Adventure Therapy

Contribution Authors:
Ryan Elliott
Larissa Pieper
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governing Bodies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficacy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory/Models</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Barriers/Problems</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Management Considerations</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contraindications</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Resources</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Appendix:

### Interventions and Initiatives
- High Ropes Course                                                      | 20|
- Low Ropes Course                                                       | 28|
- Experiential/Educational/Challenge Based Ground Initiatives            | 38|
- Teambuilding Initiatives                                               | 40|
- Guided Journaling                                                       | 41|
- Solo Experience                                                        | 41|
- Intensive Outdoor Camping Experience                                   | 42|
- Leisure Counseling                                                      | 42|
- Stress Management Seminars                                             | 42|
So what is Adventure Therapy?

"Adventure (psycho) therapy is an active, experiential approach to group (and family) psychotherapy or counseling:
- Utilizing an activity base, (cooperative group games, ropes courses, outdoor pursuits or wilderness expeditions)
- employing real and or perceived (physical and psychological) risk (distress/eustress) as a clinically significant agent to bring about desired change
- Making meaning(s) (through insights that are expressed verbally, nonverbally, or unconsciously that lead to behavioral change) from both verbal and nonverbal introductions prior to (e.g., frontloading) and discussions following (e.g., debriefings) the activity experience
- Punctuating isomorphic connection(s) (how the structure of the activity matches the resolution of the problem) that significantly contribute to the transfer of lessons learned into changed behavior" (Gillis & Thomsen, 1996).

Adventure therapy programs tend to be solution-focused and humanistic in their orientation. Many programs also have important behavioral principles, particularly for programs involving delinquent or incarcerated youth. Also evident is theory based on the therapeutic value of challenging participants and helping them learn about their reactions. Psychological theorists of particular importance include Carl Rogers, Milton Erikson and William Glasser. Also of particular significance is the ABC-model (Adventure-based Counseling) developed by Schoel, Prouty and Radcliffe and the work by Project Adventure. (Neil, J., http://www.wilderdom.com/adventuretherapy/adventuretherapytheory.html, accessed April, 2009).
Governing Bodies

**AEE (Association of Experiential Education)**
The Association for Experiential Education (AEE) is a nonprofit, professional membership association dedicated to experiential education and the students, educators and practitioners who utilize its philosophy. [www.aee.org](http://www.aee.org)

**National Society for Experiential Education**
National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) is a nonprofit membership association of educators, businesses, and community leaders. Founded in 1971, NSEE also serves as a national resource center for the development and improvement of experiential education programs nationwide. [www.nsee.org](http://www.nsee.org)

**European Institute for Experiential Learning and Outdoor Adventure**
The organization functions with the support of the European Community budget line- support for international non-governmental youth organizations a non-governmental association registered at the magistrates’ court of Marburg in Germany. [www.eoe-network.org/home.htm](http://www.eoe-network.org/home.htm)

**The Association for Challenge Course Technology**
ACCT is a trade organization, serving Challenge Course Professionals all over the world. The purpose of the association is to promote the use of Challenge Courses and to set minimum standards for Challenge Course installation, operation and inspection. [www.acctinfo.org](http://www.acctinfo.org)
Efficacy

- Adventure Education can increase the self-esteem of elementary, middle, and high school students. (Wright, 1983).*

- Wilderness Therapy programs greatly benefited youths with various kinds of emotional, psychological, and behavioral problems (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1994).*

- Adventure based activities are a viable method for promoting self-esteem. Results from this adventure-based counseling study, which focused on self-esteem of children and adolescents, show the success experiences facilitated by such activities can serve to enhance self-esteem through both prevention and intervention efforts for children and adolescents (Nassar-McMillan, & Cashwell, 1997).*

- Gibbons studied teambuilding through the use of physical challenges. Adventure education, outdoor pursuits and teambuilding initiatives were specifically highlighted in this study. The results of his study continue to prove the importance of teambuilding, adventure education and outdoor pursuits as an effective method for behavior change. (Gibbons, 1999).*

- In his book, Adventure Therapy: Therapeutic Applications of Adventure Programming, Gass posits the family experiential process causes participants to actually display their structure, work on negative and positive behavior patterns and rules of interaction, and develop successful methods of communication while accomplishing adventure based tasks (Gass, 1993).*

- Witman studied the outcomes of adolescents who participated in an adventure program as part of their psychiatric treatment. This study suggests that adventure program participation both complements and supplements psychiatric treatment in changing attitudes, affect, and behavior of adolescents in psychiatric treatment. (Witman, 1992).*
Hattie, Marsh, Neill, & Richards (1997) conducted a meta-analysis of adventure programs. They found that, in general, adventure programs positively impacted self-esteem, leadership, academics, personality, and interpersonal relations, with self-esteem change being most significant. These changes were shown to be more stable over time than the changes generated in more traditional educational programs. (Hattie, Marsh, Neill, & Richards, 1997).¹

¹ Full citations for studies and information are located in the reference section. For additional information see PDF files on the electronic copy of this material.
Theory/Models

Experiential education:
Kolb (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle (recursive and potentially non-sequential)
- Plan
  - Active experimentation
- Do
  - Experience
  - Challenges
- Reflect/ Review
  - Active (What?)
  - Abstract conceptualization (generalization, So what?)
- Next plan (Now what?)
  - Transference

Double diamond model:
Christian Itin and Scott Bandoroff developed the Double Diamond Model in the mid-1990's to explain and guide the facilitative process particularly in therapeutic adventure programs, but the model can be applied to any experiential education situation (Itin, 2002). Basically, the model combines Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle and the therapeutic components suggested as important by famous psychotherapist, Milton Erikson. Each individual (both the client and the therapist) is considered to undergo 4-stage Kolbian learning cycles during the intervention. The area between the client and the therapist is the "therapeutic milieu". Guiding this milieu is Erikson's "diamond", which has four points (important components):
- Goal Setting
- Tailoring
- Gift-wrapping
- Processing

ABC model (adventure-based counseling):
This model has emerged as a group-based, adventure-based approach to personal development and therapeutic activity. ABC has been developed by Project Adventure and become more widely used due to Project Adventure publications, programs, and trainings. (Neill, 2007)

Important principles of ABC include:
- Full Value Contract (FVC) is an important principle. Since ABC is almost always group based and relies on people exposing themselves to
perceived physical, emotional and social risks, it is vital that a supportive
group atmosphere is developed and that basic, agreed principles of
engagement are shared by the group.
The Adventure Wave is a visual way to depict the three stages of the
Adventure-Based Counseling (ABC) approach (briefing, activity,
debriefing) which is widely used in outdoor education and experiential
education programming.
Challenge by Choice is the simple principle that participants are invited to
participate voluntarily in each of the various activities and challenges of
an ABC program. A participant may choose to sit out an activity and this
right is to be respected by others in the group and instructors. (Neill, 2007)
Professional Problems/ Barriers to Overcome

- As adventure therapy becomes more widely recognized as a credible treatment approach, it is important that the literature be able to clearly represent what exactly adventure therapy is (Bandoroff & Newes, 2004).
- Need for improved training and skill level of therapists (Burg, 1995).
- Further development of theory (Burg, 1995).
- There is a lack of well-organized, definitive and widespread knowledge about effectiveness of different types of adventure therapy programs (Neill, 2003) due to the small amount of outcome and interventional process research (Burg, 1995).
- Inconsistency of accreditation of programs (Burg, 1995).
- Need for more interdisciplinary collaboration and networking (Burg, 1995).
- Need for an examination of evaluation methods to ensure that the most up-to-date and valid methods of comparison are being used (Neill, 2003).
- Making the interventions more available to the public through marketing and advertisement, so that more clients may enroll and benefit (Richards, 2003).
- The field of Adventure Therapy must begin to hold itself accountable for answering the questions posed to all other treatments: Is this treatment effective? For whom, and under what circumstance? (Bandoroff & Newes, 2004).
Risk Management Considerations

Special Issues in Working with Youth At-risk:

Working with youth at-risk also brings with it some potential hazards that require particular attention to protecting yourself from malicious accusations. Some children have been “in the system” so long, that they will develop a manipulative stance to working with helping professionals. Used to being powerless, they have learned to manipulate the system to gain power and revenge. To prevent yourself and Bradford Woods from being a target of this, we have set some policies specific to this population:

1) Always be in view of others
The risk to you as an instructor of being accused of abuse (sexual or physical) is significantly higher with this population. If you need to speak to a client “in private”, it needs to be out of earshot but in plain view of others. Do not use private rooms with a door shut or ever be out of plain view from others. If necessary, either return to plain view when out of sight or have another counselor monitor the situation from a distance.

2) Do not allow program participants into private staff areas

3) Follow policy for handling discipline - You will be covered with respect to liability and professional protocol if you follow Bradford Woods policy. This includes such important issues as notifying a co-leader and supervisor (as soon as is possible) of any suspicion of sexual interest by a participant, documenting significant incidents such as fights, reports of sexual abuse and other Bradford Woods or State mandated policies (See Bradford Woods operating manual)

4) Be aware of what you share
Young people are naturally curious about you and your experiences. Sometimes it can be very useful to share your experiences and feelings and this is frequently used by counselors and group therapists, who call it self-disclosure. It can help build rapport, credibility and encourage others to self-disclose.
HOWEVER, it can also be very inappropriate, such as when clients ask about your sex life, past drug or alcohol use and other intimate subjects.

5) Report and record suspicious or unusual observations.

6) Supervise private activities in pairs
7) Breaking up fights and intervening in physical assault

The best way to intervene in such incidents is to be proactive
Ensure the safety of you and other participants
Work as a team
Separate them as soon as possible

8) Use of therapeutic restraint

Examples of when NOT to use this strategy are:

This should only be used with training and as an absolute LAST RESORT. Restraint is a very over-used procedure and there are many alternatives to this strategy. It also carries considerable risk to all parties involved and therefore should only be used IN EXTREME situations. There are many examples of clients dying after restraint has been improperly used, so only use this if properly trained and there is IMMEDIATE danger to life or limb to a) THEMSELVES or b) OTHERS

If the client is running away (let them, unless doing so might mean they are in immediate danger, such as they are running toward a steep cliff and will not stop);

They are experiencing uncontrollable anger (move everyone out of the way and wait it out);

They are repeatedly defiant and insulting (set consequences and manage behavior but this should never be a reason to physically restrain). If the client is destroying property or wildlife; this may be a reason to remove them from the program but not to restrain. The only instance when restraint may be necessary is when the destruction of property will immediately result in loss of life or limb, such as a participant attempting to cut a rope that is currently being climbed on or to set fire to a cabin that people are sleeping in.

This might include a client in the act of committing suicide by attempting to throw themselves into a lake. This may also include a client who is about to attack another participant or staff member. Never continue a restraint for any length of time other than what is absolutely necessary to prevent immediate danger to life or limb. Do not maintain pressure on neck, head or body trunk for a long period of time. Clients should not be sat on, held in a head or neck lock or any other form of restraint that may inhibit breathing or block an airway. The need to use a restraint should be documented immediately and reported to your immediate supervisor.

The participant should be considered for removal from the program. As soon as the immediate threat has been removed, the restraint should be discontinued. Other methods should then be employed to manage the situation. For example, if a child has been threatening.
attack another participant or staff member. Never continue a restraint for any length of time other than what is absolutely necessary to prevent immediate danger to life or limb. Do not maintain pressure on neck, head or body trunk for a long period of time. Clients should not be sat on, held in a head or neck lock or any other form of restraint that may inhibit breathing or block an airway. The need to use a restraint should be documented immediately and reported to your immediate supervisor. The participant should be considered for removal from the program. As soon as the immediate threat has been removed, the restraint should be discontinued.
Contraindications

Mental Health Issues:
Mental health problems affect one in every five young people at any given time (Department of Health & Human Services). An estimated two-thirds of all young people with mental health problems are not getting the help they need (Department of Health & Human Services). Studies indicate that 1 in 5 children and adolescents (20 percent) may have a diagnosable disorder. It is important to be familiar with some of the mental health issues that may be found among participants of Adventure Therapy.

Anorexia Nervosa-
A person with anorexia initially begins dieting to lose weight. Over time, the weight loss becomes a sign of mastery and control. The drive to become thinner is actually secondary to concerns about control and/or fears relating to one’s body. The individual continues the endless cycle of restrictive eating often to a point close to starvation in order to feel a sense of control over the body. This cycle becomes an obsession and is similar to any type of drug or substance addiction.

Bulimia Nervosa-
Bulimia is a type of eating disorder. People with bulimia will eat a large amount of food in a short time (binge). Then they will do something to get rid of the food (purge). They may vomit, exercise too much, or use medicines like laxatives. Without treatment, this "binge and purge" cycle can lead to serious, long-term health problems. Acid in the mouth from vomiting can cause tooth decay, gum disease, and loss of tooth enamel. Any type of purging can lead to bone thinning (osteoporosis), kidney damage, heart problems, or even death.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder—Children with generalized anxiety disorder have recurring fears and worries that they find difficult to control. They worry unnecessarily about almost everything—school, sports, being on time, even natural disasters. They may be restless, irritable, tense, or easily tired, and may have trouble concentrating or sleeping. Children with generalized anxiety disorder usually are very eager to please others and may be “perfectionists,” dissatisfied with their own less-than-perfect performance.

Separation Anxiety Disorder—Children with separation anxiety disorder have intense anxiety about being away from home or caregivers to the point where social or school functioning is affected. Such children have a great need to stay at home or close to their parents. When they are apart, the child may worry excessively about his or her parents; when they are together,
the child may cling to parents, refuse to go to school, or be afraid to go to sleep. Repeated nightmares about separation and physical symptoms such as stomachaches and headaches are also common.

**Social Phobia** - Social phobia usually emerges in the mid-teens, and typically does not affect young children. Children and adolescents with this disorder have a constant fear of social or performance situations, like speaking in class or eating in public. They are continuously afraid of being embarrassed in these situations. This fear is often accompanied by physical symptoms, such as sweating, blushing, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, or muscle tenseness. Young people with this disorder typically respond to these feelings by avoiding the feared situation, for example, staying home from school or not going to parties. Young people with social phobia are often overly sensitive to criticism, have trouble being assertive, and have low self-esteem. Social phobia may be limited to certain situations so that the adolescent may experience a sense of dread in relation to dating or recreational events, but may be confident in school and work situations.

**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder** - Children with obsessive-compulsive disorder have frequent and uncontrollable thoughts ("obsessions") and/or perform routines or rituals ("compulsions"), usually to get rid of the thoughts. This disorder often involves repeating behaviors to avoid some imagined consequence. For instance, a common compulsion is washing one’s hands excessively because of a fear of germs. Other common compulsions include: counting, repeating words silently, and re-checking completed tasks. The obsessions and/or compulsions may take up a lot of time and cause a child much anxiety. Typically, this disorder begins in adolescence.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder** - Children who experience a physical or emotional trauma, such as witnessing a shooting, surviving physical or sexual abuse, or being in a car accident, may develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Children are more easily traumatized than adults: An event that may not be traumatic to an adult might be to a child, such as a turbulent plane ride. As a result of the trauma, a child may "re-experience" the event through nightmares, constant thoughts about what happened, or by reenacting the event while playing. A child with PTSD will experience symptoms of general anxiety, including trouble sleeping and eating or being irritable. Many children may exhibit other physical symptoms as well, such as being easily startled.

**Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)** - There are two main types of ADHD. One is characterized by inattentiveness and the other is characterized by hyperactive or impulsive behavior, although some children will have symptoms of both types. Children can also
have attention difficulties without hyperactivity. Often, symptoms are not apparent until a child enters school. The diagnosis of ADHD requires that a child meet DSM-IV criteria as developed by the American Psychiatric Association. A child must exhibit symptoms in at least two settings, such as at home and at school, and the symptoms must hinder the child’s ability to function for at least 6 months. Specialists have agreed that at least six symptoms from one or each of the two following lists of categories must be present, and symptoms must begin by the age of 7. ADHD is the most common psychiatric condition affecting children. Many children who have ADD/ADHD are never diagnosed.

**Bipolar Disorder (Manic-Depression)** -
Bipolar disorder, also known as manic-depression, is a less frequent but serious mental illness. It is a mental disorder marked by extreme changes in mood, energy levels, and behavior. Until recently, a diagnosis of the disorder was rarely made in childhood. Doctors now recognize and treat bipolar disorder in children and adolescents. Symptoms may begin in early childhood, though typically they emerge in adolescence or adulthood.

**Conduct Disorder** -
Conduct disorder is a childhood behavior disorder characterized by aggressive and destructive activities that cause disruptions in the child’s natural environments such as home, school, church, or the neighborhood. The overriding feature of conduct disorder is the repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviors that violate societal norms and the rights of other people. It is one of the most prevalent categories of mental health problems of children in the United States.

**Depression** -
An illness that involves the body, mood, and thoughts, that affects the way a person eats and sleeps, the way one feels about oneself, and the way one thinks about things. A depressive disorder is not the same as a passing blue mood. It is not a sign of personal weakness or a condition that can be wished away. People with a depressive disease cannot merely "pull themselves together" and get better. Without treatment, symptoms can last for weeks, months, or years. Appropriate treatment, however, can help most people with depression.

**Juvenile Justice** -
It is estimates that between 118,700 and 186,600 youths who are involved in the juvenile justice system have at least one mental disorder. (The National Coalition for the Mentally Ill in the Criminal Justice System)
Of the 100,000 teenagers in juvenile detention, estimates indicate that 60 percent have behavioral, mental or emotional problems. (Department of Justice)

Learning Disorders-
Learning disabilities (LD) vary from person to person. One person with learning disabilities may not have the same kind of learning problems as another person with learning disabilities. One person may have trouble with reading and writing. Another person with learning disabilities may have problems with understanding math. Still another person may have trouble in each of these areas, as well as with understanding what people are saying. Researchers think that learning disabilities are caused by differences in how a person's brain works and how it processes information. Children with learning disabilities are not "dumb" or "lazy." In fact, they usually have average or above average intelligence. Their brains just process information differently. There is no "cure" for learning disabilities. They are life-long. However, children with learning disabilities can be high achievers and can be taught ways to get around the learning disability. With the right help, children with learning disabilities can and do learn successfully.

Schizophrenia-
Schizophrenia is a psychotic disorder or group of psychotic disorders that cause a patient to lose touch with reality. It is marked by severely impaired reasoning and emotional instability and can cause violent behavior. Persons with Schizophrenia are often unable to make sense of the signals they receive from the world around them. They imagine objects and events to be very different from what they really are. If untreated, most people with schizophrenia gradually withdraw from the outside world. Exactly what schizophrenia is has been the source of considerable disagreement among psychiatrists (doctors who deal with mental disorders). There is some thought that the disease psychiatrists call schizophrenia is actually a number of different conditions classified under a single heading. Schizophrenia is rare in children under 12, but occurs in approximately three out of every 1,000 adolescents. Serious emotional disturbances affect 1 in every 10 young people at any given time.

Suicide-
Is the act of deliberately or intentionally taking one's own life. Suicidal behavior is any deliberate action that has potentially life-threatening consequences, such as taking a drug overdose or deliberately crashing a car. Suicide is the third leading cause of death for 15 - 24 year olds. The rate of suicide for this age group has nearly tripled since 1960, making it the leading cause of death in adolescents and the second leading cause of death among college age youth.
Other Considerations for Diverse Populations:

Sensing: Ask the participant to explain the nature of the sensation difference.

Vision: Use bright, contrasting colors, textures, hand-over-hand teaching.

Hearing: Use diagrams, written directions, and modeling. Face the student when speaking and try not to cover your mouth when speaking.

Touch (cold, heat, pressure, pain): Anticipate and warn participants of temperature concerns and hazards. Remove or cover sharp edges. Reduce or eliminate any friction and eliminate pressure on bony prominence. Ask participant to describe any medical concerns related to altered sensation.

Body orientation and "positioning": Physically guide participants through body positioning. Slow down instruction and use verbal or visual cues at key positions.

Strength and endurance: Provide lightweight equipment to lighten the load. Offer shorter route options and take frequent breaks. Provide external supports and consider alternative methods of travel.

Motor control and balance: Take a slower pace and teach participants the benefits of a lower center of gravity. Provide a wide base and balance of support. Use equipment that offers greater stability and provide larger gripping surfaces if necessary. Choose the most accessible environment possible.

Cognitive processing and planning skills: Break complex skills into steps and use concrete language. Repetition and practice of concepts and ideas helps retention of information. Multiple senses should be employed in teaching and learning. Provide assistance or partners as needed. Slow instruction in order to provide time for processing. Maintain participant’s focus through novelty and limit distractions.

Communication: Check frequently for understanding and ask student to demonstrate skills on their own. Provide instruction in a variety of means.

Emotional control: Limit distractions, and speak in calm and supportive tones. Provide additional supervision and be observant for increased anxiety or anger. Respond quickly to de-escalate frustration, designate time-out areas.
and procedures to allow self-regulation. Set appropriate limits depending on age, cognition, etc.

Additional Resources

Outward Bound - The pioneer adventure education program
www.outwardbound.org

Project Adventure
www.pa.org

Adventures In Training, Inc.
www.adventuresintraining.org

Outdoor Ed.Com - Archival articles and discussion forums
www.outdoored.com

Training Wheels
www.training-wheels.com

Outdoor Education Research and Evaluation Center
www.wilderdom.com

Outdoor Network
www.outdoornetwork.com

Wilderness Therapy and Treatment
http://www.Wilderness-Therapy.org

Adventure Therapy Web - The first established and arguably most comprehensive adventure therapy website by Adventure Therapy stalwart Lee Gillis
http://www.leegillis.com/AT/

Wilderness Research Center - For empirical, longitudinal research on wilderness-based youth at risk programs, this site provides access to some key, recent, well conducted studies, thanks particularly to the efforts of Keith Russell and Russell Hendee.
www.cnr.uidaho.edu/wrc/

Christian Itin's Experiential Social Work Page
www.geocities.com/dr_adventure/home.html
Martin Ringer's Home Page- Martin Ringer (consultant) has been a key figure in the development of adventure therapy in Australia, New Zealand and internationally.

www.martinringer.com

References


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Bandoroff & Newes (2004). *Coming of Age: The Evolving Field of Adventure Therapy*. Association for Experiential Education: Boulder, CO.


**High Elements**

High challenge course elements are another tool facilitators use to create safe, challenging opportunities. These elements are a great resource to utilize when discussing topics such as risk-taking, goal-setting, trust and support. Participants are usually both excited and nervous about participating in these activities emphasizing the importance to thoroughly discuss all necessary safety issues.

High elements are “high”—this requires the use of a belay system and the associated climbing equipment.

Bradford Woods currently has four separate and distinct high element areas: Climbing Tower and Zip Line, High Universal Course, Pamper Platform, and Alpine Tower with Swing-By-Choice.

**Alpine Tower**

The Alpine Tower is a 50' tall, universally designed, self-supporting structure that provides unique challenges and team-oriented experiences for groups of 8 to 36. It contains both high and low challenge course elements that allow universal training for people of all abilities.

**Risk Management:**
- Perform Safety Inspection prior to use.
- Refer to the Alpine Tower instructor’s manual for additional risk management information.

**Set-up:**
- Unlock wooden covers.
- Uncoil rope (rope should be inspected prior to use).
- Attach haul cord to rope with a clove hitch and half-hitches.
- Pull down on haul cord to pull belay rope up through belay rails (Reverse the procedure to take down a belay rope.)
- See Alpine Tower instructor’s manual for extensive set-up instructions

**Processing Points:**
- Get participant to discuss their feelings/expectations about climbing the tower prior to their climb. Also ask the participants to set a goal of how high they want to climb. Following the climb, ask them about pre/post climb feelings. Also discuss if they met their goals and compare those goals to goals in their lives. Also talk about if they met their goal and then set a new one.
**Swing By Choice**
The Swing By Choice is a 50’ tall pendulum swing attached to the Alpine Tower. The participant is attached to the swing at ground level and then is hoisted up by other participants to a desired height. The participant holds the release in their hand so they are in charge of when they swing.

**Risk Management:**
- Perform Safety Inspection prior to use.
- Refer to the Alpine Tower instructor’s manual for additional risk management information.

**Set-up:**
- Uncoil haul rope (rope should be inspected prior to use).
- Attach haul cord to haul rope with a clove hitch and half-hitches.
- Attach pulley and haul system
- Use sitting harness and possibly chest harness if necessary for participant
- Set up step ladder so participant can be attached
- See Alpine Tower instructor’s manual for extensive set-up instructions

**Processing Points:**
- Get participant to discuss their feelings/expectations about the swing. Also ask the participants to decide on how high they would like to swing. Tell them that the swing is a challenge and challenge them to go as high as possible. Following the swing, ask them about pre/post swing feelings. Discuss the fact that in challenging themselves to go as high as possible they were rewarded with fun. Ask them to relate swing to challenges in their lives, and rewards that have come as a result.

**Climbing Tower**
The Climbing Tower is a four-sided, 37’ structure with each side varying in its angle to the ground. There is a 60-degree, 80-degree, 90-degree and overhanging side of the Climbing Tower. The Climbing Tower simulates a rock-climbing experience. Each participant will have an opportunity to climb, spot, and belay.

**Risk Management:**
- Perform Safety Inspection prior to use.
- Inspect wall for any signs of broken holds or protruding bolts.

**Set-up:**
- Unlock rescue ladder inside tower.
- Uncoil rope (rope should be inspected prior to use).
- Attach haul cord to rope with a clove hitch and half-hitches.
Assure other end of haul cord is securely held down at the side of wall face.
Pull down on haul cord to pull belay rope up and through top pulley.
(Reverse the procedure to take down a belay rope.)
'Spaghetti pile' the haul cord in a safe place by the side of the wall face.
Tie a figure-8 on a bight with back-up knot on the end of the rope that will be
attached to the climber’s seat harness with two locking carabiners in the
opposite and opposed position.
Feed the other end of the rope through the Just Rite Descender and tie a
figure-8 knot on the other end to prevent the rope from slipping through the
post.
Bolt 4” x 4” steps onto tower with attached bolts, washers, and wing nuts.

Operation:
Refer to Staff Responsibilities.
Avoid putting fingers between the cracks or on the sides of the tower.
Avoid using the side of the tower as a climbing hold.
One climber begins at a time, the second after the first is off of the steps.
Climbing commands are recited for each climber.
*It is recommended that a participant be at least 10 years old to climb the
climbing tower or fit adequately into appropriate gear.

Processing Points:
Get participants to discuss their initial feelings/expectations about climbing
the wall. Ask them to choose a path/route to climb, challenge them to
choose a path that looks challenging. After they climb compare pre/post
climb feelings. Ask them if they got stuck at all when they were on their path,
if so what did they do. Did they stop and come down, did they try switching
paths, did they get guidance from others who were watching from the
ground. Ask them to relate climbing their path to their life because in life
sometimes you’re on a path and then you run into a problem, so do you give
up, try something new or ask someone who has a different point of view for
help?

Zip Line-
The participants climb to the Zip Line platform via the left side of the climbing
tower. Once on the zip-platform the participant is clipped into a Trolley system,
go through a series of commands and then steps off the platform and travels
down the zip line to a land platform.

Risk Management:
1. Perform Safety Inspection.
2. Inspect the wall for any signs of broken holds or protruding bolts.
Set-up:
1. Set up Climbing Tower 60 deg. wall
2. Climb to Zip Platform
3. Attach Zip Pulley to Zip Line. Lock carabiners
4. Attach back-up tether to Zip Pulley. Lock carabiner
5. Clip Tether to overhead cable (keep pulley from running)

Operation:
Refer to Climbing Tower Operation
Participant climbs to top of Zip Line platform
Transfers on Zip Line platform:
   a) When climber reaches zip platform clip static tether to belay loop and
      lock carabiner and indicate the “off-belay” signal to the belay team prior
      to taking climber off dynamic belay system.
   b) Climber may initiate ending Climbing Command for Climbing Tower.
   c) Detach Climbing Tower belay line carabiners from belay loop and lower
      line.
   d) Attach Zip pulley tethers to belay loop (lock opposite and opposed).
   e) Check pulley and carabiners.
   f) Participant recites these Zipping Commands:
      Participant: Zip lane clear?
      Ground Crew: Clear.
      Participant: Ready to zip?
      Ground Crew: Zip on.
      Participant: Zipping.
      Unclip from platform tether.

**Facilitator performing zip procedures should instruct participant to keep both
hands on primary zip tether (oriented at eye-level or below), to not swing up-
side-down at any time during the activity, and to avoid swinging from side-to-
side. Due to the position of the zip line cable in relation to the zip platform,
standing on the platform prior to zipping is not recommended.

4. Landing and catching:
   Ground crew carries ladder to participant location.
   One member of ground crew climbs up to participant and helps detach
   the zip tethers while participant assists by pulling on tethers in a downward
   direction.
   One end of the retrieval rope should be hooked onto the zip tethers.
   The retrieval rope and zip tethers are brought back to the zip platform.
Processing Points:
Ask participants if it was tough to let go of the tower. Compare letting go of the tower to letting go of fears. Ask what enabled them to let go, did they count, was someone else counting for them. Discuss trusting the process of getting down safely. At any point did they think about climbing back down the wall instead of going down the zip.

**High Universal Course (High Rise)**
The High Rise is a structure built on four poles. It has platforms on two opposite ends. There are a series of wires crossing the expanse between the platforms. There are a variety of activities that may be utilized at the High Rise including:

Matted Bridge is a mat that crosses the span between the platforms. The participant attempts to cross the span using the mat.

Multi-Vine is a foot-cable and series of hanging ropes that cross the span between the platforms. The participant attempts to cross the span using the wire and ropes.

Wild Woozy is two diverging cables that cross the span between the platforms. Two participants attempt to cross the span using the wires. (See Low Elements: Wild Woozy).

Giant’s Ladder is a two participant activity that involves climbing to the top of a ladder made of cables and 4” x 4”s. There are five rungs in total.

**Risk Management:**
1. Perform Safety Inspection.

**Set-up:**

**Matted Bridge, Multi-Vine, and Wild Woozy**

For these elements first set up a 3-1 Pulley System.
1. Set out red double-pulley and steel carabiner.
2. Set out a carabiner and a silver single-pulley.
3. Place in line with red double-pulley, leaving about 6-10' of space between them.
4. Uncoil High Rise pulley rope (HRP). Tie an eight-on-a-bight on one end.
5. Set the knot next to the carabiner and silver single-pulley.
6. Create one loop running from the carabiner to the red double-pulley and back to the carabiner. (Leave rope unattached to the red double-pulley).
7. Create a second loop running next to the first loop.
8. Place one loop on each wheel of the red double-pulley without allowing the loops to cross.
9. Close red pulley and place a steel carabiner through the attachment point on the silver single-pulley.
10. Place the free loop (located next to the carabiner) through the silver single-pulley.
11. Attach the figure 8 on a bite to a carabiner and to one end to one side of the single silver-pulley.
12. Clip carabiner attached to booty-bag to the other side of the silver single pulley.
13. Inspect all carabiners to make sure they are oriented properly.
14. Ensure rope is not twisted or kinked in the system anywhere.
15. Test pulley system (Should have smooth movement)

Then set up the element:
1. Unlock the ladder and place it securely against a pole with staples and attach it securely using the box method or other stable method.
2. Properly put on seat harness and helmet.
3. Attach lobster claws to belay loop.
4. Ascend to the platform with lobster claws
5. Set a trolley on the overhead cable and attach the trolley to tether at the closest attachment point.
6. Attach red double-pulley (3-1) to trolley on middle attachment point with a steel carabiner.
7. Attach a second trolley in front of the 3-1 trolley (further away from the platform). Hold on to it or clip it temporarily to the 3-1 system.
8. Attach the RSA pulley (with rope through it) to center attachment point of trolley with a rapid link and a steel carabiner.
9. Release the trolley with the RSA pulley on it so it can freely travel on the overhead cable.
10. For Wild Woozy repeat steps 5-9 to set up second system.

For Matted Bridge:
1. Untie and unclip Matted Bridge. Drag it across to other platform and clip it into the platform attachment point.
2. Check Matted Bridge for any excessive wear or debris.
3. Set 3-1 pulley system and belay system in between matted bridge cables (Refer to steps 5-9 above).

Processing Points:
Woozy- Ask the participants what their thoughts were as they were being hauled up. Ask them what they think of their partner and what the trust level is, did they get to choose their partner or were they assigned that person.
Did you have to talk your partner through it or did your partner talk you through it? Did you meet your goal, do you feel your partner helped you meet your goal. Do you feel you could’ve gotten farther with someone else? Did you communicate your fears to your partner?

**Giant’s Ladder:**
1. Uncoil belay ropes.
2. Attach the haul cord to the belay loop with a clove hitch and half hitches.
3. Ensure the other end of the haul cord is attached securely to the pole.
4. Pull down on the haul cord to pull the belay loop through the anchor. (reverse the procedure to take down a rope).
5. Remove the haul cord from the rope and spaghetti pile it next to pole.
6. Feed one end of rope through Just Rite Descender and tie a figure-8 knot.
7. Tie a figure-8 on the other end. This will be the belay loop where two opposite and opposed locking carabiners attach the rope to the harness.
8. Repeat steps 2-7 for the second belay rope.

**Operation (For all High Rise elements):**
Haul teams will be in helmet zone, therefore they need to wear helmets. For Matted Bridge, Multi-Vine, and Wild Woozy, instruct participants not to grab wires if they fall.
Monitor 3-1 pulley systems.
On Giant’s Ladder no climber is allowed above 4th rung.
When lowering from Giant’s Ladder, one spotter should pull ladder away from climber.
It is recommended that a participant is at least 12 years old to climb at the HR.

**Processing Points:**
Emphasize that teamwork is crucial for this activity. Ask them how they feel about having to rely on others to achieve a goal? Discuss contribution to a team goal instead of personal goal. Ask them to identify a situation where they needed help from someone else to achieve a goal.

**Pamper Platform:**
The Pamper Platform (Leap of Faith) is set on telephone poles with the topmost part of the platform reaching 30’ high. To get to the platform the participant climbs up the telephone pole using the remove-able steps progressing to staples, while wearing a full-body harness. S/he stands at the top of the platform and leaps outward towards the dangling objects, or trapeze. Adaptations to this element include allowing for two climbers at a time or one facilitator on the
platform to assist a climber (particularly when using a haul system).

**Risk Management:**
- Perform Safety Inspection.

**Set-up:**
- While attaching remove-able steps, a facilitator climbs to the first staple on the platform pole and releases the haul cords.
- Uncoil belay ropes.
- Attach the haul cords to the belay rope with a clove hitch and half hitches.
- Hold onto the other end of the haul cord.
- Pull down on the haul cord in order to pull the belay rope through the set of rapid links.
- Remove the haul cord from the rope and spaghetti pile it out of the way.
- Run the rope through the eye-bolts in a z-shape with the end running away from the platform pole and tie a figure-8 at the end.
- Tie a bowline on a bight with a back-up knot at the belay end.
- Attach two opposite and opposed locking carabiners through both bights on the climber end of the rope which will be attached to the full body harness through both belay loops.
- When using both ropes for one climber, attach pamper platform tether to both ropes using opposite and opposed locking carabiners.

**Operation:**
- It is recommended that a participant be at least 13 years old to complete the Pamper Platform or have appropriate maturity level to handle the event and be able to fit properly into Bradford Woods gear.
- Participant must stand at the very edge of the platform before jumping.
- Commands for jumping are:
  - Climber: 1, 2, 3, Jump (with hands outstretched and not holding rope)
- When participant jumps the belay team takes a final pull of slack and moves to the brake position.

**Processing Points:**
- Discuss pre/post jump feelings. Ask participants to set a goal as to what they want to jump and touch. Ask them what their motivations were for achieving their goal. Ask them to think about one thing that motivates them in their own life to achieve goals and share it with the group.
Low Elements

Bradford Woods currently maintains many low elements at four different challenge courses: the Teams Course, NAC Course, Memorial Course and Decentralized Course. These courses are spread throughout the developed area of BW property and are maintained by the Adventure Education staff.

When used according to all BW policies and procedures, these activities can provide safe and challenging opportunities for anyone. The following list contains recommended uses for these elements. Facilitators are encouraged to use creativity in facilitating low challenge course elements. If you have any questions regarding safe use of the elements, please ask the AE staff. Staff Responsibilities previously mentioned apply to each of the following elements.

**All Aboard**
All Aboard is a wood 2’ x 2’ platform 4” – 8” in height. Commonly, a group is asked to balance on the platform for a period of time. If any group member makes contact with the ground, the group must step down and start over.

**Risk Management:**
If a participant feels unbalanced, the participant should let go of all other participants and step to the ground. (This is to prevent a participant from pulling people down on top of himself/herself.)
At no time are participants allowed to put people on their backs or shoulders.

**Additional Facilitator Role(s):**
Actively spot participants on the platform.

**Processing points:**
Ask the participants about their personal space and what it means to them. Ask participants if they become uncomfortable when someone enters their personal space. Ask the same question following the completion of the activity. Discuss the different roles in the group, especially those who were on the edge as the support.
**Blind Maze**

*Blind Maze* is a rope maze with no beginning and no end. Participants are delivered into *Blind Maze* blindfolded. The participants are asked to discover the way out. Typically the only way out is to ask for assistance.

**Risk Management:**
- Participants must maintain physical contact with one rope for duration of activity.
- Participants should be given an awareness of other group members in the maze.
- Participants should be instructed to give a predetermined signal if they need assistance of any kind (This is typically also the answer to the Maze).

  Maintain visual contact with all participants.

**Processing points:**
Ask the participants how they feel about asking others for help. Ask the participants how the activity made them feel. Explain that the time it takes them to ask for help is a good indicator about their comfort level in asking for help. Line the participants up starting with the person who raised their hand first and ending with the person that raised it up last. Then discuss the positives of both ends of the spectrum and the negatives.

**Islands**

*Islands* is a series of three platforms and two 2’ x 6’s of different lengths. Commonly, participants are asked to manipulate the boards to create a “bridge” to get from platform to platform.

**Risk Management:**
- Participants should use caution to move 2’ x 6’s. The boards may be especially slippery if wet.
- These boards should be lower than participant’s heads when moving.
- Participants cannot attempt to jump from platform to platform.

**Additional Facilitator Role(s):**
- Monitor movement of 2’ x 6’s

**Processing points:**
Ask the group if it was difficult to work as a team for a common goal as compared to working alone. Ask the group if a leader emerged. Ask the group
how ideas were communicated and what role each person played. Was everyone actively participating and if not did it affect the group.

**Porthole-**
*Porthole* is a height-adjustable, flexible ring suspended by rope. Participants are challenged to pass all group members through without touching the ring.

**Risk Management:**
- Participants use zipper formation spotting to pass each other through.
- Participants are not allowed to dive through ring.

**Additional Facilitator Role(s):**
- Teach zipper formation spotting.

**Processing points:**
Discuss group expectations before and after. If their not successful ask how it felt to leave someone behind, and ask the person who was left how it felt. Discuss the different roles in the group i.e. lifter, and ask what each person contributed to the team.

**Squeeze Box-**
*Squeeze Box* is an adjustable “box”. Entire group attempts to get inside Squeeze Box with no body parts outside.

**Risk Management:**
- Participants must spot each other as they get in and out of the box.
- Participants are not allowed to stand on top of the box.

**Additional Facilitator Role(s):**
- Visually and verbally check with participants to ensure they are safe.
- Stop the activity if any participant is feeling “crushed” and have group start over.

**Processing points:**
- Get the group to discuss their feelings about personal space. Ask the group to set a goal of how small they want the box to be. Ask them if their goal was a low goal or high goal. Ask the group the question; what does that say about you and your perceived abilities?
**Spider’s Web-Vertical and Horizontal-**

Spider’s Web is a web made of rope and shock cord suspended between two trees or poles in either a vertical or horizontal orientation. Group attempts to pass all group members through the web. Typically, the group is not allowed to touch the web and all participants are passed through or step through a different hole.

**Risk Management:**
- Participants use zipper formation spotting to pass each other through the vertical web. Participants should be passed through the web face up and head first.
- Participants provide spotting support as necessary while going through the horizontal web. Care should be taken when lifting participants through the web. It is recommended that two people assist in any lifting while using a hand-sling technique. At no time, should participants be carried on backs or shoulders.
- Active spotting should continue until the participant is safely on the ground. Bring spotters to opposite side of the web to catch first few participants. (Until you have enough spotters there to safely catch the rest of the group.

**Additional Facilitator Role(s):**
- Revisit falling position.
- Teach participants zipper position spotting and hand-sling technique

**Processing Points:**
- Either don’t allow them to touch the web at all or get them to set a goal of how many times they can touch. Discuss the web as a metaphor for life. The holes represent goals in their life and some of the easier goals on the bottom they can achieve by themselves but some of the more difficult goals up high require the help of others to achieve. Ask the participants who in their lives they can count on to help them achieve goals. Make the point that the more people you have in your life for support the more goals you can achieve.

**Trust Fall Platform and Tier-**

Trust Fall Platform is a trust fall activity done from an elevated platform. This activity presents a high level of risk, therefore your group should be functioning at a higher level to participate in this activity.

**Risk Management:**
- Participants should remove hats, watches, and larger rings.
- Minimum group size is 9. (8 total spotters, and 1 “faller”)
- Faller should be spotted at all times.
Spotters should be in zipper position.  
Spotters should be ready before participant is on platform or participants can only climb platform after the zipper formation is ready.  
Faller falls backwards into waiting arms of spotters. Keep body “stiff as a board”.  
Faller should keep arms & hands folded across chest.  
Caution spotters to keep heads back away from the faller.  
Use clear commands:  
  - Faller ready? (spotters)  
  - Ready to fall! (faller)  
  - Fall on! (spotters)

Additional Facilitator Role(s):  
Revisit falling position.  
Teach participants zipper position spotting.  
Direct spotters to ensure faller is in line with the zipper formation.

Processing points:  
Discuss pre/post feelings of activity. Ask the group if their were similar points in your life where you trusted someone and they let you down. Ask the group what makes a person trustworthy? Ask the participants if you’re the one catching the person falling, what would you do to make them know you’re trustworthy. Ask the participants the question: do you trust yourself to be able to catch this person?

Wild Woozy-  
Wild Woozy is two diverging cables approximately 2’ above the ground. One participant stands on each cable, together they attempt to balance themselves and traverse as far as possible out along the cables without touching the ground.

Risk Management:  
If a participant feels unbalanced, the participant should let go of all other participants and step to the ground. (This is to prevent a participant from pulling people down on top of himself/herself.).  
Each participant should use this variation of climbing commands to step onto the wire one at a time:

1st participant: Spotters ready?  
  Spotters: Ready.  
1st participant: Ready to climb?  
  Group: Climb on.  
1st participant: Climbing.

2nd participant: Spotters ready?  
  Spotters: Ready.  
2nd participant: Ready to climb?  
  Group: Climb on.  
2nd participant: Climbing.
Participants should not interlock fingers. Palm to palm or palm to shoulder are acceptable. Each participant on a wire must have two spotters on the outside of the wires. As participants traverse, spotters must be added between wires.

Additional Facilitator Roles(s):
Direct spotter

Processing Points:
Ask the participants what they think of their partner and what the trust level is? Ask them if they got to choose their partner or were they assigned that person. Did you have to talk your partner through it or did your partner talk you through it? Did you meet your goal, do you feel your partner helped you meet your goal. Do you feel you could’ve gotten farther with someone else? Did you communicate your fears to your partner?

**Zigzag**
Zigzag is a series of five posts and three 2’ x 6’s of differing sizes. Participants attempt to traverse across the posts using the 2’ x 6’s and without touching the ground.

Risk Management:
Boards must be secured in slots on posts to be stepped on. If a participant feels unbalanced, the participant should let go of all other participants and step to the ground. (This is to prevent a participant from pulling people down on top of himself/herself). Participants should use caution to move 2’ x 6’s. The boards should be lower than participant’s heads when moving.

Additional Facilitator Role(s):
Monitor movement of 2’ x 6’s.

Processing Points:
Get the participants to set a time goal and a number goal for how many times they think it’ll take them before they complete the activity. Ask the group if any of them got frustrated during the activity and share their frustrations with the group. Ask them if the thought the frustrations affected...
the group at all. Discuss the importance of setting and celebrating milestones when trying to reach a goal.

**Team Wall**

*Team Wall* is an 8’ – 12’ wall. Participants attempt to get group members “up and over” the wall using themselves as their only resource.

**Risk Management:**

- Only two participants are allowed on the platform at a time (Once a third participant climbs over another down-climbs the ladder).
- Two spotters must spot participant down-climbing ladder.
- Using the edges or cracks in wall is not allowed.
- People on the platform must keep both feet on the platform.
- People on the platform must always keep their heads above their feet.
- Only one action is allowed at a time (either one climber going up or one climber coming down).
- No objects allowed to assist participants over.

**Additional Facilitator Role(s):**

- Closely monitor spotting by participants.

**Processing Points:**

- Get participants to compare the obstacles in their life to the wall. Discuss the importance of having a clear picture of your end goal/desired state. Ask the group what support system do you have in your life. Ask them what they think the difference is between individual and team goal. Ask the group if it’s enough to get yourself over and what would your new goal be now that you have already gotten over the wall?

**T.P. Shuffle**

*T.P. (Telephone Pole) shuffle* is a long wood beam or pole positioned directly on/close to the ground. Participants standing on it attempt to move into a particular order without stepping on the ground.

**Risk Management:**

- If a participant feels unbalanced, the participant should let go of all other participants and step to the ground. (This is to prevent a participant from pulling people down on top of himself/herself.)
- Participants should not jump or run on the beam.
- Participants should be careful not to step on each other’s hands.
**Processing Points:**
Ask the group to set a time goal and a goal for how many times they can touch. Before and after the activity, ask the participants how comfortable they are with people being in their personal space. Compare the answers about personal space to see if any change took place. Relate activity to life, knowing where you are and where you want to go.

**Traffic Jam:**
Traffic Jam is a series of spot markers placed on the ground in a line. The group is split into halves. Each participant must stand on a spot marker, both halves facing towards the middle with the vacant spot marker in-between. The objective is for each half to switch sides using the following rules.

Rules:
1. There are only two legal moves.
2. Move 1: A participant may move forward into a vacant space.
3. Move 2: A participant may only move around someone facing towards him/her.
4. Only one space can be stepped around.
5. Only forward movement is allowed (no stepping backwards or “rewinding the tape”).
6. Once a participant has started a move it must be completed.
7. If at any point the group gets into a “traffic jam” everyone needs to return to their original spot and begin again.

**Risk Management:**
Keep participants focused on the activity.

**Processing points:**
Discuss any frustrations the group may have had especially those who are in the back and can’t see what’s going on. Discuss the different points of view and perspectives. Ask if it is easier to look at a problem that’s right in front of you or if you take a step back and look at it?

**Whale Watch:**
Whale Watch is a giant teeter totter that consists of a 12 foot by 6 foot deck that rests on a fulcrum. Participants are generally asked to balance the deck in a certain manner.

**Risk Management:**
Toes could get crushed underneath the deck if caution is not followed. Caution participants that one side of the platform may quickly drop to the ground if the other side becomes unbalanced.
**Processing Points:**
Discuss the importance of communication and everyone problem solving together. Discuss importance of keeping your objectives in mind. Relate activity to balancing things in life. Discuss different roles in group during activity, who played more of a coaching role, who played more of a leadership role? Ask the participants; how do you effectively tell someone what you need from them.

**Muse-**
Muse is a series of stumps and 2’ x 6’s. Participants place 2’ x 6’s across stumps to traverse them without touching the ground.

**Risk Management:**
If a participant feels unbalanced, the participant should let go of all other participants and step to the ground (This is to prevent a participant from pulling people down on top of himself/herself).
Participants should use caution to move the 2’ x 6’s. These boards should be lower than participant’s heads when moving.

**Additional Facilitator Role(s):**
Monitor movement of 2’ x 6’s.
Actively spot participants.

**Processing Points:**
Get the participants to set a time goal and a number goal for how many times they think it’ll take them before they complete the activity. Ask the group if any of them got frustrated during the activity and share their frustrations with the group. Ask them if the thought the frustrations affected the group at all. Discuss the importance of setting and celebrating milestones when trying to reach a goal.

**Nitro Crossing-**
Nitro Crossing is a rope swing participants use to move across an approximately 15’ wide area. A group is asked to move from one side of the area to the other using the rope and without touching the ground in the space between.

**Risk Management:**
Participants cannot jump, lunge, use sticks, or throw rocks to get the rope. Knees, as opposed to feet should be placed in the loop. Feet are not allowed to be placed in loop.
Utilize spotters for each participant swinging.
Additional Facilitator Role(s):
Monitor speed at which participants swing across.
Spot as needed.

Ascending to and being on the Cables:

Put harness on (either personal or one out of the rescue backpack)
Attach Lobster Claws to belay loop
Ascend to overhead cable using lobster claws and appropriate access point
(leave anchor routes on high courses)
Once on overhead cables attach lobster claws to 2 different points (i.e. two different cables or leap anchors overhead)
Attach lowering system by the rescue 8 to overhead cable above climber
(with the steel carabiner attached to rescue 8)
Attach the lower carabiner to the climber or to your harness if needing to descend to climber
Go through the following rescue checks with the rescue facilitator initiating the sequence:

On-Belay? (to belayer on ground)
Belay On! (belayer response)
Unclipping? (Top Rescue Facilitator)
Check One (check carabiner attached to the cable for downward orientation and closed gate)
One Check (belayer response)
Check Two (check carabiner attachment to belayer)
Two Check (belayer response)
Check Three (belayer initiates by checking belay device connection to harness)
Three Check (Top Rescue Facilitator response)
Check Four (belayer continues by checking that rescue rope is out of bag and ready for use)
Four Check (Top Rescue Facilitator response)
Unclipping/cutting (belayer confirms to Top Rescue Facilitator)
Climber is lowered to the ground.

Processing Points:
Get them to set a goal of how many it’ll take before they complete the activity. Compare activity to overcoming obstacles in their lives. Discuss the importance of making a plan and sticking to it and discuss a current goal they are working towards in their life.
Experiential/Educational/Challenged Based Ground Initiatives

**Creek Crossing**: When you arrive at the creek inform the group that their goal is to create a bridge across the creek using whatever natural resources they can find. The rules are that everyone’s feet must remain dry during and after construction, and the entire group must help to build the bridge. Provide the group with an appropriate time limit depending on the availability of resources i.e. if you provide them with cinder blocks give them less time for construction. If resources for the bridge are scarce, give them more time to build. Inform the group that if they don’t complete the bridge in the allotted time their will be a consequence that they won’t like i.e. longer solo time that night.

Adaptations: If the participants break the rules give them one warning and inform them that the next time you will subtract 10 minutes from their building time. If they run out of time penalize the group with the aforementioned consequence and allow them to create a new time goal. At this time ask the group why they didn’t achieve their first time goal, what’s working for them, and what isn’t. Also get the group to pick one person to be the leader of the group and that person is the only one that can talk and assign duties to others.

**Processing Points:**
- Discuss the importance of setting goals and sticking to them.
- Discuss importance of using available resources. Discuss the importance of choosing the right resources such as rocks to use to achieve your goals.
- Compare that to choosing the right friends who are supportive and aren’t keeping you from obtaining goals in your life such as logs in the bridge.

**Kaizen**: Circle up around a table or flat surface everyone can fit around. Show the group a deck of cards and inform them that you are going to take out one card and their objective is to figure out which card you took. Then tell them to set a time goal for how long they think it will take them to figure out which card you took.

**Processing points:**
- Discuss the importance of setting a goal and sticking to it. Ask the participants if they were frustrated, how did they react to that frustration and did it affect the group. Discuss any creative solutions you noticed. Tell the group that Kaizen means improvement in Japanese and is a Japanese philosophy that focuses on continuous improvement throughout all aspects of life. Ask participants; what’s something in your life you want to improve?

**Raccoon Circle**: Have the participants circle up around a rope that’s tied together. Have the group pick up the rope together with two hands and then
have them take a step back so the rope is tight and they are leaning into it.
Inform the group that their objective is to sit down as a group and then stand up
as a group, but only one person can talk and lead them through the activity.

Processing points:

Compare the circle to the cyclical aspect of nature and
interconnectedness. Discuss the fact that for every action there’s a reaction.
So if one person doesn’t stand up with the group then the whole group
doesn’t stand up. Also explain that the people in the circle represent a
support network and that everyone is there to help each other.

**Trust Walk**- The participants form a line and hold hands. Everyone in the group is
blindfolded. The leader takes the group on a walk/hike. This activity can be
done with dyads where one person acts as the leader and the other the
follower with his/her eyes closed. At the end of the walk, bring participants to
an open field and instruct them to let go of the person in front of them and find
their own way back to the facilitator. This can be a powerful activity for learning
about leading and following roles in a group.

Processing Points:

Ask the participants how it felt not being in control, not being able to see, not
being able to talk to the person in front of you. Discuss the feelings of being
in a line vs. being on your own with no support or help. Ask which one was
easier, and how they felt during each separate time. Ask participants to
relate feelings to their own lives and share with the group.

**Willow in the Wind**-Show the participants correct spotting techniques (one leg in
front of other, knees bent, arms extended, spoons not forks.) Then have the
participants make a tight circle and have one participant in the middle. Have
everyone get in spotting positions. Tell the person in the middle to close their
eyes, cross their arms and keep their feet together. Then have the person in the
middle say the commands spotters ready-ready, falling-fall on. The participant
would then fall slightly and everyone around the circle would hold the person
up and gently push them around the circle.

Processing Points:

Discuss the feelings of not being able to see and being pushed around the
circle. Relate feelings of not having control and having to trust/rely on others
to real life. Ask participants who they can trust/rely on in their lives to help
them when something in their life is beyond their control.
Teambuilding Initiatives

**Human Knot** - Have the group make a large circle. (This game also works well as a race between several circles in larger groups.) Have everyone put their left hand in the middle, and hold hands with someone in the circle, not directly next to them. Repeat with the right hand, and be sure to hold hands with a different person, who is not directly next to them. You can use 1-foot "buddy ropes" to reduce arm twisting if you like. Then the group must use teamwork to unravel themselves into a circle again without coming disconnected. *Helpful Hint* To ensure that everyone is in the same circle, send a "pulse." One person begins by gently squeezing their right hand. The person who is squeezed gently squeezes their opposite hand, which passes the pulse to the next person. Continue until the first person has their second hand squeezed.

**Processing Points:**
- Ask the group how they feel about personal space before and after the activity. Discuss the different roles in the team. Ask the group what other ways that those who already untangled could help.

**Group Juggle** - The game begins with participants standing in a circle. Each participant will throw the ball/item to only one person, saying their name loudly each time they throw the item, so that each person is receiving the item from the same person each time. To increase the difficulty of this game, instructors may want to change the rules, saying that the item must make it around the entire circle without anyone dropping it, or the group must increase the speed at which they are throwing the item. If a group successfully completes this, the instructor may want to add a second and third, fourth or fifth item.

**Processing Points:**
- Discuss the importance of effectively communicating with others to achieve a goal. Discuss the difficulty in balancing different things in your life. Discuss being aware of things going on around you. Compare the feelings during the activity to feelings you get when you’re juggling things in your own life and how you handle those situations.

**Magic Carpet** - Ask the group to stand on an 8'x8' "magic carpet" (tarp or paper). The entire group must be on the tarp completely. Once everyone is settled, advise the group that they are going on a magic carpet ride. Tell them that they have risen 100 feet in the air and are ready to go. Unfortunately, the instructions on how to steer and land the carpet are on the other side of the
carpet. So, they must flip the carpet over while standing on it. If any member of the group steps off the carpet, the group must start over from the beginning.

**Processing Points:**
- Get the participants to right goals/something they want to work on in their lives and put it on the tarp. Discuss cooperation vs. competition to achieve a common goal. The tarp represents turning over a new leaf and working towards achieving your desired state.

**Guided Journaling and Reflection Time**

**Journal Spots** - The purpose of selecting journal spots for the participants to use each time they journal is to provide a serene, natural, personal space to collect one’s thoughts. The comfort of having one’s own space away from others and the instructors, encourages the participants to be honest and open while answering the journaling questions.

**Journal Questions** - These questions should reflect the therapeutic topic of the session. These are designed to prepare the participant mentally and emotionally for the topics we will discuss and work on through the interventions.

**Solo Experience**

**Reflection Time** - This is time spent in quiet solitude alone without any communication, and is intended to provide the person time for personal reflection.

**Processing Points:**
- Discuss the importance of taking time to slow down and just be alone in your thoughts to remember where you want to go and what you want to achieve. Discuss importance of being away from others because of possible negative effects they might have on you that change who you are. Therefore this is a reminder of what makes you special and unique.

**Shelter Building** - The purpose of individual shelter building is to allow the participants the freedom to choose to construct the shelter in whichever way they feel is best. The act of building adequate shelter against the elements presents participants with a sense of environmental vulnerability.

**Processing Points:**
- If the participant does not take an adequate amount of time and/or detail in his/her construction, they will suffer the natural consequences i.e. inclement weather, moisture etc. Conversely, if the participant puts time and effort in their construction and it survives the elements they will enjoy an increase in
self-confidence, esteem, and worth along with a sense of accomplishment and pride.

**Intensive Outdoor Camping Experience**

**Outdoor Living Skills** - The purpose of learning outdoor living skills is to promote an understanding of the natural environment and to encourage leave no trace ethics.

**Fire Building** - In order to increase self-worth and confidence in abilities, participants will learn techniques in starting a fire, the three different types of fires and how to identify sassafras.

**Leisure Counseling**

**Leisure Education** - Consists of groups focused on integrating leisure into client’s everyday lives, locating community recreation and leisure resources, educating clients on how to use leisure to aid in living an overall healthy lifestyle.

**Processing Points:**
Emphasize the use of leisure as a coping mechanism to deal with a variety of issues such as stress management, anger management etc.

**Stress Management Seminars**

These are informational sessions on introducing stress management techniques and how to incorporate them into your life. Topics discussed are relaxation techniques, exercise, spirituality, mindfulness, and breathing techniques.