



Anchored in the Earth

Therapeutic Farming for IDF Reservists Living with PTSD Symptoms

A Joint Project of Amutat Kaima & Bein Hatlamim Farm

Review of Cohort IV

December 31, 2025

Dear Anchored in the Earth Supporter and Friend,

On December 21, coinciding with the winter solstice, [Kaima](#) officially launched year two of [Anchored in the Earth](#), our initiative for IDF reservists struggling with PTSD symptoms and other forms of emotional distress. Our partner in the project is Bein Hatlamim Farm. To date, we have worked with over 60 participants and their families across four cohorts. Below is an update on our fourth cohort and our plans on expanding our reach. Thank you for your care and support of our mission.

Yoni Yefet Reich

Amutat Kaima, CEO

Guy Bar Navon

Anchored in the Earth, Director

Yaniv Bocian

Bein Hatlamim, CEO

Fall 2025: From Survival Mode to Healing

The fall 2025 cycle (cohort IV) was shaped by a number of changes related to the war—hostages coming home (living and dead) and fighting easing into something less intense, even as the exhaustion of repeated deployments settles deeper into people's bones.

Much of Israeli society is currently experiencing a "tension release"—a kind of collective exhale mixed with an urgent need to find meaning again after extended periods of focusing only on survival. This release triggers a process by which accumulated physical and emotional stress is discharged, signaling to the body and mind that it is ok to relax. It happens to different degrees for different people. It is understandably harder to make the transition for reservists, and we're noticing it in who shows up now, as we are being approached by more potential participants in greater distress, though ready to share what they've been through and have it validated.

Observing this shift, we feel that we have reached a moment where more people are ready to move beyond the survival stage to healing, for as Professor Ofrit Shapira Berman puts it: "What helps us survive interferes with our ability to live."

Navigating Transitions and Program Evolution

Like in every cycle, during cohort IV, we dealt with transitions—battlefield to farm, field to home/work/community, disengaged to productive. These people are struggling with profoundly hard questions: What's left of us after this many months in crisis mode? How do we live alongside trauma instead of just white-knuckling through? How do we shift our center of gravity back toward life outside the battlefield?

Our team is learning that we can hold space for people struggling with more severe PTSD symptoms while maintaining the program's essential character—engaging in hands-in-the-earth productive work that helps them heal. This is allowing the program to evolve and address new needs in real time.

Community Partnership: An Evening in Ra'anana

Mid-cycle, something unexpected happened. Shauna Goodman, a long-time Kaima supporter and enthusiastic chef, reached out and invited us—staff and two reservist participants—to her Ra'anana home for an evening with her friends and neighbors. The goal was simple: encourage people to bear witness to reservist stories and respond to the urgent need to advance the reach of "Anchored in the Earth." The evening exceeded anything we could have imagined. Real connections formed, and people gained rare exposure to what's happening inside reservists' hearts. Following that evening, many stepped up financially, enabling us to run another full cycle.

Our Distinctive Approach

The whole experience reinforced what makes this work different. We step out of clinics and meet between the farm's furrows and around the campfire. We don't wait for formal diagnoses or Ministry approvals. We build honest, natural relationships that reconnect people to life and community, while holding space for the full complexity of trauma. We create conditions that allow participants to meet their difficulty, pain, and loss—and simultaneously move through a journey that leaves them strengthened rather than diminished.

Through it all, the program continues serving as an anchor for these reservists, even as the ground keeps shifting beneath all of us.

Select Quotes from Cohort IV Participants

- *"The program helped me to stop 'disguising myself' in the presence of others, something that was an obstacle to moving forward."*
- *"I found a lot of hope on the farm. I could learn again who I am after all that happened, and still be loved and important."*
- *"This is the first place where I got to 'practice' not trying to always be 200%, only later forcing myself to run away."*
- *I couldn't ask for a better place and people to help me 'hold the space' needed for healing. This has helped me to identify what and who is right for me.*
- *"This place reduces the noise, as it strips you down. It feels comforting to be with people in the same boat. It's okay not to smile today if I don't feel like it. It's okay not to talk if I don't feel like it."*
- *The soil holds the water, the emotion. Every connection to emotion, every emotional journey cannot happen without the soil. "*

- *I hope to return to being a person with aspirations, dreams, loves...all things I put aside to cope with the crisis. Now I want to get up and restore what was - this program is my springboard.”*
- *There is a protective layer of non-judgment here. Getting up in the morning to come here was amazing, and gave me energy for the whole week. I feel much more emotionally open. I remembered that I'm good at things.”*

Summary of the Four Cohorts

Information	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
Dates	1.12.24-5.2.25	23.2.25-7.5.25	28.6.25-30.7.25	14.9.25-26.11.25
Recruitment Target	15	15	15	15
# of who started the program	13	16	17	16
# of new participants	N/A	13	14	14
# continuing from a previous cohort	N/A	3	3	2
# of who dropped out	1	3	4	3
Reasons for dropping out of the program	Work related	Called up for reserve duty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 were called up for reserve duty • 1 required more serious treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 started a new job • 1 started medical studies, • 1 couldn't commit
# of participants who completed the program*	12	13	13	13

* Ranging from ages 25 to 53.

Evaluation and the Program's Future

- Cohort V: Cohort V will begin on December 21 for 17 reservists.
- Evaluation: The program is being evaluated by an external team of researchers. They include: Dr. Gila Amitay, a senior lecturer in Criminology and Social Work at Jezreel Valley Academic College; Dr. Dor Danan, a palliative care physician with Sabar Health; and Dr. Moshe Farchi, the founder and Head of the School of Social Work at Tel-Hai College.
- Program's future: The undertaking has demonstrated something crucial: healing doesn't happen in isolation. Participants repeatedly tell us that their families are navigating this journey alongside them—often without the tools or support they need. That's why, with the right funding, we hope to pilot a new initiative (Anchored in the Family) specifically for the spouses/partners of program participants. The undertaking will strengthen family relationships through mutual understanding and collaborative agricultural work, addressing the distinct yet interconnected challenges each person faces as they try to find their new starting point as individuals and couples.

“Anchored in the Earth” provides a passageway out of the darkness.

Thank you again for being a part of this vital initiative.

Your support has made a difference in the lives of our returning soldiers and their families, all of whom deserve our care.

