

PRO IMAGE ADVENTURES, LLC.

Chapter TWO

CORE CURRICULUM

PREFACE

As always, we want to give credit where credit is due, as well as assist new facilitators understand where we have come from. There has been a great tradition in the outdoor education field for almost 70 years! The modern concept of a ropes challenge course began in the 1960's. Probably the original ropes course was built in Colorado at our nation's first Outward Bound school. That course was modeled after a rope obstacle course designed by the military during World War II. If that course was still in use today both the PRCA and ACCT would pull their hypothetical hair out. Safety standards, however, have come a long way since then. Through technological improvements the safety and durability of ropes courses has increased exponentially.

Also, the ways in which ropes courses are used has changed over the years. They have moved on from simply physical exercises transforming into courses that require team problem-solving and individual growth. In 1971 Karl Rohnke and some high school students built the first Project Adventure, Inc. ropes course at a high school in Massachusetts. A little later in the decade, Treeline Inc. revolutionized the Christian Camping world with exciting yellow polypropylene ropes courses, a custom hand made seat harness, staff training and improved safety practices. (NOTE-Polypropylene got a little too exciting after it was exposed to the sun for a few years, and it was one of the first examples of the need for constant vigilance for a better, SAFER way to do things, paving the way for standards...more on that later!) Since then, the use of ropes courses has extended from schools, to camps, corporations, therapy groups... and the list goes on.

Since the introduction of ropes courses, the scenarios in which they are used has exploded. While one is engaged on a ropes course, it seems to be a physical activity. In this modern age, however, ropes courses are much, much more than just that physical activity. The personal growth and self-discovery experienced can only be achieved at a ropes course.

"I AM THE MOST DANGEROUS PERSON ON THE ROPES COURSE!"

Yes it's true. You are the most dangerous person on the ropes course. You might be thinking it's the person sitting directly to your left. And you'd be right.

Now here is the scary part...so am I!!!

We are *each and all* the most dangerous person on the ropes course. But we are asking you to be responsible for the only person you really control, *YOU*, by saying it the way written above. I am the most dangerous person on the ropes course... YIKES! What's the point? Well, let's see what I can do about that...(and you...)

Two of the easiest ways to get yourself (or someone else) hurt/killed are being **complacent and/or over-confident**. Being complacent might look like this: assuming all of the equipment is in good order, all of the hardware works properly, all of the ropes are safe to use, and assuming your co-workers know what they are doing. There is no room for pride when someone else's life is in the balance. Being over-confident will most likely result in you getting hurt. Sure you climbed trees when you were a kid but accidents happen! You can't be too careful up there! However, being too nervous or unconfident is no better! You (and I) will always be the most dangerous person on the ropes course BUT there are some ways to mitigate it.

1. Training

-CPR - Current

-Advanced First Aid - Current

-Certified Challenge Course Facilitator to PRCA and / or ACCT
Operator Standards- Current

2. Experience

-Internship on home course under someone else's eye to learn through non-life-threatening errors.

-Internships on other courses (at least two) to develop flexibility, openness, creativity, humility, judgment, etc.

-Each level of the ACCT standards dictates a certain number of

hours MINIMUM for experience should be at least 100 hours. Of course, the TYPE of experience you have determines the activities you should be leading, and with what type of supervision. (If any...) It should include shadowing low and high elements and direct facilitating of low and high elements while someone else observes and critiques your performance.

-Some group leadership experience (Scouting, other youth group, teaching, coaching, guidance counseling, self-improvement program in therapeutic/ corporate/ camp/ school/ college setting)

3. Preparation for Self

-Personal harness, helmet, belay device, connectors (includes carabiners), bear claw, rescue blade, prussik ropes -- all personally color-coded/marked. (High Ropes ONLY)

-Well-dressed with back-up clothing planned in layers (all year round) in a duffel/backpack; should include wool-blended socks, cold weather hat, Red Sox hat (to keep the sun and Yankees away☺), gloves (2 pairs; one of which is leather palm reinforced for rope wear/burn prevention), sneakers, work/climbing boots, foul weather shell, towels, change of clothes, wool sweater or long sleeved fleece top, fleece vest, long underwear (not cotton), shorts, sunblock, bug dope.

-Headlamp with extra batteries.

-Good physical shape and well-rested.

-Aware of PRCA and ACCT standards and where you are in your skills and abilities competencies.

4. Preparation for Others

-Water - *currently stocked*

-Food - *currently stocked*

-EMS plan (including telephone, knowledge of closest Emergency Room and transportation plan)

-Rescue Bag (High Ropes ONLY)

-Extra clothing (rain gear, etc.- see above, towels, bug dope, sunscreen/block in separate bag/pack)

5. Attitudes

-Humility: I'm focused on my clients, not on myself.

-Safety: I'm ready -- checked the props, staff, site, program, but still alert to what could go wrong -- anticipatory.

-Flexibility: Are you ready to adjust your plan to the group -- whatever is wanted and needed of you?

-Humor: Can you be the renaissance leader (a new age, sensitive guy/gal?!)

-Putting it all together: Are you committed to making a difference with your clients, supporting and seeing them in their possibilities, holding them responsible for their choices and consequences, realizing that trust grows out of risking and maintaining safety, and respectful of their and my own current limits (respecting my client's and my right to say **NO**), assisting them to look for Win/Win solutions, living your own life adventures (and being able to separate them from your clients!), to talk less and do more, respectful and acknowledging their gifts with true compassion, celebrating small successes, encouraging breakthroughs through breakdowns...? and aware that all you truly have is **NOW!**

-Inclusivity: Are you sensitive to anticipating and adjusting your facilitation such that all people, regardless of gender, age, race, creed, health, physical condition, or social status have a role in the community that is created through the activities/discussions?

-Completion: Will you let people have time together to reflect (debrief/process, i.e., make sense/insight of) their experience as soon after the experience as possible and whenever is appropriate?

-Termination/Integration/Reflection: Will you make the effort to create powerful opportunities for all people to integrate their adventures into the rest of their lives with guided discussions, and by promoting sharing in open, sometimes personally and touching ways. Are you committed to doing this in artistically expressive venues such as music, quotes, rituals, dramatic readings, or personal sharing?

6. Conceptual Themes to Model, Support, and Empower Participants to Practice

-Breakdown/Breakthrough

- Support risks that lead to non safety issue errors
- They also lead to new ways of doing things.

-Choices

- Courage, Flexibility, Responsible not Victim, Making a Difference

-Playing to Win vs. Not to Lose

- Passion, Commitment, Involvement, Courage, Being HERE-NOW!

-Risking/Trusting

- Courage, Wisdom

-Valuing the magnificence of people

Holding them in their highest potential, acknowledging their gifts to others.

HAVE FUN!!!

MOST DANGEROUS PERSON THOUGHT QUESTIONS

Who is the most dangerous person on the ropes course?

What are three ways we can mitigate being the most dangerous person on the ropes course?

Why is it important to acknowledge the most dangerous person on the ropes course?

Who is the most dangerous person on the ropes course? (Yes this is a repeat. Yes it was on purpose)

SPOTTING

Spotting is the most fundamental skill you can have when it comes to keeping other people safe during a low ropes program. Being able to safely and effectively spot opens up all new possibilities. To try and explain all of the "ins and outs" of spotting would take an entire manual by itself! So what we are trying to do in this section is break down spotting into its basic components.

ROCKERS: Depending on your duration of your existence you either thought of Godsmack, The Rolling Stones, or a Rocking Chair. None of these, however, are related to the "rockers" we are talking about. The rockers are the name we give to the position your legs are in during spotting. What you should do to "put your rockers on" is first point one foot forward (for this explanation we're assuming the LEFT foot is forward). It doesn't really matter which one. Second, take your right foot and put it behind your left foot so that, your heels are touching, and your feet are perpendicular. Whoa, big word. In other words, position your feet so they create an 'L'. Once you have made sure everyone in the group has an 'L' have them take a shoulder length step back with their back foot. (A shoulder length step forward with their front foot will have the same outcome). Next, have them slide that back foot in the direction their toe is pointing. (So if my right foot is in back, the toe is pointing to the right, so I'm going to slide my foot to the right). Only slide it about 6 inches. What that does is create a wider base for better balance. Now just have your knees comfortably bent and you now have your rockers on!



BUMPERS: When you are spotting, your bumpers are your arms. With your rockers on already you should extend your arms and have your palms facing out. Make sure your elbows are bent and your fingers are loose. Voila! Bumpers are up.

FALLER: Alas, there is a position for the faller as well. First have them stand at attention like they are in the army. Feet together, standing tall, hands at their sides. From this point on the only part of their body they should move is their arms. What they are going to do is hold out their hands palms facing each other. Now have them point their thumbs down. Next, with arms still straight and thumbs still down have the fallers make an 'X' with their arms. Finally, have them interlock fingers and bring their connected hands down towards their bellybutton then up and under their chin. The reason we go to such lengths to have a specific way to hold their arms is this particular position makes it very difficult for a faller to flail in the event they get scared. We would not want them hitting the person who is trying to keep them safe.

COMMANDS: There are certain protocols that you should follow when people are doing spotting. It starts with the spotter tapping the faller on the shoulder to let them know he/she is there. Then the process proceeds as follows:

Fred (Faller): "Ready Steve?"

Steve (Spotter): "Ready Fred."

Fred (Faller): "Falling Steve."

Steve (Spotter): "Fall Away Steve."

Using names is critical! Using names avoids any confusion about who is talking to whom. If Steve were to just say "Fall Away." There could be another faller who hears that and begins to fall when their spotter is not actually ready.

GENERAL TIPS!!:

1. Have the spotter catch the faller sooner rather than later. So the spotter should lean forward then cradle the faller back as opposed to staying back and letting the faller come to them.
2. Don't let them switch spotter/faller until either the spotter or faller have spread far enough apart that the spotter or faller is no longer comfortable with the distance between them.
3. Try to keep the fooling around to a minimum. Spotting is the foundation for so many other activities that if they can't handle this you should be wary of bringing them to some of the more difficult (but more fun) challenges.
4. Remind your participants that their support comes from their legs. Make sure they use their legs when placing their faller back into the standing position.
5. Make sure the faller is rolling on their heels as opposed to just leaning back. If they just lean back then they are not truly letting themselves be caught by their spotter. Similarly, the fallers should not be helping themselves back into the standing position. The spotter must place them back upright.
6. For the faller, if it is painful for them to hold their arms in that position they can simply cross their arms like a mummy. But, they must hold a handful of their shirt in each hand.
7. Initially have them partner up with someone that is approximately the same height and weight. There is no reason a smaller person can't spot a larger person but when they are first learning it is best to match them up as evenly as possible.



SEQUENCING

As you could probably tell, understanding that you are the most dangerous person on the ropes course is an important concept. After all, we did make it first in this training manual. But, as a facilitator the next concept you must understand is the idea of sequencing. Having activities flowing in a logical order will help bridge together your participant's experience. **The Wall** is a great activity (Activities pg. X) but unless you've done the proper sequence of activities to both make **The Wall** safe and to make **The Wall** significant then it might simply become *a wall* in the middle of the woods at best, or a dangerous scarring memory because someone got hurt due to any number of reasons at worst. This manual WITH training and feedback on your performance, and experience can assure you in delivering **The Wall** kind of experience. (Caution: we do not mean to imply that you can PREDICT the outcome of your group...that reeks of arrogance. But you can at least guide their choices and thus their safe outcomes.)

The standard sequence used in adventure education is as follows:

1. Games
2. Trust Activities
3. Initiatives
4. Low Elements
5. High Ropes Course

This sequence is effective because it begin by creating a foundation for relationships through your games and group agreement(s); then slowly build on that foundation as you continue through the sequence. Here is a sample list of activities in order according to the adventure sequence:

1. Non-Elimination Simon Says
2. Spotting/Willow in the Wind
3. Whale Watch
4. Tired Two-line

Is this a hard and fast rule that you *must always* go in this order? Not necessarily. For example, there are times when low elements are used as trust activities or in some cases you might do low elements prior to initiatives. The most important thing to consider is "Have I taught my participants the necessary skills needed in order to complete this activity safely?" So if you haven't taught your participants spotting, taking them to the Mohawk Walk is *not* a good idea.

As you move through your program there are some other things that should be considered in determining a sequence of activities. First, activities can be adapted for a wide range of uses. For example, Minefield (Activities pg. X) can be used as a de-inhibitizer, a problem-solver, or a trust exercise.

SEQUENCING THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

What is the most important thing to consider when determining a sequence of activities? Why is it important?

Create a sequence of activities according to the standard Adventure Sequence. (Don't include High Ropes)

Think about your experiences in this training. Where are there examples of sequencing besides just the order of activities that were presented to you? (If you don't have any/many experiences yet in this training revisit this question later)

GAMES IN ADVENTURE EDUCATION

Here is a totally "hypothetical" situation. It's the late morning with a slight amount of dew on the grass and the sun is shining warm on your cheeks. (That dew is going to be an important factor here in a minute...)

It is the second or third day of a four day training. Things have been going well and the group has had some ups and downs but for the most part it has come together the way you hoped it would.

Luckily for you, the pieces all fall into place and the perfect game to play next is Different Drum (for details see Activities manual pg. X). Everyone is having fun, enjoying the music playing when it is one of the facilitator's turn to dance...(YOU!). You, the facilitator are really in a groove when you decide to slide on your knees as the big finish to the dance. The song reaches its climax so you decide to go for it and you execute a perfect knee slide on that dew laden grass.

Well, almost perfect. In your attempt for the perfect knee slide, uh, your pants split wide open for everyone in the group to see.

If you're ever looking for a great ice breaker or way to lighten the mood, accidentally split your pants open. The look on your own face alone is a Mastercard moment...

That is the kind of opportunity you can expect to arise (unexpectedly!) when trying to lead games in adventure education.

The truth is, there is no one correct answer for what a game in adventure education can do for you. It can do whatever you need it to. Here are a few purposes for which a game can serve.

- Break the Ice Have Fun!
- Allow a little craziness Unself-conscious awareness
- Cause Communication Cause Self-Confidence



GAMES THOUGHT QUESTIONS

What are 2 other "purposes" for which a game can serve?

What is your favorite game? Why?

Do you know the "victim" of the "hypothetical" situation mentioned at the beginning of the section?

Think of a game you would like to lead at some point in this training. Be prepared to present it to the rest of the group.

FACTORS AFFECTING GAME SELECTION

Choosing the right set of games and initiatives can really set you up for a great challenge course program. As facilitators it can be easy to get locked into a set of activities you want to do and the group ends up having a tough day because the activities you chose were not appropriate for that situation. For instance, if it is a group of college students and the program starts at 9AM on a Saturday morning, you're probably not going to want to do any activities that involve too much thinking. Why not you ask? Well we'll leave that to your imagination but just remember there is more than the facilitators wishes that will dictate the activities you might present to a group. Here are a few factors we think you should consider when selecting a game:

1. **TIME** - How much do you have? How long do you need? Can you control it?
2. Is it **FUN**?
3. **SAFETY** - How can you control it?
4. **COST** - Can you control it?
5. **SPACE** - How much? Indoor/outdoor; scale; privacy; ability to control boundaries.
6. **DAY/NIGHT**
7. **PROPS?**
8. Is it **FUN**?
9. Can you be **CREATIVE** and **ADJUST** the rules of the game to keep it interesting?
10. Does it truly involve **EVERYONE**?
11. Are the rules **EASILY** comprehended?
12. What level of **TRUST** does the group need to have with itself to play this game?
13. Have you had **EXPERIENCE** leading this game?
14. What **AGE** group is this geared toward?
15. What is the **GOAL** in playing underlying the game?
16. Last but not least- Is it **FUN**?

GAME SELECTION THOUGHT QUESTIONS

In your opinion, what is the most significant factor affecting game selection? Why?

What are two factors you would add to this list? Are there any you would take away?

What would be an activity you would choose for that group of college students at 9AM on Saturday morning?

G.R.A.B.B.S.S.

G.R.A.B.B.S.S. stands for *Goals, Readiness, Affect, Behavior, Body, Stage, Setting*. G.R.A.B.B.S.S. is a great assessment tool to help you evaluate (NOTICE, NOTICE, NOTICE!) your group as you move through a challenge course program. If your program will span over multiple days it can also help you plan that days activities. Primarily, it is meant to help you appropriately adjust and adapt your program to create the most positive and beneficial experience for your participants.

GOALS: What are the goals/objectives of your session(s)? Are individual goals aligned with the team? Do all members of the team know/understand the goals? Are people committed? How does the activity relate to the group and individual goals that have been set?

READINESS: This regards levels of instruction (skills) and safety capabilities. Is the group ready to do the activity? Will they endanger themselves and others? What skills and abilities does the team have? Are they using the skills effectively? ...enough to attempt or complete the task? What will you have to do to change the event to compensate for lack of readiness? What level of motivation exists on the team? Are people engaged and involved, or are they resistant and apathetic? What new skills do they need to learn in order to improve?



AFFECT: What is the feeling of the group? What kinds of behaviors are observable? Are behaviors and actions different from statements? What is left unspoken? What is the level of empathy/caring in the group? What is the level of trust and support? What kinds of sensations are they having?

BEHAVIOR: How is the group acting? Are they restive, disruptive, agreeable? Are they more self-involved or team-focused? What interactions are affecting the group, either positively or negatively? Are they communicating openly and honestly?

BODY: What stress is the team experiencing? How tired are they? Can people maintain concentration or are they easily distracted? Is the environment creating any discomfort? What do people need to become re-engaged with the task or process? What kind of physical shape are they in? How tired are they? Do they substance abuse? Are they on medication? How do they see their own bodies?

STAGE: Which developmental stage is the group at? Which developmental stage(s) are individuals at? Are the behaviors consistent with your assessment of the stage? What stage does the group think it is at?

SETTING: What cultural factors may be affecting this group? What do facilitators need to understand about who they are (race, gender, ethnicity, economics, etc.) in order to effectively communicate and interact with them? What impact do these factors have on the group's behaviors and on this experience? Also, what aspects of the physical location may impact the program and the participants? Are you in the right setting or space to best facilitate the exercise? What is available vs. what do you need: indoors, outdoors, dry, wet, cold, warm, flat, sunny shady, windy?

Adapted from *Islands Of Healing* by J. Schoel, D. Prouty and P. Radcliffe.

GRABBSS THOUGHT QUESTIONS

You have a group of 10 high school students who have done a Blind Buddy Stretch walk. The next activity you take them to is the Mohawk Walk. Is this a good decision? Why? Why not? Use GRABBSS to explain your answer.

Why is GRABBSS a valuable tool to have as a facilitator?

Imagine you are teaching spotting to a group of college students. One girl is deathly afraid of falling into someone else's arms. How you adapt your activity to account for your frightened participant and still meet the goal of having everyone fall and catch?

CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS OF "TRUST" BEING PRESENT

Yikes! The "T-bomb" just got dropped. Trust is one of those ideas and concepts that is so integral to what we do as facilitators and yet it is such a difficult concept to put into words. The best way we can think of to define it is through experiences. There are, however, some ways to recognize if participants are showing trust and confidence in each other.

1. Dynamic balance between **RISK** and **SAFETY**.
2. **NEGOTIATION** of **COOPERATION** between all parties concerned.
3. Evidence of "**AT STAKENESS**" (i.e., personal investment) and a willingness of participants to engage/participate in some way.
4. Ability of anyone in the group (especially most resistant/shy) to say **NO**, i.e., expressing choice and power and the space/clearing that causes for the facilitator to then adjust the task to meet the group and individual's commitment level.
5. Evidence of **RELATIONSHIP**: flexibility, power, challenge, sincerity, compromise to create win-win for one another, communication. [People are willing to compromise in order to create a win-win situation.]
6. The presence of **PARADOX**, i.e., 2 truths, apparently opposite, both present.

TRUST THOUGHT QUESTIONS

When is a time in this training you had to put your trust in someone else? What was the result of putting your trust in that person?

Did someone else put his/her trust in you? How did it feel being relied on by another person?

Why is it important a participant know they have the option of saying no?

A "RECIPE" FOR GREAT INITIATIVES

Initiatives, like games, can serve many different purposes for you as the facilitator. Also, like games, there are some things you need to consider when planning which initiatives you would like to present to your participants. There are three primary characteristics all initiatives should have. They should require everyone to participate in some way, it should be experiential, and it should be holistic. Here are some factors to consider when choosing an initiative.



1. Is it a **FUN** task? Intriguing, challenging and with an element of adventure?
2. Does its design require **EVERYONE** in the group to **CONTRIBUTE** and be involved in order to achieve success? (**INCLUSIVITY**)
3. Does it require **PLANNING** and coordination of some **ACTION** sequence involving physical movement? (**EXPERIENTIAL**)
4. Does the challenge call upon **MENTAL, PHYSICAL, and EMOTIONAL** talents and resources from the group? (**HOLISTIC**)
5. Can you **ADJUST THE LEVEL** of challenge mid-stream to fine-tune it to the group's dynamic goals?
6. Is the activity **SAFE**, including effective support systems in the group and allowing for you to interrupt if necessary to maintain that safety zone?

INITIATIVES THOUGHT QUESTIONS

Think of one initiative you've done so far this training. Did it seem to follow this general recipe? Explain your answer.

How could not including everyone in an activity negatively impact the group?

How might your selection of initiatives affect your selection of low elements and/or trust activities?

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE TO PRESENTING INITIATIVES

Once initiatives have been selected you must present them to your participants. If you don't explain the initiatives the participants won't know what to do and will probably just end up confused and walk away. BUT, it isn't enough to simply know the instructions and safety guidelines for a particular initiative. Here are some things to consider prior to presenting an initiative.

1. What **PROPS** (if any) are necessary? (i.e., Rope, bucket, blindfolds, etc.)

(Explained to the group after they have arrived):

2. What is the **NAME** of the initiative?

3. What are the **OBJECTIVES** of the initiative? (i.e., What action/event must be accomplished in brief terms?)

4. What is the **STORYLINE** to the initiative? (i.e., How can you present the challenge in a way that is pertinent metaphorically; Isomorphically? If the facilitator can be in tune with the parallel processing of the participant's own lives, s/he can assist in the creation of dynamics in the initiative that are truly exciting because they are so on target.)

5. What are the **GROUND RULES**? (i.e., How much time, what props are allowed, what conditions are ok, etc.)

6. What are the **SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS** if any? (i.e., No more than one person can cross at once, spotting is essential, two hands up at all times on the Wall, etc.)

7. What **DEBRIEF** questions would you offer that will guide the group to insights and create (transfer) commitment to action in their own lives?



GUIDE THOUGHT QUESTIONS

Why is knowing just the instructions and safety guidelines not good enough?

What are three ways a good storyline could benefit the participants?

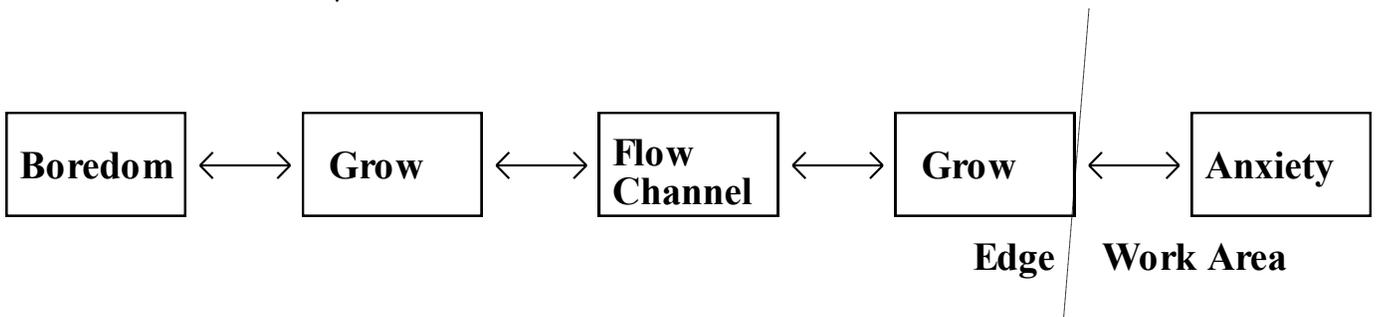
Why is it important to reflect (formerly known as "debriefing") on an activity you just completed?

THE FLOW CHANNEL MODEL

The flow channel model becomes a useful tool for facilitators by acting as a measure of the engagement level of an individual in comparison to that individual's skill level and the degree of challenge inherent to the task. By targeting a balance between a participant's abilities and the level of challenge, a facilitator is able to provide the opportunity for participants to be immersed in the flow channel, unconscious of other events around them or occurrences possible for the future.



This model may be superimposed onto any activity that an individual might be engaged in at a physical, emotional, and/or mental level. While focusing in on the individual, we as facilitators may receive crucial information that will allow us to become more effective. The facilitator may then alter an experiential activity, to better address the individual's needs and goals. Ideally, an individual would spend a considerable amount of time in the flow channel. A modification of the flow channel model would be the addition of a new zone entitled, "Grow".



New discoveries at the edge, by the participant either expand the comfort zone or contract it, thus redefining the participant's edge boundary. With the addition of the grow zone, the facilitator can aim the individual to these zones by providing adventure activities that allow the participant to interact between the grow and flow channels.

FLOW CHANNEL THOUGHT QUESTIONS

What is the "edge"?

What are two possible outcomes of working in the "edge" zone?

When is a time during this training have you been at the "edge"?

THE FOUR STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

*Richard Weber, "The Group: A Cycle from Birth to Death."
Weber uses the stages developed by Tuckman (1965), Schutz (1971), and Bion (1961).*

FORMING: When groups form, members are scrambling for leadership and whom to follow. There is confusion, anxiety, willingness to please, along with solid glimpses into what the group will be like. This is an important time for the group to achieve something, for they may be more willing to please each other and the leaders at this stage than they will be during the Storming stage. Those solid immediate first achievements will be important building blocks: "look, you did these things before, and you had a good time doing it. You can do them again."

STORMING: Others call this the control stage. Alliances between members have formed sufficiently to generate negative behavior. Real testing of the co-leaders begins. They are essentially reacting to the situation, with very little initiative or independence being exhibited. It is important to continue to deal with the uses of achievement and negotiations, giving them the solid experiences that will help them move on to the next stage.

NORMING: The group is starting to operate as a unit, taking pride in what it is doing, using its own strengths. The group is moving away from its dependency on the co-leaders, taking initiative; experiencing pride in group accomplishments. They are able to confront each other in terms of goals and behavior.

TRANSFORMING/PERFORMING: It is what a group must do when it has accomplished its goal, or has run out of time. According to Weber, there are two choices. One is to Redefine, or start again with a new agenda and time period. The other is to Disengage. "The group must decide on its future or it will proceed down a frustrating, unfulfilling path."

(NEWER) Tuckman's fifth stage - Adjourning Bruce Tuckman

refined his theory around 1975 and added a fifth stage to the Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing model - he called it Adjourning; also referred to as Deforming and Mourning. Adjourning is arguably more of an adjunct to the original four stage model rather than an extension - it views the group from a perspective beyond the purpose of the first four stages. The Adjourning phase is certainly very relevant to the people in the group and their well-being, but not to the main task of managing and developing a team, which is clearly central to the original four stages.

Adjourning - stage 5 This is the break-up of the group, hopefully when the task is completed successfully, its purpose fulfilled; everyone can move on to new things, feeling good about what's been achieved. From an organizational perspective, recognition of and sensitivity to people's vulnerabilities in this stage is helpful, particularly if members of the group have been closely bonded and feel a sense of insecurity or threat from this change.

It is important to remind yourself that groups will recycle back through the process. A group will move to a general level but it will also run into difficulties, and these may force them to take a step back. If the difficulties are addressed, the group will grow in a normal "zig-zag" kind of way. If they are not addressed the group will have more trouble moving on to the next stage.

These developmental stages can help you decide on intensity decisions and on specific tasks. Tasks that require a high degree of initiative and responsibility should be reserved for the Norming stage. Tasks that must be watched closely through narrow parameters should be slotted into Forming and Storming. Becoming a wise observer of group process (regarding how, why, and where people behave in certain ways) will be invaluable to you as a GROUP facilitator. It will help you determine when to introduce certain adventure activities and also when to call the group's attention to its process. Our role is to help you empower individuals in a group setting to grow in natural, positive ways.

GROUP DEVELOPMENT THOUGHT QUESTIONS

Why is it important to know which stage your group is in?

How might the Flow Channel Model and the stages of group development be connected?

What stage is your group in? Why do you think so?

REFLECTING

Performing reflections is a key aspect to being a good facilitator and for group development. After each activity (or series of activities) it is important to reflect on what the participants have learned as a result of their experience. This is also the time when you should connect what they've learned to areas of your participant's lives outside of the challenge course. How can they adapt the lessons they've learned into their work environment? Home? School? Yoga? Without reflection all your group will have is a bunch of random activities that do not connect or translate into real life.

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

Knowing Bloom's theory on cognitive processing can be a big help to you as a facilitator when you are trying to run a reflection (debrief). By knowing and anticipating how people progress in their ability to learn it can help facilitators organize their questions accordingly. There are six levels to Bloom's Taxonomy, Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation.

1. **KNOWLEDGE:** This is the most basic level of cognitive processing. It is a memory level where simple recall takes place.
2. **COMPREHENSION:** This is the understanding level. You have taken your knowledge and are understanding it in a literal, descriptive way.
3. **APPLICATION:** At this level a person is using their knowledge correctly.
4. **ANALYSIS:** In the analysis level you are breaking down the knowledge you've gained into component parts and can recognize their relationship to one another.

5. **SYNTHESIS:** This is the creative level. At this level you can take all of the pieces apart and put them back together again.

6. **EVALUATION:** This is the final stage. Once you've reached the evaluation stage you have the ability to make your own opinion (and be able to support it) as well as make judgments about the value of ideas and solutions.

THE CHARLES PARRY TECHNIQUE

The Charles Parry technique is another way to approach a reflection. The first step is to restate the goal of the group discussed at the start of the day in addition to reviewing the activities the group took part in that day. Then state how the reflection is going to work. So for example:

"So, we've just completed some initiatives ...a ...b ...and c. As I remember, our group goals were...x ...y ...z. Let's take five minutes to reflect on what we've learned."

"Here is how we'll do it. Given our full agenda for today, the challenge for each of you here in this verbal initiative is to silently think and prioritize. Think of a 1-3 sentence response to each of the following two questions:

1. Given your performance in today's activities what would you do the same?
2. What would you do differently?"

As a facilitator you should model for the participants what you would like them to do by going first. There are only a few times you should do something first when dealing with a new group of participants. Going first in a reflection is one of those times. Falling from a height is not.

THE KOLB TECHNIQUE

This is a simple formula for how to structure a good reflection. There are only three questions involved, What? So what? Now what?

WHAT?

What were the activities we just experienced? What were the outcomes of those activities? What have you learned?

SO WHAT?

What is the significance of the activities/outcomes? Why should you care? Why are the lessons learned important?

NOW WHAT?

How are you going to take what you've learned and experienced today and apply it to other aspects of your life?

Another name for the Kolb Technique is the Experiential Learning Cycle. You can find a great diagram of this concept in Appendix X on pg. Y.

THE 5 QUESTION REFLECTION GUIDE

(Thanks to Open to Outcomes and the Boomerang Project for this one!)

This is another technique to guide you in your quest for an effective powerful reflection. This guide goes as follows:

1. Did you notice? What did you notice during...?
2. Why does that happen?
3. Where else in your life does this occur? Work? School?
4. Why does it happen at school/work?
5. How can you use this information?

It is very important that lessons learned are connected to outside experiences. That relationship is how we can translate our journey on the ropes course with the adventure of the real world.

REFLECTION THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

How can a reflection turn a "run of the mill" experience into something people will never forget?

How does Bloom's Taxonomy connect to the series of reflection techniques mentioned in this section?

Select a reflection technique and create a scenario in which you would use that particular technique over the other techniques discussed in this section.

APPENDIX I

(All you Level II's out there should pay attention to this Appendix.)

The Role of the Instructor by Ken Kalisch is a great book about being a facilitator in the field of adventure education. There are two areas of the book that we would like to highlight here. First, we have selected ten things a facilitator should do to be more effective in leading a group and also give that group the best chance at success.

1. Provide training in new skill areas with immediate applications.

Meaning: Teach the participants skills they are actually going to need in the near future. For example, if you want to participate on the high ropes course you will have to teach belaying. Or, if you want to go to a Low Element you will have to teach spotting.

2. Use a unique or contrasting environment.

Meaning: Utilize an environment that is not necessarily in most people's comfort zones. For example, if you are working with a group that is at a summer camp and they have all been at the camp for several weeks prior to the program, go someplace off campus to do some activities. All you really did was move from one area of land with some grass and woods to another. But, for the participants it is new and different.

3. Provide opportunities for leadership and responsibility.

Meaning: Assign people roles. If water needs to be set up, have a different person set it up each day. Just give kids the chance to be in charge of something.

4. Provide a variety of experiences.

Meaning: This can mean a couple things. One meaning is that your participants will get really bored really fast if you do the same activities and challenges over and over again. The other meaning, is referring to providing a holistic experience for your participants. Use the participant's senses, have some visual, audible, and tactile experiences.

5. Provide graduated challenges (individual and group) to promote successful experiences.

Meaning: Don't throw a group into a situation they are not ready for. Build up to the tougher challenges by starting small and building that foundation for success.

6. Provide opportunities for the development of one on one relationships.

Meaning: Before this training began one or all of the trainers interviewed you. That interview acted as an introduction and began this relationship process.

7. Provide supportive, usually non-directive leadership.

Meaning: Positive reinforcement is a powerful tool you should use to emphasize things the group is doing that you like as opposed to yelling at them for doing things you don't like.

8. Provide morale building experiences.

Meaning: This means a couple things. First, you should always celebrate successes, even the small ones. Second, similar to number five, you should build their confidence by starting small and building up to more difficult challenges.

9. Provide experiences with clear-cut consequences.

Meaning: If you are doing an activity and a rule is broken make sure the group knows that there will be a consequence that is enforced. Also, make sure the consequence is consistent.

10. Emphasize reflection.

Meaning: Utilize your free time to have your participants journal or do an instructor led reflection.

The second area of the book we would like to focus on is when Ken discusses facilitator interventions. When a facilitator must intervene there are certain ways in which he/she can go about doing that. As you read think about how you would handle the scenario presented and how you would handle each intervention.

Scenario: a group is challenged with crossing a river. Some people have given ideas that were instantly rejected and criticized. Two members have come to dominate the problem solving, each vying for a greater share of power. The group is frustrated; many members are beginning to withdraw. The instructor who has been standing by senses that the situation is fast deteriorating and that an intervention may be helpful.

Obviously there are some issues in this scenario. First, the group immediately rejected a series of ideas resulting in the rejection of the people giving the ideas and their withdrawal from the activity. Second, there are two people who have begun to dominate the planning without the participation of other members of the group. A third problem is that there was no organization to the planning process initially.

Intervention 1: Attempt to diagnose the group's issue(s) then ask the group why they might be having those issues. For example, "There may be several reasons why this group is so frustrated right now. One is that everyone hasn't been included in on the discussion of the problem...Can anyone think of a reason why this is happening?"

Intervention 2: Focus the attention on the process the group has gone through. For example, "Are you all aware that every suggestion offered here has been immediately criticized?"

Intervention 3: In this intervention the goal is to bring out some unexpressed feelings from the group. For example, "Sarah, how did you feel when your suggestion was laughed at a few minutes ago?"

Intervention 4: In this intervention it is the role of the facilitator to clarify the progress that has been made and to refocus the group. "Let's stop for a few minutes and review all the suggestions which have been made up to now."

Intervention 5: Give direct feedback. "There have been a few people who have really dominated the discussion. Let's try to include more people. Now, in the book it specifically names the person, James, who is one of the people dominating the group. In this case, however, we don't think you should single out one participant because you do not want to discourage them from participating in this challenge or any future challenges."

Intervention 6: With this intervention you are trying to teach by means of providing the group with additional content or skill training. This is a slightly cheesy but still good example, "One of the keys to effective problem solving is generating a large number of alternative solutions. I would like you to try something with me as a group for a few minutes. It's called brainstorming."

Intervention 7: If the ridicule has gone too far there may be instances when you must deal with the behavior directly. For instance, "Joe!...I hate to interrupt, but I really think Sarah has heard enough from you for now."

Intervention 8: In this intervention you are stating your personal feelings about the group's performance. For instance, "I have been standing here for the last forty minutes watching and waiting for you people to get your act together. At this point I am growing impatient and can no longer hide my disappointment. After all I've tried to teach you about

problem-solving and communication, I'm feeling let down...like maybe I've been wasting my time."

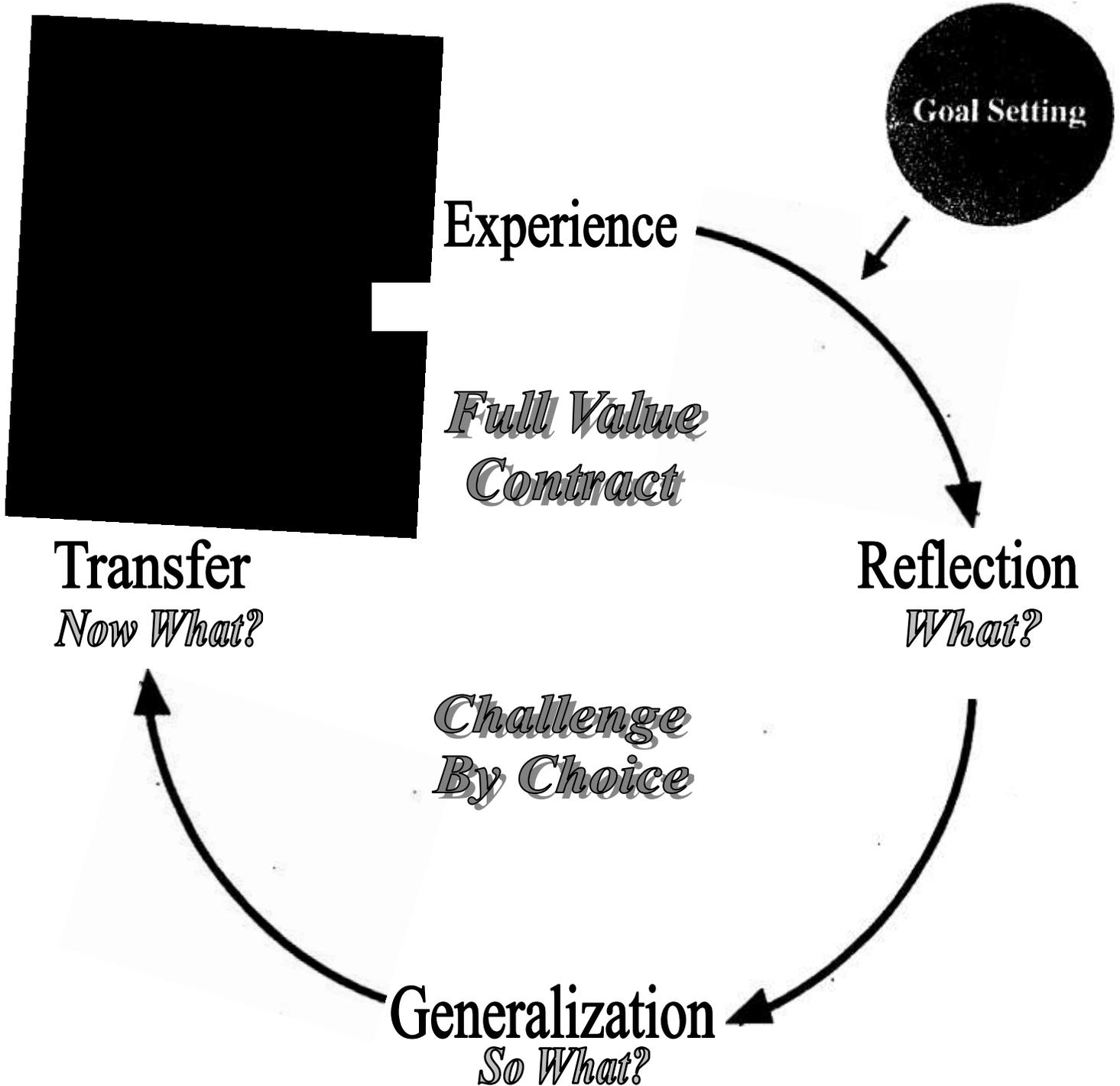
Intervention 9: Here you are attempting to restructure the situation. "I would like you all to get back together and begin a discussion of this problem. It's too soon to give up. Let's really work at communicating with each other. And Joe, since you've had so much to say up to this point I would like you to hang back for awhile and refrain from sharing anymore."

Intervention 10: Reflect other people's feelings back to them. "It's really disheartening to try to solve a problem and end up nowhere. Sort of like spinning your wheels. Even downright frustrating, isn't it?"

Facilitation is the art of knowing when and how to intervene into a group's interaction. It is not an easy job. The instructor will experience a good degree of tension in making some of these decisions. Yet, this need not deter the inexperienced instructor from involvement. Surely, mistakes will be made; but the art of facilitation can be learned with practice so don't get discouraged!

APPENDIX II

The Experiential Learning Cycle



*I see, and I forget.
I hear, and I remember.
I do, and I understand.
Lau-tzu, Chinese Philosopher*