

## Media Statement

### 'HOW'S YOUR MENTAL ELF?'

BREAK THRU CELEBRATES MENTAL HEALTH WEEK 2009 WITH TAI CHI IN THE PARK

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Despite sub-degree temperatures and rain looming, 43 job seekers and their families joined employees from Break Thru People Solutions Enfield, Bankstown and Maroubra offices to celebrate 'Mental Health Week 2009' by participating in *Tai Chi in the Park* on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2009 at Sydney's Royal Botanic Garden.

The team at Enfield managed by Hoda Kobeissi of Break Thru People Solutions *Care for Families* Program (A long term education, support and counselling program developed for people with a mental illness and anyone who supports them in their recovery process) came up with the idea of Tai Chi in the Park as they believed Tai Chi would not only help strengthen people's mental and physical health, but the activity would also help to engage job seekers with the local community.

"Tai Chi is said to lead to positive living and thinking and by improving people's mental focus and muscle strength it will help them feel revitalised. This event brought together people of all ages and backgrounds and saw them interacting with one another, regardless of their barrier. We believe social inclusion has a profound effect, as it allows people to truly feel a part of the local community, particularly if they are currently feeling alienated. It was such a positive experience and it was so encouraging to see guests still smiling despite the rain." said Hoda.

The lesson was instructed by Sue Chang from Tai Chi Fitness Australia, an acclaimed artist for the Tai Chi fan & sword and won medals at the 2006 Balloon Cup International Invitational Tournament in Qingdao, China.

Following the lesson Break Thru provided participant's with lunch and one job seeker Edward commented "today was fantastic, I actually feel more relaxed and it wasn't difficult once you know how to do it. It was terrific for my mind."

For more details about how we can help "*people with a mental illness and their families grow together*" contact Break Thru Enfield on 02 9745 1529.

#### BREAK THRU COMPANY PROFILE

Break Thru People Solutions is an Australian not-for-profit organisation that provides multiple services to communities across New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. Break Thru is known for its expertise in providing employment services to job seekers from diverse backgrounds including people with a disability, Indigenous Australians and those from a non-English speaking background.