 20-25 participants, with 2 trainers. When available, 1-hour introductory session(s) can be offered for potential participants to ask questions and experience a taste of the program.

Teaching Style

Our trainers are experienced facilitators who draw upon veterans' existing strengths and wisdom to support them in returning to their natural, healthy state. Knowledgeable about military culture, they teach in a way that is non-dogmatic yet informative.

"When you've flirted with death, you don't like anyone telling you what to do."

This sentiment, expressed by a Power Breath Workshop participant and shared by many veterans, drives the program's teaching style and environment. The knowledge is shared in a non-authoritarian way that is experiential rather than pedagogic. With extensive experience in breathing and mind-body techniques, our trainers guide the workshop with the attitude of mutual learning and respect. The program is interactive and facilitated in an open and supportive environment where veterans can share their life experiences if they wish and think about how their values shape their life.

After the Workshop

After completing the 7-day workshop, participants can independently continue with a short 20 minute daily breathing practice that can easily be integrated into the busiest of schedules. All graduates receive materials that help guide them through their daily practice. They are also supported through facilitated follow-ups with their trainers, arranged either in-person (when possible) or via teleconference (i.e. Skype).

Note: Our instructors are trained in teaching alternate and adapted versions of the exercises for different health conditions. Since breathing exercises may be counter-indicated for certain health conditions, participants may want to consult with their physicians. The course may not be suitable for individuals suffering from more severe mental health challenges such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder or certain health conditions.



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About the International Association for Human Values

Project Welcome Home Troops is a program of the International Association for Human Values (IAHV), a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit that serves communities throughout the world. IAHV offers programs to reduce stress and develop leaders so that human values can flourish in people and communities. A UN-affiliated NGO with chapters throughout North America, Asia, and Europe, IAHV has a proven history of effective trauma relief interventions.

Since its founding in 1997, IAHV has been providing stress and trauma relief to diverse populations around the world, including victims of; Hurricane Katrina (2005), Haiti Earthquake (2010), Sichuan Earthquake (2008), the South Asian tsunami (2004), and the Kosovo conflict (2003). Our trauma relief programs include SKY Breathing Practice, meditation, yoga postures, and education on stress reduction specifically designed to strengthen internal coping mechanisms. The course allows participants process past events and the emotions associated with them, and to regain enthusiasm about their lives, and develop greater hope and interest in the future.