

“Triumph over Trauma” Program

Dear 4AussieHeroes Foundation,

This is my testimonial with regards to the triumph over trauma program.

4AussieHeroes sows the seed of life, a second chance, into the hearts and minds of first responders and veterans. This may as well be crafted by my children because Heidi and Jesse have their Dad back. A Dad who feels the love for them that they deserve. Two children spared the silent suffocating grip of trauma and PTSD that so many families are torn apart by. 4AussieHeroes and their triumph over trauma program didn't just save my life, it saved a generation and rescued everyone in my ripple effect. Looking back at the seed sown nearly one year ago, I can tell you by the sweet embrace of my two children, their joyous giggles and unconditional kisses, that I wouldn't change a thing.

My reflection is something that can't be quantified by checklists. Writing this testimonial is part of who I am now. I will nurture the seed 4AussieHeroes gave me because they are as rare as hen's teeth. The program works because they've done it the hard way and never given up on the people they aim to help and support. The program and foundation have a unique freedom and fortitude that larger organisations and politics can never ascend to. Each person has a seed sown into them. One that has their name on it. A seed handpicked just for them. Not one drawn out of a numbered jar.

From,

One of many

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I am eternally grateful to the 4 Aussie Heroes Foundation, as a participant in their Triumph over Trauma Program. The greatest outcome from this program for me is hope. My PTSD journey to date has lacked hope, due to a bleak medical prognosis and so many re-enforcing negative experiences. PTSD for me, has been a condition in which the basic elements of life have been taken from me. My health, employment, financial security, relationships, self-confidence and esteem, the freedom to leave home in peace and ability to enjoy life. I take hope from the program for the first time since my diagnosis.

My focus now is post traumatic growth and taking the micro steps required to become a better version of my former self. Through the program I have discovered a new hope for a positive future and greater reasons to live.

In over 30 years in the health care industry, I have not witness greater generosity, passion and care in mental health. I cannot thank the founders Gerry and Renita enough, for their vision to save and improve the lives of members of the armed services and first responders. This passion and care are expertly delivered by Katrina and the 4 Aussie Heroes team, and comes with an ongoing commitment to care and support in the hope of nurturing post traumatic growth and resilience. I take inspiration from the kintsukuroi art of repairing pottery, as described in the program.

I intend to make the ongoing improvements to my life, as taught in the program, to improve the quality of my life and those around me, especially my family. With a particular focus on self-soothing, self-compassion with gratitude, and the power of positive affirmations, I will improve my physical and mental health. Nelson Mandela said “may your choices reflect your hopes, not your fear.” This program should help me make the choices to overcome fear with hope.

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“I’m a Navy veteran of 12 years, with active service in East Timor. I’ve been suffering with major depression and PTSD for almost 20 years now. Over the years I’ve done many programs in a hospital setting, the “Triumph over Trauma” Program is one that is completely different to any that I’ve done before. The Program was well structured and presented in a very easy and compassionate way and being in a rural setting made it even more enjoyable and less clinical.

When I first started the Program, I was extremely anxious and nervous as to what was ahead, the staff and volunteers certainly put me at ease from the get-go.

The Program had an excellent balance of psychological theory and practical strategies that I have been implementing on a day-to-day basis.

I found the mixture of military and first responders in the Program to be invaluable, we as a group built a very close bond and the Program encouraged us to support each other.

For the first time after leaving a program I actually feel that I have made a change, this Program has changed my life and the potential to change many lives to come.

I cannot thank the staff and volunteers of 4 Aussie Heroes enough for this Program, your support and passion for military and first responders is amazing.”

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I have been suffering, and struggling with PTSD for more than two years.

During that period I explored a range of programs to help me, but found none that suited my family and other commitments. Most were onerous in terms of time commitment or the wrong type of program for me at this stage of my treatment.

Fortunately I saw the 4 Aussie Heroes inaugural program advertised and made an enquiry. The assessment process and staff immediately put me at ease, and I found some comfort in the way the program was planned and structured, with relevant and practical content.

Whilst I arrived with some trepidation and anxiety, that quickly disappeared upon arrival and reception at Camp Courage. From the outset myself and other participants were put at ease by the nature and professionalism of the staff.

I found the program to be an excellent balance of psychological theory and opportunities to implement practical strategies to combat my PTSD. Added to this were other useful sessions including, but not limited to: yoga; mindfulness; canine and equine therapy; self care; nutrition; humour; physical fitness; and relaxation exercises.

I cannot compliment the staff and visiting presenters to the 4Aussie Heroes program enough. The level of professionalism, care and advice was outstanding and was unanimously appreciated by participants.

I left Camp Courage with a new sense of optimism moving forward and a belief that I do not have to continue to live with and bear my PTSD as before. I feel positive I now have a range of new tools, and had ones I was already aware of validated. I had not felt this way since falling sick in late 2016.

The program is certainly the best thing I have done on my journey to wellness. I am determined to fight on and will recommend this program to my friends and acquaintances. It's also my intention to give back to the Foundation behind the 4Aussie Heroes in whatever capacity I can in the future.