Introduction to Wilderness Adventure Therapy®

- 5 day course -

An excellent practice-oriented overview of the theory, clinical procedures and therapeutic methods used in the evidence-based model of Wilderness Adventure Therapy® developed in Australia since 1992. This course is run across Australia and is aimed at familiarising adventure facilitators and therapeutic professionals to essential elements of effective and ethical therapeutic outdoor programs. While the focus is on establishing, staffing and implementing WAT® format programs, generic topics make this course highly relevant to any person involved in outdoor-based youth work programs, or any outdoor program for special populations.

Course Outcomes

The course participants will develop a working understanding of the key elements and methods of WAT. This is achieved by linking the professional fields of wilderness adventure programming and therapy. *The course does not qualify participants as therapists or counsellors*, however it does provide an excellent foundation for further training. Completion of this course provides a broad theoretical grounding in therapeutic practices, applied ethics, duty of care and behavioural safety management and how to engage and support clients through a therapeutic process. It is ideal for those adventure facilitators who provide outdoor programs for special populations. A brief examination formally recognises learning of the course material. Professional Development (PD) points may apply for members of the Australian Psychological Society and other professional bodies.

Details

Dates:

Thursday 27th & Friday 28th March and Monday 31 March until Wed. 2 April
- Daily 9.30am to 4.30pm -

Location & Venue:

Neo Psychology
378 Burwood Rd, Hawthorn, Victoria

Enquiries:

Email: training@neopsychology.com.au
Tel: (03) 9810 3067

The Australian Wilderness Adventure Therapy Accreditation Scheme (AWATAS)

With concerns about the lack of professional regulation, and frequent anecdotal evidence of questionable practices over many years, Dr. Simon Crisp developed the AWATAS in 2002 to provide more accountability and professionalism to this type of therapy. The scheme provides formalised practitioner as well as program accreditation in the WAT model through the organisation he founded - Neo Psychology. Practitioner accreditation provides recognition for both outdoor leaders and therapeutically trained professionals. The scheme is leading the field as a responsible and accountable means to recognise a minimum level of training in an ethical and evidence-based program that has been extensively trialed in clinical, community and school settings for over 15 years. Subsequent training includes *Intermediate* and *Advanced* WAT courses, and *Psychological First Response* training and the *WAT Risk-Management Practicum*. More details about the accreditation scheme can be downloaded from: www.neopsychology.com.au/wildernessPrograms.php

What is the Wilderness Adventure Therapy® (WAT) model?

WAT was developed at the Austin Hospital Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (1992-2000), Barwon Health Adolescent Mental Health Service (2000-2001), and in community counselling agencies (eg CASAs, drug & alcohol services, etc.) and schools through the SWATRAD project (2001-2003). It is arguably the most well researched adventure therapy intervention in Australia (results: www.neopsychology.com.au/wildernessPrograms.php). Research results demonstrating its effectiveness in treating a range of mental health problems were released by the Australian Psychological Society as part of National Psychology Week in 2004, and as a result WAT was featured on ABC-TV: www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2004/s1259220.htm (watch on our website)

Course Lecturer: Dr Simon Crisp

Simon is a pioneer of this type of therapy in Australia, practicing WAT clinically, researching WAT and training professionals since 1992. Simon has developed, run and evaluated over 45 long-term WAT programs in a broad range of clinical, community & school settings since 1992. He has lectured in post-graduate Counselling, and Ethics & Professional Issues at Monash University, and has completed doctoral research into WAT's effectiveness with mental health disorders and suicidal behaviours in adolescents. In 2006/7 he researched WAT and other interventions at Monash University as a Post-Doctoral Fellow. He has an international reputation in the field, and consults to organisations such as the Victorian Schools Innovation Commission & mental health services.

Registration

neo psychology

Course Fee: **$700.00**

- Early Bird rate before February 22nd: **$660**
- Includes a comprehensive 90-page course manual
- Concession for full-time students $525 - documentary evidence required

Closing date for registration is Friday 14th March 2008

For a registration form email: **training@neopsychology.com.au**

Course Content

WAT involves a sophisticated application of a) principles of program design, b) specialised staff competencies, and c) clinical diagnostic, therapeutic and programming procedures and processes. The training emphasises requisite staff skills. Bi-disciplinary WAT teams are staffed by *Adventure Facilitators* (qualified outdoor leaders) and *Clinical Facilitators* (therapeutic professionals) and/or *Wilderness Adventure Therapists* (dual-qualified professionals). All staff must have sound knowledge and applied skills in the specialised practice of WAT - including a working knowledge of each other's skills and roles. Issues of team functioning, including effective team leadership are given close attention.

Day 1	• Key theory, definitions, concepts of WAT
	• Application of the principles of best practice
	• Program design, integration with agencies core business, liaison & referral
Day 2	• Client engagement, assessment & screening
	• Composing a functional & therapeutic group
	• Program case studies
	• Duty of care & legal issues
Day 3	• Presenting client issues & diagnostic groups
	• Client case studies: individuals & groups
	• Therapeutic outcome & process evaluation
	• Ethical Issues, confidentiality
Day 4	• Creating a therapeutic environment; managing psychological boundaries
	• Professional client communication skills
	• Group & Individual methods of intervention
	• Effective WAT teams: staff roles
Day 5	• Challenging behaviour, conflict management & crisis intervention
	• Holistic Risk Assessment and Management
	• Responding to critical incidents; trauma management

Trainee Feedback

"I felt that I learnt more this past week than I have while studying for my Masters degree. It was a great base of information, which will be very useful and applicable." (Outdoor Educator/Youth Worker)

"…I thoroughly enjoyed it. In fact, I can't remember in my university career to date feeling so engaged with the content of what was being presented. Each session seemed to be a logical progression from the former session and the opportunities given to work in small groups provided a great chance for people to share ideas and opinions across disciplines… I'm glad I had the opportunity to attend the course, and really enjoyed meeting such interesting people too…" (Probationary Psychologist) *"…it was the best course Xxxx and myself have participated in…"* (Outdoor Leader)

"This course, your approach, and the material covered is so professional – especially compared to other people who say they know something about this area…" (Social Work student)

"I learnt so much and can already see the results whilst I have been on placement at XXXX (program). I am more aware of the issues and ideas that need to be considered when creating a program for 'at risk' youth. So thankyou for sharing your knowledge and experience in Wilderness Adventure Therapy…" (Youth Studies/Outdoor Rec. Student)

"Learning such great professional knowledge around WAT, so good to finally be apart of it." (Outdoor Educator)

➔ go to **www.neopsychology.com.au** for more about other training & consultation