

Title of Study:

Mental Health Outcomes in Veterans Following a Weeklong Excursion With Project Healing Waters

Purpose:

Recent research shows that nature-based therapy may be particularly effective in helping alleviate certain mental health symptoms, like mood and anxiety. The current study will evaluate the changes in mental health symptoms following a nature-based therapy.

Participants:

Participants will be recruited from Project Healing Waters, a non-profit group that is currently helping Veterans with a variety of mental health disorders. All individuals who were selected for the five-day Freedom Ranch experience will be eligible for enrollment in this study.

Procedure:

We will evaluate overall changes in mental health by comparing depression and anxiety levels two weeks before the intervention with levels two weeks after the intervention. We will also compare changes in positive mood and negative mood immediately before and after one specific therapeutic intervention. We expect that an increase in positive mood and a decrease in negative mood after the interventions will be associated with improved mental health scores. Mental Health Outcomes in Veterans Following a Weeklong Excursion With Project Healing Waters two weeks after the intervention.

Methods:

Mental Health Outcomes in Veterans Following a Weeklong Excursion With Project Healing Waters

BDI-II - Beck Depression Inventory -This questionnaire has 21 questions and evaluates symptom severity in depression. The form will take about 10 minutes to complete. Scores will provide an overall assessment of Depression symptoms over the last few weeks.

STAI-6 - State and Trait Anxiety inventory. This questionnaire has 20 items that measure trait anxiety (i.e., how relaxed or anxious are you in general) and 20 items that measure state anxiety (i.e., how anxious are you currently - takes current situations into account). The STAI-6 will take about 15 minutes to complete.

CD-RISC-25 - This questionnaire uses 25 statements to evaluate resiliency. This scale also has norms for values expected in neurotypical populations and score values for specific mental health conditions. This form will take about 10 minutes to complete.

Demographic Survey- This questionnaire asks three questions to include age, sex, and current state the participant resides in.

Scores from these forms will provide information about how PHW is influencing symptoms in anxiety, depression/mood, resilience and from trauma.

Once participants are at Freedom Ranch, the PANAS will be administered to measure general levels of affect, or mood. The PANAS is a 20-item scale that measures overall mood. There

are 10 words that describe negative emotions and 10 words that describe positive emotions. Participants will be asked to complete the questionnaire rating their current emotional levels at that moment. It typically takes people less than five minutes to complete. This will give the study a general measure of affect/mood when the participants first arrive, immediately before and immediately after one outdoor experience and just before the participants leave Freedom Ranch.

Two weeks after the PHW fly-fishing intervention, participants will be emailed with a SurveyMonkey link to answer the original four questionnaires one last time.