

Returning Warriors Program

In ancient, as well as in many current indigenous tribal cultures, when Warriors returned from battle they were not allowed to re-enter the tribe immediately. The War Chief first led his Warriors into the wilderness for days, weeks or months of cleansing. Through bathing, burial, and other ritual practices, the “burning blood” was calmed and the Warrior Spirit was reintegrated.

Only then were the Warriors allowed to return to the tranquility of the tribe.

Our culture has no such ritual, no such process for our Returning Warriors. Since our earliest wars, we have simply sent our soldiers home after conflict to resume their lives, as though nothing had ever happened. The result of this oversight has been massive trauma to both the individual and the community. Left to themselves, even with current post trauma psychological support, our Returning Warriors are unprepared to reconstruct their lives and rediscover who they were before the War.

What is today known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) went largely unaddressed during previous conflicts (Korea, World Wars I and II, and before). The psychological traumas of battle were not effectively treated, and usually were never talked about even by its survivors. The result of returning our soldiers directly back to their families, communities and society without the opportunity to release the Warrior Spirit has been horrifying.

And today, the reported incidence of PTSD among our soldiers returning from Iraq, in particular, is appearing more quickly, more severely than ever before.

The Returning Warriors program was developed to apply these ancient principles to assist in the transition from Warrior to stable and valuable member of the Community once again.

Program Locations & Cost

The Returning Warriors workshops and retreats are held in a variety of locations. Fees vary based on location to include room and board options. Please see the web site for the current location and fees.

If you have a group of veterans who would like to produce a Returning Warriors retreat in your area, please contact us for options and scheduling.

Training Program

The Foundation also provides training for retreat facilitators and support staff. Contact us for more information on our training programs

Ravens Grove Foundation for Healing, Inc.
www.RavensGroveFoundation.org

Information & Registration:
www.ReturningWarriors.com

Registration forms are available online or call 512-586-2736 to receive one by mail.

Tax-deductible Donations

Ravens Grove Foundation for Healing, Inc., the sponsor of the Returning Warriors program, is a 501(c)(3), 100% publicly funded charity as recognized by the IRS. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Donations of any amount are welcome, and may be made online, by mail, or in person.

Sponsor Program

The unfortunate fact is that not all of our Returning Warriors have the financial resources to get the help they need. If you would like to contribute to our Sponsor Fund, please let us know. Your contribution to the Foundation for such support is tax-deductible.

Contact Gerry Starnes, Executive Director for donor and sponsor opportunities.
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Returning Warriors

A Program of Ravens Grove
Foundation for Healing



**A retreat for veterans to help
heal the trauma of war**

Warfare is an ancient and mythic experience, and the effects it has on soldiers are real.

People returning from War are never the same. War changes them, some more than others. When the Warrior within is released it can never be put back in the box, can never be ignored.

The Returning Warriors program goes beyond contemporary traditional treatment. Using ancient healing techniques practiced for thousands of years, the Returning Warriors program helps to create a bridge between the traumatic experience of War and the desire to again become an effective member of family and community.

To do this, the program addresses the whole person: Mind, Body, Heart, and Soul.

Through the program, participants experience directly the healing power of techniques used for thousands of years to effectively reintegrate the Warrior Spirit. They learn specific practices they can use on a daily basis, as needed. Everyone has an opportunity to tell their story, to express the nightmare, to let go of fear.

Key Program Elements

Participants will learn and experience a variety of practices, rituals, and ceremonies in addition to dialog and discussion. These practices were carefully selected and structured through the program to both heal and teach skills for living effectively.

The Shamanic Journey

The drumming journey is a fundamental aspect of this healing practice that has been used for at least 10,000 years. Healers journey into the spirit world to connect with spirit allies and guides for the purpose of gaining information and access to healing power. Applied to our culture, the individual is empowered to go on journeys – alone if possible or with the assistance of a guide – for personal healing. Participants will learn how to journey and will take part in several journeys throughout the retreat.

Rituals for Letting Go

There are many varieties of Ritual Burial: in earth, fire, and water. Ritual death is letting go of attachments, including attachments to the past and to fear. During the week, participants will learn how to use ritual burial practices to let go of memories, nightmares, and fear.

Curse Healing

Engagements with the enemy involve the entire being – mind, emotions, body, and soul. During battle, soldiers engage all of themselves in the struggle for survival. In that process, curses are sent and received, as well as blows and bullets. The curse healing process identifies and removes the active curses.

Soul Retrieval

A key cause of illnesses of the mind, body, and spirit is soul loss. Pieces of the Self are lost through encounters with Power, in which the individual is overwhelmed. Soul Retrieval is an ancient practice in which the healer/practitioner journeys to find one or more of these lost pieces and return them in order to re-integrate the person. Such integration is key to fully recovering as a fully functioning – whole – self.



Program Facilitators

A trained and experienced team of facilitators and assistants is on site throughout the retreat.

Karen Hutchins, MA LPC

Karen is the clinical director of Ravens Grove Foundation for Healing and owner of Cicada Recovery Services, Austin, TX. She has been a psychotherapist for more than 30 years, focusing for the past 25 years in her specialty of working with PTSD and survivors of extensive trauma and abuse of all types: sexual, physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual.

She has worked for many years with veterans and children of veterans.

Karen also has worked in the criminal justice system to provide therapy for convicted perpetrators of physical and sexual abuse. Working with the shadow aspect of human behavior has given her the insight, compassion, and understanding of the extremes to which the human soul can go.

Ms. Hutchins is a shamanic practitioner, Reiki Master & Certified Hypnotherapist. She has presented retreats and workshops since 1975 for individuals and professional organizations.

Gerry Starnes, M.Ed.

Gerry is the executive director of Ravens Grove Foundation for Healing, Austin, TX. He is a teacher, trainer, and consultant, focusing on contemporary and alternative approaches to healing and personal evolution.

Mr. Starnes has experience in both individual and group settings, including work with psychotic patients using a variety of contemporary traditional treatment modalities. He has facilitated and co-facilitated numerous workshops and retreats over the past 20 years.