

Allan Sparkes CV, OAM, VA, FRSN

Mental and Physical Health Advocate, Inspirational Speaker and Trainer

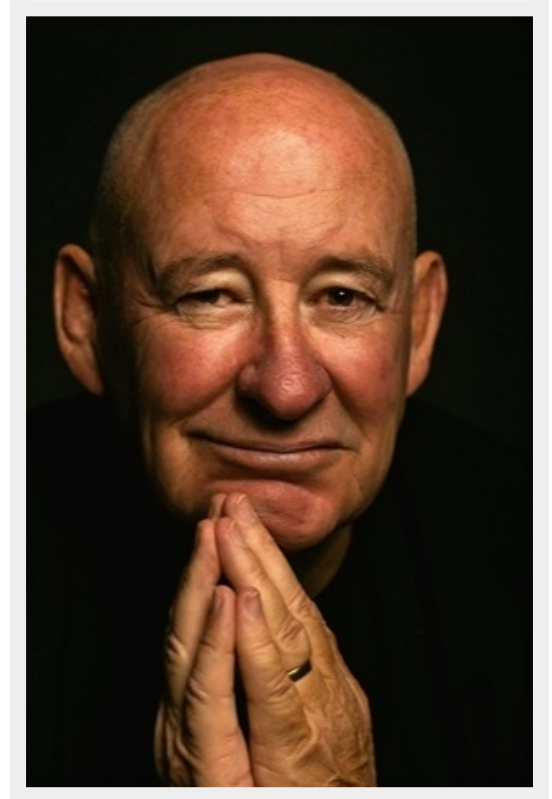
With over 20 years as an operational police officer, Allan Sparkes embraced the unpredictable nature of crime, confronting routine challenges like murder, bombings, and robberies. However, the latter part of his career brought unforeseen hurdles, leading to a battle with post-traumatic stress disorder and depression.

Despite professional acclaim, Allan faced a sudden loss of his 20-year career, triggering a profound struggle with self-worth and suicidal ideation, ultimately resulting in an ignominious discharge from his police career. His subsequent recovery from debilitating mental illnesses unfolded as a decade-long rollercoaster of personal challenges, testing his courage and resolve. Allan confronted his demons, meticulously reconstructing his mind, body, and soul.

These unique experiences and engagements have inspired Allan to develop distinctive presentations and training programs. It's his profound honesty, combined with his extensive knowledge and experiences that can help guide you in combating the stresses prevalent in our lives today.

Allan is one of Australia's most highly decorated citizens, having received numerous prestigious awards. He stands as one of only five Australians in the past 48 years to be honoured with the Cross of Valour, Australia's highest bravery decoration and highest civil award. This recognition was bestowed upon him for his courageous role in the rescue of a small boy swept 600 metres down a flooded stormwater pipe in Coffs Harbour in May 1996. Allan was also awarded the Royal Humane Society Galleghan Award and the New South Wales Police Commissioner's Valour Award in recognition of his involvement in saving the life of this little boy. Allan has also been recognised for his service with the National Medal for Service, the National Police Medal for Service, and the New South Wales Police Diligent and Ethical Service Medal.

In August 2016, Allan received Australia's fourth highest bravery decoration, the Commendation for Brave Conduct, for saving the life of an Aboriginal man who had fallen onto train tracks at Redfern Railway Station. Additionally, in January 2017, Allan was further acknowledged in the



Australia Day Honours List, where he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for his outstanding service to mental health support organisations and the community.

His accolades extend beyond bravery. In December 2012, Allan was among the select few Australians to be presented with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal, and in 2022, he earned the distinction of being one of only 10 Australians to receive the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal. September 2022 marked another significant event in Allan's distinguished journey, as he travelled to London to represent the Cross of Valour recipients of Australia. Invited by St James Palace, he participated in the Chivalry and Gallantry Procession during the funeral ceremony of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Allan has embraced numerous roles that bring immense benefits to others. These include being an Ambassador for Beyond Blue and Soldier On, holding the position of Deputy Commissioner with the Mental Health Commission of NSW, contributing to the New South Wales Mental Health Commission Suicide Prevention advisory group, and serving as a key member of the New South Wales Police Mental Health Team. Allan is also the Foundation Patron of the Stay Kind Foundation, a Non-Executive Director of the Gidget Foundation, and a National Advisory Committee Member for the McKillop Foundation. Additionally, he acts as a Patron for the Heart2Heart Foundation, Vice Patron of the Australian Bravery Association, Chair of the National Police Bravery Award Committee, and President of the Cross of Valour Association. Allan is an Ambassador for Kookaburra Kids and Australia Day, while actively supporting initiatives like the Indigenous Police Recruitment program (IPROWD), Tribal Warrior Indigenous programs, Clean Slate without Prejudice, and Never Going Back.

Testimonials

“ Out of the hundreds of speakers we've featured at our events, Allan Sparkes has been an absolute standout. Allan delivers the complete package – captivating storytelling, vulnerability, humour and humility.

- *The Serenity Collective*

“ Allan Sparkes is a brilliant man who has been through hardships and (thankfully) made it through the other side and, now encourages and inspires others to remember they are not alone and by making small changes, they can have a big impact on your life and mental health.

- *Ernst and Young*

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