



**This session:**  
 Understanding how we got here, what we do, and why.  
 We provide intensive therapeutic care to young people who are in significant need, but otherwise may not access traditional care (and may need support beyond what conventional approaches can offer).



**Trained as a Psychologist**  
 Worked in psychosocial rehabilitation - mental health, justice, drug & alcohol  
*(Experiential outreach therapeutic work)*  
**but...**

**Strictly clinical approach never quite sat right**  
 Mainstream services appeared to be ignoring underlying trauma -  
 focussing on responding to symptoms  
 (mental illness, behavioural issues, addiction, homelessness etc)  
 ...and all but ignoring the underlying causes  
 (trauma, disadvantage, lack of healthy attachment, etc.)

**Dominant Paradigm**

- Government services for 'at-risk' youth in Australia are limited and are failing those who 'fall through the gaps'
  - Arguable those for whom cost is highest
- Headspace, school counsellors, youth services: able to intervene early, but...
- Many YP will not effectively engage with conventional clinical approaches:
  - either not get through the door in the first place, or
  - Require significantly greater depth of intervention than is available
- Beyond this we have 'ambulance at the bottom of the cliff' services picking up the pieces - too late...

**Why does therapy usually only look like this?**



**When it could also look like this?**



**The conventional "clinical" expression of Mental Health care is lacking...**

- Often rigid models of care
- Not individualised
- Lack of recognition of trauma and disadvantage – underlying causes and/or social determinants of mental health problems.
- Over diagnose, over-medicate over-pathologise



**So what's missing?**







....connection with others...



...experiences of relying on others for support



Trusting,  
being held safely,  
and securely...



...the opportunity for other forms of expression



## The Recre8 Program

A 4 month program for 14-19 year old young people at-risk and living with disadvantage:

- **Intake:** Intensive intake and assessment
- **Preparation:** Preparation phase and Preparation Camp
- **Expedition:** Ten-day expedition journey
- **Reunion:** Reunion and Celebration Day
- **Follow up:** Debriefing and follow-up support

## Pillars of Impact



**Effective engagement:**

- Appealing and empowering for young people
- Enables and supports full participation and strong therapeutic alliances based on *earned trust and genuine relationships.*



### Pillars of Impact



- Initial assessments enhanced by 'real-world/real-time' evidence gathered from natural/incidental therapeutic interactions and observations of YP in diverse social contexts
- This can provide a *far richer understanding of issues and needs.*



### Pillars of Impact



- Lasting change cannot occur unless there is both *desire for change and ownership of the change process.*
- The program is extremely effective in *inspiring the desire for change.*
- Triumphs result in a profound experience of *feeling activated, alive, and accomplished.*
- Guided reflection and reinforcement of achievements supports a sustained motivation for change.



### Pillars of Impact



- Unhealthy physical, mental and emotional patterns reset by strong guidance and support in a novel setting.
- Essential conditions for wellbeing and optimal MH can be seamlessly learned, practiced and reinforced.
- New healthy habits repeatedly applied change the brain for the better – new neural pathways.



## Pillars of Impact



- Direct experience of the achievement of success as a result of one's own efforts supports a strong internal 'locus-of-control', i.e. 'my efforts make a difference in my life'.
- The felt sense of this is enhanced with practice and skilled therapeutic guidance supporting greater insight and self-awareness. Tried and tested changes have a far greater lasting impact on everyday life.



## Recre8 Program Benefits

Targeted therapeutic support that addresses critical issues in YP's lives

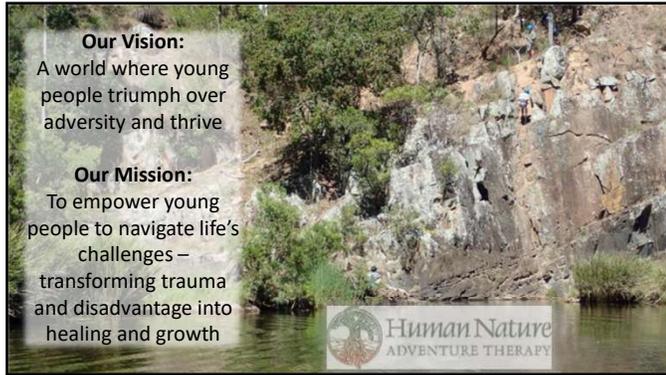
- A strong sense of achievement and personal empowerment
- Layered and applied support to set goals for positive change
- Renewed sense of connection: - to trusted adults, to oneself, to others and community.

## Recre8 Program Benefits

- **Trauma and attachment healing:**
  - acknowledgment and understanding of the influence of adverse experiences on development, behaviour, thinking and emotions
  - learning of and directly experiencing capacity to heal and change
- **Developing a help-seeking mindset, capacity and receptivity:**
  - empowerment to take control of mental wellbeing and ultimately life decisions and trajectory
- **Social skills:**
  - healthy engagement with others, respectful relating, conflict resolution, emotional intelligence (vulnerability, authenticity, boundaries, healthy disclosure, listening)
- **Life skills:**
  - being organised (planning), cooking, self-care, leadership



## Adventure + Therapy = Adventure Therapy



**Our Vision:**  
A world where young people triumph over adversity and thrive

**Our Mission:**  
To empower young people to navigate life's challenges – transforming trauma and disadvantage into healing and growth



To find out more:  
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