

Remount to ease transition to civilian life

The UK's armed forces are undergoing the most intense period of operational commitment since the Second World War. For service men and women who leave the forces to return to normal civilian life, the transition is more stressful than ever before. As a result, a new programme has been created to help members of the armed services from all ranks to prepare for the transition from military to civilian life, called the Remount Programme (www.remount.net).

Remount is free to all service personnel and it will offer a series of residential conversion and personal realisation courses at Brathay Hall near Lake Windermere. The Remount Programme aims to help service people to enjoy a smooth and fruitful transition into civilian life, and to help them plan to cope with the stress which can often arise from undergoing such significant personal change.

Neville Barton, founder of the Remount Programme said, "As General Sir Richard Dannatt recently commented, there is a "growing gulf between the Army and the nation". Factor-in the increasing requirement of all service men and women to serve in intensive operations, and the contrast between military and civilian life has never been greater.

"When our soldiers, sailors and aircrew do decide to leave the services, the transition can be a tremendously stressful experience. We have established the Remount Programme to help these valuable members of our society to integrate more easily into civilian life and to coach them to build on the considerable skills they have developed whilst serving."

Each course comprises 12 students, lasts four days, and includes class teaching, person to person tutoring, discussion groups, career guidance and challenging outside activities. The four day course is free, except for a £50 commitment fee on registration which covers insurance, the course materials and a book that students take home with them.

The Remount Programme is funded by a trust set up by mostly ex service people who are concerned that ex-service men and women are given the appropriate tools with which to handle the change in cultures. They have already been through the mill themselves so they understand how to overcome the difficulties. They also know how to have a happy, successful and fulfilling life.

At the conclusion of the course students can join the 15 Minute Club which provides access to a network of experts who can offer advice, help, someone to have a drink with or simply to talk to.

As Neville Barton concludes: "Remount will teach students how to take control of their lives in the civilian environment and how to handle the occupational and emotional changes that they will face. They will learn how to discover what they really want to do in their new lives and how to handle interviews for jobs. It will provide them with the tools and teach them the methods of handling the inevitable down times that will assail them and it will show them how to combat loneliness."

Remount offers a unique springboard from military to civilian life. As the two worlds appear seemingly further apart than ever before, The Remount Programme provides service men and women with an invaluable start to their new lives. To find out more, and to reserve a place on a Remount course, go to www.remount.net, e-mail remount@brathay.org.uk or telephone +44 (0) 1539 438 722.