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Outward CANADA Bound

Journal of Education

Spring 2007 | Volume 11

Issues of
Passion and Purpose

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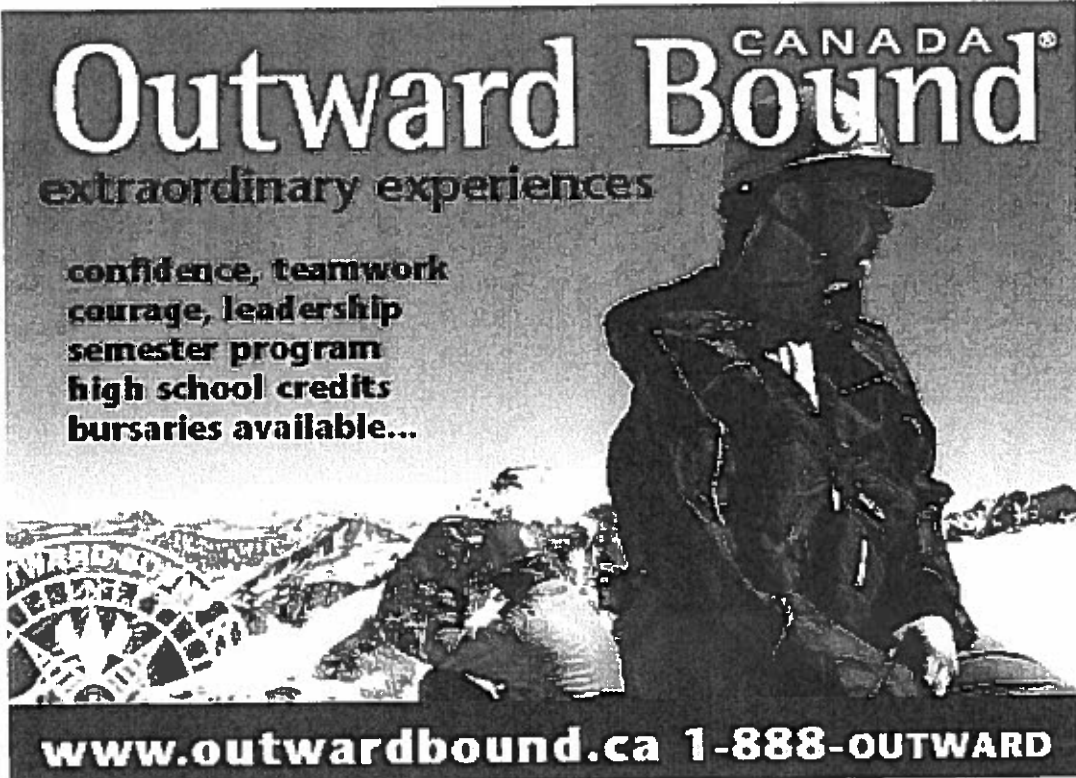


one more snowflake, one more article, one more voice, each one being just one snowflake: a call for change. Increasingly, important global issues, both social and environmental, affect us all. We live in a time where there is no time to waste. We need to all figure out not just where we can help, but where we are truly passionate about helping.

On my mind recently was an article about the Nobel Peace Prize being given to a banker, Mohammed Yunus. I drew a great deal of inspiration from Yunus, who has been called a banker to the poor. Yunus makes loans to families in India that require a small sum of money to get a business started - to buy a goat, a vending cart, etc. The average loan is only \$100. But Yunus has made almost eight million of these loans - eight million separate snowflakes. Eight million moments when he could have lost faith in change, but chose instead to continue acting on his vision.

Not only are we living in an age of intense social transformation, a tipping point where the fate of the world hangs in the balance, but that the balance is intrinsically affected by our attitudes and by our actions. Like the mouse who realized the importance of each snowflake, Yunus reminds us of the power of micro events, micro impacts that ripple out beyond our awareness, creating the butterfly effect, or the snowflake effect.

And so it is for this journal. I found the articles in this issue inspiring, a testament to a distinct new sense of possibility. These folks have written articles because they've been inspired - passion and purpose - and their words convey that inspiration and hope. Each of the articles is a snowflake of intentional consciousness that leaves me with one lingering message - a question for us all - where are we truly passionate about serving, about dropping our snowflake, and how can we make it happen?



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The advertisement features a black and white photograph of a person in outdoor gear sitting on a rocky ledge, looking out over a mountainous landscape. The text is overlaid on the image in a clean, sans-serif font.

If you are thinking of writing, consider these tips:

- a) **Ancient Chinese Secret:** Write first, then consider the process. (There are two parts to the process: writing something, and then going through the review process. If you worry about the review process, it can become yet another block to writing. Write first – get it down on paper – then we can sort out the rest.)
- b) **Dreaded Deadlines:**
 - End August - deadline for proposals (letting us know that you intend to submit an article and a simple outline of the topic).
 - End September- deadline for article submission.
 - October - November - article reviewing.
 - December - printing time!
- c) **Other writing options:** write a letter to the editor, a response to a previous article, a comment about a previous issue, do an interview, etc.
- d) **Further options:** art, poetry, journal entries by yourself or by a student, testimonials by a student or guardian, book reviews, etc.
- e) **A special shout out to the writers in the far corners of our geography.** Whether you are off at a base in the far west, far east, far north or just plain far away lands -- it is always a pleasure to have your voices heard! Taking that initiative is something that has to come from you! (If you are a program manager in one of these areas, be aware that you can impact potential writers to take the leap!)
- f) If you really want to get something in but have **trouble with the deadline**, let us know and we'll see what we can do! On the flip side, any early submissions are VERY helpful!!

If you want more copies of this Volume or of previous Volumes:

- a) Staff can access the archives through the staff website (at the back of Volume 10 there is an index of all past articles).
- b) Non-staff can order printed copies by calling Jody Harmon at OBC (888-OUTWARD).

Maximum submission length: 2000 words.

Submissions outside of the designated theme will always be considered.

Send submissions or inquires for further information to: Alon Gelcer or Jackie Dawson.

Alon Gelcer: Phone: (250) 825-4422 e-mail: alonzo@shaw.ca
Jackie Dawson: Phone: (519) 744-5282 e-mail: jpdawson@fes.uwaterloo.ca

instructor be a passive bystander to the natural course of things or a discerning catalyst for natural things to emerge? Are Outward Bound instructors guilty of deriving self-gratification from this sense of power? Does this sense of power contribute to or hinder the passion and purpose in our work?

The theme of this OBC Journal of Education, "Issues of Passion and Purpose", leads me to wonder just what is passion? It has been said that passion can come only from things that evoke emotions of both love and hate. The dictionary defines passion as "any powerful or compelling emotion or feeling, as love or hate". Love versus Hate, Black versus White, Good versus Evil, New versus Old, Male versus Female, Right versus Wrong, Fair and Unfair, and Us versus Them have always needed to be included with their opposite in order to be explained. It is not until we understand the relationship between both forces that we find each has meaning and purpose. It is even difficult to suggest that one can exist without its opposite. A force is powerless without something to resist it.

Throughout childhood and life we learn about and are reminded of the importance of polarities by comparing them to their opposite. How does a child evaluate the meaning of good behaviour without also having been given an example of bad behaviour? What does it mean to be right in school if we do not understand what it means to be wrong? The Tao of Leadership examines polarities and many of the chapter titles throughout the book are opposites: *This Versus That, Tao: Is and Isn't, A Warrior, a Healer, and Tao, Owning or Being Owned? Existence: Life and Death, Freedom and Responsibility, Flexible or Rigid, Soft and Strong, and Win or Lose*. When we begin to analyze the relationships between polarities, we start to discover that their coexistence is just "The Way of the World" or "How It Is".

So if opposites must coexist to provide meaning and understanding for one another, is there a value placed on one polarity over its opposite? It is this notion, that we believe one opposite will or should win out over another, that influences experiential educators and leaders to act in accordance with their values. It only adds to our bias that we have grown up in a society with phrases like, "love will prevail", "the good guys always win", and "do the right thing". The question remains: are we as leaders passively overseeing an experience without bias or interfering with experiences for students because of our values? Do our values and interference with these experiences follow or counter the natural law known as Tao and "The Way of the World"?

You may notice that in some of the above chapter titles the word Tao is thrown in amongst two opposites. In these and all other lessons Tao remains a separate entity amongst these forces as the unification of both extremes in a paradox. Beyond that, an understanding of Tao is an acceptance that paradox and unity are often the way of the world. Interestingly enough, Tao places no preference or judgment on individual polarities over their opposite. Importance is placed on letting go of one's attachment to "your own way", and giving in to the Great Way or Tao. There is no better way than that of the harmony that exists in Tao's explanation of natural law and to interfere is to suggest that you have a better way. Tao is the way. Tao is how. *The Tao of Leadership* is a guide to living and working with unbiased passion and purpose.

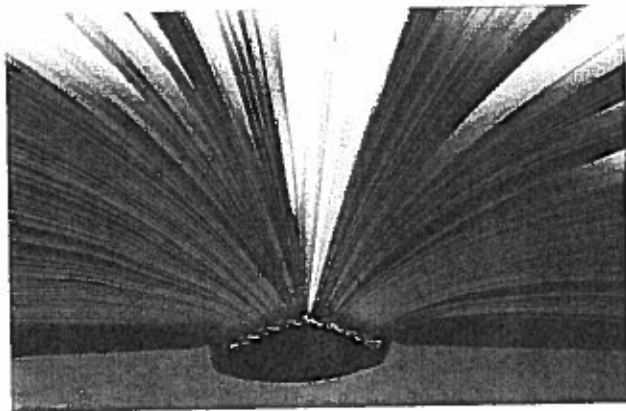
So back to the question of whether we are passively overseeing without bias or interfering with natural law or Tao. If Tao is how, then how can we be sure that we are following along with the way that nature has intended? In Chapter 73, Freedom and Responsibility, *The Tao of Leadership* has this to say,

Tao does not preach sermons or dictate behaviour. What people do is their own responsibility. But the pattern of behaviour follows natural law. This law is so general, it covers every possible event. It is so specific, it applies to every instance of every event. But no one can decide for you what to do in a given situation. That is up to you. (Heider, 1985, p.145)

There is great value in living with balance, shedding our biases, and opting for awareness and a conscious understanding of the world. With a greater understanding of the book and, in turn, Tao, it is likely that you will find a passion for living and working with purpose. With true purpose comes a greater responsibility to work towards attaining your own balance and unity with nature. With balance and unity we can better focus our passion to educate without the need for imparting our own values so much as imparting an awareness of all values. As for Alvin, it's for you, in conjunction with Tao, to decide what course of action is necessary. Do you need to become the warrior, the healer or withdraw to Tao? I know we all want a hard and fast answer, but as mentioned above, "Tao does not preach sermons or dictate behaviour. What people do is their own responsibility. Whatever your choice, now might be a good time to say, "May the force be with you".

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Of course it cares, but very little. Getting pee-ed on is just one more thing a rock has to deal with. A rock takes life as it comes.

Now think of butterflies. Butterflies actually believe they're important. That's why they're always fearful, always feeling that it would be a great tragedy if something "bad" was to happen to them.

Try to pee on a butterfly.

See what happens?

You have to chase it all around the garden trying to get it wet.

That's a difficult task for a man or woman.

Why does a butterfly make life so difficult?

Why does it flee?

Because it refuses to accept your insulting actions, that's why. It's full of pride.

Try another experiment: sit on a rock.

What happens?

Very little.

But then... sit on a butterfly.

What happens?

The butterfly feels crushed. It's so humiliated it refuses to move. It just lies there refusing to even look like a healthy butterfly anymore.

Of course, some people will say that this is a stupid experiment. Most people believe butterflies are delicate, easily wounded things, while rocks are hard and tough to break. These people, of course, expect that if you sit on a butterfly it will die, and expect that sitting on a rock will change it very little.

But let me ask you this, if that's what you believe: what happens when a butterfly stays still and lets you sit on it?

It becomes a rock, that's what.

How could that be, you ask?

I wish I could tell you.

That's just the way... the way it happens.

It's a miracle.

Butterflies flee: that's their nature, the way they are. Rocks stay still: that's the way they are. So... if a butterfly stays still while some big ass is coming down on it, then the butterfly changes into a rock.

Like I said, it's a miracle, and it actually happens, although you might find that hard to believe.

Maybe this will help you believe it: remember that once upon a time, that butterfly was a caterpillar, a type of little worm that crawled slowly on the ground. Then, it changed into a beautiful thing that could fly, could dance on a breeze. Well, that's one miracle, and I bet you'd have a hard time explaining exactly how that happens.

It's the same with me. I've seen butterflies change into rocks merely by sitting there, by refusing to be afraid. They lose their pride, and then they are rocks. All I can say about how it happens is that it's a miracle.

And it rarely happens.

Most butterflies fail.

They are too full of fear.

Pride, remember, is just another form of fear.

A great deal of energy is wasted on pride and fear, wasted by refusing to take life as it comes. But the truth is: we creatures of the earth have only a limited amount of energy, so we pay dearly if we waste it. The butterfly darts here and there, always suspicious, always watching out for danger. By doing this it wastes its vital energy. On the other hand, rocks just sit there, saving their energy, fully accepting what comes or doesn't. That's why rocks live forever, and butterflies die so young.

THE RE-ENCHANTMENT OF THE WORLD: Working with Magic on Outward Bound Courses

Brianna Sharpe

Brianna Sharpe has somewhat earned herself the nickname "vocabo" over the four odd years she has been variously involved with OBC. This fact, and a slight addiction to the comma and the apostrophe have assisted her on her journey to touch the universe through words and use that in turn to touch the lives of many. She lives in Emsdale amongst smiles, trees, and many books.

- sometimes all you need is a frog
- unbirthdays are just as important as birthdays
- ju-jube must mean joy in *some* language
- if you think you see a peacock in the woods, maybe you do
- even the toughest kid in the biggest hoodie can't resist singing Backstreet Boys
- fresh air is addictive
- a warm pair of dry wool socks can be better than anything else ever anywhere
- dirt is good
- butterflies hold the secret of everything
- there are *always* more corners to turn
- mornings are small windows waiting while the world gets warmer outside. And those windows open wider with the smell of coffee
- a tree is *never* just a tree
- Sparklers are almost as good as stars, and better because they can be held in our hands

... what you have just read is a recipe for magic. Yes, you can make your own and no, I am not selling it. There have been many voices over the last two hundred years which have suggested that magic is dead, that we are suffering from a massive "disenchantment of the world." iPods, PSPs, text messaging, crystal meth, SUVs, sweatshops, and Starbucks venti mocha-valencia double-fat no-foam lattes are all cited as evidence that if there was ever any magic to be found, that it is all but making a mad dash for the clear-cut hills. I would propose, however, that magic is not dead, but in hiding. And we, as instructors, can coax it out with dinner circles, dance parties amongst red pines, candlelit solos, rice pudding and hot chocolate, salamander sightings, Tibetan singing bowls, and late night blue-barrel jam sessions. It is entirely possible that because we *can* do this, we *must* do it.

Magic can be seen as simply making possible the impossible, making visible the invisible. Is this not what happens every time we find ourselves able to get through to a student we thought it was completely impossible to reach? And what happens when the mood of a trip shifts from caustic negativity into a transformative experience? Yes, indeed, we are outdoor professionals, but we are also creators who work with the art of the impossible. During a course debrief the other day, we went over all the nuts and bolts of our courses; things to change, things to keep, etc. But where we all exploded into face-wide grins was telling our stories of magic. These are moments when you realize that every doubtful experience was worth it in the end; when your pogeys were the only thing keeping you going; when even three cups of coffee was not enough to open your eyes to their full potential; when you think you might need a new job as a circus trainer because elephants would be more complicit with your programming; the knowing that

ON DOGS AND DMM

Fiona Hough

In my current positional incarnation I am the Director of Innovation and Development for Educational Contracts and the Principal of OBCC. I have been in a senior management role since winter 2004 and worked as an instructor, base manager and course director from 1995 until 1999 year round. I have a Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Outdoor Recreation and a B.Ed from Queens in the Outdoor and Experiential Education program. Personally, I have always been a student of human behaviour and relationships through my work at OB and in the outdoor and educational worlds. I am particularly interested in the development of self awareness and how our relationships - working and personal - can be rich grounds for this type of learning. I care a lot about the issue of "walking our talk", and our ability and inability to do this as a values based, people and relationship-centric organization, and would love to open up a more open dialogue about how we can strive towards this at all levels of the organization.

During this year's winter staff training, the Eastern staff had their first exposure to the Design Management Model (DMM), with the guidance of facilitators Kevin Dube from OBC's Western contingent, and Steve Smith from OBUSA. As a group, we explored intentionality and creative tension in our practice and spent our first 4 days together as the winter staff community of 2007. Within this training, staff had the opportunity to explore their own learning edge and ability to design the best program possible for their students.

During that training, Andrea Bell, a second-year instructor, and I got together to try putting the DMM into practice. We chose a medium and a tool we were both passionate about and felt was one of our richest winter metaphors here at the Eastern end of OBC: sled dogs.

Anyone who has ever worked a winter at OBC has been witness to the magic of living with the dogs on trail: the frantic screaming of hook up, the sudden peace of paws on snow which follows and the night time whines, snarls and howls at the campsite which frame the days on expedition. Our dogs teach us what it is to be part of the fabric of the world around us, to be immersed in snow and winter air. Ironically, they also teach us a little bit about what it is to be human.

Outward Bound, as many of us know it, is not only a workplace, but a community of like-minded and passionate people who often live and work closely together. We tend to be attracted to this work environment because we are highly social beings, with a high level of emotional engagement in what we do and whom we work with. This is what makes OB what it is, what allows students and instructors to create magic out on the trail. It can also create a complex web of relationships and interactions which merge our professional and personal realms. As Andrea and I have experienced with several different yards, dogs can live in the same dynamic. They live and work in close proximity to each other, and we, as their human stewards, can have a profound impact on the health of their working relationships.

I remember the OB dog yard at Homeplace, when I was first a winter instructor. It was a crazy place, full of big, fuzzy, desperately affectionate but strong and aggressive Canadian Inuit dogs and crosses. The dog yard culture was a little cutthroat, with much fence-fighting (when two dogs will start menacing

ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES AND PASSION FOR NATURE

Jackie Dawson

Jackie Dawson worked at Outward Bound Canada from 2002-2005 and is now working on a Ph.D in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at the University of Waterloo. She is passionate about the environment and the notion that one day our government might sincerely embrace caring for the earth. Jackie welcomes correspondence at: jpdawson@fes.uwaterloo.ca

Introduction

In 1971 Dr. Suess introduced the world to the eco-friendly Lorax and his environmentally destructive neighbour, the Once-ler. This adult-focused children's book tells the tale of two individuals who value the environment in very different ways. The Once-ler capitalizes on the forest as an economic commodity while the Lorax rhythmically protests for its natural value. "I'm the Lorax who speaks for the trees which you seem to be chopping as fast as you please" (Dr. Suess, 1971, p.16), he says to the Once-ler as the Truffula forest slowly disappears. Similar opposing environmental value orientations can be traced back to the utilitarian-conservation debates between John Muir (1838-1914) and Gifford Pinchot (1865-1946) in which Muir publicly crusaded for wilderness preservation, while Pinchot argued for the anthropocentric use of public lands (Nash, 1967).

Dunlap and Heffernan (1975) outline another potential environmental value separation, identifying the dichotomy between nonconsumptive and consumptive recreationists. They argue that, like the Lorax and the ecocentric values expressed by John Muir, nonconsumptive recreationists whose actions do not involve extracting anything from the environment may exhibit high pro-environmental values. Conversely, consumptive individuals such as the Once-ler and Gifford Pinchot whose actions involve taking something from or disrupting the natural environment may have lower environmental values.

In the field of outdoor recreation, nonconsumptive activities include; sea kayaking, sailing, canoeing, swimming, wildlife viewing and natural photography (Jackson, 1989). Weaver (2001) makes a case for distinguishing these activities as nonconsumptive arguing that they must be environmentally sensitive considering that for example, vessels traveling across water leave no trace. The alternative categorization, consumptive activity, includes traditional pastimes such as hunting and fishing (Vaske et al. 1982), which may have significant impacts upon ecosystems.

Environmental Values

The nonconsumptive/consumptive dichotomy raises some important issues regarding how environmental values and passion for nature are reflected in these seemingly polarized forms of recreation. Although values are sometimes difficult to describe and often get confused with other constructs such as ethics or attitudes, they are most often defined as evolving and enduring beliefs (Rokeach, 1973). They represent hypothetical constructs, which are manifested in humans through experience and communication (Pizam and Calantone, 1987). In acknowledging the differences between nonconsumptive and consumptive recreation, I question if it is reasonable to assume that recreationists involved in different types of activities are likely to value the environment quite differently? This

Notably, the way people depict an environment and what they value within it varies according to their immediate aims and objectives within a particular context (Crick-Furman and Prentice, 2000). For example, the way in which one values the natural environment while they are on day 18 of a 21 day backcountry canoe trip is arguably very different than the way they may value and perceive nature while walking down Yonge Street in downtown Toronto. It is also likely to be somewhat different than when they head out on an ice fishing day trip with their buddies, six-pack in hand. The goals of these outdoor excursions are quite different and therefore they each facilitate different levels of passion and excitement about nature and the environment. Furthermore, our values change over time and are influenced by the things that are going on in our lives at present.

Discussion

Research to date suggests that very few people consistently exhibit deep ecological/extreme preservationist attitudes towards nature and that few consistently exhibit environmentally destructive values/behaviours. At Outward Bound, for example, we are both consumptive (winter wood, fishing etc.) and nonconsumptive (canoeing, hiking, sea kayaking etc.) in our actions and activities. I have at one point or another left stoner crumbs on a rock or cut down a tree for firewood. In fact, just this past week I tried my hand at rabbit snaring. However, I have in the past also been deeply moved by waterfalls on the Dumoine river, windswept pines in Killarney and the sound of the wind whistling through the trees in Wabakimi.

My bipolar environmental values and transitioning passion for nature is, I think, quite normal. Despite my occasional environmental slip ups and my sporadic over-the-top enthusiasm for the outdoors, I believe my value variability tends to average out, resulting in an enduring passion for the environment, the outdoors and outdoor education. I wonder though if this is true for our students. How can we at Outward Bound ensure that our students develop long term pro-environmental values versus short term site specific situational appreciation? Is our environmental programming sufficient? And the bigger question is: should environmental programming be emphasized considering the critical state of the environment and the multitude of other important social and developmental programming we do (e.g. teamwork, communication, service, leadership, hard skills etc.)? After all Outward Bound New York successfully runs programs in completely urban environments and the Czech Outward Bound school focuses on dramatic arts in non-wilderness settings. Outward Bound Canada employs expeditionary based wilderness education in the backcountry. Just as other schools use their various settings to pass on similar curriculum, Outward Bound Canada and other wilderness based schools have the unique opportunity to use the wilderness as a backdrop or setting in which to teach Outward Bound philosophy. This opportunity provides us a critical advantage; one which allows us to use the wilderness setting as a tool to teach environmental education and sustainability.

In the end, perhaps it is not our job to ensure long term pro-environmental values in our students but instead to help create a foundation in which they can themselves develop enduring passion for the environment in their own individual ways.

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INTEGRATING PASSION AND PURPOSE: OBCC and Ecological Sustainability at Outward Bound Canada

Scott Caspell

Scott Caspell has worked as an Outward Bound instructor for several summers. Scott's undergraduate thesis – as part of his Bachelor in Environmental Studies degree – focused on the long-term influence of Integrated Curriculum Programs on participants' lives. He recently completed his B.Ed with the Outdoor, Experiential and Ecological Education (OE3) specialization at Lakehead University. Scott welcomes correspondence at: scottcaspell@hotmail.com

Introduction

I could see ignited in the eyes of my students the fire burning in me. [Integrated] Programs...are vehicles to give kids back their own sense of power, their ability to connect, to feel compassion for others and the planet. They re-inspire kids to love learning, to think critically and to connect with the Earth that is their home – their home that is in dire need of their compassionate touch (Hood: 2002,34).

Like a gust of wind fuelling a wildfire, my passion for life and learning was strengthened while paddling wild rivers and engaging with a like-minded community of learners through an Integrated Curriculum Program (ICP). The opening quotation, however, reminds me how quickly one's passion can fade away, like a campfire's smouldering embers, if it is not consistently and consciously nurtured and rekindled. As part of my Bachelor of Education degree, my teaching placement with the Outward Bound Canada College (OBCC) high school program has stoked the fire that burns inside me.

This article initially stemmed from my desire to inform the Outward Bound community about ICPs in general, and in particular the OBCC Program. However, as I started writing, I became aware of a wonderfully unique component at OBCC: it's propensity to foster ecological literacy in its students. This inspired me to further explore the relationship between ecological sustainability and OBCC, as well as the larger and possibly even more crucial relationship between ecological sustainability and Outward Bound Canada (OBC) as an organization. The final two sections of this paper encourage the OBC community (organizationally and individually) to seek out and embrace knowledge, attitudes and actions that help us reduce our ecological footprint and work towards ecological consciousness.

Integrated Curriculum Programs

There are a variety of high school programs across Canada that use an integrated curriculum, including technical-based courses and programs that focus on the arts (Hood and Macmillan: 2002, 18). As of 2005, there were approximately thirty ICPs operating in the province of Ontario that have a strong outdoor and experiential education component, including the OBCC Program (Kittle and Sharpe: 2005, 13). OBCC was founded in 2002 and has since run for nine semesters from OBC's Chetwynd base.

The OBCC program offers participants a pre-determined curriculum package for either the fall or winter semester, with different credits offered in each. The program generally operates with 12-16 students per

whether or not OBCC alumni are living more ecologically conscious lives. However, as research has shown (Caspell, 2007), participant testimonials from other ICPs similar to the OBCC Program indicate that these programs do indeed have long lasting effects. These effects include an increase in ecological behaviour, as well as a number of other life decisions, such as post secondary program selection.

What then, are the obstacles to starting more programs like OBCC? The tuition fee of almost \$15,000 a semester is undeniably a barrier to many potential participants in this privately run program. I began to delve deeper into the financial accessibility of the OBCC Program; in doing so, I discovered that there are a number of scholarships available to the program's applicants. Of the 107 OBCC alumni, 14% have received a full or partial bursary (OBC, 2006). For the 2007 OBCC semesters, Outward Bound has set a goal to raise \$50,000 for student bursaries. This is the largest amount of donations that has ever been sought after for one purpose, and as of December 2006, half of these funds have already been collected (OBC)!

Whether operating in the public or private education system, there are a number of challenges that teachers of ICPs encounter. These include heavy teacher workload and maintaining adequate enrolment levels. Nevertheless, Kittle and Sharpe (2005) studied three ICPs in operation for over 10 years and found evidence that educators can not only overcome the challenges of operating ICPs, but that these programs can actually thrive.

Establishing an ICP in a public school board is an excellent opportunity for Outward Bound instructors with their B.Ed who are interested in creating a program that suits their teaching interests. Essentially, certified teachers can start an ICP anywhere in the country, provided they meet certain administrative criteria. I strongly encourage the creation of additional ICPs like OBCC, through Outward Bound or otherwise.

Sustainability at OBC

I believe the twenty-first century will largely be defined by the myriad of interconnected issues relating to ecological sustainability including climate change, the end of cheap oil, degraded human and ecosystem health, and the vastly disproportionate concentration of wealth and power. Although it may be a contested statement, based on my experience, I believe that Outward Bound Canada is poised to be a leader in sustainability education, as well as an organization that more completely models the desire to be working toward reducing its "ecological footprint". This will, however, only come to fruition if it is consciously made a priority, and if educational programs, facility operations, and partnerships are developed to help with this endeavour.

Kurt Hahn founded Outward Bound to address what he believed to be major social problems at the time. The four pillars of Outward Bound – physical fitness, craft, self-reliance and compassion, stem directly from the social ills that Hahn endeavoured to alleviate (James: 1992, 68). If Hahn was alive today, I suspect that he would be a strong proponent of education for ecological sustainability. Although ecological sustainability could be integrated into OBC via a fifth pillar, I think it could perhaps better be viewed as the foundation upon which the four pillars rest. Is it not self-evident that the future of human existence, as we know it, and thus Outward Bound, is dependent upon clean water and air, as well as healthy ecosystems.

OBC has made several notable steps regarding ecological sustainability. The commitment to renewable, off the grid infrastructure for the newly acquired Alberta base is one example and the solar panels on the

use in the backcountry, let's apply similar principles to everything we do and every dollar we spend (Moskowitz & Ottey 2006: 18, 19).

Conclusion

I deeply value what OBC does; I have seen students and staff become transformed through the Outward Bound process. The world is a wonderfully dynamic place, and as times change, we (individually and organizationally) need to adapt as well. As OBC continues to influence the lives of staff and students, as well as the field of education in Canada and beyond, a thoughtful and critical analysis of how we choose to respond to issues such as climate change is essential (Dalby: 1998, 311). It is not only about limiting our impact on the world, but also figuring out (and celebrating) how we can have a positive influence on the people in our lives and the communities we live in (Moskowitz & Ottey 2006: 19).

While I may not be a model ecological citizen, I am in the process of transferring my knowledge, skills and passion to make a difference into tangible, socially and ecologically conscious life decisions. This point serves to underline my belief that developing ecological consciousness is a life long process. I encourage the staff at OBC to take it upon themselves to learn more about sustainability issues. A thorough understanding of sustainability will help us lead a balanced and healthy lifestyle with a relatively small ecological footprint. To integrate this understanding (both personally and organizationally within OBC) will foster a culture of sustainability for the triple bottom line: that of profit, people and planet.

For more information on integrated semester programs, see www.coeo.org

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The Journey Begins: Challenges and Successes

The first few months of the job involved working in partnership with another facilitator and a program manager, developing a vision and a plan for the outdoor pursuits program. Our activities with the clients during that time were limited to within the city limits. Many afternoons were spent hiking along a surprisingly diverse urban trail system, playing soccer, and doing yoga.

A major part of those first few months involved assessing the risk management of taking clients outside of the city limits into local wilderness areas. The climate was tense surrounding outdoor education in Western Canada at that time due to two recent tragedies involving high school groups (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2000; Dohrmann, 2003). A significant logistical challenge proved to be the waiver process. Getting waiver forms home with the clients, signed, and returned often involved repeated phone calls to guardians. However, these calls also provided the opportunity to discuss the new outdoor pursuits program and often resulted in increased guardian support.

Other aspects of risk management that we examined were staff certification requirements, potential excursion locations, and client to staff ratios. At times it was challenging working within a team that was relatively unfamiliar with the field of outdoor education. For example, it was initially a challenge to gain agreement on the importance of outdoor pursuits staff being certified in Wilderness First Aid (at least 40 hours). Initially, it was proposed by the management that if one staff member had Wilderness First Aid training, then others needed only to have Standard First Aid certification. However, this line of logic neglects the possibility of the higher trained staff member injuring his or herself in a wilderness situation, requiring appropriate assistance from other staff members. Eventually, it was recognized that all outdoor pursuits staff should be trained in Wilderness First Aid and financial support was provided. Overcoming this type of difference in perspective was challenging, but also rewarding.

As our planning progressed, we decided that we would schedule one full day of outdoor pursuits activities each week in conjunction with other half-day excursions. We planned to spend most of our full days hiking in wilderness areas within an hour drive of the city and also include monthly excursions to local climbing gyms, a canoe club, a sailing club, and a local Provincial Park with an established orienteering course.

These extra excursions were limited by our funding. We were running our program on a seemingly incredulous budget of \$100 per month (excluding vehicle expenses) from the organization and \$100 per year from each client. One dynamic that I experienced as a result of this was regular revamping of our programs and services. For example, depending on funding parameters, programs like art and outdoor pursuits might stand alone as individual entities at some points, while at other times be amalgamated into other program areas such as healthy living. This fluidity made the task of developing the outdoor pursuits program extra challenging.

As spring approached, we headed out on our first day-hikes. The excursions were generally successful, but it quickly became evident that we would need to be hyper-aware of our client to staff ratio as well as which clients were present. Our typical group size was 6-10 clients with two staff. This was generally manageable except in circumstances where clients with especially high needs were present. For example, in the early months we had a client with autism. Rob would consistently endanger himself on day hikes by darting unexpectedly off of a trail into the surrounding bush, onto thin ice, towards cliff edges, into traffic, or into creeks and rivers. When you have a client such as Rob, who requires constant support, it

"You Must be Special to Work with Those People"

Sapon-Shevin (2001) discusses the common experience of special-education instructors hearing a comment like, "it takes a special person to work with those kids". She points out that comments such as this often imply that it is patience and kind-heartedness, but not technical skills that are required to work with students with special needs. I encountered this phenomenon during my time with the organization. When I told others what I did for a living, they often said things like, "You must be very patient - it takes a special person..." Well, maybe it does, but Sapon-Shevin is right in recognizing that it is not only patience that is required to be an effective special education facilitator, but also technical skills and knowledge. I would add to her point of view however and recognize that successful educators often possess a combination of technical knowledge and soft, people skills. For example, to be an effective outdoor educator one must possess the technical skills and experience to safely lead a group of *any* students through their given terrain along with special intrinsic qualities or characteristics that help them in interactions with their specific students.

Sapon-Shevin (2001) also discusses the concept of 'matter of fact accommodation'. Matter of fact accommodation involves an educator gracefully accommodating students with special needs in the context of any educational environment. She uses the example of discreetly providing a special snack to a student who has dietary restriction and using it (with their permission) as a learning opportunity for the rest of the class. I experienced this during my time with this organization. With a diverse group of clients with various disabilities, we were constantly responding to individual needs. Generally, clients were aware of each other's special needs and accommodated each other which helped to create a safe and open environment. I've experienced this phenomenon again with different populations of students in my current role as an instructor with Outward Bound Canada. I've also been impressed by my fellow instructors' seemingly inherent understanding and implementation of this concept.

The Journey Ends: Reflections and Implications

Summer turned into fall, and fall into winter. Before we knew it we were approaching the end of our first year. We had developed a plan for the winter season that involved a lot of snowshoeing and indoor climbing. We had also developed a long-term plan for expanding the program. In the process, I had become familiar and made connections with more established organizations which deliver therapeutic outdoor programs such as Power to Be in Victoria, BC (Power to Be, 2007). It was inspiring to learn about the success of other programs. However, being only twenty-four years old at the time, I had realized that I still had an itch for personal adventure and further education; a long-term commitment to this organization was not for me. A suitable replacement was found and we spent a short time transitioning him into the program I took time off to travel and began the outdoor, ecological, and experiential education (OE3) program at Lakehead University that fall.

My experiences with this organization were formative. I learned a lot about the logistical and financial challenges of operating non-profit educational organizations, risk-management, and the trials and joys of leading special needs students in outdoor experiences. To this day, these experiences continue to inform my instructional practice.

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TEACHINGS OF THE LAND: A METIS IN CANADA'S NORTH

Sonia Wesche

Sonia Wesche is a human geographer and outdoor enthusiast with interests in social-environmental change, integrated environmental management, sustainable community development, and environmental issues in developing regions. Her academic background includes a B.A. in Environmental Studies (Honours) and Geography (Concentration) from the University of Ottawa, and a M.Sc. in Environmental Technology from Imperial College in London, England. As a doctoral candidate in the Waterloo-Laurier Program in Geography, her current research involves immersion into a northern community to study the impacts of environmental change. In an expression of gratefulness for her northern experience, Sonia says, "I want to express my heartfelt thanks to Fred for sharing his company and knowledge with me during the past few years. His friendship has been invaluable, while providing me a unique window on the North".

As part of my ongoing doctoral research, I have been fortunate to spend upwards of ten months in the southern Northwest Territories (NWT), learning about the people and their changing environment. Community-based social science research is unpredictable, as it relies entirely on human relationships, and researchers must spend quality time engaging with local people in order to truly connect. There are certain unique occurrences that have elevated my personal experience as a researcher in ways that I could not have previously imagined. One of these is the connection I developed with Fred, the Environment and Natural Resource Officer in Fort Resolution, NWT. What follows is an account of teachings gleaned from my relationship with Fred and our profound experience on the land in Canada's North.

A Social History of the Land

Fred was born and raised in Fort Resolution, a Dene-Métis community on the south shore of Great Slave Lake. Fred personifies the changing north, striving to balance traditional and western elements into his life. He is driven by his love for the 'land' (the natural environment) and openly shares his passion and knowledge with others who show an interest. He has lived the changes of his community from its traditional roots as a fur trading post and mission outpost, through the social upheaval caused by road access and a nearby mine, to its current state as a town in transition, once again, in the throes of recreating itself. The Deninu Kue First Nations (DKFN) or 'Res', as it is called by most northerners, is one of the four Akaitcho Territory First Nations involved in a long negotiation process with the Government of Canada to implement their 1901 treaty. The Métis are pursuing concurrent negotiations based on the recognition of their native heritage, and have recently signed an Agreement in Principle. As these agreements move towards finalization, they create a solid basis upon which to build and balance both traditional and Western elements to improve local livelihoods.

The population of Fort Resolution has long depended on food and fur from the ecological resources of the nearby Slave River Delta, as well as two other main river systems, Little Buffalo River and Taltson River. Despite a recent marked reduction in traditional land use, residents continue to engage in traditional activities like hunting, fishing and trapping for both recreational and economic gain. The integrity of the surrounding ecosystem is also essential for newer endeavours like tourism as well as local attempts to revive cultural traditions and knowledge that is tied to the land.

Later, I point out the two cranes flying towards us, admiring their graceful beauty. Suddenly the shotgun fires and both birds fall from the sky.

I gasp, covering my mouth.

"Sorry, I forgot how beautiful they are to you", says Fred, with a mischievous grin and a twinkle in his eye. The incident reminds me that we are on his turf, and that this is part of the way life is lived up north. Although animals are harvested for food and fur, this can still be done within a context of respect and value for the natural world.

The next evening Fred has a parting present for me: a Ziploc of crane meat. As I fly south and respectfully partake in my gifted meal, I realize that it is without a doubt the best airplane food I have ever eaten.

Quotes by Kurt Hahn
Source: www.kurthahn.org

"The passion of rescue reveals the highest dynamic of the human soul"

"I regard it as the foremost task of education to insure the survival of these qualities: an enterprising curiosity, an undefeatable spirit, tenacity in pursuit, readiness for sensible self denial, and above all, compassion."

*

"The experience of helping a fellow man in danger, or even of training in a realistic manner to be ready to give this help, tends to change the balance of power in a youth's inner life with the result that compassion can become the master motive."

*

"It is the sin of the soul to force young people into opinions - indoctrination is of the devil - but it is culpable neglect not to impel young people into experiences"

*

"Education must enable young people to effect what they have recognized to be right, despite hardships, despite dangers, despite inner skepticism, despite boredom, and despite mockery from the world. . . ."

*

"Your disability is your opportunity"

Board of Reviewers:

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Sean has worked for six different Outward Bound schools over the last 15 years. With a passion for the OB process, he obtained his MA in Experiential Ed from Minnesota State at Mankato, followed by his doctorate in Philosophy of Ed at Harvard. He chairs the Advisory Committee of the Journal of Experiential Ed, is the co-director of the Imaginative Education Research Group, and is Assistant Professor of Imaginative Education in the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University. His current research interests involve questions of ecology, justice, and education, questions of a relationality in epistemology, dialogue, and the search for an eco-centric ethic/s, and lastly, theoretical explorations of the imagination, place-based education, and outdoor education. He also is a fanatical Nordic skier in search of a fix.

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Bob has been a consummate OBC board member for well over a decade, leading with passion and devotion. Author of the book, "Every Trail has a Story: Heritage Travel in Canada", and editor since 1992 of Pathways: The Ontario Journal of Outdoor Ed, his latest research concerns Nordic notions of friluftsliv: Outdoor Life. With an MA and PhD from the University of Alberta, Bob has been teaching at McMaster since 1981 and has also taught Canadian Identity, Environmental Inquiry as well as the History of Sport.

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Marcia McKenzie (PhD, MEd, BSc) is a SSHRC Postdoctoral Scholar at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada, with research and writing interests in social justice and environmental education, cultural studies, teacher education, and research methodology. With over ten years of experience working in non-profit and university settings, including for UBC, SFU, the Justice Institute of BC, Outward Bound Canada, and the Community Adventure Training Institute (CATI), Marcia is currently Vice-Chair of the Sierra Club of Canada, BC, Co-chair of the UBC Environmental Education Caucus, and a member of several other community groups.

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Janet has worked on and off for Outward Bound since 1990. She spent many summers working at COBWS - beginning as the equipment manager and moving into instructing. She worked some dog-sledding winter programs while lecturing in the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism at Lakehead University. Currently, Janet lives in Tasmania and is enjoying establishing the Outdoor Education program within the Faculty of Education. While down under, she's enjoying exploring the Australia landscapes and waterscapes.

WHAT IS EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION?

Defining the work we do, the values we hold, and the principles that guide us is part of the experience of being a lifelong learner and an active member of the Association for Experiential Education. We invite all of our members, educators and practitioners to engage in the ongoing conversation about what defines experiential education. To begin the conversation, AEE offers the following:

"Experiential education is a philosophy and methodology in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills and clarify values."

The principles¹ of experiential education practice are:

- Experiential learning occurs when carefully chosen experiences are supported by reflection, critical analysis and synthesis.
- Experiences are structured to require the learner² to take initiative, make decisions and be accountable for the results.
- Throughout the experiential learning process, the learner is actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative and construction meaning.
- Learners are engaged intellectually, emotionally, socially, soulfully and/or physically. This involvement produces a perception that the learning task is authentic.
- The results of the learning are personal, and form the basis for future experience and learning.
- Relationships are developed and nurtured: learner to self, learner to others, and learner to the world at large.
- The educator³ and learner may experience success, failure, adventure, risk-taking and uncertainty, since the outcomes of experience cannot be totally predicted.
- Opportunities are nurtured for learners and educators to explore and examine their own values.
- The educator's primary roles include creating suitable experiences, posing problems, setting boundaries, supporting learners, insuring physical and emotional safety, and facilitating the learning process.
- The educator recognizes and encourages spontaneous opportunities for learning.
- Educators strive to be aware of their biases, judgments and preconceptions and how they influence the learner.
- The design of the learning experience includes the possibility to learn from natural consequences, mistakes and successes.

¹ The priority or order in which each professional places these principles may vary.

² There is no single term that encompasses all the roles of the participant within experiential education. Therefore, the term "learner" is meant to include student, client, trainee, participant, etc.

³ There is no single term that encompasses all the roles of the professional within experiential education. Therefore, the term "educator" is meant to include therapist, facilitator, teacher, trainer, practitioner, counselor, etc.

(Source: Association of Experiential Education)