



Media Release

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Beyond Blue and Coastrek partnership embraces 'friluftsliv'

Coastrek and Beyond Blue are proud to announce a new charity partnership based on a series of celebrated coastal treks that inspire people to exercise in nature for the good of their mental health.

Teams of four can take on walks of varying distance along some of Australia's most stunning coastlines while experiencing the widely recognised benefits of exercising in nature with family and friends.

Every dollar raised by participants goes towards the Beyond Blue Support Service, which offers free counselling, referrals and advice to almost 200,000 contacts each year.

The treks are held annually in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide and participants can select 60km, 30km or, where offered, 15km treks. Events are open to both men and women and each team made up of at least two women.

Beyond Blue Board Director Johanna Griggs said Coastrek was a great way to get back to nature.

"Growing up on Sydney's northern beaches, I've always loved being outdoors and heading to the coast is always a wonderful experience," Ms Griggs said.

"I think that's something a lot of Australians can relate to and Coastrek combines that love of walking along the coast with friends and supporting Beyond Blue. Beyond Blue has partnered with Coastrek for four amazing treks where participants will experience some of our country's most spectacular coastlines."

A [review](#)¹ of international research showed spending time in natural environments can improve psychological wellbeing, stress responses, cognitive performance and social skills. The research referenced 'friluftsliv' [*free – loofst – liv*] – the Nordic connection between people and nature and the uplifting effect it can have on our mental and physical health.

Coastrek Founding Director and women's health expert Di Westaway says the benefits of being active outdoors were backed by science.

"We've taken tens of thousands of Australian women into nature and there's no doubt the experience makes them happier and healthier," Ms Westaway said.

"Coastrek is a chance to be immersed in nature while challenging yourself with a team hike along scenic coastlines, high clifftops, beautiful bush trails and sunny sand. It lifts your mood and supports the fabulous work of Beyond Blue.

"The recent review of research confirms yet again that being in nature improves psychological wellbeing, reduces stress and enhances cognitive performance, so the whole community benefits."

Registrations for Coastrek Sydney, which will be held on March 27, 2020, are now open. To register your interest for Coastrek events, visit coastrek.com.au

¹ Immersive Nature-Experiences as Health Promotion Interventions for Healthy, Vulnerable, and Sick Populations? A Systematic Review and Appraisal of Controlled Studies (2019)

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If you or someone you care about is struggling, you can talk to mental health professionals 24/7 via the Beyond Blue Support Service on 1300 22 4636, via web chat from 3pm to midnight (AEST) every night at beyondblue.org.au/get-support or via email.