

VETERANS AND TRAUMA

The National Institutes of Health estimate that, of the approximately 2 million veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, up to 20% suffer from post-traumatic stress or PTSD. Veterans of previous wars may also continue to experience symptoms of PTSD. PTSD is an anxiety disorder that develops as a result of exposure to a traumatic event and is characterized by:

- *Recurring intrusive thoughts related to the trauma (e.g., flashbacks, dreams)*
- *Avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma, emotional numbness, and social withdrawal*
- *Symptoms of physiological arousal such as hyper-vigilance, exaggerated startle response, anxiety, difficulty sleeping, irritability, and hyper-reactivity.*



As veteran post-traumatic stress (PTSD) and suicide are on the rise, there is an urgent need to address combat stress. The Power Breath workshop allows veterans to regain a sense of self-mastery and control because they can self-administer the techniques. Research shows 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. 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.



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 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.

“ I have found an inner contentment and peace that I had not experienced before the course. I learned to be more accepting of myself and others. I learned the power the breath has... and how it is the key to surviving any and every situation life throws at you.”

– Jennifer Kannel Ambord, *WI Army National Guard, Operation Iraqi Freedom*