

Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium

Final Report and Recommendations from the First Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium

Victoria, British Columbia
March 8-9, 2009



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Royal Roads University
Boys and Girls Club of Greater Victoria
Power To Be Adventure Therapy Society

I offer most sincere apologies to anyone contributing to the organization and success of the symposium and training day that were missed in these acknowledgements. A last word of gratitude is due for the attendees whose passion and thoughtful contributions have assisted in this national effort to develop adventure therapy in Canada.

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Table of Contents.....	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Symposium Overview.....	6
History	6
Definitions and setting the tone	7
Schedule.....	8
March 8 th : Symposium.....	8
March 9 th : Training Day.....	8
Presenters.....	9
Keynote Speaker: Hugh Pepper.....	9
Biography.....	9
Summary of Keynote Address	10
Invited Closing Commentator: Bob Henderson	11
Biography.....	11
Summary of Closing Comments.....	11
Recognition Award.....	12
Guiding Round Table Questions.....	13
Key Findings from The 3 Questions.....	14
Question 1: Trends and issues	14
Major discussion points	14
Question 2: Partnerships, training, funding.....	15
Major discussion points	15
Question 3: Open space format	15
Major discussion points: Gender.....	15
Major discussion points: Spirituality in wilderness	16
Major discussion points: National organization	16
Major discussion points: AT and counseling practice	16
Wiki-wall.....	17
Recommendations	17
New Proposals.....	19
2 nd Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium.....	20
Upcoming Events of Interest	20
Convener's Last Words	21
Appendices	23
Appendix A: Preemptive Opening Address	23
Appendix B: Keynote Address.....	26
Appendix C: Closing Invited Comments	33
Appendix D: Participant List	36
Appendix E: Training Day Brochure	38

Executive Summary

Adventure therapy—the confluence of outdoor, adventure and experiential activities in therapeutic fields of practice—is present in a number of forms across Canada. From Arctic expeditions for kids with cancer to indoor rock climbing with drug and alcohol clients in urban settings, this exciting approach integrates participant’s physical, emotional, spiritual and cognitive being. While operationalized in various forms, adventure therapy currently has no formal/informal professional association/network in Canada to allow for the sharing of resources, development of standards of practice nor collaborative input from the field.

The Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium (CATS) was held to identify trends and address the needs of those currently practicing, and those interested in, adventure therapy. The symposium was held March 8th 2009 at Royal Roads University with adventure therapy training facilitated the following day at Metchosin Wilderness Camp west of Victoria. Seventy-eight practitioners, academics and students from across the country attended the symposium and shared their interests in utilizing adventure therapy within health, mental health, education, justice and related human service fields.

The Symposium aimed to engage attendees in producing a series of recommendations for future development of adventure therapy in Canada. A keynote address, group dialogue on 3 guiding questions, an invited closing commentator, and considerable attendee passion and motivation provided ample material to set a course for action. The following recommendations are the result of the symposium (see page 18 for more details):

- 1) To develop an interactive national networking forum to allow adventure therapy practitioners, academics, students and partnering organizations to communicate and share their expertise and resources and to develop partnerships and opportunities to advance the field.
- 2) To continue meeting at a national level to strengthen the field through sharing our knowledge and stories while honouring our diversity
- 3) To investigate liability and insurance issues in adventure therapy with professional human service associations and insurance providers.
- 4) To diversify the populations served by adventure therapy and better understand how to serve each population.
- 5) To develop a national body for the oversight and development of adventure therapy in Canada.

It has been taken into consideration that the symposium, although attended by representatives of 4 provinces, was primarily made up of western Canadian delegates. For that reason, the results of the symposium will be shared in Montreal in the fall of 2009 at the meeting of the Therapeutic Adventure Professional Group of the Association for

Experiential Education to solicit ‘eastern’ input. In addition to the recommendations, a proposal was presented to the organizing committee to host the Second CATS gathering at University of Quebec at Chicoutimi (UQAC) in the fall of 2010; an ideal host in eastern Canada with strong institutional support and two partnering organizations (INAQ and On the Tips of The Toes Foundation) represented at the 2009 symposium.

Last, the connections between CATS and the Adventure Therapy International Committee (ATIC) deserve further clarity in relationship to one future potential of these gatherings. The notion to hold the symposium was raised in Rotorua New Zealand at the 2006 International Adventure Therapy Conference. Canada has 2 national representatives on ATIC, positions which ultimately would be elected/nominated by a national organization or committee. The growth of CATS and a national organizing body will assist in bringing further credibility to the work of the ATIC and AT in Canada concurrently. We are currently seeking one new national representative for a six-year term on ATIC. Interested individuals would need to have the time and resources to fulfill responsibilities and attend the next two international conferences, one this fall in Scotland and another in 2012.

Special thanks to the sponsoring organizations listed below and to the volunteers and organizers that helped make the symposium a success.

Respectfully submitted,

Nevin Harper, CATS Convener



Symposium Overview

History

Canada has a strong history of adventure and wilderness travel through its diverse and expansive terrain. Therapeutic wilderness and adventure-based programmes have provided meaningful experiences for adolescents and families across justice, mental health and social service fields in Canada for more than 35 years. A 2006 review of six Canadian adventure therapy programs indicated AT programming in Canada is generally (a) connected to governmental or government-funded organisations, (b) facilitated with developmental and psycho-educational foci, (c) delivered through collaborative relationships between therapeutic and adventure professionals, and (d) involves meaningful wilderness expeditions steeped in historical and epic lore, often integrating First Nation's people and early explorer travel practices, history and ritual.

Increases in adolescent mental health issues nationwide have heightened the demand for innovative and effective interventions; a demand that can be addressed by the integration of adventure therapy approaches within conventional practices. At the moment, no formal association or network exists for adventure therapy to develop within the Canadian context. The Therapeutic Adventure Professional Group (TAPG) exists in the United States aligned with the Association for Experiential Education. The TAPG is currently developing best-practices for adventure therapy and will provide a framework for CDN practitioners and academics to model or adopt as seen fit. Internationally, AT organisations are being developed within their own socio-cultural and political realms (e.g., Australian Bush Adventure Therapy Association).

In 2003 the 3rd International Adventure Therapy Conference (IATC) was hosted by Power To Be Adventure Therapy Society in Victoria, BC. Well attended by Canadians, the event inspired a number of Canadian practitioners and academics to join the discourse and development of the international adventure therapy community.

In February 2006 at the 4th IATC in Rotorua New Zealand, Canadian delegates envisioned a national symposium on adventure therapy to share ideas related practice and theory, further develop the field, and to more accurately define adventure therapy in the Canadian context. Further, the establishment of a Canadian network of adventure therapy practitioners and academics from related fields was proposed. While small steps have been taken toward these ends, the call was out to move the field forward with the assistance of interested people and organizations.

The 5th IATC is to be held in Scotland in the fall of 2009. The 2009 Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium was envisioned to provide a platform for Canadian practitioners, students and academics to engage in a national adventure therapy conversation and gain insight into a diverse range of practice while recognizing our relationship to adventure therapy around the world. The international committee is comprised of up to two representatives from each nation active in the development of adventure therapy. National representatives are responsible for national to international-level communication, and are

ideally, elected/nominated by national adventure therapy associations. As a national organisation currently does not exist, it is hoped that this symposium may provide the catalyst for such developments. Currently, the two Canadian representatives on the International Adventure Therapy Advisory Committee are: Nevin Harper, Ph.D., School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria and Bonnie Dyck, MSW, Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission.

While mentioned at the Symposium, recruitment is still open for a 6-year term position on the Adventure Therapy International Committee as a Canadian representative. A commitment to working on the international AT agenda and having the time and resources to travel are required; those interested should contact Nevin Harper at njharper@uvic.ca.

Definitions and setting the tone

As organisers, we remained present to possible issues that might derail the ‘work’ of the symposium. These issues included the long-standing debate on adventure therapy definitions and the reality of having 75 strong-willed and charismatic characters in the same room together with hopes of maintaining an agenda, and to remain open to honouring the needs of the group.

The issue of definitions was deferred through a pre-emptive opening address by Nevin Harper, the Symposium Convener (See Appendix A). The document was sent electronically to all registrants a week before the event. In short, definitions were recognized as critical to understanding specific practices which may fall under the adventure therapy umbrella, but also identified as a discussion item that could stifle the greater potential of the symposium. International examples were shared to underscore the importance of our openness to inclusion of all those who are called toward the concepts and practice of adventure therapy. It was stated that definitions will surely be a discussion to be picked up on when we have a more sustainable structure to operate from. Further, the document also reiterated the aims of the Symposium as a ‘work’ day; an event they were to be actively engaged in ‘setting the course’ for adventure therapy development in Canada.

The second issue of encouraging passion and strong opinions to be present while honouring all voices and yet stay on track was achieved through (a) significant legwork on behalf of the organising committee to discuss the aims of the day with participants pre-symposium, (b) strategic teamwork in facilitation, and (c) allowing the dialogue of the round table ‘guiding questions’ to go where each group needed to go on content and depth (e.g., the 3rd round table became an organic open-space with groups forming around what they believed were unaddressed critical issues).

Feedback from many participants was that they were pleased with the strategies and structure of the day, but felt they could have used a second ‘work day’ to bring dialogue to the commitment and action stages. A detailed overview of discussion points, recommendations and new proposals are presented in this report.

Schedule

March 8th : Symposium

Agenda	
8:00-8:30	Check-in, poster set-up, morning tea
8:30-8:45	Words of welcome & agenda
8:45-9:15	Facilitated networking activities
9:15-10:00	Keynote address: Hugh Pepper
10:00-11:00	Facilitated networking activities
11:00-12:00	First round table
12:00-1:30	Lunch (provided)
1:30-2:30	Second round table
2:30-2:45	Break & afternoon tea
2:45-3:45	Third round table
3:45-4:00	Award of recognition
4:00-4:45	Invited commentary: Bob Henderson
4:45-5:00	Closing activity
6:30	Dinner & camping at Metchosin Camp

March 9th : Training Day

Agenda	
9:00-10:00	Sign-in and networking at Metchosin Wilderness Camp
10:00-12:00	Concurrent workshops
12:00-1:00	Lunch
1:00-3:00	Concurrent workshops
3:00-5:00	Networking and recreation
5:00-8:00	Dinner and social

Presenters

Keynote Speaker: Hugh Pepper

Biography



Hugh Pepper has been one of the quiet pioneers of adventure therapy in Canada for more than 35 years. As a naval cadet in 1964, he recalls being dropped overboard in a lifeboat from the deck of a frigate at 2:00 a.m. into the North Atlantic along with five crewmates. They were instructed to meet their ship at a location several hundred kilometres away and given ten days to get there. They accomplished the objective, and for Hugh the experience ignited a lifelong passion for experiential and outdoor learning.

Some years later, while completing a Masters in Counselling Psychology he met Bob Pieh who had just joined the faculty at Queens University. Bob, who had founded both the Minnesota Outward Bound School and the Canadian Outward Bound Wilderness School, became an influential friend and mentor, who encouraged Hugh to incorporate challenge and adventure in the process of achieving therapeutic and educational goals. As a college counsellor, Hugh subsequently instituted therapeutically-oriented Outward Bound programs at Loyalist and Sir Sanford Flemming colleges, and as one of the founders of the Ontario College Counsellors Association, supported colleges around Ontario to establish similar outdoor programs in the early 1970's.

After a brief stint setting up a wilderness-based youth addictions program in northern Alberta, Hugh became the founding director of the Enviro Wilderness School. The School, still running today, uses extended wilderness and adventure experiences to support young people with a range of behavioural challenges and addictions to make and sustain positive changes. Hugh went on to work for the Calgary Board of Education as a counsellor/teacher setting up programs to assess and support children with learning and/or behavioural problems, as well as a range of programs serving children with psychiatric illnesses.

After working in education for 37 years Hugh retired to concentrate on his passion for addressing environmental problems, especially water issues. He is a member of the Alberta Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Appeal Panel hearing complaints concerning the actions of social service ministry directors, and remains active as an elected representative, small-scale logger, philosopher and social activist. Hugh continues to be a supportive friend and mentor to many working actively in the outdoor education and adventure therapy field and still paddles his trusty Grumann canoe down the rivers of the Rocky Mountains.

Summary of Keynote Address

Our focus is on the change process. We are managers, guides, leaders, teachers and therapists, regardless of the organizationally defined roles we play. Our job is to be exemplars of change, modeling the change we expect to facilitate in others. Our challenge is to create circumstances and experiences which result in change and growth for all of those we serve.

We are specialists in managing the vital processes of human interaction and group functioning, namely: communicating, making decisions, resolving conflict, making realistic assessments of risk, clarifying our own values and helping others to achieve similar clarity, aiding in the process of achieving organizational change and community development.

Our troubled times compel us to act with a clear sense of urgency. Economic and environmental crises, and derivative challenges combine to create conditions, which require immediate corrective responses. It is our job to provide leadership in this effort.

We are all teachers and therapists. Our job is to assist our clients to see adventure as the stuff of life, the driving energy which leads to change and growth, a source of enrichment and creative excitement. Our collective survival will relate directly to our success in this effort and in this regard we will have to find ways to work constructively, perhaps subversively, within established institutions. Others will find it easier to invent their own channels to achieve success. All of this energy is vital and there will be a need for creative networking.

In conclusion, I cited the example of the “ecoschool” concept as a means of teaching people how to form into proactive, sustainable communities.

**See Appendix B for complete Keynote Address.

Invited Closing Commentator: Bob Henderson

Biography



Bob Henderson has taught courses in outdoor education and environmental inquiry at McMaster University for the last 27 years in the Arts and Sciences Program and the Department of Kinesiology. His passion for outdoor life started early as a camper at an Algonquin Park children's camp. Later as a canoe-tripping guide, he began exploring Canadian trails, winter and summer, coast to coast. Today, he is known and thought of, as a storyteller, wilderness travel writer and guide, and experiential educator in the university setting.

Bob has written two books on outdoor living and travel; *Every Trail has a Story: Heritage Travel in Canada* and *Nature First: Outdoor Life the Friluftsliv Way*, the second co-edited with Nils Vikander. With an additional 20+ publications in books and journals, 16 years editing Ontario's Outdoor Education Journal Pathways, and as a regular columnist for Kanawa, Canada's national paddling magazine, Bob's insights and reflections have been shared with many practitioners and academics in the outdoor education field. For his professional contributions to the field of outdoor and experiential education, Bob was recognized by the Association for Experiential Education where he gave the Kurt Hahn Address at their 2008 annual international conference.

With a research background spanning education, outdoor living and travel, and experiential education, Bob provided his perspective to close the symposium and share his thoughts on the work and action plans of symposium participants relative to the history of Canadian outdoor education and heritage. Recognizing the confluence of outdoor education and the world of therapeutic intervention, Bob allowed us to more deeply reflect on where adventure therapy may define itself in the broader outdoor adventure context.

Summary of Closing Comments

Bob Henderson wrapped up the symposium with his usual flare of story telling, critical insights and humour. In a synthesis of the days events, his reflections and learning, and a poignant outlook on the broader conception of outdoor adventure work in which adventure therapy is situated, Bob shared with CATS the following:

1) Shift the burden of proof. The convention isn't really working for adventure therapy practitioners having to 'prove' that their approach works. If you are the alternative, the convention needn't be the sage authority. It ain't working, point it out. Shift the burden of proof, be the trickster, rather, out here in the west, be the raven.

2) Stay together. If you honour diversity, then keep your professional field a wide field. It is sound ecology. Monoculture forests are not sustainable.

3) Accept the lack of accountability in our experiential education work: you can't be accountable for all that is learned in your recreation / education / therapy. Embrace this. Thrive in 'open space' of it.

**See Appendix C for complete closing comments from Bob Henderson.

Recognition Award

Why an award? As an organizing committee, we discussed the idea of celebration and recognition for the great work in our field. Traditions start somewhere, and we hope that future events may begin to develop and honour the sense of tradition that we may collectively develop for adventure therapy in Canada. So how does one go about selecting a recipient, let alone the first recipient? Those who know the individual we chose would have likely put his name forward if asked. For his significant contributions to the field of adventure therapy, the host committee honoured **Mario Bilodeau** from the University of Quebec at Chicoutimi.

Mario Bilodeau embodies all conceptions of adventure; through his untiring energy, passion and concern for others, Mario has inspired many. It is safe to say, that he has been at the forefront of much of adventure therapy program development in Quebec, a fact not widely known across the country. Mario has been referred to, by his own university as a "force of nature" while also saying he "is by no means a conventional professor either" with an office that looks more like a sporting goods store than a haven for scholarly reflection!



With a significant trip log of his own as an accomplished mountaineer and paddler, Mario has provided meaningful therapeutic adventures for a wide range of people in remote places

over the last 3 decades. Mario exhibits what many emulate as the best our field has to offer, but we felt, without deserved recognition. That said, Mario, was presented with a framed Bill Reid (renowned master of west coast Haida art) print in recognition of his leadership, inspiration and commitment to the field of adventure therapy in Canada.

Sylvain Turgeon, colleague and past student of Mario's shared his knowledge of Mario's impact on him and adventure therapy in Quebec. Mario, in response, shared some personal stories that had significant impact on him in his life and work, providing attendees with a just a taste of his adventure philosophy, infectious passion and the depth of his dedication to serving others through adventure.

Guiding Round Table Questions

Guiding questions were based loosely on those asked in Leo Tolstoy's classic teaching story, *The Three Questions*. The moral of Tolstoy's story, which can be found earlier in eastern literature, is to be present with those you are with and to recognize that the most important thing to do is that which is needed by those you are with. In being intentionally inclusive in this symposium, the 3 questions provided a philosophical basis for building an adventure therapy 'community.'

The aim of using the three round table questions was to guide the symposium attendees toward producing tangible outcomes and action plans. Each question provided an opportunity to inform future directions for adventure therapy in Canada (e.g., to form networks, host symposiums, public education...). The 3 questions are as follows:

1. *When is the right time to do each thing?*

ROUND TABLE #1: Identify current trends and potential areas of future growth for adventure therapy in Canada

2. *Who are the most important people to work with?*

ROUND TABLE #2: Explore partnerships, training and funding options for adventure therapy practice and research, regionally and nationally

3. *What is the most important thing to do?*

ROUND TABLE #3: Identify needs: theoretical development, evaluation, accreditation, licensure, public education, insurance etc.

Those unable to attend the symposium but desiring to contribute to the outcomes had an opportunity before the event to submit their responses to the 3 questions, those contributions have been included in this analysis.

Key Findings from The 3 Questions

Facilitators of each round table discussion directed participants toward formulating discussion points on each question and if any conclusions were drawn, to identify them as action items. Approximately 50 pages of notes, taken on laptops by round table scribes, were analyzed and the following are the major discussion points synthesized from the notes. They are followed by recommendations emerging from the proposed action items.

Question 1: Trends and issues

Major discussion points

- Shifts in funding have moved from direct government funding toward non-profit & for profit sectors accessing money from a broader array of sources (fee for service to health, crime prevention, land trusts...)
- Adolescents and people with disabilities are two main populations served = many underserved populations
- Barriers (liability, funding, training) continue in developing service, although creative alternatives are showing success
- Credibility and recognition of value of practice is in question although AT is surfacing in sectors new to the concepts
- Broader perspective and description of the field has drawn more toward AT concepts as evidenced by those present and their collaborating partners (e.g., ecopsychology and human relationship to nature)
- Need for client-directed, outcomes-based approaches
- Collaborative service delivery models rather than an encompassing skill set for the AT practitioner
- Education and training almost non-existent in Canada, few exceptions (e.g., UQAC, CUC)
- Legitimacy may lie in helping other professions recognize values of AT in improving their services rather than using evidence to 'prove' AT
- No standardized definition or practices identified as both a major hindrance to development, and the heart of an adaptable and experiential approach to helping fields
- Public education and promotion of AT needed to dispel false assumptions and build professional recognition (e.g., documentary on AT)
- Standards of practice and increased need for 'evidence' from funders
- Programs and practitioners desire cross-training and share collective resources
- Interdisciplinary challenge: more diversity brings wealth of knowledge and resources, but also becomes hard to manage collective voices, competencies and energy on initiatives due to varied professional standards and motivations
- Skepticism of research and questions of value for academic relationships remains
- No national coordination of resources, training or funding opportunities
- Tension exists around ultimate goals in AT programming: reason for client participation vs. how is the experience structured to address whole person
- Interest in connecting with broader community (e.g., schools, health and mental health institutions, veterans, families...)
- Use of technology in client service (e.g., videos/pictures), for marketing and public education campaigns for AT considered

- Sense of being ‘locked into an AT identity’ may stagnate new opportunities in funding and program service delivery: need to be open to change and new directions
- Low wages, high turn-over, few elders/olders, glass ceiling for young staff and females in administration, perception of undervalued work

Question 2: Partnerships, training, funding

Major discussion points

- Need to find ‘champions’ in other sectors where service is not available to at least begin the conversations
- Sustainability needs to be discussed and planned for when entering into partnerships
- Diversify funding base to protect core programs and allow for trends to have less effect on organization
- Sharing of liability, program design and resources in partnerships will increase shared commitment to quality service (e.g., multiple programs sharing purchases and use of outdoor equipment)
- Limited AT training available in Canada: need for core training and specialist training in both ‘adventure’ and ‘therapy’ to efficiently provide AT service
- Standards and best practices not well established in AT: will look to professional associations and efforts of TAPG and other nations for direction
- Local and regional training opportunities to share resources and expertise: non-competitive ‘grass roots’ advancement of AT field, exchanges, training to those ‘interested’ in AT
- Sharing of funding options and opportunities available: increased interest in joint grants for funding and program diversity
- Need to identify effective ways to utilize joint liability and indentureship between clinical liability and trip liability insurance carriers (e.g., BC Registered Counselors can not currently get coverage for work in wilderness)
- Cooperative business model approach (e.g., INAQ model in Quebec)

Question 3: Open space format

By the final round table, the facilitators and the attendees agreed that very specific needs were presently unaddressed and that the time left would be best spent in dialogue on these topics. A self-organizing process led to the formation of round table groups focused on specific topics: gender, spirituality in wilderness, national organization and AT counseling practice.

Major discussion points: Gender

- Lack of female focused programs and limited ‘femininity’ in AT programming
- Need to explore value and practices for gender specific and non-gender specific programming and staffing teams
- Rites of passage approaches skewed by heroes journey and male initiation practices; not cross gender transferable
- Glass ceiling for women in small industry with few long-standing practitioners leads to female field staff leaving career when having children vs. not leaving career if in

- administration positions: also noted that programs needing female staff have fewer females to draw from = less competition
- Differences in language, approaches, focus and activities needing to be recognized, articulated and incorporated in AT practice

Major discussion points: Spirituality in wilderness

- Topics worth exploring more in AT include the holistic experience, separation between concepts of spirituality and religion, influence of indigenous traditions, and incorporating non-faith based tools for practice (e.g., meditation, breath, yoga..)
- Limited guidance available on boundaries and appropriateness of incorporating spirituality into AT programming
- Solo, creation of ‘sacred space’, and other reflective activities can be facilitated intentionally as a ‘theatre of introspection’
- Need to assist people in achieving ‘depth experiences’ related to their relationship to the earth and community; seek out elders and indigenous teachers, stay present to cultural appropriateness and client needs
- Reinvest in teaching stories and explore personal narratives of the wilderness experience

Major discussion points: National organization

- A national organization/association/network/collaborative/cooperative... may provide increased advocacy, reduced liability insurance, a clearinghouse on resources, job postings, networking, support for accreditation/licensure/standards/funding opportunities...
- Possible alignment with existing national associations or professional groups (e.g., becoming a ‘chapter’ or professional group within)
- Opportunities to make in-roads with provincial and national counseling, social work, psychology and other professional associations
- National gatherings with business and workshop/trainings can allow for development and knowledge sharing while organization can grow to support the field
- Need to be viable, action-oriented and sustainable (e.g., what is the incentive for membership—is the entity desirable or necessary for AT programs and service providers?)
- Can provide lead on organizing group insurance opportunities, public education and membership drives to build strength and momentum for the field
- Will require staff base, resources and technologies to remain a viable and useful entity
- Question: If benefits were broad or desired, would/could organizations and individuals pay for membership?

Major discussion points: AT and counseling practice

- Can liability insurance for clinicians be addressed with professional associations without creating further barriers? Liability between ‘adventure’ and ‘therapy’ professionals is critical regarding risk management, accountability to funders/insurers, ensuring competencies are in place...

- Collaborative treatment models seem to be a working model in action now, and worthy of developing a ‘template’ or ‘toolkit’ for others to employ
- Nature as place for therapeutic work is poorly understood (e.g., is the context/environment or the skills of therapist/worker—or what combination, for whom, when etc—making AT therapeutic?)
- Nature and wilderness experiences have not been well expressed in the realm of the ‘transpersonal’, in trauma work or as the ‘essence’ of AT work outdoors
- Intentionality of AT interventions needs to be improved: lots of work to be done in this realm

Wiki-wall

What’s a wiki-wall? Well, wiki technology is open-source, meaning your ideas and voice can be used to address any issue or thought you may have related to a given topic. In our case, a wall of flip chart paper was provided along with pens and guidance from the organizers. The outcomes were...well, unknown, but as the symposium transpired organizers reminded attendees to utilize the wall for any issues or ideas that had not been voiced. The goal was to ‘capture’ as much input from attendees as possible for inclusion in this report. In the end, the wall remained fairly blank, possibly an indication of needs being met. Issues and comments raised are listed below. As you can see, some of those wiki items eventually became content areas for the 3rd round table discussion. Here I provide only the actual statements, no analysis or interpretation is offered.

- How do self-organizing systems relate to AT?
- Are we just a bunch of outdoor-loving people trying to get paid to do what we love?
- How can we unite the voices and expertise of our field to establish an effective, action-oriented association that expands and develops adventure therapy in Canada? What would be the terms of reference? Would you support this initiative financially? What if it expanded funding opportunities/resources for AT?
- What about post-secondary education? (Undergraduate, Graduate, where, type of programs, collaborate with existing disciplines, recognition?)
- How does one get started? Is post-secondary education needed?

Recommendations

The following are the major recommendations emerging from CATS. Attendee contributions have been collated above and from those, the following can be considered the ‘action items’ needing to be addressed to move forward in a meaningful and productive manner. Working committees will take up the actions and progress will transparent and available on the CATS website: www.adventuretherapy.ca

1. To develop a national networking forum to allow adventure therapy practitioners, academics, students and partnering organizations to communicate and share their expertise and resources and to develop partnerships and opportunities to advance the field. A web-based social networking platform has been suggested and is the most likely approach to make this happen. Planning and oversight of this forum is critical to ensure it remains in the ‘spirit’ of national adventure therapy development and true to the voices of CATS attendees (and future symposiums). A working group is called for to develop a plan of action to fulfill this recommendation and bring it

forward to be shared in Montreal in November at the Therapeutic Adventure Professional Group meeting. Until a further decision is made, the www.adventuretherapy.ca website will remain active as the home for the Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium and will link to symposium host websites and the networking site... Nevin Harper currently owns the domain name although it was secured with the intention of eventually handing it off to a formal body as a home domain name: other nations have used similar domains (e.g., adventuretherapy.nz in New Zealand).

- An offer to lead this development was made by Lee White, lee@leewhite.ca
 - Those with interest, IT skills and experience in social networking platforms should contact Lee to engage in a discussion as to the best way to establish a national networking forum
 - We suggest the investigation of possible forum platforms, a criteria for its development and maintenance including protocols and ethics for its use, and to report back to the collective before taking action
 - Ideally a national networking platform could be up and running before TAPG meeting in Montreal (end of October 2009) and be shared/launched at that time.
2. To continue meeting at a national level to strengthen the field through sharing our knowledge and stories while honouring our diversity. As a proposal has already been presented (see below) to have a CATS-2 in Quebec, significant interest and energy is available to move forward on a national agenda in adventure therapy. Until our direction and national network is vibrant and sustainable, it recommended that annual events occur for a 3-5 year period, and then consideration should be given to biennial or triennial symposiums. On a local front, regional trainings in AT were discussed on the second day of CATS and are strongly recommended to maintain a local presence and continue widening the circle of practitioners who may be drawn to AT practice.
- CATS-2 will be held at UQAC (see new proposals below)
 - Mario Bilodeau, Convener (*a contact person has not yet been designated)
 - An Advisory Committee will be developed to maintain continuity within CATS. This advisory group will grow from each CATS (e.g., Nevin Harper and Julian Norris will stay on to support the host committees of future CATS's and will be joined by two from CATS-2)
 - Until the formation of a more formal national network, this advisory committee will serve as a point of contact and future developments
3. To investigate liability and insurance issues in adventure therapy with professional human service associations and insurance providers. Liability is a major concern and barrier to adventure therapy program development. Issues of sharing insurance from multiple providers and restrictive insurance from some professional associations need to be addressed. A working group is called for to gain a better understanding of how these issues can be addressed.
- An offer to lead this task was made by Dave Segal, dsegal@uvic.ca
 - As a critical issue faced by therapists, it is critical to understand how barriers can be reduced, to identify successful strategies and possible actions needed to be taken

- This inquiry crosses disciplines and provincial standards; having significant implications and depth, it is likely this group will need continued support for CATS attendees and other interested parties
 - Those interested and willing to work on this front are asked to contact Dave above and report back to group by October 2009
4. To diversify the populations served by adventure therapy and better understand how to serve each population. A theme identified by attendees was that most adventure therapy in Canada is serving ‘at-risk’ adolescents and people with disabilities. A wide range of opportunities exists for adventure therapy practice. A challenge is offered to practitioners to explore diverse populations to serve and fields of practice to collaborate with.
- While a common theme, no formal working group is called for
5. To develop a national body for the oversight and development of adventure therapy in Canada. A common theme throughout the symposium was that of a desired ‘connectivity’ with others in the field. Conversations suggested interest in national-level efforts for networking, resource sharing, and collegial actions toward the development of the adventure therapy. Included in this recommendation are similar warnings to proceed intentionally in alignment with the voices of CATS attendees and to identify options for a national entity, be it an association, network, or affiliate of an existing organization. A working group is called for to develop a plan of action to fulfill this recommendation and bring it forward to be shared in Montreal in November at the Therapeutic Adventure Professional Group meeting.
- An offer to lead this task was made by Greg Stevenson, greg@canadventure.ca
 - Those with interest and organisation development ideas should contact Greg to explore options in this area
 - We suggest the investigation of possible organizational formats or affiliations with criteria for development and maintenance including protocols and ethics for its use, and to report back to the collective before taking action
 - Again, the late October deadline prior to TAPG seems ideal for an initial report on this initiative.

New Proposals

Following the Symposium, Mario Bilodeau approached the organizing committee to host CATS in 2010 at the University of Quebec at Chicoutimi. While no formal body exists to accept or reject this proposal, the organizing committee of CATS agreed that the momentum gained at CATS should be taken advantage of, and that moving the symposium east was always part of the vision, so why not proceed. It is recognized that continuity is desirable and we as a collective need to be strategic in how we proceed. In effort to maintain the aforementioned continuity and sustainability, two members of the organizing committee of CATS will remain as CATS representatives (Nevin Harper and Julian Norris) and work with the host committee: a group of representatives that can grow as symposiums are held, building toward a CATS Advisory Committee. This committee will propose a format at CATS-2 to be used to select future symposiums in an equitable manner.

2nd Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium

To be held at the university of Quebec at Chicoutimi in partnership with Tips of the Toes Foundation, INAQ Adventure cooperative. The current plan is to hold CATS-2 in Fall 2010, stay tuned on www.adventuretherapy.ca for details. Conference hosts will be Mario Bilodeau (Convener) from UQAC, Sylvain Turgeon from INAQ and Helena Longpre from On the Tips of the Toes Foundation.



Fondation Sur la pointe des pieds
On the Tip of the Toes Foundation



UQAC
UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC
À CHICOUTIMI

Upcoming Events of Interest

International Adventure Therapy Conference:

September 7-11, 2009 in Edinburgh, Scotland

(for info contact Nevin Harper or Bonnie Dyck , CDN Representatives on AT International Committee)

Association For Experiential Education, International Conference:

October 29 - November 1, 2009 in Montreal, Canada

(for more information see www.aee.org and check out the TAPG pre-conference)

Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium

Fall 2010, Chicoutimi, Quebec

Convener's Last Words

In hosting an event such as CATS I have taken a risk; nothing indicated who would ultimately be present, nor how many; no real direction was given besides an agreement from an hour of dialogue between 15 individuals sitting in a field on the other side of the world 3 years ago; no outcomes were anticipated or pre-destined to emerge. So, planning this gathering was nothing less than a risk. We use risks intentionally in our work. Risk is, of course, the opportunity for loss and gain; I believe we have gained, gained a significant step forward in our collective organization around some key practices and ideas cobbled together in the name of adventure therapy.

I entered into planning CATS with no more agenda than to bring folks together to ask 'who are we, what do we do and what do we need to move forward?' The 'people have spoken' so to speak; at least with a 'western' voice. We now can move the conversation east, this fall to Montreal, and next fall to Chicoutimi. I hope that this report's documenting the gathering the collective voices can serve as an offering, a starting point to build from, and that CATS can continue to offer the forum for sustainable future growth.

As we continue to move forward, with our sights remaining intentionally on the development of national and regional resources and opportunities, I believe we need to stay present to two significant facts: (1) Those drawn to adventure therapy cross disciplines and we need to recognize similarities and differences in practice, and work toward integrative collaborative approaches rather than creating exclusive definitions and boundaries that may diminish our capacity to work collectively, and (2) Adventure therapy is to some a practice, to others a philosophy and teaching practice transcending disciplines in healing and helping fields; either way, the field is too small in Canada to not be strategic in how we move forward. To assist in fulfilling the recommendations of this report, it is the intention of CATS to provide a forum for interested individuals and programs to continue this work for the field of adventure therapy in Canada.

In closing, I ask you all to consider envisioning what you see for adventure therapy in Canada over the next ten years. Same ol' same ol', or something else? What do you envision may need to happen to meet your expectations? Will others be responsible for that picture, or will you? There is plenty of work to be done. Please consider how you can help. Working committees will be developed to pursue the recommendations of this report and provide opportunities for you to contribute meaningfully to the development of adventure therapy in Canada. We will keep the working committee's progress transparent and accessible on the www.adventuretherapy.ca website.

I look forward to seeing as many of you that can make it out to Quebec next fall for CATS-2 and to seeing the progress of the working groups on the various initiatives.

Be well,

Nevin J. Harper

Footnote

1. Harper et al. (2009). Canada and the state of adventure therapy: Wilderness expeditions, integrated service delivery models and democratic socialism? Mitten, D. & Itin, C. M. (Eds.). *Connecting with the Essence of Adventure Therapy*. Boulder CO: Association for Experiential Education.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Preemptive Opening Address

March 1, 2009

Nevin Harper

Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium

Canadian adventure therapy symposium: What's in a name?

We are gathering to collectively set a course for adventure therapy in Canada. Our task is to answer three guiding questions. We will get to them in a minute; first, what is adventure therapy? We'd best address definitions right off as we will, without doubt, return to them later. While a number of programs represented at CATS have 20-35 year histories, the term *adventure therapy* has about a 15 year history of common use¹, and, being in a comparatively adolescent stage of development, is seeking identity, its place in today's world of helping and healing fields. So, to assist in moving on to the 'business' of the symposium...

Definitions...

Adventure: *an unusual and exciting, typically hazardous, experience or activity.* Many aligning themselves with adventure therapy would disagree with this description of practice. While it is generally agreed that adventure therapy often includes elements of risk and challenge—be it physical, emotional, spiritual—hazards are generally all but eliminated, though the perception of 'risk' remains integral to practice.

Therapy: *treatment intended to relieve or heal a disorder.* Many aligning themselves with adventure therapy would disagree with this description of practice, wait...didn't I say that already? Probably the more contentious of the two words, the focus of many discussions among adventure therapy allies, and quite possibly the crux argument preventing forward momentum toward agreement on a guiding philosophy and standards of practice (therapy vs. therapeutic: the classic debate). Although clear definitions will bring about distinctions between what is, and what isn't adventure therapy, we won't get beyond opinions today, agreement with concise language we may set as a future goal!

Symposium: *a conference or meeting to discuss a particular subject, or, from the ancient Greek, a drinking party or convivial discussion.* Although we may imbibe joyously later, today's gathering aims to set a course for future development of adventure therapy in Canada.

A suspension of personal and professional biases regarding what defines adventure therapy specifically, will allow us to move forward generally, and to address the aims of day: *The 3 questions*; to identify who we are, what should we be doing and how do we move forward?

So why even use the term adventure therapy?

The term *adventure therapy* immediately invokes dramatic images to those not yet exposed to the scant collection of books and articles on the topic or practitioners aligning themselves with the term and its practices—rock climbing with your therapist?. Now evidenced by the content of four international conferences bearing the adventure therapy name over the last dozen years, most practice is some permutation of experiential learning, risk-related outdoor activity and time in nature, combined with intentional therapeutic practice.

A recently registered Australian association has decided on *Bush Adventure Therapy* in recognition of the land and cultural context. The US association most closely aligned with adventure therapy is the *Therapeutic Adventure Professional Group*, a name invoking inclusiveness of practice; a long-standing debate between therapy and therapeutic has, although important, consumed much time and energy. In reviewing a number of CDN programs in 2006², I found the utilization of nature and outdoor travel activities as core elements defining CDN adventure therapy practice. Further, collaborative programming between *therapeutic* and *adventure* professionals was common. For the sake of productivity and connectivity today, I propose we use the term more conceptually, less literally, and move forward on *The 3 questions*.

This gathering is an opportunity to be in the presence of like-minded individuals, share ideas and knowledge and to set a course for the development of adventure therapy in Canada. While taking into consideration the social, political and geographic realities of Canada, your answers to *The 3 questions* may provide a starting point for future developments. Beyond that, we have no agenda; if the conclusion of the symposium is to take no collective action, so be it. Our gathering may produce a call to build a network; it may determine the need for a professional association to be formed; it may decide to align ourselves with existing associations; the future is unwritten.

What you can expect from your participation in the symposium?

To some attending this symposium, disappointment may follow in not being able to share fully the unique or successful work you are doing. For others, maybe new to the field, a new vision or energy may emerge as you are exposed to a range of dynamic and talented individuals allied with adventure therapy practice. The symposium is designed as a *work day* rather than showcase of programs and services in Canada. We as organizers have decided to tap your collective energies to provide a catalyst for growth in adventure therapy across Canada. Hopefully the networking and activities of CATS will provide you with a platform to contribute, collaborate and grow.

We will hear from two exceptional Canadians; their experience speaks volumes and we are well-served to pay attention to their narratives, their understanding of the power and importance of our work, the history and achievements of those before us, and the needs and challenges of what lies ahead. We will attempt to answer *The 3 questions*, a series of inquiries, found in numerous teaching fables across cultures; they are a simple, but direct route to establishing future objectives. Our diverse voices will be heard in roundtable format, recorded, synthesized, and reported back. Our CDN colleagues unable to attend will also have an avenue to be heard; we will collect and prepare your responses, suggestions and

concerns. What I ask of you is to share your current perspective and future vision of adventure therapy in Canada.

What are The 3 questions?

1. What is the right time to do each thing? This first question is intended to ground us in our current realities. By recognizing what is going on presently, we can decide when and where we need to act. As a starting point, we are guiding the first round table discussion to identify current trends and potential areas of growth for adventure therapy in Canada.

2. Who are the most important people to work with? The second question is intended to direct our attention to who we are, whom we are with and whom else should we be working in collaboration with. The second round table discussion will focus on exploring partnerships, training and funding options for adventure therapy practice and research, regionally and nationally.

3. What is the most important thing to do? How are we to act? What are we to do? This third question is geared toward future thinking. What actions should we collectively consider taking? The third and last round table discussion will focus on identifying needs: theoretical development, evaluation, accreditation, licensure, public education, insurance etc. of adventure therapy in Canada.

Participants will be challenged to actively contribute and depart with action plans and the inspiration to increase the profile and use of adventure therapy in their respective regions. We, as organizers, have decided to allow the outcomes of this gathering to speak for themselves. The host committee will document the symposium activities and a final report will be sent to participants and posted on the www.adventuretherapy.ca web site.

In closing...

In the spirit of being experiential and less didactic, this opening address can be read and considered at your leisure, an effort to preserve time for *'the work'* of the day. On behalf of the organizers, I encourage you to share your knowledge and enthusiasm, ensure you get your needs met and enjoy the Symposium.

Respectfully submitted,
Nevin Harper
Convener
CDN Adventure Therapy Symposium
njharper@uvic.ca

Footnotes

1. Gass, M. (1993). Adventure Therapy: Therapeutic applications of adventure programming. *Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.*
2. Harper et al. (2009). Canada and the state of adventure therapy: Wilderness expeditions, integrated service delivery models and democratic socialism? Mitten, D. & Itin, C. M. (Eds.). *Connecting with the Essence of Adventure Therapy.* Boulder CO: Association for Experiential Education.

Appendix B: Keynote Address

March 8, 2009

Hugh Pepper

Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium

Without *change* and *growth* achieved rapidly, our planet, our communities and obviously each of us, are in peril. We need leaders now

Therapy is all about change and each of us here is a change agent. Whether we call ourselves teachers, counselors, or therapists, we are AGENTS OF CHANGE. This is our sacred task, our life mission.

Insert “change” joke about the Commandant of the POW camp (prisoners get change of underwear, they are pleased, commandant says “Andrew change with Peter, John change with Mike...).

I want to pause here for a minute, to give you time to reflect on your own practice, or your own life experience if you wish. I want you to remember a time when you choose to change, or perhaps a time when you helped another person, or a group of people, to change. The change I want you to reflect on need not be some great decisive, life –defining alteration; it can be the ordinary variety resulting in growth and learning that was helpful in the pursuit of a goal which fascinated you or your client/student.

In one minute, I want you to share this reflection with your neighbor, in outline form only.

All of us are here as a result of our commitment to the process of helping others to change, to grow, to become, to be. I hope also that each of us, on deeply personal levels, is committed to the task of growing and becoming living exemplars of fully functioning persons. To paraphrase Ghandi, we have to be the change we expect to see in others. I have found over years of working with some extraordinary change agents, that the very best have a rich variety of life experiences, which they acquired in the rough and tumble of adventurous living. These model change agents exhibit an ability to strike up meaningful relationships quickly and they are deeply and naturally empathetic.

There are many obstacles to change, some of which are personal, others systemic. As therapists and teachers we can help our clients identify and remove these obstacles, and formulate reasonable plans for growth and development.

At the same time we are able to assist our clients become more closely connected to the land and other vital life support systems, which are presently under severe stress. The quality of this connection has diminished as our populations have become more urbanized and as food production has become industrialized. And yet I have noticed a clear yearning for the restoration of these connections and the life-defining meanings, which derive from them. As therapists and teachers, this may be our most important task, to assist in regaining this sense of connection and meaning.

My conviction is that we will not succeed in resolving our environmental and other problems without masses of people able to connect authentically to each other and to the land. Without this deep connection, any changes we make will be cosmetic in nature, and hence, unsustainable.

My guess is that there is a great teacher in each of our lives, a person who helped us become connected to essential elements of our world and to other people, someone who triggered an insight, fashioned an experience, or inspired an idea which led to significant growth, the selection of a career path, or, perhaps the formation of a life style alteration. This person served to guide us in a new direction, which in turn led to the formation of significant insight, satisfaction and accomplishment.

I want you to bring this individual into your awareness now, reflect thankfully on the memory, and silently express gratitude to this person for their gift to you.

My thankful memory is of my rowing coach, Twink Fodey who entered my life when I was 16 years old. I had played other sports, including hockey and football, and thought of myself as a good athlete. Twink taught me to focus on being a good person, on becoming a little bit better every day, and to become fully committed to this task and disciplined to follow through on the plans.. He helped me to learn that success was the act of choosing to become competent and developing the energy, skill and determination to make this happen. He helped me learn that working hard to achieve these goals was both necessary and pleasurable, and that the adventure of reaching for self-chosen targets was the very essence of life. These lessons, learned on the water at age 16, have served me well for over 50 years. Thank you Twink.

Rowing is a team sport, which requires profound coordination. Eight individuals have to learn to think and act as one person. Success depends on this. There is no place in a rowing shell for the freelancer. Accordingly, developing sensitivity for the actions of others in the boat is a vitally necessary part of the training, and learning to adjust with very slight alterations of hands and feet, or the applications of effort, are crucial requirements of crew behavior. Very successful crews achieve this unity at astonishing levels of perfection and they are able to maintain this balance even under conditions of extreme stress, when their effort levels are at the maximum. This is team play at the highest level and it is a perfect metaphor for the adventure experiences, which we all arrange, in our respective practices.

A few years latter, while doing graduate studies at Queens University in Kingston, I met Bob Pieh, who you may know, is one of the founders of Outward Bound in North America. I was one of Bob's first students at Queens, and it was evident to me from our first meeting, that I was engaged in a "change-of-life" experience. Bob had no time for "head trips"; the ordinary was acceptable, but only has a prelude to more extraordinary possibilities. "Life was meant to be an adventure," Bob would say in his gentle and always clear way, as though it was inconceivable that there were any other alternatives.

Just as with Twink ten years earlier, I learned that CHOICE was the catalyst, the great elixir, which led directly to change. I learned that life itself was meant to be lived as an adventure, but that this would only happen if I choose to make it so. Learning to choose became a life

mission for me; finding ways to create a life of adventure became an animating principle of my life and I still strive to meet this goal. Thank you Bob.

Bob's taught everyone the value of "experience" as a means of facilitating learning. You couldn't be with Bob for more than five minutes without being challenged to think about something differently, perform some task of imagination, or engage in an activity which he had devised for very specific purposes. It was always a pleasure to go to Bob's farm, for example, which was a kind of Disneyland for aspiring counselors and teachers. Bob would meet us at the barn and suggest that we all climb to the perch he had built high in the rafters to discuss our plan for the day and to decide exactly how we were going to navigate through the swamp in his back forty with half of our group blindfolded going one way, and the other half being blindfolded on the return. And just to make the challenge a touch more pressing, he would suggest that we conduct this whole experience silently, (including the planning phase) without oral language. Challenge took on a whole new meaning with Bob, and it became an organizing principle for our practices.

With Bob we learned to create experiences for our students/clients which would be just a little more challenging every day. I had learned this lesson earlier with Twink in rowing, but the learning with Bob was much more broadly focused and directly related to teaching and counseling. Our mission, he taught us, was to create experiences for small and large groups of young people, which would result in personal growth, and even organizational development. We learned how to use the "teachable moments" to facilitate change at all levels, how to mediate ongoing experience in the service of enhancing awareness and expanding the participants repertoire of communication skills. We developed a both a pedagogic and a therapeutic focus, which emphasized the importance of using all experience, properly arranged and sensitively mediated, as a means of facilitating change and growth. Most importantly, we devised a "bag of tricks" which we could use to achieve our objectives. From Bob we learned that every theoretical orientation is usable and the goal is to do whatever works. Bob was the consummate eclectic.

When I began working as a counselor at Loyalist College in Belleville, Ontario, one of the twenty new community colleges built in Ontario in the early 1970's, I quickly realized that I could achieve the organization's expectations more effectively by taking my clients into the wilderness, or on prolonged trips to Europe (for example). I was expected to help students communicate more effectively, or make more appropriate decisions based on realistic assessments, or perhaps deal with conflict in a more satisfactory manner and I learned that I could achieve these objectives using well-designed OB adventure approaches. Accordingly, I began taking small groups of students to the wilderness of Algonquin Park, just to the north of Belleville. We conducted weekend workshops focused on personal growth and we introduced experiential styles of education in the regular curriculum. These events need some elaboration.

The Math department was teaching in a very conventional style. Objectives were announced at the beginning of the term, a lecture schedule was defined and the test/exam schedule was announced. Working with two of the instructors, we set up an alternative approach to be conducted with randomly chosen students, (Group B) which was dramatically different in style. The College's expectations were defined as with the other group, but the students were

told that they could attend lectures, write essays and other projects, conduct interviews, write tests when ready and then finally, write a final exam. The results were astonishingly different.

The regular group did exactly as required; they came to lectures, wrote tests, even a term paper and then sat for the final exam. Group A was marked in the traditional way. Their marks started at 100, and then was lowered consistent with test and exam results. Group B began at 0 and their mark increased as they performed their self-chosen tasks, the tests and the exam. The results were predictable for Group A, conforming to the normal curve, with some passing, some failing and most in the middle. Group B, however, all passed at an above average level. More importantly, they completed several additional tasks (interviews, papers, additional tests, consultation sessions with the staff where provocative questions were raised). What was learned from this experience?

Aside from the pedagogic observations, I learned that a counselor with a strong bias towards experiential forms of learning could work with traditional educators in a helpful and productive way. I found it much easier to propose working collaboratively with the history/geography instructors, where we helped design a journey into the wilderness which duplicated a trek made a hundred years earlier by miners looking for iron ore. This experience, designed to compliment the history curriculum, had students build a wagon and then, using horses, move into a wilderness setting, just as the early settlers would have done. The learning, which ensued, was vastly more impactful and memorable than would have occurred had the students merely read and talked about these historical experiences.

While working as a counselor in the College system, I was also acting as the President of the area United Community Services organization. We raised millions of dollars for 30 regional organizations. It became apparent that there was very little communication between our client organizations, and also between these organizations and the community, which provided their funding. We sensed that there was at least a modicum of irrelevancy, which was frustrating their efforts to provide needed services and there was a need for community-wide change. We found a way, using the same counseling skills learned working with Bob Pieh.

We assembled the whole group of service providers, introduced them to each other and then devised ways for them to begin actually working together. We taught them more effective ways to communicate with each other, methods to determine the aspirations and expectations of their client populations, and finally to devise effective methods to evaluate the success of their interventions in the community. All of this involved the application of skilled practice learned working with experiential forms of education and involving approaches, which could be labeled as organizational therapy.

I want to make a simple point here, namely: the skills and strategies used by practitioners of AT, are abundantly useful in educational and community settings. Adventure programs are being used to enhance regular curricula in varieties of settings, including the math and history programs I have cited. But adventure is also being used as an adjunct of many other programs at all levels of education, and counselors equipped with AT skills are designing very effective programs serving both mainstream and special needs populations. Just in my own experience, working for the Calgary Board of Education, we have inaugurated adventure programs in partnership with Woods Homes, serving behaviorally challenged

young people. But perhaps the best example of the use of AT in an educational context is Enviros Wilderness School.

Enviros was designed to serve teenagers who were incarcerated; delinquents who needed to acquire a whole new and more socially acceptable orientation towards life. We were convinced that leaving them in a lockup situation would not lead to the kind of change which would result in them becoming productive citizens, able to productively contribute to their families and to the community. Equally, we were sure that if they could learn to redefine themselves as strong, powerful and capable, by engaging in both simple tasks and a variety of challenging adventures, we were convinced that real positive personal growth would occur.

For this to happen we knew that simply removing the youngsters from situations which were clearly toxic would be advantageous and facilitative of change. But, most importantly, we also were convinced that both the young persons and their support group, had to choose to participate in our program. Change cannot be coerced. Our conviction was that stable change would follow a decision to change and grow. We knew also that we had to surround our student/clients with men and women who could strike up and maintain a caring relationship quickly, who could provide effective leadership in a variety of challenging pursuits and who knew how to use the “teachable moments” which inevitably occur in adventure experiences, to motivate, encourage, effect altered ways to make decisions and resolve conflicts and who could facilitate growth in the students’ abilities to communicate effectively. The leaders had to be both superlative teachers and outstanding therapists.

Later, working with Woods Homes School with the same population of young people, we introduced Larry Brendtro’s idea of the Circle of Courage. We developed a method using Brendtro’s principles focused on belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. We began using circles to teach the young people effective ways to manage their own behavior, set plans and evaluate their progress. A program of challenging experiences was set up to assist the students in this path to change.

As with the Enviros students, we learned that working with the parents of our students was a vital part of ensuring stable and sustainable change. We knew that behavior is normative and that if the young person was not openly and actively supported by his parents, he would quickly revert to his previous lifestyle after leaving our program. In this regard, I set up two programs designed to support the young people in their transition back to normal life, after the specialized programs where they had been for extended periods concluded. Education and therapy have their limits; without support from significant others, very fragile young people cannot succeed over the long periods of time.

The idea that young people yearn for connection, and long to give up useless defenses and awkward isolation, is beautifully expressed by Anais Nin. She says, “And the day came when the risk to remain tight in the bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.” This reality was powerfully evident, while watching a group of youngsters talking about the highlights of their adventure experience at a graduation ceremony. A boy, about age 16, described his decision on a rock climbing experience. He told us about a crucial point where he had to choose between taking an easy route, or going up on a very difficult way, one where there was a real good chance that he would fail and would be forced to fall back on

the top rope. He explained that up until this point in his life he had always chosen to fail when he got in a tough and risky spot. But on this occasion, he said, he chose to succeed and take the risks involved in this effort. It was a magnificent illustration of the profoundly life defining possibilities that derive from AT. At that moment he chose to transform from “bud” to “blossom”. His friends, parents and teachers were able to celebrate this magnificent transformation.

A few years ago my wife and I decided to host a group called YES, Youth For Environmental Sanity, a California based group led by the Robbins family. Our land became a beehive of activity for 25 young people from all over North America who congregated to learn leadership skills and to grow more focused on the challenges facing their communities and the planet. There were many highlights of this experience, but I want to cite one, which was remarkable for me, and happily I can report for many of the participants.

The group was “warmed up” in the evening before by Joyce Irvine, telling mythological stories, and then in the morning by their own poetry and music. The young people were told that we would be using the environment as a metaphor, that we would be descending from the high bank, down 100 meters to the Ghost River, that we would cross the river and move as a group two kilometers on the far shore before returning on the near shore. They saw the experience as a process of moving from the safety of the high bank, to the mysterious world below, and eventually as a commitment of entering life, the river. My expectation was that this experience would take about three to four hours.

I structured a few experiences and encouraged the group to sit down if (when) they had some idea, which they wanted to talk about. I also asked them to find something along the way which would symbolize something which they would be willing to give to life and I informed them that at the end of the day we would place all of these objects in a hat and send them off down the river (life). No part of this experience went as planned, I am happy to report.

Rather than traveling two kilometers, we managed to walk only about 400 meters. There was just too much to discuss, too many intense moments needing the whole groups attention and far too much of significance to cause us to stick to a prearranged schedule. The final experience of placing their symbolic objects in the hat and then the river, took well over an hour and was the most powerful part of the day’s experience. We arrived back at the house, four hours later than planned, with the whole group higher than kites, and ready to tackle the challenges of the world.

It was an eye opening experience, which taught me, once again, the power of using the environment in an invitational manner to facilitate change and growth. We focused on useful metaphors and used them to encourage the participants to think about their lives in a deeper way than usual and to formulate a vision of their future accordingly. The river was life and the valley became a place of mystery. They all made a choice to enter both, and with the help of their peers, proceeded to use the passage to grow, to become a bigger version of who they might otherwise be. One young man told me that this experience was a highlight of his life and several others made similar comments. It was evident that many of these young people chose to transform from buds to blossoms.

I want to conclude with some statements concerning my sense of the urgencies facing all of us, with a special plea to find ways which suit your interests, and talents to make change in your communities and in the organizations where you work. This is not to say that working one-on-one is not important. But given the crises which have beset the human family, and all other life on this planet, we all need to optimize the impact that we have through our professional activities. What will this mean?

The world is now demanding teacher/therapists; change agents who can help organizations and communities gain the confidence to take the risks necessary to transform our world. We will all have to learn to assess risk effectively, to make hard-nosed, but humane decisions, to resolve conflicts creatively and nonviolently, to communicate openly with deep integrity and to see the “blossoms” in ourselves, in each other and in the world around us.

I have developed a plan to construct a network of “ecoschools”, each with an experiential curriculum, where both effective teaching and therapy can occur. The schools would be situated in mountain, marine, woodlands, prairie and urban settings, and they would focus on developing the kinds of values, skills and energies discussed throughout this talk. Most importantly, they would make students aware of themselves, the human condition, and the world we share. The curriculum would not only be an opportunity to learn about varieties of self-chosen topics, but it would also be a chance to learn through experience the dynamics required to form and function in community. Participants would gain a full appreciation of the need to engage in proactive planning, taking into account all those factors which constitute hazard and all those other factors which can be readily harnessed to enable orderly and sustainable community development. Additionally, they would acquire the communication, leadership and team skills needed to work collaboratively towards a sustainable future. Above all, they would learn that the most elegant act they can take is a simple choice, to be.

Therapy and education become very similar when we are dealing with sustainable and enduring change. By providing varieties of experiences which encourage and enable change and growth, for both individuals and organizations, we will optimize our opportunity to have a lasting impact in the community we serve.

Appendix C: Closing Invited Comments

March 8, 2009

Bob Henderson

Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium

Asked to be a closer keynote for the CATS gathering at Royal Roads, I elected to share reflections that emerged as I traveled through the day. A few of the following ideas presented below came out of the day at Preceding “Get Outside” conference. The majority of ideas to share have been with me for some time. I hope the following reflects the content and some of the spirit of the moment.

Accepting his award, Mario Bilodeau elected to tell a practitioner’s story of seeing Monique joyous face as she is helped up from a major tumble on a dog sled. Monique has “disabilities”. That happy face, dare I say, among many other such faces, shapes Mario’s career and life. My point is Mario told us a story, his story, Monique’s story. If you want to communicate the power of your work / our work, tell your stories. Don’t forget the research, but tell those critical incidences of your work. You know the ones!!!

Do you think it is true, that we often oscillate between being the recreator, educator and therapist (in my case a reluctant therapist). I do. I, for one, have no formal training in therapy or counseling yet I understand you and I in adventure therapy or adventure education are engaged in such work all the time. We will oscillate between these three camps particularly if we have two things. One: we love our work, and two – we love people.

Your program may be intended to be either of the three, recreation, education, or therapy but in reality you perhaps are always doing one or the other and are wise to sort out which. For example, was Mario’s Monique involved in a recreational or educational experience? It matters not. At the moment of that smile for Monique and Mario there was therapy for all. If you love your work and people and you work wisely helping people meet nature (their nature and that other nature) you will often be involved in therapy – good therapy – trained or not. Go for it!

Hugh Pepper talked about our work as “change” agents, the work of transformation. We would be wise to have some way to unpack this massive idea of changing lives. Here’s one that is a theory, which means it may be useful or useless to you. Your choice. I’ll throw it out there.

A friend, Pam Cushing when using the phrase of ‘personal transformation’ during her Master’s defense concerning the personal growth incurred by Outward Bound students was forced by Anthropology Professors (her committee) to unpack the phrase. She floundered. Later, she and I fashioned an answer – a modest compensation.

Perhaps there are more but, might we experience change/transformation is three dominant ways: (1) We may change in terms of skill development; (2) We may change in terms of citizenship qualities; and (3) We may change in terms of a more radical cultural work of changing ecologically who we are and must be with a culture that we come to realize must change. In short, be the change we need to be. These can likely happen each on their own or all three ongoing in an organic recreational / educational / therapy flow of energy that is experiential learning and we are doing nothing if not experiential learning with others. All three are good, all three together ... well ... I'll keep going back to Monique's happy face recovering from that dog sled spill.

Three words seem to be subtle and very important to the work of Adventure Therapy. Story, place and technology deserve our attention. As for story / Douglas Coupland in his landmark book *Generation X* put it well. "Either our lives become stories, or there is no way to get through them". How our work helps people generate life stories and learn life / cultural stories – positive stories – stories to live a life by is central.

We give people places. We help people move from undifferentiated space into meaningful places with the self and the landscape / mindscape. The technology we offer is burdensome and in the burden is a rich engagement. Ours is an alternative technology ie. outdoor travel / initiative / circles of care. The dominant technology of TV, IPOD, central air, the automobile is disburdening and lacks engagement when compared to the campfire, the guitar sing song story circle of self propelled travel. It is simple engaging, story and place filled work we do and in the simplicity is a rich complexity. There is a saying; "if you learn a skill without learning the way, you've learned nothing". I am thinking more about the "way" here than about skills.

Robert Bateman at the "Get Outside" conference [held prior to CATS] talked about his "instant pudding" metaphor. Instant pudding is slick and sweet, quick and easy; you won't have heard of half the ingredients and might even pause to wonder if they are good for you. In experiential education our package and meal is different. Ours is a hearty soup. Slow and simmering, healthy root vegetables pulled from the ground; we know what we offer by comparison. Develop this metaphor further if you wish. I'd focus on the need for a wise variety of nutrients.

Finally three quick ideas that I remind you come out of the day as I listened and observed.

1. Shift the burden of proof. Be a trickster. The conventional isn't really working. If you are the alternative, the convention needn't be the sage authority. It ain't necessarily working. Point it out. Shift the burden of proof. Be the trickster. Out here in the west, be the raven.
2. Stay together. If you honour diversity, then keep your professional field a wide field. It is sound ecology.

3. Accept the lack of accountability in our experiential education work. You can't be accountable for all that is learned in your recreation / education / therapy.
Embrace this. Thrive in 'open space' of it.

These are thoughts expressed orally and casually as a closer to the CATS March 8th, 2009 gathering at Royal Roads, Victoria. Thanks to Nevin Harper for the opportunity to attend.

Bob Henderson
McMaster University

Appendix D: Participant List

Name	Affiliation	Address
Allen-Newman, Jordie	Vancouver Island Health Authority	Sooke, BC
Bathurst, Amanda		Burnaby, BC
Bilodeau, Mario	University of Quebec	Chicoutimi, QC
Birch, Nashira	GVCEC	Victoria, BC
Black, Rachel	Sierra Club of BC	Victoria, BC
Broome, Sean	Boys and Girls Club, Praxis	Victoria, BC
Brown, Nigel	Mountain Equipment Cooperative	Victoria, BC
Chatterton, Paul	Strathcona Lodge/ COLT	Campbell River, BC
Clow, Jennaka	Boys and Girls Club	Saanichton, BC
Cole, Jason	Power To Be Adventure Therapy Society	Victoria, BC
Cook, Richard*	SD 63, Individual Learning Centre	Victoria, BC
Cooper, Ian	Boys and Girls Club, Coastline	Victoria, BC
Cormode, Sarah	Uvic, Office of Indigenous Affairs	Victoria, BC
Cornell, Lindsay	Boys and Girls Club, Adventure-based	Victoria, BC
Cousins, Amy	Sierra Club of BC, Sustainable High Schools	Victoria, BC
Cox, Tony	Outward Bound Canada	
Cross, Marion*	Parent	Vancouver, BC
Dolan, Neil	Real Deal Training & Consulting	Nanaimo, BC
Domries, Katie	Mary Manning Centre	Victoria, BC
Drengson, Alan	University of Victoria	Saanich, BC
Dyck, Bonnie*	Alberta Alcohol & Drug Abuse Commission	Calgary, AB
Fagnan, Robin	Boys and Girls Club, Kickstart	Victoria, BC
Gesbracht, Ben	Boys and Girls Club, Coastline	Victoria, BC
Hanlon, Belinda	Kelly Road Secondary School	Prince George, BC
Hanson, Tori	Elevation Outdoors	Kelowna, BC
Harper, Nevin	University of Victoria	Victoria, BC
Henderson, Bob	McMaster University	Hamilton, ON
Heppner, Andrew	Lakehead University	Thunder Bay, ON
Hope-Gill, Catherine	Cedar Stone Healing Arts Center	Stanwood, WA
Inglis, Tanya	Boys and Girls Club, Praxis	Victoria, BC
Irving, Gord	Boys and Girls Club, Youth Justice	Victoria, BC
Jaskowiak, Kajtek	Boys and Girls Club, Coastline	Victoria, BC
Kemkes, Ben	Boys and Girls Club	Nanaimo, BC
Kenigsberg, Carinna	Power To Be Adventure Therapy Society	Victoria, BC
Kent, Mike	Freedom Quest	Trail, BC
Kotler, Ben	Strathcona Counselling	Sayward, BC
Lalumiere, Veronique	Freedom Quest Regional Youth Services	Nelson, BC
Landry, Manon	CLAN, SD 93	Powell River, BC
Lanthier, Amy		Victoria, BC
Lauritzen, Emily	Boys and Girls Club	Victoria, BC
Lefevre, Jason	Vancouver Island Health Authority	Qualicum Beach, BC
Lehmann, DonnaLee	Canadian University College	Lacombe, AB
Lehmann, Paul	Canadian University College	Lacombe, AB
Lejer, Natasha	University of Victoria	Victoria, BC
Lemire, Victoria	Van. Parks & Rec, EDUCO	Vancouver, BC
Link, April		Nanaimo, BC
Lipkind, Katy	Sooke Family Resource Society	Victoria, BC

Longpre, Helena	On the Tips of the Toes Foundation	Chicoutimi, QC
Mairs, Beth*	Laurentian U. & Wild Women Expeditions	Sudbury, ON
McLean, Andrea Dawn		Roberts Creek, BC
McNaughton, Ainsley	Enviros Wilderness School Association	Calgary, AB
Norris, Julian	Outward Bound Canada	Canmore, AB
Oosterveld, Dylan	Cochrane Youth Services	Cochrane, AB
Pennell, Rachel	Enviros Wilderness School Association	Golden, BC
Pepper, Hugh	Enviros Founder	Bragg Creek, AB
Richie, Stephen	Laurentian University	Sudbury, ON
Ross, Adam	Enviros Connects Program	Calgary, AB
Segal, Dave	Power To Be Adventure Therapy Society	Victoria, BC
Sigismunn, Marina	Boys and Girls Club	Victoria, BC
Slatoff, Joshua	Ministry of Children & Families	Victoria, BC
Sleen, Stephanie		Victoria, BC
Smethurst, Tania		Sayward, BC
Smolders, Pete	Boys and Girls Club	Victoria, BC
Stevenson, Corinna	CanAdventure Education	Sayward, BC
Stevenson, Greg	CanAdventure Education	Sayward, BC
Tate, Scarlett	Private Practice Counselor	Nanaimo, BC
Taylor, Duncan	Uvic, Environmental Studies	Victoria, BC
Tefler, Justin	East Kootenay Addiction Services Society	Golden, BC
Therens, Graham	Enviros Wilderness School Association	Canmore, AB
Thibeault, Michel	CLAN, SD 93	Powell River, BC
Thomson, Alan	Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club	Victoria, BC
Turgeon, Sylvain	INAQ Adventure Cooperative	Chicoutimi, QC
White, Lee	Social Change Consultant	Smithers, BC
Wilkes, Faith	MCFD- Child & Youth Mental Health	Langley, BC
Winters, Gord	Vernon & District Community Living Assoc.	Vernon, BC
Wolstenholme, John	Boys and Girls Club	Victoria, BC
World, Rebecca	Vancouver School Board	Vancouver, BC
Worthington, Joey	University of Victoria	Victoria, BC
Zryd, David	Community Counselling	Port Alberni, BC

*Those who contributed via email

Appendix E: Training Day Brochure

“Extending the conversation” -- Post-Symposium Workshops

March 9th 10 AM – 3 PM

The following workshops are an ‘extension of the conversations’ from the 1st Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium on March 8th. The goals of the workshops are two-fold: (1) to bring practitioners and academics together to continue dialogue on critical aspects of adventure therapy, and (2) to network, play and build community in an outdoor setting. Workshops (\$20) are facilitated, however, in a way to encourage participants to contribute to group learning. Additionally, recreational and networking opportunities with challenge course, climbing wall, hiking and canoeing activities (no cost) will be available from 3-5 PM, and a community meal (\$10) will be available from 5-8 PM. Workshop participants are also welcome to stay overnight at Metchosin Camp at no cost. The camp and hospitality are provided by Boys and Girls Club of Greater Victoria.

Workshop titles and facilitators (more details below):

A walk on the wild side: Transforming adversity into assets in the wilderness, Tony Cox & Julian Norris

Access to adventure based activities: How we adapt, Carinna Kenigsberg, Mario Bilodeau & Megan Millar

Experiential learning principles and practice for adventure programming, Jason Cole & Lindsay Cornell

Exploring ‘risk’ in adventure programming: Not always a walk in the park!, Dylan Oosterveld & Mike Kent

Ecological perspectives and adventure therapy practice, Dave Segal, Duncan Taylor & Alan Drengson

Schedule:

9:00-10:00	Networking at Metchosin Wilderness Camp
10:00-12:00	Concurrent workshops
1:00-3:00	Concurrent workshops
3:00-5:00	Networking and recreation
5:00-8:00	Dinner and social

*Registration will take place at the Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium, March 8th



Logistics:

All workshops will be facilitated at Metchosin Wilderness Camp of the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Victoria (with the exception of the adaptive recreation workshop which will be held at the Boathouse at Royal Roads University). All workshops are \$20, payable to Boys and Girls Club of Greater Victoria to cover facility costs and any profit will go toward sponsoring children for the subsidized summer camp offered on site. While parking is available, car-pooling is encouraged; time will be made available for this arranged on Sunday at the Symposium. See Google maps link for directions: <http://maps.google.ca/maps?hl=en&tab=wl>

What to bring:

Participants are reminded to dress for all weather as they will be outside and active for the duration of most workshops. Alternative space is available if seriously inclement weather occurs; these may include cabins, tarp shelters or camp facilities. Please wear closed-toed shoes and clothing you can be active in. Participants are also encouraged to bring a reusable water bottle and mug, it is March, and the hot chocolate will be on. While dinner is available at camp for \$10 per person, lunches are not provided during the day. The hour lunch break allows for extended networking or socializing, but limited time to travel to nearby restaurants or grocery stores. Please bring lunch!

Questions:

Nevin Harper
Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium Convener

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University of Victoria
School of Child and Youth Care
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250.472.4836 (f)

*Workshop descriptions to follow



A walk on the wild side: Transforming adversity into assets in the wilderness

Tony Cox & Julian Norris

Description:

For 40 years Outward Bound Canada has pioneered the use of wilderness and adventure programming to support developmental and therapeutic outcomes for populations including vulnerable and at-risk youth, adult survivors of violence and trauma, people in recovery from substance abuse challenges, aboriginal communities and youth from conflict zones. Since its inception in the 1940's, the core objectives of Outward Bound have focused on enhancing resiliency, and today, our therapeutic and developmental programs rest on a strengths or asset-based theoretical foundation. In this workshop, we will review the theory and practice of using an asset-based approach in the context of wilderness expeditions. It will be an engaging and hands-on session that will provide participants an opportunity to share and learn new tools they can use in their own practice.

About the Facilitators:

Tony has been the Director of Outward Bound Canada's community programs for the past five years and is responsible for creating and managing asset-based wilderness programs for a wide range of communities and special populations. His unique background includes six years designing and leading wilderness therapy programs for young offenders in Northern Ontario and five years running therapeutic experiential programs for refugee communities in conflict zones during the war in Bosnia. Tony is also the senior trainer for staff working in therapeutically oriented programs at Outward Bound Canada.

Julian directs program development for Outward Bound in Western Canada. He developed the Guiding Spirit therapeutic wilderness leadership semester program for the University of Victoria and co-founded the Ghost River Rediscovery program. His path of service has included using nature-based and wilderness approaches in a variety of therapeutic settings to address issues such as solvent abuse in Labrador, youth suicide in the Arctic, psycho-social rehabilitation following the Asian tsunami and HIV and post-conflict work in southern Africa.



Access to adventure based activities: How we adapt

Carinna Kenigsberg, Mario Bilodeau & Megan Millar

Description:

This workshop will be an exploration of adventure therapy through an adaptive recreation perspective. Come share and learn about adaptive recreation and the benefits arising from the creation of inclusive environment for people of all abilities to experience outdoor adventures. The session will involve a visual demonstration of adaptive recreation program practices implemented within Power To Be and Tips of the Toes programs. We will also discuss innovative program ideas and the diverse communities we can serve. We will create a space for practitioners to taste some of our activities and initiatives experientially, on both land and water.

About the Facilitators:

Carinna has been working with people with disabilities for over 12 years and is the adaptive recreation program coordinator for Power to Be. A graduate of the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria, she has focused her career on creating access to outdoor environments for those living with barriers, as she believes everyone has the right to recreation and connection to nature.

Mario is Professor of Outdoors Adventure and Tourism at Université du Québec à Chicoutimi and has been responsible for numerous developments in adventure therapy in Quebec, and has been a keynote and speaker internationally on the topic for more than 25 years. As a seasoned mountaineer and paddler with a truly aspiring trip log, Mario has given endlessly to providing people with disabilities the opportunity for transformative wilderness experiences. From dog sledding with quadriplegics to mountain climbing with kids with cancer, as well as his own personal and family adventures, Mario will bring a wide range of experiences to this workshop.

Megan is an adaptive recreation facilitator with Power to Be Adventure Therapy Society. Trained as a social worker at the University of Victoria, she is new to the adventure therapy field but has appreciated the knowledge and experience gained in this innovative approach. Megan also facilitates week-long leadership camps for youth through the B.C. Cooperative Association.



Experiential learning principles and practice for adventure programming

Jason Cole & Lindsay Cornell

Description:

This workshop will focus on the challenges of integrating learning objectives and intangible concepts into experiential initiatives and programming. The workshop will explore a variety of settings and tools including rock climbing, fixed initiatives and wilderness environments as vehicles to achieving program objectives. Experienced or inexperienced in the field of experiential education and adventure therapy, workshop participants will learn and develop tools and ideas they can infuse into their professional practices. Facilitators will journey with participants through an interactive workshop that will give insight on how to maintain flexibility and spontaneity in your programming while maintaining program intentionality.

About the Facilitators:

Jason holds an honours degree in Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism from Lakehead University. He has over 10 years experience creating and leading outdoor experiences for youths and families across a variety of settings. He is currently the Operations Manger at Power To Be Adventure Therapy Society in Victoria B.C., and the past supervisor of a youth justice wilderness expedition program.

Lindsay holds a B.SC. in Biology and Environmental Studies, a diploma in Outdoor Education and currently completing graduate studies in . Lindsay has designed and lead a variety of outdoor and experiential education programs over the past 8 years. She is currently the coordinator of the Adventure Based Learning program for Boys & Girls Club Services, Victoria B.C. She brings an infectious energy and wit to her workshops.



Exploring ‘risk’ in adventure programming: Not always a walk in the park!

Dylan Oosterveld & Mike Kent

Description:

This workshop will look risk management strategies in adventure programming. Using the example of a day hike, we will be walking through (literally!) a day in the life of a therapeutic adventure program. Workshop participants will explore some beautiful country, some potential pitfalls, and some tried and true techniques and have the opportunity to discuss and examine terrain, group dynamics, on-trail therapeutic opportunities and what to expect with the unexpected. Plus we hope to have a whole lot of fun! Come with your questions, knowledge, your stories and your boots on! This workshop will be held in the Metchosin Camp area and surrounding parklands. Maximum participants for this workshop are 12 due to logistics and risk management.

About the Facilitators:

Dylan is an original Nova Scotian and currently the Executive Director of the Cochrane Youth Association. He has been working in adventure-based settings with young people for over 10 years and is currently completing his B.S.W. through the University of Victoria. As the past supervisor of Enviros Wilderness School’s Base Camp program, Dylan has lived and worked with young people experiencing challenges with addiction, the justice system, family, community expectations and school. He currently resides in Cochrane Alberta with his wife, Danelle, and their really funny daughter, Navee.

Mike is an experiential educator, facilitator, consultant, outdoor leader and youth worker. He is a director of Inner Compass Innovations, Inc, a company committed to community and individual growth and capacity building. He is also involved with Freedom Quest Regional Youth Services, an agency that provides drug and alcohol counseling, prevention and outreach services to youth in the West Kootenay Boundary Region, as their Recreation and Recreational Risk Management Coordinator. Since 1997, Mike has worked with programs and projects focusing on leadership training, wilderness experience, therapeutic drug and alcohol treatment, conflict resolution, personal development, experiential education and community capacity building.



Ecological perspectives and adventure therapy practice

Dave Segal, Duncan Taylor & Alan Drengson

Description:

The healing potential of viewing and being in nature is a cornerstone of many AT programs. In this workshop we ask the questions, 1) Are wilderness AT programs working from a dualistic perspective where nature is positioned as an object for our use? 2) What are the consequences of such practices? and 3) What would an AT practice look like that embodies a "nature as self" perspective? By exploring different ecological perspectives, such as Deep Ecology, American Transcendentalism, Eastern Wisdom Traditions, and Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge, we hope to extrapolate what they have to offer AT practice, as well as specific experiential strategies to put these values into practice.

Dave has been working in the adventure therapy field for over 10 years. Positions held include facilitator for Boundless Adventure's mental health and addictions wilderness programs, lead facilitator for Power To Be Adventure Therapy Society (Power To Be) and most recently coordinating evaluation for Power To Be. Dave has a B.A. in Psychology, is a passionate environmentalist, is completing an M.A. in Child and Youth Care and credentialing as a registered counselor. For his thesis research, he will be investigating the potential unison of ecopsychology ideas and adventure therapy practice.

Duncan's academic background is in the history, politics, and philosophy of the environmental movement in North America. He has worked on forestry issues as part of his more inclusive research on the history and development of environmental thought, and in the larger issue of "sustainable development" and the question of what it means to meet human and biophysical needs. His research and publications focus on the history and philosophy of the environmental movement and on changing society's values regarding sustainability. In turn, his recent work has specialized in the application of integral systems approaches to cultural transformation and environmental changes and the deep link between human and community health and forest ecosystems.

Alan is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and Adjunct Professor of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria in Canada. His areas are Eastern philosophy, comparative religion, and environmental philosophy and cross cultural technology studies. He has taught and practices meditation disciplines related to harmony with Nature. He is the author of many articles and books, *The Practice of Technology* and *Beyond Environmental Crisis*, and of two unpublished manuscripts called *Wild Way Home* and *Caring for Home Place*. He is the founding editor of *The Trumpeter: Journal of Ecosophy and Ecoforestry*.

