

REGENERATE

Explaining REGENERATE and Bush Adventure Therapy (BAT)

REGENERATE program provides **free** therapeutic outdoor experiences for single women, women and families and young people who are survivors of family violence

What is BAT?

Bush Adventure Therapy (BAT) is a holistic approach to health and wellbeing. BAT combines experiences of adventure in outdoor environments with the intention to create therapeutic outcomes for all those involved. People can practice new ways of relating with themselves and others while experiencing the benefits of nature. Through new adventures, participants can feel, taste, touch, hear and even see their strengths more clearly, enabling them to create a new narrative.

How are we different to other experiences and programs?

REGENERATE events are intentionally therapeutic and tailored through collaboration of individuals in the group. Our staff focus on participant's interests, hopes and intentions for their involvement in the program. **Gentle experiences** in nature offer opportunities to move beyond one's usual daily experiences towards a new preferred future for themselves and their families.

We see women as the expert in their life, and challenge assumptions that can limit or define them. Our programs offer whole-of-body experiences in nature, space for reflection, nurture and playful adventure.

At REGENERATE participant's first experience will be meeting one of our staff to talk about their expectations of the program. They can then choose to come along again to a short local park session, or move towards an adventure day. There is then the option to extend to a longer 1 day adventure, or 3 day base camp or camping journey trip. These longer trips may include bush, alpine, river, beach or rock environments to explore with other women and our team.

Counselling

Our BAT Outreach Counsellor will provide support and counselling for women and / or their children to attend REGENERATE events. This service is not a general counselling service, and while we may help in practical ways such as helping plan transport or phone a service on behalf of a participant, we do not offer case management. REGENERATE weaves individual support into the program by providing the space to address any barriers preventing women from being involved, and helping women get the most out of the program. Counsellors are trained in Trauma Informed Practice using approaches such as Narrative Therapy, Mindfulness, sensorimotor psychotherapy, Child developmental theories, and Motivational Interviewing.

Adventure: is very personal - an adventure may be different for each individual and / or family, and women's level of adventure is **always their choice**. Participants will speak with staff at REGENERATE to discuss any concerns and consider what level of adventure is right for them at this stage.

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Therapy: REGENERATE staff are trauma-informed and work together to bring skills in counselling, education, social work and group facilitation, with specialist BAT knowledge to ensure participants are supported on this new journey.

Recovery

REGENERATE will support women to be able to attend weekly, whole day and overnight BAT events. We do this by providing individual support and counselling that focuses on enabling women to participate to the level they want to participate, and helping them integrate learnings back into their everyday life. We can also provide support for women and their children to find, re-find or create new ways of relating with each other by assisting them to create new positive memories.

Because our focus is on providing positive BAT experiences, we do not offer crisis intervention, case management, long term counselling or other support not related to participation in REGENERATE. Should women and / or their children need additional support they will be referred back to their support worker, or another relevant option. It is expected that women and children who are referred by an agency will continue to be supported by that agency as needed.

Values and Frameworks

- We value gender equality and everyone's personal safety.
- We acknowledge the Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the land in which we work, and pay respects to traditional Elders of the past, present and future.
- We follow the ethical principles of the Australian Association of Bush Adventure Therapy (AABAT), the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA), and the Australian Association of Social Work (AASW).
- We are a Child Safe organisation.
- We work within the Australian Adventure Activities Safety Standards.

What are our qualifications and experience?

The REGENERATE staff team includes trained social workers, counsellors, teachers, outdoor educators and Bush Adventure Therapy practitioners. Individually our staff have up to 20 years experience in working with families and young people.

Rules

The regenerate staff team insist on only three key rules during BAT events:

1. No alcohol or drug use
2. No violence of any kind, and
3. If brought, all mobile phones must have 'location services' turned off. Beyond those three rules, the group will help to decide how they will relate and behave with each other during BAT events.

To help with the development of a safe group, an agreement will be developed by the group. In general, areas such as sharing stories, showing respect and taking personal responsibility will be discussed. Confidentiality and safety are our priority and will be discussed with individual women prior to BAT events.

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Weekly REGENERATE

The weekly REGENERATE session goes for 2 hours, and involves a meet-and-greet in a local park, with tea and coffee. It offers the chance for women to meet other women as well as the female REGENERATE team.

Following introductions, we will outline a plan for the session. We may then do some gentle warm-up activities and games. A grounding or centering activity will usually be used to help women feel comfortable.

Questions that are raised may be reflected upon through sharing of ideas facilitated by staff. Collaborative guidelines will be developed for how we will work together, including setting up of safe boundaries about how we want to be as a group and what is safe to share or not.

Adventure Days

Once someone has attended a weekly REGENERATE session, they are invited to sign up for an adventure day then a camp. We invite women to come with us away from the hustle and bustle of normal life to the bush, a river or an ocean setting.

These whole day sessions immerse us further into the benefits of Bush Adventure Therapy, and give participants more time to build friendships, get active, and absorb the healing that nature offers. Some adventure days will be for women only, and others for children and young people up to the age of 16. Activities may include walking in nature and taking time to explore a deeper understanding of the benefits of the outdoors, climbing or water activities.

Adventure Camps

When women feel ready to participate in an overnight adventure, they can join us for a camping trip in a bush, ocean or river setting. These 2-night experiences will enable more time for adventures, friendship, healthy activities, fun and laughter. They also offer space to reflect on how far people have come on their recovery journey, and to think about 'where to next'.

Some camps are for women only, and some are for women and their children.

A focus on camps will be creating opportunities for women to reflect on how they will develop a positive future for themselves and their family.

These camps create new fun memories, and help participants grow, laugh, and shine a light on each other's strengths.

Food and Equipment

For all events, food and drinks will be provided and allergies catered for.

Participants are expected to wear appropriate clothing for weather and activity, and any extra equipment will be provided by REGENERATE

Travel

Women will need to find their way to the nominated local park for our weekly REGENERATE session. If transport is an issue, it is hoped that a support worker or good friend can help transport women to these sessions. For the whole day adventures and overnight experiences departure points will be arranged.