



# Timor Awakening 2023

A renewal and rehabilitation program for veterans founded on solidarity, camaraderie, and holistic health care



## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Submission of this Expression of Interest (EOI) does not guarantee a place in the program. I wish to. Be considered for:

- Timor Awakening 23: 25<sup>th</sup> February to 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023, Gold Coast EOI closing Date: TBC
- Timor Awakening 24: 22<sup>nd</sup> April to 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023, Timor-Leste, EOI Closing Date: TBC
- Timor Awakening 25: 16<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> June 2023, Gold Coast, EOI Closing Date: TBC
- Timor Awakening 26: 16<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> August or 16<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023, Timor-Leste, EOI Closing Date: TBC

The Timor Awakening (TA) program is an immersive, evidence based, peer to peer wellbeing program for veterans and their families (i.e. spouse/defacto or adult child); composing holistic health education, group therapy, mentoring, physical activity and community development. The program aims to provide renewal, holistic health training and contribute and reduce the instance of veteran suicide, domestic violence, and detrimental effects of service life on veteran families. TA is a program for veterans willing to be accountable and take responsibility to do the work to move in a positive direction in life. The activities and structure in the program are designed to help each veteran make a positive plan towards purpose, identity, to realise their potential and regain a sense of pride and dignity in their lives.

During Covid, the TA program on the Gold Coast follows the rhythm, structure, and ethos of Timor Awakening, based out of St George's Defence Holiday Suites, 192 Marine Parade, Rainbow Bay, with a range of new activities and experiences. We will be doing our programs between Gold Coast and Timor-Leste.

Before completing this form, please visit our website on [www.timorawakening.com](http://www.timorawakening.com) to gain a deeper understanding about the Timor Awakening program. Past programs, testimonials, media reports, photo galleries and videos are available.

This EOI is the first step in the selection process to determine final participants. It is important that you provide enough information on this form to assist with the panelling process. If this is an outdated EOI, e.g., you were forwarded this from previous participant, please use the latest version which can be found on our website [www.timorawakening.com/participants](http://www.timorawakening.com/participants).

- ◆ Timor Awakening programs are conceived, coordinated, and conducted by veterans for veterans.
- ◆ Our programs are available to Australian veterans from any service, from any state, **with or without operational service.**
- ◆ In our programs we have 3 expectations: 1: **Be respectful**, 2. **Be safe** and 3. **Be active.**
- ◆ Please consider your spouse or adult age child to accompany you \* they need to submit their own EOI. (See page 4).



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- ◆ Priority for this program will be for veterans who have had limited access to veteran support, those who are experiencing personal difficulty, younger veterans and those actively engaged in the veteran/wellness community.
- ◆ Veterans who have completed previous TA programs will be considered a reserve and, if qualified, Peer mentors.
- ◆ Timor Awakening is an program. Plenty of water, smoothies, kombucha, tea and coffee available.

## PERSONAL DETAILS (if filling out by hand, please print clearly):

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment: (please circle one) Currently Employed / Currently Unemployed / Retired

Type of employment (please circle one): Full-time / Part-Time / Casual / Volunteer / Retired

Relationship Status: (please circle what applies to you) Single / De Facto / Married / Divorced

Do you have children (please circle) Yes / No      If yes, # of children?

If you have children, are they financially dependent on you? Yes / No

Shirt Size: \_\_\_\_\_

**SELECTION INFORMATION:** \* Please take the time to fill in all fields with as much details as possible. The VCA team's ability to select participants for this program is based on the level of detail you provide in this EOI.

Are you committed to change for your health & wellbeing?

Have you read this EOI in full? \*We have a lot of information in here so please make sure you read thoroughly.

How did you hear about the Timor Awakening Program?

Why would you like to participate in the Timor Awakening Program?

How do you feel you will benefit from the Program?



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Have you participated in any form of rehabilitation program previously?

If yes, please describe the program and who it was run by.

Please provide an overview of your military history:

Year of Enlistment:

Year of Discharge:

Service:

Corps/Speciality:

Operational Service:

Additional information of interest:

How many years did you serve, or have you served?

Please explain current injuries, illnesses, or medical challenges (mental and physical) - (Confidential for program, this is a wellbeing and rehabilitation program, and priority is given to veterans in need of healing and growth)

Were you medically discharged?

Yes.

No

If no, what was your reason for leaving the military? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been diagnosed with a psychological condition?

Yes

No

Unsure

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever received treatment for the above conditions?

Yes

No

Unsure

If yes, please list the type of treatment (i.e., medication, psychological therapy):

Psychiatrist

Psychologist

Medication

Please provide detail of your treatment: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe your current level of fitness and training:



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Are you willing and able to participate in group activities?

What scope would you see in helping other veterans or an Ex-Service Organisations in the future?

Please give us an idea of any qualifications, skills or interests you are willing and able to offer the program? Eg. Current advanced medic, photographer, website support, counsellor psychologist, fundraiser etc.

## Media Outreach

With the aim of creating awareness and promoting health in our veteran community we will look for media opportunities to highlight this program and the benefits provided. Do you approve for photos and footage taken from the program to be used for education and outreach? Privacy will be strictly protected if requested.

Yes  No  Unsure

**Spouse/ adult age dependent (please name)/ Note: Please submit an accompanying EOI for your nominated dependant.** Please indicate if you are interested in your spouse or caregiver joining you and how it would help. **Again – if you fill this field in, please submit a full EOI and send both EOI's in together.**

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

EOI's will be held until closing dates. Veterans Care Association will contact you ASAP by email & phone.

When the panel is determined you will be notified if you have been accepted for this program, put on a reserve list, or recommended to apply for future programs.

We invite health professionals such as experienced psychologists, holistic health providers, ex-military chaplains with experience in the veteran community to apply as a volunteer for the program, or future programs. Please let us know if you think of somebody that fits in one of these categories that may be a good fit to join.

Please submit your EOI for prior to the closing date of 21 November 2021, via email to [support@veteranscare.com.au](mailto:support@veteranscare.com.au)

## Acknowledgment:

I have read and understand the information in this EOI

I understand that submitting an EOI does not guarantee a position on the program. Digital signature is fine.

Signature:

Date:

*For further information on the Timor Awakening Program visit*



# Timor Awakening 2023

[www.timorawakening.com](http://www.timorawakening.com)

*Timor Awakening is funded with support from Bolton Clarke and RSL QLD*

*We acknowledge the volunteer staff at VCU to make this program possible. Our deepest respect and thanks to the Timor-Leste day government and Timorese veteran community who make our Timor-Leste programs one of the most of unique programs in the world. It is from these rich experiences in Timor-Leste, from the Timorese Veterans and people, they have formed the basis to develop programs now available in Australia.*

We invite all veterans and families to join Veterans Care Association and appreciate any support via donation to allow us to continue helping veterans and their families. A membership and donation form are at the following link:

<http://veteranscare.com.au/donate/>

As a final note we would like to emphasise what the program is, and what it is not. TA is an active peer-to-peer health and wellness program. Signing up to the program is a commitment to be an active member of the group, to be safe and respectful. The programs include a detailed range of confronting issues and activities for people who are choosing to improve their health and wellbeing. Alcohol will not be available during the programme. Coming on to the program with ongoing alcohol or drug dependencies is not appropriate timing.

The Timor Awakening program has been a life changing experience for hundreds of veterans and we look forward to meeting you soon.

Kind Regards

VCA Team.



# Timor Awakening 2023

## Timor Awakening Program Overview Prepared by Program Director Michael Stone, 1 April 2020

Timor Awakening (TA) is an immersive, evidence based, peer to peer wellbeing program for veterans; composing holistic health education, group therapy, mentoring, physical activity, historical commemoration and community development. The program is centred around an 11-day immersion in Timor-Leste, creating a disruption from participant's routine to take pause, learn about themselves and seize responsibility for a positive direction forward in life. TA is available to Australian Veterans (and spouse or carer), from any state, with or without operational service. The aim of Timor Awakening is to prevent veteran suicide and improve the wellbeing of veterans and their families. TA has a comprehensive medical support team from all streams of the mental health community. Every TA participant conducts a range of data collection based on internationally accepted metrics for mental health contributing to detailed quantitative and qualitative reporting on each program.

By attending the programme veterans have elected to participate in their own rescue, taking responsibility for the life they want. The programme is intensive and obliges participants to be active in a peer group, whilst facilitating reflection time and individual mentoring. A range of stimulating activities and environments provide fertile ground for healing, growth and development. Our veteran facilitators, who are active participants on each programme, demonstrate the value of becoming a healer of others in our examples that Post Traumatic Growth is possible. The end state of Timor Awakening is to have inspired and informed veterans empowered with tools for positive change and linked to the array of veteran resources available in Australia.

Timor awakening embodies the relationship between Australian soldiers and the people of Timor lest a forged in World War 2 Promoting honourable values, shared identity, and unified purpose. Timor-Leste, as a nation, welcomes Australian veterans of Timor Awakening, from the President of the Republic down to the local village chief, for what is a unique life changing experience. Timor-Leste veterans inspiration, practical tools and lessons in overcoming trauma and re-establishing purposeful lives. With 24 years of war and oppression the Timorese veterans are world leaders in resilience, courage and discipline, and it is profound that their choice to forgive their enemies has set them free to continue serving their people with extremely low instance of PTSD and other mental illness. There are cognitive benefits for veterans to return to a former conflict zone, to experience these places through a new perspective and remove the images of anxiety that may be trapped within their minds.

The community engagement and development aspect of Timor Awakening provide veterans a sense of esteem, pride, community, hope, and purpose. Riak retreat is a major educational facility being built funded by Australian Veterans and construction has included cooperation between Australian, New Zealand and Timorese Veterans.

The program was developed in 2016 as a response to the increasing suicide crisis, as well as diminishing mental and physical health, amongst the Australian Veteran community. To date over 400 Veterans and partners have participated in Timor Awakening. For more information including forms to nominate to participate visit [www.timorawakening.com](http://www.timorawakening.com)

Timor Awakening has been possible due to financial support of Bolton Clarke and RSL QLD, along with major volunteer contributions of a number of veterans. Corporate partners are required for the program to continue and share the program with the wider veteran community for both domestic and international programs. **veterans care association has a clear strategic aim to utilise the data and successful interventions of Timor Awakening As a model for Department of Veterans affairs to commit to funding Wellness intervention to prevent veterans suicide, broken families and injured veterans. Wellness intervention will result in considerable government budget savings compared to \$ spent on 'sickness' treatment, pensions and medication, as well as increase health and wellbeing of veterans and their families, save lives, and meaningfully re-engage some of the nation's most energetic and capable members of society.** In the soul of the veteran is a need to serve, to be of value, to contribute and to belong.

Program Director Timor Awakening, Michael Stone, email: [michael@veteranscare.com.au](mailto:michael@veteranscare.com.au)

### Timor Awakening Program Media

RSL QLD 3 Minute Video overview (2020) - <https://www.facebook.com/RSLQueensland/videos/594230674463467/>  
Timor Awakening 7 Program Video - provides a snapshot of the program (6 mins) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5Xdjp5bcuc>  
Riak Veterans Retreat and Language School - short videos about this project which is our enduring project for all veterans:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N78XE6tpnRs&t=36s> . <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQIU9r16OvM>  
<https://www.facebook.com/timorawakening/videos/2441330942583644/>

ABC News story on the Riak Retreat project 19 Sep 19:  
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-09-19/war-veterans-heal-in-east-timor-tour/11525170>  
<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/am/war-veterans-healing-through-community-work-in-east-timor/11526898>



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## Timor Awakening program components (content structure)

Detailed preparation - involving individual admin/medical/mental prep, personal and group engagement.  
Orientation - team bonding, individual mentor 1 on 1, briefing.  
Self-Awareness. Improving capacity to relate to yourself and others.  
Grounding (beliefs, techniques, mindfulness).  
Taking ownership and responsibility of personal circumstances.  
Nurturing your mind, body and soul.  
Sleep Management.  
Destigmatizing trauma and mental health.  
Anxiety, depression and stress - understanding the causes, biology, recognising the signs and mitigating symptoms.  
Tools to help relax, ground and manage feelings and physical symptoms of stress and anxiety.  
Communication and positive living in communities.  
Restoring a sense of Identity and Purpose.  
Forgiveness.  
Goal Setting.  
Forging a new Identity (participants form identity as alumni of program, as Australian veterans, as Australians)  
Strategies to help you go back to activities or places you may have avoided since the trauma.  
Transitioning back to connection with communities, support and positive pathways.

## Timor Awakening Activities

Group discussions.  
Self-awareness exercises.  
Physical activation (group walks, stretching, breath work, personal exercise, volunteer work).  
Volunteer work on organic farm  
Breathing and breath work.  
Mindfulness and grounding.  
Yoga  
Goal setting.  
Communication skills.  
Body Language – impact of posture, effects on communication.  
Introduction to Neuro Linguistic Programming.  
Fun team activities – Volleyball, Axe Throwing, Surfing Lessons

## Group discussion topics on Timor Awakening

Living with purpose and identity (and helping others).  
Growth mindset / Living above the line.  
Addiction and relapse prevention.  
Taking ownership and responsibility (of our past, present and future).  
Nurturing the body – Nutrition, exercise, sleep.  
Mental health – Anxiety, depression or post-traumatic stress (awareness, mitigation).  
Safety plans – Addiction relapse, Triggered Anxiety/Stress/Depression, Suicidal Ideation.  
Suicide – helping others, getting help, safety plans, processing and managing bereavement.  
Communication and relationships.  
Relationships.  
Forgiveness / Letting Go.  
Resources for veterans and families at home.