



4th Canadian Adventure
Therapy Symposium

Nothing (ad)Ventured,
Nothing Gained

Camp Horizon, Kananaskis Alberta

May 3-5, 2013
Final Report

Canadian
Adventure
Therapy
Symposium



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4th Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium
May 3-5th, 2013

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The Intention of this Report:

The intention of this report is to stand as an official record and transcript for the CATS 4 gathering; including the symposium format, new symposium additions, sessions presented, speaker notes and recommendations. This symposium included three pre-conference workshops, 2 speakers, a round table discussion, 15 sessions and morning yoga; all of which will be paraphrased in the body of this report, so as not to over-burden the reader with too many lengthy transcripts.

This report is not meant to be an overview of all the CATS symposiums from the origins of CATS1 in 2009 until the present. Further to this, it does not contain any of the recommendations and happenings from the previous gatherings. Previous CATS reports and information regarding the origins of the symposium can be found by visiting: <http://adventuretherapy.squarespace.com> or www.canadianadventuretherapy.ca

CATS 4, as with all of the previous gatherings, owes its success and value to the talented presenters and insightful speakers who take the time to share their expertise, skill and wisdom.

It is with this in mind that we would like to thank all of these individuals for coming together to enrich and enlighten the Canadian Adventure Therapy community.

We also wish to thank all symposium participants and you the reader for your interest and support, as we work to broaden the interest and increase the connection of the national Adventure Therapy community in Canada.

An Overview of C.A.T.S. 4 - Nothing (ad) Ventured, Nothing Gained:

The fourth Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium took place from May 3-5, 2013, amidst the beautiful setting of Easter Seals Camp Horizon, in Kananaskis Alberta, located forty five minutes south-west of Calgary. Camp Horizon, a year round wilderness facility nestled amongst the front ranges of the Canadian Rockies, provided a comfortable and relaxing setting for all of the dynamic sessions, discussions and presentations that were a part of the gathering,

There were 72 participants in total, with attendees and presenters from British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, the Yukon and Alaska.

This year's theme, "Nothing (ad) Ventured, Nothing Gained", was interpreted broadly and beautifully from the value added pre-symposium workshops, to the insightful and entertaining addresses given by the Opening Speaker Will Gadd and the Keynote Speaker, Geoff Powter. The concept that it takes the courage of a few steps forward, in order to create something of value was evident in all of the content that was shared.

For this symposium, there was intention put on looking for those professionals who not only had a great program to share, but whose success in the field of Adventure Therapy was developed through education, experience and the administration of Adventure Therapy programs. The result was that a broad collective of professionals came forward to share their knowledge and a great platform was created for sharing, learning and networking.

Design Components:

Who attended the symposium?

This was the first time that a CATS gathering was held in Alberta, and we as the host committee realized that the community of attendees was already well-established from previous CATS gatherings. Therefore, the question became how do we work to keep that community engaged and how do we work to attract members of that community locally, who have not attended before.

As a committee, we chose to invite speakers, facilitators and presenters based upon the following streams, as they relate to Adventure Therapy; experience in programming and therapeutic programs, contributions to education, research and development, and the business of adventure. The intent was that a compelling list of presenters would be developed, and that it would be encouraging for the community to want to participate, with the intention of deepening their own knowledge and understanding of adventure Therapy, as well as helping to advance their own practice and professionalism in the field.

This approach was successful, as there were multiple attendees from the following professional streams in attendance, with a total of 72 attendees participating. The list includes, but is not limited to:

1. Field Practitioners
2. Organizational leaders and Administrators
3. Students
4. Academics and Researchers
5. Mental Health Professionals
6. Professional Adventurers
7. Professionals from peripheral disciplines.

The programming and therapeutic stream had the largest number of presentations this year, with emphasis on the purpose of AT, family and adventure based programming. Field practitioners and other professionals working within programs made up the largest number of attendees, so it was very practical that the largest number of presentations came from this stream. The education, research and development stream saw the second largest number of presentations, with a focus on the components of AT, the purpose of AT and outcome evaluation. The third stream, the business of adventure, saw only one presentation submitted.

This was an interesting development as presentations centered on program administration and risk management had been identified as a desired addition to the conference's presentation themes.

Symposium Length:

The ideal length of an event such as CATS 4, was a question that we as the host committee evaluated carefully before deciding upon, the 2 day, 2 night format. Consideration for the length of the symposium was based upon the length of previous CATS gatherings, previous participant feedback and consultation with the organizer's of other like events.

The decision to run the official symposium from the evening of May 3, until partway through the afternoon of May 5, was one of duration vs. content. As the host committee we felt that it was long enough to accommodate sessions, provide time to both of the speakers and to facilitate the "networking"

component, that is an invaluable component of any gathering. It was not however too much of a demand on the commitment of time that was asked of the participants

To accommodate those folks who were keen on learning and wanting to participate in a larger capacity, there were 3 pre-symposium workshops that were built into the first day of the symposium.

Pre-symposium Workshops:

CATS 3 had a wonderful pre-symposium workshop that was facilitated by Bob Henderson, entitled "Outdoor Travel Guiding: Considering what has changed over the last 30 years". It was a very successful component to that symposium, and certainly enriched the experience for those that participated.

As a host committee, we decided to take this component and expand it if possible, in order to add to the offerings for CATS 4. After some consideration of what was of value to potential participants, there were three different areas that were targeted:

New Practitioner Workshop: Adventure Therapy 101, Jeff Couillard and Adam Ross

Advanced Practitioner Workshop: The Awakened Practitioner, Julian Norris

Hands on/skills workshop: The Ropes, Enviros Shunda Creek - Will Black, Ed Haliburton and Ryan Stromeyer.

There were a total of 35 participants in those workshops, and the feedback was very supportive of their inclusion.

The registrations for these pre-symposium workshops was handled on line as a "conference add on", and the revenue generated from these workshops was used to offset any costs that were accrued in offering them.

A complete description of the 3 pre-symposium workshops that were offered, are provided in the "Workshop Description", section of this report.

Morning Yoga:

As a host committee, there was some discussion from the beginning of the planning stages, with respect to offering a health and wellness component. The committee was hopeful to provide this as an option for both days of the symposium, however felt that the schedule needed to be somewhat complete before making a final decision. There was recognition that there was value in providing this component, however it was approached with the awareness that adding too many components to an itinerary can be overwhelming for participants.

After the schedule was complete, and the sessions and speakers had been determined, it was decided that there was room in the schedule for a health and wellness component. The host committee was approached by a local yoga practitioner, who was keen to be a part of the symposium in a meaningful way.

The end result was that two ninety minute yoga sessions were added to both mornings of the conference, as a way to actively greet the day. Both sessions were attended by roughly 20 people and the feedback was very supportive of its inclusion.

This component was offered to participants as part of the conference experience and no further cost was added for its provision. There was a nominal fee provided to the facilitator, as compensation for supplies and mileage.

A description of the yoga sessions offered is provided in the "Workshop Description", section of this report.

Speakers:

As a host committee, we were honoured to be able to provide the experience of two speakers at this year's CATS gathering. It was a decision, that involved some discussion and decisions with respect to who would be appropriate to speak on adventure therapy and if they could provide a link to the theme, "Nothing Ventured, Nothing Gained".

The discussion around the keynote involved input from the host committee members, as well as the CATS committee, as this speaker is a big attraction for the participants of any gathering. The inclusion of an opening speaker was a decision that the host committee made, once there was room to accommodate one in the schedule

Will Gadd, an international adventurer, was the opening speaker on the first evening. Will spoke about risk from the perspective of what it has meant to him, with respect to managing it and allowing it to be a part of the adventures and work that he has done. The link to the symposium was that Will has always needed to take risk, in order to accomplish any of the outdoor endeavours that he has undertaken. The concept of, "Nothing Ventured. Nothing Gained", was evident throughout his talk.

Geoff Powter, a psychologist involved in adventure therapy and a renowned climber, came on as the keynote speaker. Geoff's talk, "*Positively Terrified: Why We Need to Take Chances*", addressed the need to take risks with a client base, in a society that is so risk averse, however glorifies it in magazine ads and television commercials. The link to adventure therapy was that there is a need for participants in our programs to take risks, however the way in which we ask them to take risks is very important.

A description of the both the opening address and the keynote address are provided in the "Workshop Description", section of this report.

Common Ground Conference Setting:

The organizing committee for CATS 3 intentionally set out to find a location that could accommodate all participants on site. The feedback from the previous symposiums, which had only a few participants remain on site, highlighted that some of the richest conversations for them took place after everyone else had left for the day. CATS 3 secured a camp in Ontario, which allowed for everyone to be together in one place for the duration of the symposium. It was a successful pursuit, as the ability to network and continue conversations at the end of the day was an enriching opportunity. As the organizing committee for CATS 4, this was a part of the symposium experience that we wanted to re-create.

We were successful in securing Easter Seals Camp Horizon, in Kananaskis Country, Alberta. It was a fully operational camp, capable of accommodating up to 120 people. The deposit was reasonable, and the total cost for the facility and food was easily accommodated into our cost structure for conference participation.

In order to break even on this cost, there would need to be 55 participants registering at the "dorm style" accommodation price. There were over 65 that registered for the "dorm style" accommodations.

As a Committee, the recommendation going forward is that hosting a symposium on common ground, is a valuable part of the experience, however the costs needs to be carefully evaluated and weighed against the potential participant base and revenue income through registration. Working with local camps/organizations to see if a donation of space is possible, is a further recommendation that is worth considering.

Information Technology and Social Media:

CATS has a Facebook page and Twitter feed that were created by the CATS 3 organizing committee, which are now an established way of communicating with the CATS community. The Twitter feed was linked to the Facebook page so that each can be automatically updated with one entry. The Facebook page proved to be a great medium for communicating information as well communicating with folks who had questions about CATS 4. There were well over 200 people connected to the Facebook page at the time of the CATS 4 symposium.

The CATS website (www.canadianadventuretherapysymposium.ca), the “Legacy Project” created by the CATS 3 organizing committee was passed onto the CATS 4 organizing committee. As an organizing committee, this was invaluable to us, as it provided a platform that was already established, with a URL that was already familiar to the CATS community.

It was very easy for a website administrator to go in and update all the info for the CATS 4 symposium. There was a lot of traffic generated through the site, including general traffic, questions and all the symposium registrations.

The website is now a part of the CATS communication platform and will be available for use by the organizing committee for CATS 5.

Registrations:

There were 72 participants who registered in total for the CATS 4 Symposium. Everyone registered online through the website, which proved to be a great way to track numbers, revenue and manage the various products that were available for the symposium.

As an organizing committee, we strategized with a few ways of generating the volume of registration needed to ensure that our costs were covered. The success in covering our costs was to ensure that the largest amount of registrations available were in the “dorm style” and “semi private” accommodation. This was possible as most of the registrants would be needing accommodations. We based the number of spots made available in these categories on the amount of revenue needed to cover the costs of the facility and food. Our other participation options, “camping” and “full participation with no accommodation”, were based on the need to cover this cost as well as be inclusive of those who wished to stay off site or needed to be budget conscious. We capped the registration at 10 for both of these options, and they sold out quickly. This way of managing the registrations, was positively reflected in the feedback, and there were no concerns pre or post symposium with respect to the registration package that participants chose.

CATS 4 Practitioner Award

At every CATS gathering, beginning with the first one, the organizing committee has honoured someone from within the field who has made a significant contribution to Adventure Therapy, in the areas of academia, program administration or field work. The idea has been to acknowledge someone who has consciously contributed to Adventure Therapy in an intentional way, helping to move it forward in both its acceptance and prominence as a recognized and respected way of working with individuals who are seeking change in their lives.

The CATS 4 organizing committee, with the support from the CATS advisory committee, chose to recognize the contributions of Steve Prysunka. Steve is a Canadian, who started the formative years of his career in the Calgary area. Throughout the 80's and early 90's, Steve worked at the Rocky Mountain YMCA in both a frontline and leadership role. These formative years set the stage for a 5 year stint with

the Boys and Girls Club of Victoria, working as a Wilderness Guide, in their 26 Day program for at risk youth. These combined years of service, in a field that does not lend itself as a career option for most, was just the beginning for Steve, as he went on to co-found and serve as director for the wilderness behavioral health program, Alaska Crossings. They run 48 day wilderness based therapeutic programs for youth ages 12-18. It was the development and evolution of this program, that has ultimately cemented Steve's contributions to the Adventure Therapy field, both in the US and Canada. His innovation evolved that program into a world recognized leader in the provision of Adventure Therapy to vulnerable populations. Steve retired in 2012

CATS 4 Workshops Descriptions

Pre-Symposium Workshops - Friday May 3: All day

***Adventure Therapy 101* - Adam Ross and Jeff Couillard**

Join Adam and Jeff of Enviros as they walk you through a day of learning the "tricks of the trail". You'll spend the day out in the Elbow Valley at Camp Horizon, experiencing how to structure, frame, execute and debrief a variety of "must know" AT activities. Adam and Jeff bring many years of experience from both working with youth and training staff.

Biographical Sketch

Adam Ross - Adam is the Program Manager for the Intensive Residential Treatment Centers, as well as the Wilderness Programming Manager with Enviros. Adam has an extensive background in working with vulnerable populations in a variety of wilderness mediums and treatment environments, always using an experiential approach. He's a skilled facilitator in a variety of industry areas.

Jeff Couillard - Jeff is the Program Supervisor at Enviros Base Camp and Co-founder and CEO of Givypup (a social business). He's a skilled public speaker and facilitator, and has presented workshops at a variety of industry conferences on a range of topics from addiction and experiential learning to building resiliency in systems and organizations.

***The Awakened Practitioner* - Dr. Julian Norris**

What does awakened practice look like in the field of adventure therapy? This pre-symposium session is an invitation to explore some of the deeper practice threads that can add value across the AT spectrum. Along the way you may investigate topics like process-oriented approaches to facilitation, the relevance of mindfulness disciplines, soul-centric maps of human development, deep diagnosis, the nature of transition and much more.

Biographical Sketch - Originally hailing from the British Isles, Julian Norris is based in the Rockies where he served, until recently, as the Associate Director of Outward Bound Canada. A well-regarded facilitator and mentor, his work with the Banff Centre has explored depth-based leadership, the application of living systems theory, working across cultures, strategic planning, nature and place-based learning and mindfulness practices. He also teaches at the University of Calgary's Haskayne School of Business.

***The Ropes* - Enviros Shunda Creek - Will Black, Ed Haliburton, Ryan Stromeyer**

Join the Enviros' Shunda Creek program for a day of "optimizing rock climbing activities, to maximize therapeutic outcomes by design and intention." Will has 30+ years of experience in therapeutic, corporate and educational facilitation, and loves nothing more than passing his accumulated knowledge and expertise to new and old practitioners alike.

Friday May 3, Opening Speaker: 7:30 - 8:30p.m.

***The Adventure of Risk* - Will Gadd**

A life of adventure, both personally and professionally, has been the expressive medium through which Will has made his mark in the world. Some of his adventures include: climbing icebergs in the Atlantic, setting world records for distance paragliding and ice climbing continuously for 24 hours as a fundraising event. The key to success for Will time after time, is based on his approach to managing risk. Careful planning and timing are the basic ingredients for any such endeavor and central in the talk that was delivered,

An inspiring hour into one's man journey with outdoor adventure, and how the idea of "Nothing (ad) Ventured, Nothing Gained", is evident in all that is meaningfully and successfully pursued.

Biographical Sketch - Will is one of Canada's premier adventure athletes, winner of multiple X-games and ice climbing championships, 4-time winner of the Canadian National Sport Climbing competition, world record holder for distance paragliding and much more (including climbing icebergs off the coast of Labrador!). Will is well known for his entertaining approach to sharing his adventures, and regularly speaks to audiences large and small around the world.

Saturday May 4, Yoga: 6:30 - 7:30 a.m.

***Early Morning Yoga* - Kristin Stuart**

Participants will experience the therapeutic application of mindfulness through yoga and meditation as a tool for healing and personal growth. The workshop will lead participants through a 90 minute yoga session (outdoor weather permitting) where they can connect to their natural surroundings and be guided on a journey into the Self.

Biographical Sketch - Kristen has been an active member in the adventure and wellness industry in the Bow Valley for the past 11 years. As a yoga teacher, ACMG Hiking Guide and lifestyle coach she has been offering mind-body wellness programming and teaching through a variety of platforms to all ages. Through her own life experience and as a teacher and guide, she has witnessed the transformation that occurs both on and off the mat through yoga, meditation and mountain adventure. She believes in the power of the mountain environment to heal and connect one to their own authentic self and true nature while cultivating self-discovery, self-confidence and personal growth.

Saturday May 4, Session 1 Workshops: 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

***Family Roots Adventure Therapy Program* - Kati Rose and David Segal**

Education, Research and Development

In this workshop, participants will be introduced to the theory and practice of family adventure therapy through an exploration of the Family Roots Adventure Therapy Program (FRP) - an innovative multi-family AT program entering its 5th year of service in Victoria, BC.

The FRP is unique within Canada, blending adventure therapy and eco-therapy with the practices of family counselling to provide a dynamic and engaging intervention for families facing challenges. This 6-month outdoor adventure program aims to provide accessible and engaging family counselling services that enhance overall family functioning, build capacity for navigating stress and conflict, and increase the family's awareness of internal and external resources.

Biographical Sketch:

Kati Rose - As a clinical counselor, Katy is passionate about the joys of experiential and nature-based approaches to working with youth and families. Katy spent the past 4 years focused on developing accessible family counselling programs in BC, and promoting the use of adventure therapy in healing through practice and teaching.

David Segal - Dave hails from Victoria BC and is passionate about providing outdoor adventure counselling to children, youth and families. He has been working as a facilitator, evaluator, and counsellor for the Power To Be Adventure Therapy Society and also specializes in providing eco-therapy through his private practice Human-Nature Counselling.

***Purpose of Adventure Therapy* - Renae Plett**

Programming and Therapeutic

This will be a presentation of new research using power point and will also include some time for discussion. Outcomes will be achieved through well-presented information based on research findings. Outcomes will be enhanced through participant knowledge and understanding related to the topic brought up in discussion. Participants will hear outcomes from new research that focuses on why people choose adventure therapy and how this can relate to the operation of adventure therapy programming. The hope is that participants will gain understanding and see the desire for and need of this type of programming, through expression by those who chose it as a relevant and necessary therapeutic avenue. This research will aid adventure therapy providers through increasing cognizance of what clients are expecting and desiring from programs. In addition it will provide a picture for Adventure Therapy professionals as to how people view Adventure Therapy and why they believe it to be a valuable therapeutic choice.

Biographical Sketch: Renae Plett holds a Diploma in Adventure Guiding/Management, an Interdisciplinary Degree in Adventure Therapy, sea kayak, canoe and sailing certifications, and advanced wilderness first responder certification. She has worked in New Zealand leading adults in personal growth adventures and recently in therapeutic wilderness programming for at-risk-youth on Vancouver Island.

***Best Practices in Adventure Therapy* - Steve Javorski**

Education, Research and Development

The overall goal of this workshop is to help workshop participants engage with four critical questions facing the field of adventure therapy and expose Canadian practitioners to the research being done by the National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs and the Outdoor Behavioural Healthcare Research Cooperative to address these questions, as well as key elements of best practices in Adventure Therapy as defined by the Therapeutic Adventure Professional Group (TAPG) and the Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare Research Cooperative (OBHRC). The secondary goal of this workshop is to provide participants with the time to evaluate this information in the context of their own practice, share processes they have in place to address these questions, and collect feedback on both research and best-practices from Canadian practitioners to bring back to both TAPG and OBHRC.

The first phase of the workshop will be an interactive lecture during which the bulk of this information will be presented by PowerPoint (60 minutes).

The second phase of the workshop will comprise the majority of the workshop (~90 minute), and will provide opportunities for participants to discuss the relevance of the information presented within the context of their own work.

Biographical Sketch - Stephen holds an MA in Wilderness Therapy from Naropa University, and is a PhD candidate in the Outdoor Experiential Education program at UNH. He studies incident and clinical outcome trends in Adventure Therapy and Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare programs, and is on the leadership council of the Therapeutic Adventure Professional Group.

Saturday May 4, Session 2 Workshops: 10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

All that Glitters - Margo Talbot

Programming and Therapeutic

Participants will have the opportunity to listen to a first-hand experience of how wilderness adventure brought one woman from the brink of drug addiction and suicidal depression to becoming a celebrated athlete in the sport of ice climbing. The presentation will include a 45 minute keynote with images, followed by a 45 minute discussion/ Q&A.

Biographical Sketch - Margo Talbot is a sponsored climber, author, and speaker who has been giving presentations of her wilderness adventures for over ten years. She has worked with Outward Bound's youth at risk, put on a one-day ice climbing clinic for Enviros, as well as taught ice and rock climbing clinics all over North America for more than ten years

Sage - Jeff Horvath

Education, Research and Development

The SAGE Program at Canmore Collegiate High School in southern Alberta is a yearlong intervention program designed to improve high school completion rates for Aboriginal students. We use the mountains as our classroom and take students into the backcountry with the intent of developing skills that transfer into their day to day lives, empowering them to find academic and personal success. Through physical, emotional and spiritual challenge within the context of adventure and experiential education, participants develop the courage and confidence needed to navigate the obstacles of life. The participants discover there is more in them than they think.

In this presentation, we give an overview of the program as well as information about the resources needed to develop individualized programs for your community or school. Participants will gain a better understanding of the challenges Aboriginal students face in Canadian schools. They will also gain a

better understanding of experiential and adventure education. Thirdly, participants will gain insight into the importance of relationships, mentorship and the power of role models.

Biographical Sketch - Jeff Horvath is a member of the Ojibways of Onegaming in north-western Ontario, and was born in Toronto, Ontario. He has lived in Alberta since 1984. He is the Aboriginal Liaison Teacher at Canmore Collegiate High School and is coordinator of First Nation, Metis and Inuit education (FNMI). His educational philosophy has stressed the importance of experiential, outdoor and adventure education with a culturally relevant curriculum. He is a board member for Outward Bound Canada and the Outdoor Council of Canada. He was selected as a co-chair in the 2012 Governor General of Canada Leadership conference. He has also worked as an instructor for SAIT Polytechnic and a facilitator at The Banff Centre. He lives in Canmore, Alberta with his wife Genevieve Soler and their two young children.

Saturday May 4, Keynote Speaker: 1:45 -3:00 p.m.

Positively Terrified: Why We Need to Take Chances - Geoff Powter

Risk is a complicated word in our world. We glorify risk — can't turn a page in a magazine without being slapped with images of kayakers braving a waterfall, surfers barrelling down a wave; can't turn on the TV without seeing people leaping off cliffs in wingsuits — and yet, at the same moment, we act as though we want to remove all the risks from our lives: we risk-proof our playgrounds, legislate and punish risky behaviour, sue when things go wrong. Geoff Powter will look at the natural history of risk, and ask you to consider how the people in your programs are pulled by the confusing forces of risk that surround them.

Biographical Sketch - Geoff is a clinical psychologist, mountain adventurer and writer based in Canmore, Alberta. Geoff began his clinical career at Enviros Wilderness School, drawing on a life-long love of nature-based learning to help build the Project Trust program in Calgary. He has worked at Outward Bound, NOLS and Yamnuska Mountain School, and since 1990, has been a senior facilitator at the Pacific Center for Leadership and a faculty member in Leadership Development at the Banff Centre. Geoff is a veteran of 13 Himalayan expeditions, has climbed extensively at home in the Rockies and around the world, and has been writing and speaking about the psychology of adventure since the 1970s. He was the editor of the Canadian Alpine Journal for 13 years, and his book *Strange and Dangerous Dreams: The Fine Line Between Adventure and Madness*, was shortlisted for the Boardman-Tasker Award and won the Jury Prize at the 2006 Banff Mountain Book Festival. Geoff has also written for outdoor magazines around the world, and his Canadian writing has won him nine National Magazine Awards. Geoff was the 2012 winner of the Summit of Excellence award, for contributions to Canadian climbing.

Saturday May 4, Session 3 Workshops: 3:15 - 4:45 p.m.

Brass Tacks - Nevin Harper

Programming and Therapeutic

Panel Discussion:

As presenter/moderator, I hope to engage the participants in discussion, set the tone and pace of the panel toward idealized ends, and to spark participant interest in asking questions. I will select, with the help of the CATS committee, key members of the panel.

The intent of this panel discussion with pre-selected participants is to address major questions being asked of the field and to more clearly articulate adventure therapy in Canada. Participants will gain a broader understanding of theory and practice of adventure therapy as well as be able to ask questions

and engage the panel in dialogue on the future of adventure therapy.

Biographical Sketch - Dr. Nevin Harper is a researcher, educator, trainer, and author in the field of adventure education and experiential learning. Following athlete burnout at age 20, Nevin began a 20+ year career as a wilderness guide and outdoor skills instructor. Additionally, Nevin has provided team building and group development trainings and workshops across sectors. He has worked with students, athletes, and employees at places such as Royal Roads University, Vancouver Island University, the University of Victoria, and the National Coaching Institute. He holds a Master's Degree in Leadership and a PhD in Education.

Specific Outcomes in AT - Virginie Gargano

Education, Research and Development

Outdoor programs are popular in different countries around the world and have been a consistent object of study by field practitioners for more than fifty years. Recent research demonstrates the effects of outdoor programs, in educational and therapeutic pursuits. This research considers both the components and the effects of these programs, yet more research needs to be done in order to link specific components (anxiety, challenge, level of risk, nature of the activities, length of the programs) to specific outcomes (self efficacy, self confidence, therapeutic alliance, etc.). Many of these studies are done with participants with specific needs. In this presentation, the aim is to show what the main components of AT are and what their effects are at this time. It will be supported by current research and examples from the field.

Participants will leave this workshop with a better understanding of what is going on in the field and in actual research from the field. A specific outcome will be to help participants develop a critical way of thinking about working with clients with specific needs.

Biographical Sketch – Virginie is a PhD student in Social Work. She has a professional background in outdoor programming for over 10 years, working with different organizations.

Flourishing or Languishing - Stephen Ritchie

Education, Research and Development

The session will include a combination of presentation (lecture), discussion, and personal practice time using several health measurement scales. During the presentation part, the focus will be on presenting principles of program evaluation, sharing definitions and frameworks of health, reviewing principles of measurement theory, and examining some of the important adventure therapy outcome studies in the literature. Discussion will be encouraged throughout the session, and specific facilitated questions will stimulate debate and create new ideas. Delegates will have the opportunity to complete several health measurement scales, calculate a summary score, and then discuss and interpret the results. As adventure therapy develops and evolves in Canada, it is critical that program evaluation and research continue in a lock-step fashion. Using self-reported health measures is the gold standard. This workshop is important for experienced practitioners and program supervisors or managers who are currently involved in, or are interested in learning more about, using health measurement scales for program evaluation or research.

There are four targeted outcomes in this session: (1) Gain experience using, scoring, and interpreting several self-reported health measurement scales; (2) Understand how to use health measurement scales for program evaluation and research; (3) Explore some of the important considerations for selecting an appropriate scale; (4) Co-create a rich learning environment that encourages delegates sharing their own experiences and expertise.

Biographical Sketch - I am an Assistant Professor in the School of Human Kinetics and a Doctoral Candidate in the School of Rural and Northern Health at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario Canada. My research interests are devoted to understanding wilderness, adventure and outdoor education in the context of achieving personal growth and health outcomes.

Sunday May 5, Session 4 Workshops: 8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

***Standing Strong* - Tony Cox**

Programming and Therapeutic

"When we as Practitioners fail to take good care of ourselves, our ability to give dynamically to others is greatly compromised. We spend a great deal of our careers honing our skills to be of service to others in helping professions, but it is surprising how often we forget to apply our First Responder Training to this paradigm. You must look after your own well-being if you are to truly continue to be of service to others. Join us for this very engaging presentation as we explore strategies to help you discover ways to maintain power balance and professional sustainability. How do you work with challenging populations with often very difficult Life Stories without taking on the emotion of that yourself? Come find out.

Participants will have the opportunity to explore techniques and strategies aimed at preventing early burn-out in this field. During the course of the workshop participants will be invited to engage in a series of unique activities, discussions and insights, facilitated by a practitioner with over 20 years of field experience. Workshop attendees will leave the session armed with some great new personal awareness; some useful tools for generating their own "professional sustainability" plans and some proven strategies for maintaining equilibrium while working with challenging populations with often very challenging Life Stories.

Biographical Sketch - Tony Cox is currently the Executive Director at Leaders of the Day. During the war in Bosnia, Tony led groups there facilitating play therapy programs for refugee communities. He is best known for his powerful programs serving young offender youth, First Nations communities and young people living with powerful addictions.

***Game Changers* - Jeff Couillard**

The Business of Adventure

A hands on toolkit for creating REALLY BIG VALUE IDEAS. Introducing participants to tools from outside the realm of AT (a trans-theoretical approach to learning) allows for new insight and depth into creating "game-changing" ideas. From bringing a new AT product to market, or finding synergistic approaches to business modelling and development, honing a REALLY BIG VALUE IDEA can help an organization retain staff, create new markets, serve their clientele better and (best of all), solve some really big challenges.

Through a mix of hands-on work with a variety of innovation tools, some small group discussion and a bit of lecture.

Biographical Sketch: Jeff is the Program Supervisor at Enviros Base Camp and Co-founder and CEO of Givvup (a social business). He's a skilled public speaker and facilitator, and has presented workshops at a variety of industry conferences on a range of topics from addiction and experiential learning to building resiliency in systems and organizations.

The Shunda Way - Jeff Wilson

Programming and Therapeutic

This session will be a conversation about the evolving approaches and foundations which drive Shunda Creek, a 90 day experiential/wilderness based program serving addiction/mental health issues for males, aged 18-24. It is a voluntary program, whose approach is to engage clients in their own recovery rather than tell them how to recover.

Our approach centers on being companions on the treatment journey of our clients. Relationship is our primary treatment modality. Intentionality, generative conversations, compassionate inquiry, invitations, adventure therapy, experiential learning, mindfulness, at risk vs. at stake and adventure thresholds are some of our tools and foundations. The whole philosophy is predicated on a stand that every staff is also engaged in their own process of self-discovery and willing to be engaged and present as mentors and coaches with those young adults in search of where they belong. It is a community that seeks out the strength and resiliency in our clients and staff, in order to examine their own life traumas and to make the choice to re-wire their own change process. There will be time throughout to engage in dialogue and explore questions and solutions.

Explore how adventure therapy and outdoor technology tools are integrated into an evolving addiction/mental health treatment program. Generate conversations around sustainability and maintaining a culture of continuous and intentional learning with staff, clients and program.

Biographical Sketch - 25 years in the field - Outward Bound (7 years); Enviros and other adaptive programs 20 years; owner/operator custom outdoor experiences company (canoeing, hiking, dogsledding, skijoring) 20 years and ongoing; program supervisor with Shunda Creek.

Sunday May 5, Session 5 Workshops - 10:15 - 11:45 a.m.

Connecting with the Breath - Meaghan Farquarson

Programming and Therapeutic

Connecting with the breath can a powerful foundation for moving through stress and trauma- come share in the practice of techniques that will invite you to adventure into the wilderness of the self. This session is for practitioners who sense that how they show up on the outside is informed by what's on the inside- a valuable parallel process to the journeys we witness as we walk beside another amidst the transformative experiences we facilitate.

Biographical Sketch - Meaghan has spent over a decade facilitating transformative experiences. A registered therapist, her style integrates embodied awareness techniques, spiritually directed practices and psychosomatic approaches. Last year, she completed yoga teacher training at an ashram in India, and instructed Outward Bound Canada's Nunavut Youth Leadership Program.

Research and Evaluation in Addiction Services - Lynnette Nikkel

Education, Research and Development

An overview of research being conducting on adventure therapy in relation to addiction services, residential treatment, and family centered practice will be provided. A specific example of a program evaluation in this area will be given using the presenter's own research, which occurred at Enviros Wilderness School Association's Base Camp program. This example will describe quantitative and qualitative methods used, as well as preliminary data analysis and outcomes. This will be followed by

facilitation of a group discussion on research in adventure therapy, including the use of program evaluations, challenges of research in adventure therapy settings, best practices, and our joint responsibility for participating in research. This workshop is significant to the adventure therapy field as it examines the use of program evaluations, which have the potential to directly affect programming and its impact on clients through the identification of agents of change. This workshop is also significant as it identifies gaps in research relating to the use of adventure therapy in addiction services, residential treatment, and family centered practice and creates a discussion on our responsibility to contribute to filling these.

Participants will gain knowledge of research being conducted in the area of adventure therapy and addiction services, especially in relation to residential treatment and family centered practice. Participants will also gain knowledge of program evaluations and their role in adventure therapy research. They will have the opportunity to take part in group discussions, which will assist them in sharing their own experiences and learning from others.

Biographical Sketch - Lynette Nikkel is a Registered Social Worker and Master of Social Work candidate at the University of Manitoba. She has been researching adventure therapy since 2010 and works as a research assistant. Lynette has 10 years of experience in experiential education working as a guide and within residential camp settings.

Recommendations:

- 1) To continue hosting CATS gatherings every 18 months, as is feasible. Participant feedback was consistent with this timeframe, noting that once annually was not necessary, however leaving it for two years is too long and could disrupt the momentum.
- 2) To continue the movement towards a more cohesive national network of professionals on an organic level, with no intention to move towards a formalized body in the foreseeable future.
- 3) To continue to host the CATS gatherings at a ``common living`` venue, such as a camp, that can support the facilitation needs for high level professional development and the discussion /development of best practices for AT in Canada.
- 4) To continue to consider the wider peripheral disciplines which may have important overlaps and to continue to invite them to engage through participation in the CATS gatherings
- 5) To promote CATS and its intentions at other national and internationally gatherings.
- 6) To continue using the website www.canadianadventuretherapysymposium.ca , Facebook page and Twitter feed that were created for the hosting of CATS 3 and past onto the organizers of CATS 4. It has been beneficial in the development of an online CATS community.

CATS Future:

Following the 4th Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium, attendees and the CATS committee have committed to minimally gathering one more time, with the intention of seeing CATS 5 hosted on the East Coast. At the time of writing this report, an organizing committee has been struck and a venue has been secured for CATS 5, in October 2014. One of the original intentions of CATS, was to host a gathering in each geographical region of Canada, which would ideally allow many folks with connections or interest in adventure therapy the opportunity to easily participate in this journey. To date previous symposiums have been held in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec, with the Eastern Provinces being exposed through the hosting of CATS 5. The Prairie Provinces and the Territories are the only Canadian regions that have yet to host a CATS gathering.

There is strong support from both the CATS committee and its attendees to continue moving forward in this organic fashion until all of the geographic regions outlined above have had the opportunity to easily participate in a gathering. Once this journey is complete, the conversation regarding the future of CATS and the development of a formal structure can be considered by attendees from across Canada, and everyone can have a voice in what that process should look like.

While the task of formalizing the future of CATS is a few years away, there is a need to support the current community and commitment associated with CATS. To support this task and begin the process of developing a formal structure around the CATS movement, the CATS advisory committee continues to meet regularly. Membership consists of previous CATS conveners and individuals who have played a significant part in the success of the gatherings. The CATS Committee will continue to undertake the role of an advisory group and support future CATS Conveners, while endeavoring to work towards the formalization of the CATS movement in some logical and meaningful fashion.

The committee currently consists of:

- Nevin Harper (CATS Convener)
- Mario Bilodeau (CATS2 Convener)
- Tony Cox (CATS3 Convener)

- Stephen Glass (CATS3 Convener)
- Bob Henderson (Attendee and speaker at all 3 CATS)
- Stephen R. (Attendee and speaker at all 3CATS)
- Lee White (CATS1 & 3 Attendee and speaker)
- Adam Ross (CATS 4 Convenor)

Announcement for CATS 5 - Coming to Nova Scotia in Fall 2014

The C.A.T.S. Advisory Committee is very pleased to announce that CATS 5 will be held in Nova Scotia, in October 2014. The hosting organization will be The Nova Scotia Sea School, (<http://www.seaschool.org>) who will be partnering with Brigadoon Village (<http://brigadoonvillage.org>), as the venue host. Heather Kelday, ED of the Nova Scotia Sea School, will be the CATS 5 convenor. Heather has already assembled an organizing committee, and together they are in the early stages of planning the next symposium. There will be more launch details to come in early spring 2014.

On behalf of Heather, the Nova Scotia Sea School and the CATS Committee, I would like to extend a formal invitation for you to join us in Nova Scotia for CATS 5.

We would be honoured to see you there.

Adam Ross,

CATS 4 Convenors

Contact Information:

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- Pablo Arsenault - Enviros - parsenault@enviros.org
- Dylan Oosterveld - The Boys and Girls Club - Doosterveld@bgcc.ab.ca
- Tony Cox - Leaders of the Day - tony_cox@leadersoftheday.com
- Hazel Bergen - Mahmawi-atoskiwin - hbergen@mahmawi-atoskiwin.ca

CATS 4 Host Organization:



www.enviros.org

CATS 4 Website: www.canadianadventuretherapysymposium.ca

Facebook: Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium

Twitter: @C_A_T_S_

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