



# ReAwaken

Connection • Compassion • Meaningful Action

HUMANE CLINIC  
ADELAIDE  
Hope  
Understanding  
Meaning  
Acceptance  
Noos (human spirit)  
Empowerment  
[www.humaneclinic.com.au](http://www.humaneclinic.com.au)

## Manifesto for compassionate change

The ReAwaken community acknowledges that this document was developed on the lands of the Kaurna people and we respect the continuing spiritual relationship with their country. We acknowledge the Kaurna people as the traditional custodians of the Adelaide region and pay respect to elders past and present.

We are guided by a set of core beliefs and values that include:

- 1) The current medical model is not working, in fact data suggests that since the introduction of the biomedical approach to mental health and addiction, these very conditions have skyrocketed
- 2) Healing happens through connected relationships and in community
- 3) The importance of all aspects of intersectionality, including that mental health, trauma, and addiction are universal and interconnected
- 4) There is no sick and no well, only a continuum of human experience
- 5) People's pain does not occur in a vacuum, instead it is often caused by greater societal problems such as poverty, violence, environmental destruction, broken institutions, etc.
- 6) People who have been labelled with mental health conditions, addiction problems, and/or trauma survivors have wisdom in their experience and need to be deeply listened to
- 7) Experiences labelled as "psychotic" or "pathological" actually have meaning and have the potential to be explored and integrated into people's lives as a part of the healing process
- 8) Policies should be guided by people with lived experience (Nothing about us without us)
- 9) Every human is a whole person with the potential to heal and contribute to their communities in meaningful ways
- 10) We value self-determination or our right to choose what is best for us, including taking or not taking drugs/medications
- 11) Our communities are safer, more sustainable, and more enjoyable places to live when every person is valued, supported, and listened to



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Rooted in these beliefs and values, ReAwaken has the following aims:

- 1) A great shift from a medical focus on “fixing” individuals to transforming oppressive social structures in to healing communities where all people are valued
- 2) In shifting to a social perspective, we recognize true causes of emotional distress and addiction include intergenerational trauma, child abuse, sexual violence, bullying, family violence, poverty, racism, and environmental destruction
- 3) The creation of a vast array of programs, services, and communities where we stop putting people into silos, but instead where authentic connection and compassion for others and the environment is central
- 4) Shifting our culture to honour and learn from diverse people and perspectives, including indigenous peoples, rather than a one size fits all colonial approach
- 5) The creation of policies that allow people to discover what works for them in the context of healing communities rather than having treatments imposed upon them

The ReAwaken Manifesto was born out of a week-long gathering of international leaders in mental health, addiction, and trauma at the inaugural ReAwaken conference, ReAwaken Australia, which took place 8-12 April, 2019 in Adelaide, South Australia. The manifesto reflects the collective work and vision of these leaders. ReAwaken recognizes that our society is asleep in many ways, more isolated than ever from each other and the environment, which has led to ineffective and often harmful policies and practices in the fields of mental health, trauma and addiction. We call for a great reawakening of the human spirit, a reclaiming of our narratives, and a reconnection with our fellow travellers and the earth. We know this is possible because we have achieved this in one short week, having created a beautiful, safe, inclusive, and loving community in one small corner of the world.

As a call to action, we express a critical need for connection, compassion, and meaningful response to these issues, which affect our lives, our families, and our communities. We call on political leaders and citizens to hear our collective voice, and to take action in a manner consistent with our shared desire to promote the health and welfare of the populace.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this Manifesto may not be endorsed or shared by everyone who has attended Reawaken events.

*Humane Clinic acknowledges gratitude to **Oryx Cohen** as the person who crafted the ReAwaken Manifesto document, bringing together the views and ideas of the many contributors who attended ReAwaken Australia and shared ideas of compassion, connection and meaningful action for change.*