Wilderness education for youth at risk: an interpretive case study

by

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WILDERNESS EDUCATION FOR YOUTH AT RISK: AN INTERPRETIVE CASE STUDY

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Julie Booke

A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

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ABSTRACT

The Hurricane Island Outward Bound (HIOBS), Family In Need of Service (FINS) program is a wilderness education program targeting youth at risk who portray truant, ungovernable and runaway behaviors. The program involves an 18 day wilderness expedition, followed by a 10 day reinforcement phase. Using qualitative research methods, this interpretive case study attempts to provide an in-depth and meaningful representation of what the FINS students' believe to be the meaning of their participation in a wilderness education experience.

An interpretive case study was conducted as a means to describe and interpret the students' experience of the FINS program. A bricolage method of data collection including interviews, observations, and document analysis were used to capture the participants' experience in the FINS program. Thirty three days were spent in the research field encompassing a complete FINS program, beginning with the instructor preparation days and ending with graduation.

The findings from this study show the importance of incorporating educational lessons during a wilderness program. Further, the lessons need to be taught in manner that the skills can be transferred from the wilderness experience to the home environment.

It is hoped that the findings from this study can help Outward Bound instructors as well as leaders from other wilderness schools continue to further their success with youth at risk.

DEDICATION

To the five young men and one strong young woman who participated in this study. You are all incredible young people who have the skills and abilities to excel in this world. I wish you luck.

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you Dr. Seifert. I appreciate the time and effort you put into this study. I enjoyed being your student and working with you on this project.

Dr. Campbell, thank you for always pushing me a step further. Thank you also for opening my eyes to other areas of Canada and other areas of outdoor recreation.

Dr. Halas, you have been an inspiration. You have taught me a tremendous amount. I admire the work you do and look forward to the next step of doing research with you.

To the young people and their families who allowed me to be part of their group, enter their homes and answer all my questions. Thank you very much.

Finally, to the staff at the FINS base, Outward Bound holds a special place in my heart. Thank you so much for opening your doors and offices to me throughout this project. One day, I will be back to instruct a course.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

This interpretive case study focuses on wilderness education experiences for youth at risk. Specifically, the experience of youth at risk in the Hurricane Island Outward Bound (HIOBS), Family In Need of Service program (FINS) was examined. Using qualitative research methods, this case study attempts to provide an in-depth and meaningful representation of what the FINS students believe to be the meaning of their participation in a wilderness education experience, and how their participation in the program may help them deal with their everyday life challenges.

Wilderness education

For some time, wilderness education has been a tool used to help youth at risk become better citizens (Berman, Berman & Capone, 1994; Hattie, Marsh, Neill & Richards, 1997 & 1993; Lingle, 1980). Using the wilderness as a classroom, young people have been introduced to new skills, beliefs and challenges (Cason & Gillis, 1994). By participating in new and challenging activities youth at risk have exhibited increased self-esteem, self-confidence, and trust in others and themselves (Chappell & Wiggins 1996; Hendee & Brown, 1987; Moote & Wodarski, 1997; Rosenthal, 1985). Yet there is little information, particularly from the youths' perspective, on how positive changes occur.

Currently, a variety of wilderness schools and programs are offered for youth at risk. Examples of existing programs include: Project Adventure (Prouty, 1999), Eckard Wilderness School (Milner & Nisbet, 1997), and NOLS (Hirsch, 1999), which all seem to be using some of the same program philosophies. Yet, there appears to be

a lack of similarity in structure across wilderness programs. In Moote & Wodarski's (1997) review of the literature on Adventure Based Activities, they found that no two programs had the same plan for implementation and delivery of adventure programming. Given the diversity in programming, it is difficult to know what it is about each program that affects its participants. In particular, there is a need for a deeper understanding of how wilderness education is helpful for youth at risk.

Concerned engagement

Concerned engagement is the process where a researcher decides to undertake a project based on past experiences, involvement or concern with a specific topic (Ellis, 1999). I decided to undertake this interpretive case study because after working for the HIOBS program for three years I was made aware that some Outward Bound course participants had made positive changes in their lives. These changes included: becoming more involved and concerned with academics, following family rules, stopping the abuse of drugs, alcohol and smoking and removing ones' self from a destructive group of friends. Even though I witnessed the changed behaviors I could never be sure exactly what, why or how the FINS program might have prompted these changes to occur. While at Outward Bound I saw that something was helping and making a difference to some students and their families but never seemed to have the opportunity or time to explore 'why' or 'what' was helping them and leading them to make these changes. This is the reason I decided to undertake this study.

As a means to contextualize my concerned engagement in the research study that I have undertaken, I have written a short narrative about my past involvement with Outward Bound.

It was hot and rainy, we were tired and miserable, and we had been up for 15 hours and were still on the river. We were trying to get to our campsite but that did not seem like it was going to happen for some time. We still had five more miles to paddle and at the rate we had been going it looked as if it would take at least another two hours. This was assuming the group would not fight or argue anymore and we could just paddle and get to our campsite. Wishful thinking. Every ten minutes there was something wrong, whether one student looked at another in the wrong way, someone splashed some water by accident or someone said something another didn't like. This day was never going to end.

As an instructor I was part of everything that was going on, and at times the kids blamed the slowness of our travels on me. Was it truly my fault? At the time all I wanted to do was tell everyone to be quiet and paddle. But I didn't, instead every time there was a problem we gathered the canoes together and discussed it, taught a new lesson for the students to use and had them attempt to solve or work through the issue. It was midnight now and we were just getting to camp, we still had to set up, eat, have evening meeting and go to bed. We could have easily kept on paddling and paddled all night and then took a day off or we could have just set up our tents and gone to bed without dinner or a meeting. But it was the students who put us where we were, their laziness in the morning, their fighting all day long, and they needed to deal with the consequences of their actions. That evening we spent discussing the day's event and what lead us to the spot we were in. After more than two hours and many discussions the students stated that they realized that they themselves had put us in that position and not the instructors.

This personal story was included to help create the opportunity for a more commonly shared meaning between the reader and the writer, which may lead to a more understandable report of the research about to be undertaken (Ellis, 1999). Ellis further explains that by placing a personal story at the beginning of a research report the readers may be provided with a more informed perspective about the meaning the writer is creating.

Assumptions

Patton (1990) states that in qualitative research, the researcher should discuss the past experiences, training and views with which they are entering the field.

Stating ones' assumptions will both increase the quality and validity of the research. And so, I will briefly list the assumptions with which I entered into this study. To begin, I have a recreation background and believe that participation in some form of recreation affects who you are, the choices you make and the friends you keep. I have worked in the FINS program and have seen students in the past begin to make positive changes in their lives, which included stopping smoking and staying in school. I believe that youth that participate in the FINS program are given skills and tools they can utilize to create a better life for themselves, if they choose. Finally, I believe that wilderness expeditions offer a unique and memorable experience from which one can take the lessons learned and transfer them to a variety of aspects in life. At this time, I am not sure how these lessons are learned or how they are transferred to their day to day life beyond the wilderness program. Thus, the reason for this study. My intention for this interpretive case study was to gather information from those who participated in the Outward Bound program as a means to benefit instructors, the program, other wilderness-based schools, as well as add to the body of educational literature on youth at risk and wilderness education.

In the next section, the history of Outward Bound is discussed as a means to give the reader an understanding of the life of Kurt Hahn, the founder of Outward Bound, and the processes that he went through in creating the school. A historical perspective is important because it can provide an understanding of how the school came to be, and how the underlying philosophies of Kurt Hahn drive the make-up of current Outward Bound programs.

History of Outward Bound

The history of Outward Bound begins with the man Kurt Hahn. Hahn was born in 1886 to a Jewish family in Berlin. Hahn's childhood was affected by the death of his older brother and father, two events which led him to take an active role in raising his other sibling and caring for his mother. Hahn's mother frequently entertained wealthy guests in her home, giving Hahn the opportunity to learn and become at ease interacting with upper class individuals (HIOBS paper work, 2000; Minor, 1999).

During his school years, Hahn was exposed to a traditional educational curriculum. He soon realized that he did not learn well in this type of structured learning environment. Despite the challenges of adapting to a strict routine, Hahn did manage to complete school. However, the following year Hahn suffered severe sunstroke, which left him having to spend a year living in a darkened room. This ailment would be a problem Hahn would have to deal with for the rest of his life. From this affliction Hahn developed the philosophy of "your disability is your opportunity" (HIOBS paperwork, 2000; Minor, 1999) a philosophy he would follow throughout his life.

Hahn's post secondary education was spent at universities in Germany and at Oxford, where he was once again immersed in a structured learning environment. From the 12 months spent in a darkened room and through to his university years, Hahn had continually worked on his personal education philosophies which revolved around targeting the "whole individual, working on their strengths and not focusing on their inabilities" (HIOBS paperwork, p. 2, 2000; Minor, 1999). After completing

university Hahn set out to open a school that incorporated his educational philosophies. However, World War II would interrupt these plans.

During wartime Hahn held a number of different professional positions which ultimately introduced him to Prince Max of Baden. Hahn and Max shared the same educational philosophies and their many discussions evolved into a concrete plan to open a private school. Eventually, the Salem School was created (Flavin, 1996; HIOBS field manual, 1993; Minor & Bolt, 1981), with the main purpose focusing on character development.

In creating the Salem School, Prince Max brought forth his educational goals, which were called the seven laws of Salem (Flavin, 1996, front page; HIOBS paperwork, pg. 6).

1. Give the children the opportunities for self-discovery.
2. Make the children meet with triumph and defeat.
3. Give the children the opportunity of self-effacement in the common cause.
4. Provide periods of silence.
5. Train the imagination.
6. Make games important but not predominant.
7. Free the sons of the wealthy and powerful from the enervating sense of privilege.

Even though these seven laws do not define an Outward Bound course today, they still continue to influence program development.

With the rise of Adolph Hitler, Hahn's life would soon take a divergent turn. In 1932, Hitler's soldiers trampled a young communist to death in front of his mother. Upon hearing this Hahn distributed a letter to all Salem alumni requesting they break from either Hitler or Salem. Due to Hahn's public outspokenness against Hitler he

was arrested and jailed. The year was 1933, and within a month Hahn was released and exiled to England (HIOBS paperwork, 2000; Minor, 1999).

Eventually, Hahn moved to Scotland and in 1934 he opened a second school called Gordonstoun, which began with only two students. At this point, Hahn's attention was quickly drawn to the decline of fitness in youth (Fischesser & Sickler, 1992). Hahn believed that this decline was due to the new luxuries like cheap movies and books. While many believed that this was to be the adolescents' fate, Hahn and other educators believed that if "adolescence was a disease than it was possible to develop a cure" (HIOBS paperwork, 2000, pg. 9). This idea motivated the development of the Moray badge scheme, which intended to help youth become more involved with fitness programs. The Moray badge centered around three main areas: 1) track and field tests, 2) expedition tests involving rock climbing, solo walks, hiking, and mountaineering and 3) training conditions which promoted healthy behaviors and self discipline such as no smoking (HIOBS paperwork, 2000).

The Moray Badge scheme continued to evolve and change as different student groups and educators were involved. Eventually, the Moray scheme would come to be known as the County badge scheme, which centered on four achievements, "physical, expedition, project and service" (HIOBS paperwork, 2000). The two schemes, Moray and County, were presented to Sir Lawrence Holt, owner of a major shipping business, who believed that young seamen were dying during war time because they did not have the skills or knowledge to survive (Sveen, 1993). A proposal was made to have young seamen participate in a month long scheme which would become known as Outward Bound (Flavin, 1996; HIOBS paperwork, 2000;

HIOBS field manual, 1993; Minor, 1999; Minor & Bolt, 1981). From this, the first official Outward Bound school opened in 1941 in Aberdovy, Wales. The Outward Bound name comes from a nautical term used when sailors leave the safety of the harbour.

In 1950, Josh Miner, an educator at a small boarding school traveled to Scotland where he met with Kurt Hahn. Eleven years after this initial meeting of Josh Miner and Kurt Hahn, the first Outward Bound school opened in the United States. From that time forward, Outward Bound schools continued to open across the world. In 1964, Peter Willauer opened the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School (Flavin, 1996; Godfrey 1990; HIOBS field manual, 1993). Today, HIOBS is one of the largest schools in the Outward Bound system, offering programs in Maine, Maryland and Florida. HIOBS targets a variety of client groups from general population and college students to youth at risk to youth in custody and their families.

In 1983, the Family In Need of Service program (FINS) based in Scottsmoor, Florida was created to help youth and their parents learn to deal with adolescent issues. The program was developed as a prevention program with the intention to be an alternative to jail. George Armstrong, an official from the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, approached the Outward Bound school because they were running a STEP (Short Term Elective Program) for adjudicated youth (see McKnight, 1979, for an article on STEP). The state had come to realize that many incarcerated youth shared the characteristics of being ungovernable, truant and runaway. The State of Florida commissioned Outward Bound to study incarcerated youth and examine the behaviors and reasons that put them in jail. Ken Peeples

(current FINS Program Director) began to look at how many incarcerated youth had been placed in jail for truancy, ungovernable, or runaway behaviors. He found that more than half of those youth locked away met that criteria. The state then asked the Outward Bound school to develop a program that could address ungovernable, truant and runaway behaviors and create a prevention program, rather than a detention program (K. Peeples, personal communication, March 25, 2002).

The program that was created involves an 18-day wilderness expedition followed by a 10-day reinforcement phase. During the wilderness expedition the youth are challenged to follow the same concepts of the earlier Moray Badge and County Badge schemes, which are now commonly called the four pillars of Outward Bound - craftsmanship, physical fitness, self reliance, and overall compassion. In the section to follow, I will briefly describe the current structure of the FINS program for youth at risk.

The FINS program; wilderness expedition and ten day reinforcement

Wilderness expedition

The FINS wilderness expedition involves an 18-day canoe trip. The trip is split into three main phases: training, main and final. All three phases take place while on the wilderness expedition. The participants must successfully complete each phase before they transfer into the next phase. As well, participants must successfully complete all stages before graduating from the wilderness phase of the Outward Bound program. Transition from one phase to the next is based on the performance of the group; for example, how the group is working together and how the participants are utilizing the tools and lessons they are being taught. After completing each stage

students are rewarded with more responsibilities and more freedom. Examples of freedoms include: the privilege of picking tent partners, canoe partners, campsites, mileage or meals.

Training phase (the learning phase)

During the training phase, instructors spend time teaching skills on how to live comfortably in the woods. Instruction during this phase is very hands on with the instructors leading and guiding students so that by the final phase the students will have the necessary skills to run the wilderness expedition on their own. To successfully complete the training phase instructors set up a checklist of tasks and skills the students must perform (see appendix A). Once the group has shown the instructors that they can complete all tasks, without instructors help, they will begin the main phase of the program.

Main phase (demonstration)

Main phase is the time when students demonstrate the skills they have been taught and at the same time they continue to learn new skills, or more specifically, behavior management skills. Students in this phase have more control over daily responsibilities including navigation and menu organization. As well, students begin to deal with group behavior issues. With this increased responsibility also comes more freedom.

Final phase (mastery)

The final phase takes place once the group has shown instructors that they can handle the daily tasks involved in camp breakdown and set up as well as group problem solving. During the final phase the instructors take a back seat to the

students. It becomes the students' responsibility to get the group from place to place and deal with any issues that may arise on the way.

Reinforcement phase

The FINS program also includes a 10-day reinforcement phase, which occurs after the completion of the wilderness expedition. At this time, the young people leave Outward Bound and return to their homes, with their families and resume their 'normal' routine. During the reinforcement phase youth are required to check in with the instructors by phone each day, follow their family contract, which is a plan created with Outward Bound instructors and families during the last day of the wilderness course, and participate in two home visits and one school visit with Outward Bound staff. Home visits by Outward Bound staff involve reviewing the contract, and making any necessary changes. Many times instructors will teach a new lesson focused on individual family issues and make plans for the next visit.

School visits involve the participant, Outward Bound staff, and as many of the participant's teachers as possible. Family members are invited to participate in the school visit but are not required to be there. Outward Bound staff begin by explaining the program to the teachers, checking on the participant's behaviors, helping organize student's homework and helping them transfer the skills gained from participating in the wilderness portion of the program to the school environment.

If the youth have successfully completed all three phases of the wilderness expedition and the reinforcement phase, they graduate from the Outward Bound program. Participants who graduate from the program by completing all the necessary components receive an Outward Bound certificate. If participants have

gone above and beyond the necessary steps of the program, and have shown much growth and skill while participating in the FINS program, instructors may choose to graduate that student with honors and if so they would receive an Outward Bound pin.

In this study, an in-depth analysis of how students progress through each of these three phases through to graduation will be provided as a means to address the question: how does Outward Bound help youth at risk.

Youth at risk

There are many different interpretations about what defines a young person who is at risk (Halas & Hanson, 2001). These interpretations will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two. However, it is important to note, that for the purpose of this study the Outward Bound definition of youth at risk will be used. Outward Bound describes youth at risk as those youth who meet some or all of the following criteria; single parent families, low socio-economic status, truant, uncontrollable and ungovernable. Other terms Outward Bound associates with youth at risk include low self-esteem, lack of confidence, runaway, inconsistencies with school work, irresponsible, impulsive and argumentative (HIOBS field manual, 1993).

Delimitation

This study involved 6 young people that applied to and were accepted on the F-400 FINS course (course name and number changed for confidentiality). The decision to study an Outward Bound group was deliberate, as I have had previous experience working with the Outward Bound school and specifically the FINS program. I made the decision to study the FINS program because of the high success of graduating students. The time limits of the program, which was conducive to

conducting a qualitative case study, was also a factor in choosing this program. As the researcher, I believed it was important to study a high quality program in the hopes that my findings might benefit newer programs or programs that have not yet realized as high a success rate.

Summary

This introductory chapter has provided information surrounding the reasons for this interpretive case study. Further, a history of Outward Bound along with a description of the current FINS program was provided to help the reader understand the make-up of the current Outward Bound program. By performing this qualitative interpretive case study, it is my hope that the findings will provide insight regarding specific aspects of how the FINS program affects its' participants. Furthermore, I hope that individuals responsible for existing or new wilderness education programs can learn and adapt their programs based on information gained from this study.

This thesis will continue with Chapter Two, which provides a review of the current literature on youth at risk and wilderness education, as well as a rationale for the use of qualitative research methods. Chapter Three provides a description of the research methods employed in this study. The final chapters provide ethnographic descriptions of the FINS program, including interpretive themes related to the research question: what are the positive and negative aspects of the FINS program, and how does participation in this program impact youth at risk once their participation in the program ends? The study concludes with an evaluation of the research findings and provides suggestions for further or future research.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

This review of literature will explore the use of wilderness education programs developed for youth at risk. A discussion of the term youth at risk and a brief history of wilderness education programs will be included. Following this will be an examination of past studies that have investigated the use of wilderness programs. This section will conclude with a discussion of the gaps in the research literature on youth at risk and wilderness education. The final section will discuss issues surrounding the use of qualitative research, emphasizing the benefits of utilizing qualitative research methods for this study. The intent of this review is to give an insightful overview of the use and need for wilderness education and how this thesis may help inform wilderness programs as well as contribute to the existing body of research literature.

Youth at risk

Youth at risk have been defined and categorized in a variety of ways (Collingwood, 1997; McCready, 1997; Moote & Wodarski, 1997: Tidwell, & Garrett, 1994). Some define youth at risk as those who have such risk factors as being raised in low income families, single parent homes, minority race or ethnicity, or exhibiting low self-esteem and self-confidence (Barrington, 1995; Collingwood, 1997; Moote & Wodarski). While some studies define youth at risk within these specific variables, there are those who believe that all youth are at risk (Federal- Provincial Conference, 1995).

Other researchers (McWhirter, McWhirter, McWhirter & McWhirter, 1998) have taken the description of youth at risk and illustrated it as a five step continuum (see table 1 for a summary of the continuum). The continuum begins with "low risk" and steps up to "imminent risk" and ends with an "at risk" category. "Low risk" youth are described as young people who have a supportive family environment, who come from high socioeconomic status, who encounter few personal stresses, and attend school. While individuals who come from this background are considered at minimal risk of becoming an at risk youth, it is noted that no youth can be considered "no risk". This is because there are many unforeseen problems or circumstances that may arise which may move a young person further down the continuum, for example divorce, death in the family, et cetera.

The next step in the at risk continuum is called "remote risk", which defines the stage where young people are moving closer toward the possibility of becoming "at risk." Individuals in this group are characterized as coming from low socio-economic status, and being of a part of a minority group. It is believed that young people who fall into this category are more likely to be exposed to situations which can cause psychosocial stress, such as racism. The third step is "high risk" and includes factors such as negative family relationships, truancy, and other stresses. Characteristics of a high-risk youth include depression and many of the factors that come with depression. The forth step is "imminent risk" which is defined as the "gateway". Imminent risk is described as an opening to worse behaviors. For example, if a young person smokes cigarettes this is seen as a gateway to smoking marijuana and so on. The fifth and final category in the at risk continuum is "at risk"

and is defined as the stage where the young person is actively participating in at risk behaviors. It is noted in the discussion of the at risk continuum that factors which relate to being at risk (low socioeconomic status, minority, poor school performance, lack of a stable, loving family) can add up and move the young person further down the at risk continuum (McWhirter, et al., 1998).

Table 1

At risk continuum

Stage	Characteristics
Low risk	High socio-economic status
	Positive family environment
	Positive school environment
	Positive social interactions
	Limited stressors
Remote risk	Low socioeconomic status
	Minority group
	Racism
High risk	Negative family relationships
	Truancy
	Depression
Imminent risk	"Gateway"
At risk	At risk behaviors

Note. Common factors associated with each step in the at risk continuum (McWhirter, et al., 1998).

Defining at risk is difficult because the type of program or work one is involved in will likely affect the definition of at risk (McWhirter, et al., 1998). For example, social workers define at risk as people who have adjustment problems, while people in the medical field may use the term at risk for those who have health problems (McWhirter, et al.). Even with these wide spread interpretations of youth at risk there seem to be some commonalties among researchers in different fields about what defines an at risk youth (Moote & Wodarski, 1997).

One such commonality is the thought that teenagers need to be part of a group and have a need to fit in. Often referred to as "peer pressure", the need to fit in may motivate teenagers to participate in activities they may not have participated in on their own. Research has found that as youth try to fit into groups they will usually participate in the same activities their friends are doing (Kipke, Unger, O'Conner, Palmer & LaFrance, 1997). For example, youth who smoke cigarettes, drink, use drugs, or engage in sexual activities usually have friends who are doing the same. Other studies have shown that youth try to fit in by dressing like others, talking, walking, wearing their hair like others, listening to the same music and participating in the same activities during free time (Dinges & Oetts as cited in Kipke et al., 1997). In summary, youth have tremendous influence over each other, and may do or follow whatever their peer groups are doing in order to be accepted.

Another aspect of being a teenager that is agreed upon by researchers is that youth have free time, and it is usually during this unstructured time when criminal activity takes place (Kipke et al., 1997). When you add the belief that youth participate in negative activities because of the influence of their peers to the idea that

these activities usually occur during unstructured time, a rationale for wilderness education evolves (Gillis & Ringer, 1999).

The belief that removing participants from situations where there are risk factors to a wilderness setting could be a valuable education tool has been around for some time. Plato believed outdoor education could help create "healthy bodies which lead to healthy souls" (Hattie, Marsh, Neill & Richards, p. 43, 1997). Ewert (1989) reports that since the 1960s a number of outdoor programs have been established with the aim of addressing the youth delinquency problem. As programs grew and enrollment increased, the need to examine wilderness programs emerged, as there was a desire to see if there truly was a benefit for youth at risk.

Contemporary studies of wilderness education experiences

Research has shown that participation in a wilderness education program by youth at risk contributes to positive outcomes, such as increased self-esteem and self-confidence (Becker & Popkin, 1998; Chappell & Wiggins, 1996; Davis-Berman & Berman, 1999; Hendee & Brown, 1987; Milner & Nisbet, 1997; Nassar-McMillans & Cashwell, 1997; Witt & Crompton, 1996; Woodbury,). The majority of research literature currently available in this area involves studies that employ quantitative methods and report results on specific variables (self-esteem, confidence, and maturity). Cason & Gillis (1994) performed a meta-analysis on outdoor adventure programming with adolescents. This study intended to help adventure practitioners show that there were benefits to participating in outdoor education. Through their meta-analysis, Cason & Gillis reported that there are benefits of participating in outdoor education, and also stated that with the growth in wilderness education

programs, there has also been an increased amount of research done on the effectiveness of these programs. Many of these studies have tried to identify what it is the participants are gaining from their participation in a wilderness program.

The main findings of current literature illustrate that youth who participate in wilderness programs demonstrate an increase in self-esteem and self-confidence. Moote and Wodarski (1997) prepared a review of literature entitled 'The Acquisitions of Life Skills through Adventure-Based Activities and Programs'. Their examination looked into the definition of at risk elementary and secondary school students and the stresses they encounter. The review examined the theoretical issues related to adolescence and educational adventure based programs that have been used as prevention techniques to help address the use of drugs, alcohol and youth pregnancy for at risk students. Of all the studies examined, 11 reviewed the relationship between adventure education and self-esteem. Through their examination, Moote and Wordarski found that the programs accomplished the overall goal of increasing participants' self esteem. All told, it was generally reported that the effects of participating in an adventure based program lead to positive results, as 16 out of the 19 studies stated some type of positive outcome in the students.

Chappell and Wiggins (1996) performed a case study on the use of outdoor and adventure activities in a London, England school. The goal of the study was to see whether "personal growth" was occurring in those students who were involved in the outdoor and adventure program based on activities which would challenge the participants physically, emotionally, and mentally. A questionnaire was administered to the students at the end of each outdoor and adventure activity. The study used a self

contained questionnaire involving closed/forced choices. In total, 54 questionnaires were completed. Other methods used in this study included interviewing the physical education teacher and observing five outdoor adventure lessons. Although the study concluded that personal growth was limited, all three methods of data collection confirmed that the program helped increase self-esteem and self-confidence.

There have been many other studies which have highlighted the growth in self-esteem due to participation in wilderness education programs. Lingle (1980) looked into a variety of wilderness education programs and the challenge of working with youth at risk. When examining common elements of each program many included "growth in self-esteem and belief in ones' potential" (pg. 20). Rosenthal (1985) discusses a research based evaluation where 60 adolescent boys participated in an Outward Bound program. This evaluation supported the idea of positive changes occurring in those who participate in wilderness education. Recreation Programs that Work for At Risk Youth (1996) describe a number of outdoor programs and report the experience results in a growth in pride, self-esteem and success in its' participants. The report further states that those who participate in outdoor programs have the opportunity to participate in new environments and experiences. As well, outdoor programming leads to the development of respect for oneself and others. The majority of studies have focused and reported on growth in participants' self-esteem as a result of participating in a wilderness program.

Studies have also looked at a number of different program types, from long term residential wilderness-based schools to short, overnight camping trips to experiential wilderness expeditions. These studies identified that self-esteem was the

prevalent aspect of participation. The obvious question to arise is: why or what part of a wilderness-based education program provides these benefits?

Some studies suggest that there are common qualities of programs that contribute to positive changes in the participants. One is the fact it takes place in the wilderness, away from the youth's normal environment (Oles, 1994). In one's community or city, one feels comfortable with life. Going to school, playing, walking home or socializing with friends can become a comfortable experience that lacks challenge or stress. It is thought that when an activity or situation does not include any challenge or stress little to no learning can take place.

Living in the wilderness is a challenge (Milner & Nisbet, 1997) for many people, especially individuals who have had little opportunity to spend time in the wilderness. Witt & Crompton (1996) discuss how taking participants away from their normal surroundings allows for the opportunity to view life in a different perspective. They further report that this experience gives youth the opportunity to be away from the normal difficulties involved with living in the inner city as well as the opportunity to learn new skills, develop friendships and be with positive adult role models. Davis-Berman & Berman (1999) also report that wilderness programs remove the youth from their comfort zones and it is believed that some of the greatest growth and change occurs when individuals are on the edge of their comfort zone. Milner & Nisbet (1997) who wrote a report on the Eckerd wilderness program comment that the wilderness environment allows the youth the opportunity to develop a new identity and change their current pattern of behavior.

Comfort circles

Comfort circles is a common lesson taught during the beginning of Outward Bound courses to help explain to the participants the meaning of comfort zones. This lesson discusses the effects when one ventures out of their comfort zone and into the learning zone. The following is a brief explanation of how comfort zones are taught during Outward Bound courses. Comfort zones involve 3 circles; the inner circle represents the individual's comfort zone, the middle circle represents the individual's learning zone and the outer circle represents the individual's stress zone.

The comfort zone includes activities in which the individual feels safe and participates in activities without much challenge. This circle offers very little in terms of skill building and may include activities like walking in one's neighborhood, or hanging out with friends. One must remember that everyone has their own definition of challenge, risk and comfort and so one participant's comfort zone may be smaller or larger than the next.

As people move into the learning zone (middle circle) they begin to participate in activities that are somewhat new and may add both challenge and excitement to their lives. By attempting new activities, the individual is placed in a position where they are unsure, however, if the individual feels safe enough, they will attempt the activities from which new information and skills can be gained.

The final circle represents the stress zone where activities are occurring which are too emotionally and/or physically challenging so that no learning can take place. The individual in this zone feels totally out of control and become tense rather than trying the activity (Outward Bound course paperwork). Itin's (1999) paper on The

Impelling Principle discusses how the essential component of education for Kurt Hahn was to challenge the participants to leave their comfort zone and step into their learning zone. She further reports that this movement was to give the opportunity for self discovery and for the youths' to see themselves differently. In a study using both quantitative and qualitative methods, the authors Gaust, Scheider & Baker (2001) discuss how participants described that participating in an adventure program allowed them to see the world in a different way. Also, they reported that their participation allowed them to be away from their normal risk environment, giving them room to try new things.

Wilderness courses offer unique and varied experiences which involve risk taking and participation in challenging activities (The Lifestyle Research Institute, 1997). Participation in wilderness programs takes students out of their comfort zones and places them in their learning zones. Activities like canoeing, hiking, climbing and living in the woods are usually unknown and may not be comfortable at the beginning. If instructors explain and create a safe and trusting learning atmosphere, these activities can offer a variety of learning experiences, such as teamwork, communication and trust.

When one is faced with a task and he/she does not know how or what to do he/she has entered a place where learning can occur. The individual will have to either figure out on his/her own how to accomplish the set task or ask another participant or instructor for help. Two different learning occurrences can take place in this scenario. If relying on one's self to figure out the problem the individual is taking risks to problem solve it out on his or her own; for example, not being successful,

looking funny or failing in front of their group. On the other hand in order to ask for help and in the end rely on others he or she will need to trust each other. Through these tasks trust is built and becomes a fundamental outcome of wilderness programs (Jones, 1998).

Wilderness expeditions tend not to be one isolated event, but rather tend to be ongoing experiences involving active engagement in a variety of challenging activities. It is through continued participation and ongoing involvement that learning takes place. The effects of working as a team, learning to trust others and one's self and participating in challenging activities over an extended period reinforces positive behaviors. Kistler, Bryant & Tucker (1977) describe a five-week experiential therapeutic project with seven disturbed individuals. The key element of this study involved 2-hour meetings, which were held once a week and concluded with a four-day meeting and an overnight camping trip. The staff involved in this project stated that there were a number of beneficial outcomes including a feeling of success enjoyed by participants. However, the staff believed one of the main factors for the program's success was that treatment occurred over an extended period of time and was not an isolated event.

Another aspect of wilderness programs believed to contribute to positive outcomes is that consequences are clear and easy, are immediate, hard felt (Woodbury, 1994), and mirror the reality of the situation (Oles, 1994). In this day and age of fast fixes, such as fast food, youth rarely feel the consequences of their actions. It may be difficult to see how getting an F on a math test in grade eight may affect a student years later when deciding on a job or profession. In the wilderness,

consequences are felt almost immediately. If the group does not listen to instructions or ask for help, and for example set up their tent improperly, and it rains that night, the consequence of not asking for help or putting craftsmanship into their work will be felt as a very uncomfortable wet night. It is through these direct consequences that participants learn to ask for help, and develop craftsmanship, patience and communication skills.

Transfer

One topic largely ignored by the literature is that of the transfer of learning from the wilderness environment to the participant's home environment. The fact that learning takes place while on a program has been documented. Students are learning and gaining skills in teamwork, trust building, self-esteem and self-confidence growth. What then becomes important is whether these new skills and tools help the youth at home and if they know how to transfer their knowledge from a wilderness environment to the city environment. It is one thing to call a 'circle up' (Outward Bound term) to discuss a behavior issue with another student in the safety of your wilderness group, and it is completely different to learn how to talk a bully out of beating you up in the halls at school. Rosol (2000) discusses how debriefing, a method which helps transfer occur, is an important component of a wilderness program. Gass (1999) says, "the true value or effectiveness of the program lies in how learning experienced during adventure activity will serve the learner in the future (pg. 227).

Gass (1999) describes two different types of transfer, specific and non specific. Specific transfer is defined as a skill which is taught that can then be directly

related to an upcoming skill. He uses the example of teaching a group of youth how to belay a climber. The skills of belaying are then able to directly relate to a following event of repelling, in which similar technical skills are needed. Non specific transfer is when a skill is taught that later relates to an indirect experience. Using the example of belaying again, this skill can be transferred to the ability to trust others. Wilderness programs need to incorporate lessons on how to use the skills taught during the courses so the skills gained from the participation can then extend into the youths' everyday lives and can continue to benefit the participants.

Throughout Outward Bound courses, instructors and students debrief each day, after each activity, and after each behavioral lesson. In these debriefs, youth can see what they did, how they did it, and discussions can take place for how they can do it at home. To explain this further, an example from a previous course in which I was involved with, is described in which instructors taught a lesson on how to properly argue. Students utilized this method throughout the entire course, and the tool was also taught to their parents. The group talked about how to use this method when in the city and confronted by a bully. Most of the students said "just walk away, or get them to talk about it." Families also used the lesson and as an instructor I will never forget having the mother of a student say to me "Cara (name changed) used that lesson on us yesterday, and it made her father and I really realize what we were arguing at and how to solve it." This example was included to show how transfer is a tool which can move the learning which takes place while in the wilderness environment to the youths' everyday life.

Wilderness programs offer their participants new and exciting experiences where the learning that can occur can change someone's life. Youth can learn to trust in others and in themselves. Participants learn the value of teamwork and craftsmanship. Through unique and challenging experiences participants grow and experience environments and situations that stretch their comfort zones, allowing them to expand their horizons.

Opportunities for contributions to the literature

The literature contained minimal descriptions of what it feels like to be a participant on a wilderness trip, what the daily activities are, and what instructors are doing to create a successful wilderness trip. As well, within the literature, there is little information from the voices of the participants. Gillis & Ringer (1999) report that a piece that is missing in the available literature is descriptions of the population researchers are looking at. It is difficult to gain a clear understanding of the benefits of a program if we do not hear from the participants of the program. This led some researchers to think that qualitative methods may be the needed alternative to the more traditional research methods (Rowley, 1987).

Qualitative research

Qualitative research is a method used to seek out in depth information on people, groups or programs (Bogdan & Bilken, 1992). When a qualitative research study is undertaken, the researcher is attempting to gain a deeper understanding of their participants (Ellis, 1998; Oliver, 1998). With this understanding the researcher creates a detailed description of their findings which can be utilized to define or make sense of their research subject (Ellis, 1998). Qualitative research is used to create

meaning from what is being done or describe why something is occurring. In terms of this research project, the researcher was seeking to understand, from the point of view of the FINS students, what they were learning or gaining from their experience and if there are specific aspects of the program that can be attributed to their learning.

Qualitative research methods place the researcher in direct contact with their participants (Bogdan & Bilken, 1992). Rowley (1987) states that given that the outdoor leader is a natural part of the group, he or she is in a strategic place for interviews and observations. Through a variety of research methods; participant observations, interviews and document analysis, the researcher has the ability to continually examine, review and question participants on what and why something is occurring or not (Ellis, 1992). Due to this close interaction, the researcher must be aware of their place and influence on the study. Bogdan and Bilken (1992) discuss the effects the researcher has on the data and state that in qualitative research, the researcher is constantly reviewing the data and is thus continually confronted with his or her own opinions and own prejudices.

Furthermore, Bogdan and Bilken (1992) report that the data collected in a natural setting normally provide a much better and detailed explanation of events than the researcher could make up. One method that helps alleviate biases is the recording of detailed field notes while collecting data. A researcher can also then have a colleague review their findings and compare them to the field notes, helping to minimize researcher bias (Bogdan & Bilken).

Qualitative researchers attempt to interact with their subjects in a "natural, unobtrusive and non threatening manner" (Bogdan & Bilken, p. 47, 1992). Both in

interviews and during observations the qualitative researcher is open and active with their participants. Researchers attempt to fit in and thus try to become part of the group rather than an outsider (Bogdan & Bilken).

As the researcher, I participated in parts of the complete Outward Bound program. Participating in all the activities and challenges the group had to endure placed me in the role of group member and not only that of researcher. This participation and active involvement created a positive rapport with the participants, ultimately blurring the line between researcher and participants. Halas (1999), who completed an interpretive case study on the experience of physical education for troubled youth at an Adolescent Treatment Center, stated that the time spent socializing during fieldwork helped to quicken the positive relationship between herself and participants. Through my extended involvement with the research group, rapport was built and I feel I was rewarded with open and honest interviews and observations.

In utilizing qualitative methods the researcher may be privileged to gather more detailed, in-depth information on their topic (Rowley, 1987). Cason and Gilles (1994) performed a meta-analysis on an outdoor adventure program with adolescents and report there is a "wide variance in findings (which) raises the question about the validity of quantitative research for this field" (p. 46). Moote and Wodarski (1997) state there is a lack of program evaluations that incorporate observed behaviors of group members. Davis-Berman & Berman (1999) state that the lack of program evaluations may be due to the vary nature that they take place in the wilderness, which can be a very difficult environment to study.

Priest (1999) discusses the difference between positivistic and naturalistic inquiry, when using quantitative and qualitative research methods for adventure programs. Priest states that historically, quantitative methods, in the positivistic paradigm, was used mostly in studying adventure programs, but states that this type of method lacked the ability to look at and discuss human relationships, and thus qualitative research may be helpful in future research. Priest also discusses future research needs. He believes that research should focus on different program elements and if there are specific program elements that bring about change. Due to the experience of the researcher, the researchers past involvement and understanding of the FINS program and the ability of the researcher to participate in an entire FINS course, it was believed that the findings from this study would be beneficial because of the direct involvement with the participants in the field.

In a study (Pommier & Witt, 1995) performed on the FINS program, data was collected using surveys administered before the program, four weeks after the start of the program and finally four months later. Pommier & Witt concluded that qualitative methods may be helpful in gaining information on program dynamics and outcomes that other methods could not address. Qualitative research methods were thought to be helpful because of the difficulties associated with the location of programs and because qualitative research can look into the characteristics of the individuals and the group.

West (1983) reports on a camp created for young troubled girls. The group met for two weeks of planning prior to the camping trip, and during these meetings each participant selected three goals on which they wanted to focus on. Throughout

the program, students worked on their goals, received feedback, and discussed how to transfer these skills home. This study involved a number of psychological tests, which were administered before, during and after the program. Through the analysis of the tests, West found therapeutic value in the program, but went on to state that the comments from the participants showed greater benefit than any psychological test could show. This further supports the need for qualitative research and this study.

As the review highlighted, a number of studies have been performed on wilderness education for youth at risk. Even so, many of the researchers involved stated that qualitative research can add a necessary element or piece to the existing literature. Qualitative researchers have the ability to describe, discuss and communicate with the participants which can open a whole new area of information in regards to wilderness education for youth at risk.

Ethnography

Another benefit of utilizing qualitative methods for this study comes in the writing up of data. Qualitative research allows the researcher the room to be creative and describe to the readers what it feels like to be part of the study environment. For this study, ethnographic descriptions of the FINS experience are included to attempt to bring the reader to the FINS program.

Ethnography is a technique used to present findings in a descriptive style. The aim of ethnographers or ethnographic research is to "paint a picture of what people say and how they act" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, pg. 135). The researcher who is writing an ethnographic study is attempting to tell a story through rich descriptions of the events that were observed during data collection.

Van Manen (1984) describes ethnography as a tool used to explain specific meanings that arise from particular cultures. In terms of this study, the purpose of including ethnographic descriptions of the FINS experience is to bring the readers as close to being a part of the group, or culture without actually participating in the program. It is hoped that readers will gain a deep understanding of the events, activities, feelings and skills that arise from taking part in such an expedition. Van Manen, further states that a "good ethnography describes a cultural reality in such a way that a non member of the culture could pass as an insider" (pg. 178).

A benefit of using ethnography as a presenting style is that it tends to focus on the culture of the group being studied (Patton, 1990). In Schensul and LeCompte's (1999) Ethnographer's Toolkit, ethnography is described as a tool that can provide feedback to the topic of the specific study, in this case the FINS program and its employees and staff. They further discuss how this form of analysis is a process that describes how individuals in a group interpret their world, while discussing what people do and why. The intent of this project was to examine the culture of the FINS program, to help interpret the outcomes upon the FINS participants. With ethnographic descriptions, it is hoped that this research project will be able to present information that may help explain the program outcomes.

Summary

Youth at risk and wilderness programming is not a new idea or a new area of research interest. The idea that there can be beneficial outcomes from participating in an adventure education program has been utilized for some time. As the number of

programs continues to grow, so does the amount of research performed on this topic (Berman, Berman & Capone 1994; Cason & Gillis, 1995).

This literature review has shown that studies have examined the beneficial outcomes of wilderness programs and what is thought to cause those outcomes. Most studies were performed using quantitative methods and report specific findings such as increased self-esteem. Yet, how self-esteem improves is not fully understood. It is the purpose of this present research study to examine more specifically what the participants believe to be occurring while on a FINS program. Furthermore, the researcher hoped to explore through qualitative methods what the students thought were the important parts of a wilderness program and whether they believed there were any aspects that need not be incorporated.

It was believed that by undertaking a qualitative methodology the researcher would be provided with the "opportunity to gain new and important insight on the effects of the outdoor adventure experience on young people" (Rowley, pg. 2, 1987). Finally, as Rowley believes, this qualitative research project may open a window to an in-depth understanding of what effects wilderness programs have on the lives of their participants.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the students' perspective of the Outward Bound experience in order to gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of a wilderness education program. In order to do so, I chose to conduct an interpretive case study (Ellis, 1999) of the FINS program. Using a variety of research methods, I hoped to deliver an in-depth and meaningful representation of what students of the FINS program believed to be the positive and negative, helpful and unhelpful aspects of participating in a wilderness education program. After reviewing the literature it was felt that qualitative case study research could add to the existing literature, and examine questions that may not be able to be answered by other methods. It was because of these goals that an interpretive case study was chosen.

Ellis (1997, 1998) describes qualitative case study as a method researchers use to examine or understand the thinking and feeling behind their participants' actions. Case study research is used to create a holistic description of a program, person or unit. Case study allows the researcher to describe the people involved, the environment, and the activities all from the perspective of those involved in the program being studied (Patton, 1990). Halas (2002, 2001) performed a case study that focused on troubled youth and physical education. Through the use of interpretive research methods, she was able to show the importance and impact physical education has on youth at risk and specifically the participants involved in her study. Ellis, Hart & Small-McGinley (1998), competed a study on difficult

students in elementary school. They wanted to learn the student's perspective on how elementary school years could have been a more helpful place for them. Ten students participated and were interviewed two to four times. From this study the authors were able to better understand the students' perspective of his or her elementary school years and hoped that the information would help teachers and future students.

A benefit of case study research for this project included the fact that the data could be used to further understand the wilderness education experience and help to improve upon the program based on the study outcomes (Ellis, 1998). Case study methods use the researcher as the primary instrument in the data collection process (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998), placing the researcher in a position to examine the phenomenon from the perspective of the study participants (Ellis). Findings from this case study research can also help develop future policies and practices, which will be beneficial to existing wilderness programs.

The following research questions were addressed:

1. What is the meaning of the FINS students' experience of the Outward Bound program?
2. What are the positive and negative aspects of participating in the FINS program?
3. What is it about the program that helps students' transfer what they have learned in the Outward Bound program to their everyday life?

Research activities

This study utilized a bricolage method of data collection. A bricolage is defined as "a pieced together, close knit set of practices that provide solutions to a

program" (Denzin & Lincoln, p. 3, 1998). Using a bricolage method allowed the bricoleur (researcher) to apply a number of different research methods and techniques from "interviewing to observing, to interpreting personal and historical documents, to intensive self reflection and introspection" (Denzin and Lincoln, pg. 4, 1998). The primary methods of data collection used in this study were open-ended interviews and observations. Other methods employed included document analysis and supplementary interviews with Outward Bound field and office staff, as well as keeping a personal field journal. The bricolage method of data collection was appropriate for this study because it allowed for changes in the research pattern as the study unfolded (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Since a wilderness program changes depending on weather, student behaviors or any number of other unknowns, this method allowed me, as the researcher, to arrive with a flexible research schedule. Yin (1994) believes that the researcher should take advantage of unforeseen opportunities, especially since data collection procedures are not restricted to formal structures. Finally, the bricolage method allowed the researcher to be creative during the data collection process.

Data were collected over 33 days. During this time I participated in the instructor course preparation days, the wilderness expedition, home and school visits and graduation. Throughout the data collection period, I conducted formal participant interviews on four separate occasions, as well as recorded daily observations at a variety of phases throughout this period. Fieldwork observations included student interactions with each other and instructors, morning and evening meetings, course routine, the weather and student behaviors. Upon each return to the Outward Bound

base camp, field notes were entered onto a computer and any missing information was added. This was done immediately upon return to capture important observations of the program and the participants. During the time away from the study group I was also able to gather relevant documents including program mission statements, student profiles, course paperwork and other Outward Bound school information. By triangulating (Patton, 1991) these three forms of data collected, I hoped to create a description of the type of individuals who participate in the program, the program goals and participant thoughts about the FINS program.

Interviews

Open-ended interviews were used to elicit stories and information from participants, families, instructors and other Outward Bound staff. Interviews were conducted at opportune times within each collection phase. Interview questions were phenomenologically based (Halas, 2002; Van Manen, 1984), which means I asked students to describe their participation in the FINS program and more specifically "what is it like to be an Outward Bound student." Interviews were used to gather data that helped develop a deeper understanding of the FINS program and its effects on the students (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Van Manen, 1984). Since data was collected at a variety of times throughout the 28-day program a hermeneutic framework was utilized (Smith, 1991).

Ellis (1998) explains the hermeneutic spiral method as a process where the researcher is able to re-enter the research field at a number of different times. Each new entry into the research field is considered a data collection loop. With each loop, or data collection period, the researcher is trying to get closer to understanding his or

her participants (Ellis, 1997; Kvale, 1996). Using this method I was able to re-enter the research field with new interview questions at a variety of stages throughout the FINS program, which were based on responses received during the previous data collection period or loop.

All interviews were recorded using a hand held-tape recorder and were later transcribed. Interviews throughout each data collection loop focused on different aspects of the program, the individual and the group. As shown in Table 2, questions revolved around the participant's feelings and thoughts. Interviews lasted anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour, depending on the participant and the data collection phase. Group conversations and meetings were also recorded periodically throughout the 18-day wilderness course. After each interview session the interview tapes were reviewed and notes were created. Prior to each new interview, the interviewee had the opportunity to review the information gathered from the previous interview to ensure their comments were interpreted correctly, which addressed the issue of validity within the study (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Throughout the study, all students agreed that the information recorded on the information sheets were accurate in describing their thoughts and answers from the previous interview.

Observations

The use of observation as a data collection method gave me the opportunity to interpret what was actually seen, rather than just what was heard through interviews and second hand conversations (Merriam, 1988). Observations help describe how individuals in a group interpret their environment (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998; Bogdan & Bilken, 1998).

Table 2

Sample Interview Questions

Interview Phase/Loop	Questions
River Visit – Interview 1	1. Describe a typical day.
	2. What is your favorite part of the program?
	3. What is your least favorite part?
Solo – Interview 2	1. What have you learned so far?
	2. What sticks out most in your head when you think about the program?
	3. What has been the most beneficial part of the program for you? Least beneficial?
Homestretch – Interview 3	1. What has changed since day 1, if anything?
	2. Tell me 3 things you have learned on course.
	3. Can you tell me specific aspects of the program that have taught you those things?
Graduation – Interview 4	1. Is your life different since returning home?
	2. What did you learn on course that you are not using at home?
	3. What did you learn on course that you are using at home?

Note. The table includes only a sample of the questions asked during each interview phase/loop.

Observations also provide information that helps interpretation of the data or allows for a better understanding of the outcomes of the program (Bogdan & Bilken, 1998). There are a variety of ways in which a researcher can use the observation technique. For example, Boostrom (1994) describes a number of observation techniques from observing like a "camera" where one is expected to capture everything, to observing like a "playgoer", where the researcher becomes emotionally involved with their subjects.

Consistent with interpretive case study methods this study used the technique of observing as an "interpreter". The technique of observing as an interpreter involves a method where the researcher becomes part of the participant group which allows the researcher to bring forth their own experiences and judgments as a means to construct meaning from the observations. For me, this meant I could reflect upon the experiences I was having while participating in the FINS program. For example, I recorded how I was feeling and thinking about what was occurring on the river.

Document analysis

Documents which were seen as important or helpful to better understand the Outward Bound program were collected throughout the research phase. These documents included program philosophy, mission statements, student profiles, student needs' assessments, and instructor paper work. The documents were helpful in better understanding the program and program participants.

Personal journal

During the data collection a personal journal was kept (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Journal entries included personal interpretations about the structure of the

course, the students, how I was feeling, the weather, and other thoughts regarding the research study. These were recorded irregularly during the 33 days of data collection. Usually, journaling occurred at night, after everyone had gone to sleep, or while sitting around the fire with instructors discussing the next day's events. This information was later used to bring forth my personal thoughts and feelings as a means to inform the interpretation of the data.

Gaining consent & data collection

Ethical considerations

Consent: The intake interview with the Outward Bound Intake Coordinator is the first step to being accepted into the Outward Bound FINS program. During this interview, the youth and their family decided if they wanted to take part in the FINS program. If the families agreed to take part in the FINS program, the Outward Bound Intake Coordinator introduced the research project and informed the family they would hear from the researcher prior to the beginning of the program. Once I arrived to the Outward Bound base, I contacted each family by phone. This phone call was used as an opportunity to introduce myself, the study, answer any questions and to secure consent. Families were informed about the voluntary nature of the study and the right for participants to withdraw at any time, with no consequences.

Confidentiality: During the initial meeting (phone conversation) with the youth and parent/guardian I informed the family that all information gathered throughout the study would be kept confidential. Measures that were taken included keeping interview tapes, field notes, journals, and other relevant documents in a locked filing cabinet. Families were also informed that documents would be coded

and participants' names would be changed in order to maintain confidentiality. Only the researcher had access to this information. I also informed the families that the study had been approved by the University of Manitoba's Ethics Review Board.

Building rapport: Halas (2002) reports that building rapport between the researcher and the study participants is an essential component of qualitative research, especially when working with troubled youth. Halas states that by building rapport, a comfortable relationship can evolve, and may allow the researcher to better understand what is meant by certain actions or words that participants' may use. My past involvement with Outward Bound, and specifically the FINS program was an asset as it helped me to develop a respectful relationship with the participating families. Having previous wilderness experience and knowledge of the program gave me the ability to explain, discuss and help students while they participated in the program.

Sensitive issues: There were no foreseeable risks to those who participated in this study. FINS courses often create a community that is safe both emotionally and physically, where the students feel comfortable sharing stories of their past and present, which may include disclosures of sensitive issues (e.g., abuse, suicide). The participant information sheet (appendix B) explained to the student that the researcher would follow Outward Bound protocol when dealing with sensitive issues. Outward Bound protocol is found in the Field Manual that each group of instructors is required to take on every course (HIOB Instructor field manual, 1993). For an example of the Outward Bound protocol see appendix C.

Data collection

Data was collected over five intervals encompassing all stages of the FINS program. Prior to my arrival the Intake Coordinator sent out the consent forms (appendix D) and information sheets to the registered Outward Bound participants and their families (appendix E). This was very beneficial to me, as once I arrived at the Outward Bound base camp and made the initial contact with the families they were already aware of who I was and what the study was asking of them.

The first step in collecting data began with a telephone call to the six students registered in the FINS program. This phone call was used to introduce myself to the students and families, which was an integral first step in building rapport with the participants. Each phone call lasted about ten minutes, and all but one family agreed to participate. The family that did not grant consent wanted to wait to meet me in person before agreeing to participate. Families were reminded to bring the signed consent forms to the course start, if they had not already sent them in.

Course start

Course start began at 8:30 in the morning with families arriving to the Outward Bound base camp. During the first 30 minutes, I had the opportunity to introduce myself once again to the students and their parents, to answer any questions and to gather the remaining signed consent forms. The one family who did not consent to participating in the study during the initial phone call, agreed to participate in the study after meeting me. After a group meeting with Outward Bound staff, students, and families, families said their good-byes and the FINS course officially began. The next 48 hours were spent with the students as they participated in a swim

test and as they learned how to set up camp, and to cook on a camping stove. Participants also began to develop other skills that would help them succeed on the FINS program. During these 48 hours, I spent time continuing to build rapport, 'hanging out' with students, and helping instructors.

During the final day, prior to the group's transport to the river, I informally met with each student. The purpose of this conversation was to introduce the interview process, including the tape recorder and type of questions which would be asked. These meetings lasted approximately 20 minutes. Along with the conversations, observation notes were recorded throughout the 48 hours. Information that was recorded included student behaviors, comments, participation in program activities, questions, expressions and relationships with other group members and instructors. After leaving the group, I recorded more comprehensive field notes and reviewed conversation responses which were then used to create the next set of interview questions (Ellis, 1997).

River visit - Interview 1

Forty-eight hours later, I spent two days canoeing, living and participating with the participants in the program. During these 48 hours, observation field notes were again collected that focused on group and individual behaviors. During this phase, I also began the first of the more formal interview sessions, which each participant would be involved in at four different times over the course of the entire FINS program. Interviews occurred during the last day on the river and lasted from 15 to 30 minutes. The purpose of this interview was to learn about individual thoughts and feelings about the purpose of the program, and how participants thought

they were fairing. The questions prompted participants to describe their experiences in the program and asked them specific feelings about the hardest and simplest parts of the program to date.

After 48 hours on the river, I again returned to the Outward Bound base camp to record my observational field notes in more detail and to review the interview tapes. Interview tapes were reviewed and outlines of students' comments (see appendix F for an example) were created, which were later shown to each individual. Based on the hermeneutic process the answers received and observations recorded helped form the next set of interview questions.

Solo expedition - Interview 2

Fifteen hours later, I was back on the road to pick up the group and transport them to the solo site. Solo lasted 48 hours and was followed by a day at the high ropes course, giving me the opportunity to spend another 72 hours with the group. In some ways, the solo expedition can be compared to the Native Vision Quest. Vision Quests are described as being a rite of passage which involves a number of different components. Delaney (1995) explains how different elements involve a separation, instructions from an elder, a transition and finally a welcoming back. McCormick (1997) adds to these elements that there is a need for the individual to look beyond themselves and examine their place in their community. Variations of these elements all take place within the solo phase of an Outward Bound course.

Individual interviews were conducted during the last day of solo, allowing students the opportunity to be alone with their thoughts and not be interrupted during the first 24 hours of the solo experience. Interviews during this session focused on

what had occurred within the group and with each individual over the last week, and goals for home. Participants discussed specific aspects of the program and whether they were thought to be beneficial or not.

Observations during solo included the transport to the solo site and camp set up. While interviewing, notes were made on each student's camp set up including whether they had made any homemade decorations (wood side walks up to the tent, doormats, et cetera), and whether students were spending time outside of their tents. Other observation notes were recorded when students returned from solo and throughout the next day which involved a transport to the ropes course and the ropes course activity.

Homestretch - Interview 3

After the ropes course activity, the group was once again dropped off at the river. After three days of paddling the group was picked up 30 miles down the river and began the last few days of their wilderness course. The last two days included gear clean up, a service project, overall course debriefing, a five mile marathon, graduation and mediation sessions with each family.

The third set of interviews were conducted prior to students returning home. The questions during this session focused on what the students may or may not have learned from their experience during the 18 days, what they were going to do when they got home, and whether they thought there was anything useful that they could transfer from the wilderness course to their home lives.

Reinforcement

The next ten days of the FINS program involved two home and one school visit with each student and their family. While participating in these visits field notes were recorded and questions were asked. No formal interviews were conducted during the home or school visits.

Graduation - Interview 4

The final interviews occurred on graduation day. The purpose of this session was to give the students an opportunity to reflect on and discuss the wilderness and reinforcement phases of the program. Participants were asked to further relate information surrounding benefits of the program, and aspects of the program that had or had not helped them back in their 'normal' life.

Summary

This study encompassed a bricolage method of data collection including open-ended interviews, observations and document analysis. The use of various research methods allowed the researcher the opportunity to converse with the participants, and to gather information from them regarding their participation in the program. Observations provided a picture of what was occurring on the course and within the group. Analysis of course and program paperwork helped create an understanding of the goals and philosophies of the program. Document analysis was also helpful because I was able to access complete student profiles as a means to better understand the make up of program participants.

Study participants

Participants accepted onto a FINS course are chosen based on an in-person interview with the Outward Bound Intake Coordinator. The criteria for applying to Outward Bound includes: a referral from a counselor, being of either gender, between the ages of 13 and 17, and having ungovernable, runaway, or truant behaviors. As the researcher, I had no involvement in the selection of participants but rather selection was based on those who fit the Outward Bound criteria and chose to participate on course number F-400. In all, six Caucasian students, five male and one female participated in the course and in this study. The participants ranged in age from 13 to 17 with a mean age of 14.67.

Data analysis

To make sense of the large amount of data collected I took a thematic approach to analyzing the interview transcripts, fieldwork observations and documents that were collected. Van Manen (1997) describes thematic analysis as "the process of recovering the theme or themes that are embodied and dramatized in the evolving meaning and imagery of the work" (p. 78). All interviews were transcribed and field notes which were collected while in the research field were entered into a computer file. At the completion of the entire data collection process transcripts and field notes were coded. Taylor and Bogdan (1998) state that coding is a process that helps develop and refine interpretation of data. Coding was a way to highlight common ideas that existed in the text. All data were coded without the use of a computer program but rather I continually read and reread interview transcripts

and field notes (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Notes were made and lists were developed to help make sense of the data.

Participant interviews were analyzed separately and then cross-analyzed (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998) with each other to see if there were overall themes that correspond to the research questions. This means that each individual interview was examined and important and common points were extracted. Ellis (1997) explains that to truly understand the whole, one must understand each individual part, and to truly understand each individual part you must understand the whole. Once all interview reviews were completed the notes were compared to see if there were "common answers to common questions" (Patton, p. 376, 1990). Overall, common themes were created based on what individual participants reported related to the research questions.

To add credibility to a study, Manning (1997) suggests the researcher engage in peer debriefings. Peer debriefings ask colleagues outside the study but who are knowledgeable in the methodology to review the researcher's interpretations. Throughout data collection, data analysis and the writing process I discussed the data and my interpretations with Dr. Halas (my thesis co-advisor). Also, the data was reviewed by another graduate student who commented that the themes reflect the participants' comments. As well, through the data analysis process, ideas and concepts were discussed on and off with staff members at the Outward Bound school. Outward Bound staff reported that the findings were very interesting and that they were excited to see the final report.

Data analysis was completed when the research questions were addressed. To evaluate whether this occurred I followed Ellis' (1998) guide which she suggests a qualitative researcher use as an evaluative tool. Ellis says the researcher should examine if the reason for the study has been advanced. There are six questions which need not all be answered, but should be used as a tool to evaluate the research findings. The six questions are:

1. Is it plausible, convincing?
2. Does it fit with other material we know?
3. Does it have the power to change practice?
4. Has the researcher's understanding been transformed?
5. Has a solution been uncovered?
6. Have any new possibilities been opened up for the researcher, research participants, and the structure of the context?

In Chapter Seven, a final discussion will highlight the answers to the research questions in regards to Ellis' evaluative tool.

Chapter 4

Findings

Introduction

The review of literature stated that a missing piece of research on adventure education was a description of the students who participate in wilderness programs (Gillis & Ringer, 1999). In this chapter, a description of the students is included as a means to add to the existing body of research literature on youth at risk and wilderness education. These descriptions will also illustrate the type of youth who participate in the FINS program, the problems individuals are coming to the program with, their personal background and goals for the future. By including background information of the FINS students' current issues and goals, it is hoped that a better understanding of the wilderness program and how it works to help young people will be gained.

Chapters Five and Six will provide the reader with ethnographic descriptions of the FINS program. Ethnography is a tool used to bring the readers as close to being a part of the group or culture being studied without actually having to participate in the program (Van Manen, 1984). These descriptions are a means to answer the research questions; what is the meaning of the FINS students' experience of the Outward Bound program, what are the positive and negative aspects of participating in a wilderness education program, and how does participation help deal with their everyday life challenges? Through the reading of the ethnographic descriptions, it is hoped that the reader will see what it is like to live in the Florida wilderness and what it feels like for a young person to be a part of the FINS program.

Setting: Beginning at base camp

The alarm sounds and awakens a sleeping cabin of two course instructors, the intern and myself. It is hard to get out of bed. Even though it is not your bed, it will be home for the next 33 days. This is the FINS base camp. The base is located in the small town of Scottsmoor, Florida. The town consists of orange farms, a post office and the community meeting place – the gas station. The FINS base is located on an old orange orchard which continues to grow fresh oranges, a treat for Outward Bound staff and students. The base includes a staff cabin, a staff lounge, and a large storage kitchen. Attached to this is a large garage which houses all the FINS tools and supplies. There is also the main 'house' where the offices are located. There are seven full-time staff working out of the FINS base camp: a Program Director, an Education Coordinator, two Course Directors, an Office Manager, an Intake Coordinator and the Logistics Manager, who take on the characteristics of a small family.

Living on base is not like living at home. Here, on the base camp, you share your space with snakes, roaches and, banana spiders. The worst of them all are the relentless mosquitoes whose constant buzzing is enough to drive anyone mad. These extra inhabitants are everywhere. They force you to watch every step you take, to look in and under every piece of clothing you put on. They are a nuisance, crawling in your clothes and bed, and the constant buzzing, this only adds to the everyday challenges of the FINS base camp.

A couple times a month the base becomes home for two instructors and an intern who spend three days preparing for the course, leave for two and a half weeks

on the wilderness trip and return to the base for the course follow up. On this course, F-400, the instructor team consists of the Lead Instructor – Jennifer, the Assistant Instructor, Amy and the Intern, Mark. Outward Bound always staffs an Assistant Instructor and a Lead Instructor on every course. An Intern is an individual new to Outward Bound training to be an instructor. Most courses are lucky enough to have an intern but it is not a requirement of the program. FINS courses have the capacity to have 11 students, however for this course only six families who applied to participate in the Outward Bound program met the program requirements.

Today begins the 18 day wilderness course for F- 400, and for the next 18 days the instructional staff and myself will be living, sleeping and eating with a group of young 'at risk' youth whom we have yet to meet. It is 7:00 in the morning and the temperature is already nearing 100 degrees. Jennifer, Amy and Mark have spent the last three days preparing for this course; they have been up past midnight and awake before dawn each day and of course they are still not done. As a previous course instructor, I know the frantic pace of this routine. For the next hour, I watch what looks like the instructors running anxiously around the base as they attend to the last necessary details that are required for course to begin. At 8:00 am the families begin to arrive.

The characters

As stated in the introduction a description of the participants will be provided as a means to illustrate the type of youth who participate in the program, the issues they encounter in their home life, what they look like and the reasons they decide to participate in the program. This information was gathered from the student needs'

assessments (completed during the intake interview), instructor notes, and personal observations.

Dale

The first student to arrive at the Outward Bound base camp is Dale, a 15-year-old male. Dale jumps out of his grandfather's rusty old truck and walks to the front yard of the offices. He immediately asks "when are we going?" As we were standing around the front of the offices I asked "are you excited about the program?" Dale mumbles "I just want to get going, this is everyday stuff for me."

Dale comes from a small town in middle Florida where he lives with his grandparents and his brother. On the outside Dale appears to be a nice kid. He is dressed in tight wrangler jeans, shirt tucked in and his hair slicked back. His grandfather is the only one to come with him today. His grandfather mentioned to the instructional staff that Dale's grandmother has "had enough with him and could not take it anymore" and this was the reason why she did not come today. Looking at Dale and hearing his grandfather it makes you wonder what is causing the tension at home. Past experience reminds me that time will tell.

Dale was referred to Outward Bound for 'ungovernable behaviors', a FINS term which means any number of difficult behaviors youth are showing. Specifically, Dale had trouble controlling his anger and accepting responsibility for his actions. He stated that when he becomes angry he will "flair up" and yell and scream. During the intake interview, which precedes the Outward Bound course, Dale and his family set goals to work on during the course. The goals included developing better social skills and having a more positive attitude. Once on course he added, "quittin dippin"

tobacco to his goals. Dale's family stated that their goals for him included following rules at home and gaining anger management skills.

James

James is the next to arrive. He is 13 years old and arrives with both his parents. It seems to take James a long time to get out of his parent's car. After some coaxing, he slowly makes his way out of the car and over to where Dale and his family are sitting and waiting. James' looks like your everyday Florida teen: blond hair, baggy jeans, a t-shirt and a ball cap. While James and his family were waiting for the program to begin, he did not crack a smile once. His body language and demeanor told its own story. His body communicated that he did not want to be here at all.

Like Dale, James was also referred to Outward Bound for 'ungovernable behaviors', as well as 'poor school performance'. Specifically, James' parents said he was mouthy, disrespectful, did not complete his chores and always picked on his sibling. His mother stated that he was conceited and if people were not up to his standards, he picked on them. At school James was disrespectful to his teachers, disruptive in class, did not complete his homework and received referrals for talking. James' personal goals for course included gaining self-control, increasing self-esteem, and to learn to stop talking at inappropriate times. The goals James' parents had set during their intake interview were for him to learn self-control, to follow instructions and to have a better overall attitude.

John

John is a 14-year-old male who arrived to the Outward Bound base with his mother. For the hour before parents and kids said goodbye, John's mother was crying and holding on to him. She introduced her son as a "great kid who will make you all laugh throughout the course, and you are lucky to have him on your course." This support and out pouring of love was very different than many of the other participants. I wonder if this will impact his success in the program?

John was also referred to Outward Bound for 'ungovernable behaviors' and 'poor school performance'. Of note, both John and his family agreed there was no trouble at home and he was very responsible around the house. John participated in the FINS program because he had been having trouble at school for two years. He failed a grade and did not complete his homework and often failed to turn it in. John's personal goals included increasing self-esteem and confidence, as well as learning to have better judgment. His mother wanted to see her son learn better study habits, become more motivated and to improve his grades at school.

Todd

Todd is one of the oldest students at 17 years old. He arrived to Outward Bound in combat boots, fatigue pants, a tight black shirt, a buzzed hair cut and a new face piercing which was added "just for the program." Accompanying him were his father and his girlfriend. As with James and John, Todd was also referred to Outward Bound for 'ungovernable behaviors' at home and 'poor school performance'. His specific problem behaviors included being disrespectful to his parents, showing a lack of motivation and not taking responsibility for his actions. At school, he was

disruptive, had failing grades and had received suspensions and referrals for fighting. Todd's goals for himself while on course included learning to be more respectful, becoming more responsible and to stop swearing. His parents said they would like to see Todd learn self-control, respect and responsibility.

Les

Les is a 15-year-old male, who came to Outward Bound with his father and little sister. Les looked like a football player; he was a little overweight, short, stocky and tough looking. Les was referred to Outward Bound for 'ungovernable behaviors' and 'poor school performance'. At home he was unmotivated and had difficulty following directions. Les stated that he argued with his father on a daily basis. At school Les lacked motivation and was disruptive in class. Other issues he arrived to the program with included extensive drug use, stealing from family members and physically fighting with his sister.

Les stated that he was hoping to gain listening skills and to learn to be more responsible. He further added losing weight to his goals. He also stated that when he returned home, he wanted to create a 'real family'. Les' father hoped he would learn to respect others, become more responsible and to gain self-esteem.

Kelly

Kelly was the only girl in the program. She was the last student to arrive, and came with both her mother and father. At first Kelly was very quiet. As a rule, if there is only one girl registered on course, the issue must be discussed with the family to ensure the youth feels safe. Instructors approached Kelly and her parents and asked

what they would like to do. After a few minutes Kelly said "I'll just go, it will make you happy. I'll be all right."

Kelly was referred to Outward Bound for being 'ungovernable' at home and having 'poor school performance'. At home she was disrespectful, rebellious, impulsive and often made poor decisions. Her parents stated that she had low self-esteem and that she had lied and stolen. Other problems included fighting and running with the wrong crowd. Kelly hoped she would learn respect, and learn not to 'talk back'. Her parents hoped she would increase her self-esteem, stop lying and stealing and learn not to be so impulsive.

Summary

In summary, all six students had similar issues related to being ungovernable at home and showing poor school performance. Yet, they were also unique individuals who all had varying degrees of support from their families and challenges they needed to face. Please see Table 3 for a summary of participants.

It is interesting to think that all these youth arrive with a variety of issues and goals, and one camping trip may be able to work with each youth as an individual and help them each achieve their personal goals. This study will attempt to figure out how all these young people, with all these different issues and goals, can use a wilderness camping trip to address ungovernable behaviors and poor school performance.

Table 3

Individual characteristics

Name	Reason for referral	Goals
Dale	Ungovernable behaviors	Develop better social skills Have a more positive attitude Quit dipping tobacco
James	Ungovernable behaviors Poor school performance	Gain self control Increase self-esteem Stop talking at inappropriate times
John	Ungovernable behaviors Poor school performance	Increase self-esteem Increase self-confidence Learn to have better judgment
Todd	Ungovernable behaviors Poor school performance	Learn to be more respectful Become more responsible Stop swearing
Les	Ungovernable behaviors Poor school performance	Gain listening skills Learn to be more responsible
Kelly	Ungovernable behaviors Poor school performance	Learn to be more respectful Learn not to talk back

Chapter 5

Lessons Work

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the first ten days of the FINS program and highlights the first of two main themes I identified which seem to best correspond with the research questions. The first theme, which I discuss in this chapter is *Lessons work.* Chapter Six will discuss the second theme, *Lessons come home*. Themes were extracted from the interview responses given by all six participants. The transcripts were read and reread picking out common themes (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998), and are discussed as a means to help further answer the research questions about the experience of the FINS program, the positive and negative aspects of the program and how participation in the program may help with everyday life challenges. Also, to help further respond to the research questions, where appropriate, I included my own interpretations of events based on my past experience with the FINS program, my current undertaking of this research study and information gained from reviewing the literature related to youth at risk and wilderness programs.

The FINS program does not only involve traveling, living and surviving the wilderness environment, but also includes an academic or education component. On staff at the FINS base camp is an Education Coordinator. The Education Coordinator is responsible for training course instructors, visiting with students twice during the wilderness expedition (during the river visit and solo), and ensuring that the instructors are incorporating 225 minutes of structured education time each day. Lessons are taught a variety of different ways. These include structured meetings at

specific times during each day, which usually occur during the morning prior to leaving the campsite and in the evening prior to retiring to bed. Lessons are also taught prior to participating in an activity or at opportune times when issues arise as 'teachable moments'. Instructors prepare relevant lessons to deliver that are directly related to individual student needs and the overall group needs. Lessons are prepared prior to meeting the students based on the information gathered from the intake interviews.

These lessons may differ for each group, because each group has its own strengths, weaknesses, issues and goals. However, from talking to Outward Bound instructors and participating in a number of courses as an instructor myself, there is a core group of lessons that seem to make their way on to every course. A number of these lessons will be discussed throughout this chapter, as we follow the students through parts of their course experience.

Heading out

The youth and their families say their good byes, some hug and cry, while some just wave and walk away. The group of Outward Bound participants now begin their life in the woods. This morning the students spend three hours at the Outward Bound base camp getting their gear in order before driving off to their campsite where they will spend the first two nights of the program prior to being transported to the river to start their canoe trip. Instructors begin by talking with the students, finding out their likes and dislikes, hearing their stories and building rapport. The group begins by walking over to where all the gear has been stored. Once there, the lessons fly; how to river roll the rain gear, how to pack a sleeping bag, what the rules of the

course are, how to pack a gear bag, how to make a gear man, what the van rules are, what lightning drill is. The students are trying to make sense of it all. They ask "Why do we have to do this?" and complain, "I need help, I can't fit all my clothes in this stupid bag you gave us." This is the first hour of the program; there are still 18 more days of 'learning' to take place.

During this time the participants are relatively quiet. There is some joke telling and horse play going on, but it seems like the participants are just trying to fit in. They ask each other questions like "what school do you go to?", "why are you here?", "do you like to play football?" It is interesting to watch them find their place in the group and it will be interesting to watch whether the roles they are taking on now will continue throughout the program. I ask myself if this is the 'honeymoon' phase (Halas, 1999; Outward Bound paperwork), the calm before the storm. That is, the participants' quiet actions are noted as common behaviors during the early stages of group development.

Before heading off to the swim test and our first campsite, the instructors form a fork in the road using canoe paddles. The instructors ask the participants to place themselves somewhere on the road or on one of the forks, one being the wrong road, and the other being the right path. The participants place themselves on the road and they state individually, "I have put myself here because I have done some stupid things", or "I am here, trying, I am trying to do something right." The instructors tell the students "this course places each of you in your own spot, you now have the ability to choose which way you want to go." The instructors' further state that the students can choose to continue down the wrong road or take this new opportunity

that has been placed in front of them and travel the right path. The students nod their heads in agreement, and make comments like "I can change the way I am going" and "I can do this." Through their comments and expressions it is obvious that they realize they have been given the opportunity to change, to make a difference and to grow, but now it is up to them. The instructors will try to deliver an emotionally and physically safe course, they will teach lessons and help each individual through their own tough times, but in the end, it is the youths' responsibility to take what they learn and choose how to incorporate it. The road lesson is the first of many 'soft skill' lessons to be taught. Each day instructors teach at least two new lessons based on the skills and issues within the group. It is mid day. So far, so good.

The rest of this day and the next are spent at the Hatbill campsite, where participants continue to learn many of the 'hard skills' necessary for a successful wilderness expedition. I stayed with the group throughout these two days, after which I transported them to the river to begin their canoe expedition. After unloading the group, I returned to the Outward Bound base, and two days later I rejoined the group on the river.

When the storm winds blow

Two days after leaving the group, on the morning of day six, Lisa the Course Director and I are driven to a boat landing to rejoin the group. We immediately see many issues have arisen, have been dealt with and lessons have been taught. As I watch the participants, they are using FINS lingo commonly associated with lessons. Within the first few minutes of our arrival, one participant screams "circle up, I have a problem to discuss." It seems as though it has been a rough morning and it is only

about 11:00am. Once everyone is in the circle, Dale begins a CNR – a tool instructors have taught to help the students explain their problems. Dale begins by saying "my C (complaint) is no one is helping unload the boats, my N (need) is for you lazy people to get off your butts and help and my R (request) is for everyone to unload their boat." After Dale finished he yells "circle break, now lets get this show on the road." The group makes their way to the boats and begin to unload their gear. Already, it seems as though the program participants have begun to grasp an understanding of the lessons.

The youth are calling a few 'circle ups' (group meetings) and attempting to follow the steps of the lessons that have been taught. Many still need direction from instructors as they are not always able to do this on their own. This is still the beginning of the program and the group has only been taught a portion of the lessons to which they will be exposed to. This is why they are still in the training phase and have not moved into the main phase of the wilderness expedition. To be in main the group has to be able to complete all the 'hard skills' like setting up and breaking down camp without the help of instructors. They also need to begin to identify that there is a problem or an issue that needs to be addressed. At this point instructors are still prompting kids to call circle ups when issues arise, at which point they help them through the process of dealing with the problem. After the group unloaded their boats, it was time to reload them with the fresh food and gear Lisa and I brought. Immediately, Les has an issue with his canoe partner, who will not load the boat.

Their exchange follows:

> Les yells: "Will you fucking load the boat, I can't do this shit on my own, its' your stuff too."
>
> Amy (Assistant Instructor) asks: "Why don't you call a CNR, instead of just 'figure eighting' back and forth, I will help you through it."

Amy was able to help Les communicate this issue to his partner. Instead of just yelling back and forth (a figure 8) which typically ends up in a fist fight, Les calls a circle up. Les is reminded that he is learning new ways of confronting issues. They address the issue and once again get back to finishing getting the boats together so we could start paddling to our campsite.

About an hour into the paddle, Jennifer yells for us to pull over to land so that the group can go into 'lightning drill'. Lightning drill is a safety procedure that groups are expected to use when there is a 25-second count between lightning and thunder. Lightning drill involves everyone getting out of the canoes and onto land, putting on all their rain gear, and sitting still waiting for the storm to pass. In the summer in Florida rain forces you into a lightning drill at least once a day. The only problem today is instructors cannot seem to find any dry land, which only aggravates the situation. The students are yelling in a chorus of complaints: "lets just keep going", we don't have to go into lightning drill", "lightning drill sucks", "its over 100 degrees, I don't want to sit in my rain gear, its hardly lighting anyway." They paddle on, dragging the paddles through the water.

Finally, a small patch of dry land appears on the shore. We pull over and begin to unload and dress in our rain gear, even though the temperature is well above

100 degrees. The complaints accelerate: "Why do we have to fucking do this?" Les yells "I'm done", "I'm out" and throws his stuff on land and sits down. This drill sucks the life out of everyone, the students slump down on their sleeping pads, while the instructors sit quietly. No one talks. I think instructors are sitting quietly as an attempt to be good role models, trying to show that it is not that hard to sit still and quiet. I know I am suffering in my rain gear, so too must they be.

Once the lightning appears to stop, Lisa pulls the mail out which she has been holding since this morning. She does this to help redirect the negative energy flow of the group members. We still have a few miles to go and with the current mood, this will be a challenge. Mail is exciting to get while you are away from the comforts of home. Mail can also be a tough time if you are the unlucky person who does not get any. Such is the case for Les today, and he responds "I didn't get mail, nobody in my family cares for me." Les is the student who stole money from his family, maybe they do not feel he deserves mail?

Before loading back up, the instructors decide to play a game/lesson called WIN WIN (see appendix G), which, in the end can result in the reward of M & Ms for the participants if they successfully learn the lesson. Typically, the participants enjoy this, and actually learn a little bit about working together instead of fighting with each other. Or so we thought. As we begin loading the boats back up, there is a commotion and a circle up is called. Jennifer threatens Les saying, "I'll put you on a contract." Once in the circle up, we learn that Les attempted to hit Jennifer, although it is not exactly clear why. To me, his actions seem to be a direct reaction to not getting mail. In the 'circle up' Les accuses the instructors, saying that "you guys are

talking to me like a baby." Jennifer replies "because you came at me with a fist and I felt uncomfortable." Les responds saying "I think this camp sucks!" He then jumps in his canoe and sits down.

Instructors choose to leave the discussion there. They tell everyone that we must get back on the river and make it to our campsite as it is clear another storm appears to be on its way, and there is no more land until our next campsite. Also, if they continue to discuss this issue, Les' negative attitude may very easily transfer to the rest of the group. If that were to happen we would never get to camp. This whole situation reminds me how much instructors have to think on their feet, weighing options about how to address issues as they arise, when to deal with issues, and how to maintain the safety of the participants.

Two more hours of paddling in the heat, we finally make it to the campsite and begin the task of setting up and starting dinner. Everyone is tired, but during the first few minutes of arriving at the campsite, the instructors lose control of the group. Todd decides to take a time out, and while on his time out, leaves his shoes placed neatly on the side of the trail. He then runs away. Les swears at the staff saying "I hate this fucking shit, you won't let me bath." I see this as a fair complaint. The first priority is for the instructors to create a comfortable course, and bathing is a need and a comfort that is not being met by instructors. For some reason, instructors have turned bathing into a reward rather than a daily activity. James and Dale are not feeling well. John is upset and he cries "why can't I just go home?" Kelly is the only student doing any work, she sets up her tent, knowing that she will have her stuff in order before it is too dark.

The instructors, with my help, are able to get things under some control. Amy talks to John, while Jennifer tends to the sick boys. Lisa and Mark deal with the runaway, and I talk to Les. Les had come over to me saying "I need to talk to someone, is there anyone I can talk to?" But everyone was too busy, so I sat down with him. He was really mad, shaking, pacing and sweating, he said he was "boiling over", because he felt like he was being treated like a 12-year-old. I listen. I then suggest that he bring his feelings and suggestions up at the 'student forum', which is held each night. He says he will. Meanwhile, the group begins to settle.

Before dinner, instructors decide to break structure to help meet peoples' needs. I believe that this is something they will need to discuss as a team and work to incorporate into their daily routine in order to run a successful course. Some students take a bucket bath because it is too dark to go swimming, which is when the alligators *eat*. Some students change into dry clothing. Dinner is on, and people are hanging out, talking around the fire, relaxing. Camp has been a busy place to be.

As darkness falls, Todd returns to camp with Mark. As a consequence for his behavior he is told he will have to complete a few chores before he would be allowed to rejoin the group. Todd immediately states, "Fuck that, I am not doing that, I will do what I want." When he attempts to sit down with the group, Mark asks him to remove himself. "I've been back in the group for two fucking minutes" he says, "and you already want me out, I'm not doing any fucking contract, not doing any group time, I don't give a shit." After ripping up his contract, the instructors place Todd in full isolation, where he was removed from the group area.

The night is finally coming to an end for the students. During evening meeting the instructors teach a lesson on positive and negative leadership and give students' feedback. They debrief the day and brief the next day. Participants were also given the chance to give each other feedback and bring up any issues that they were having within the group or with the instructors. This night's meeting went really well. Les communicated, "It is not fair we can't bathe", and instructors agree, saying, "We will make it easier to bathe." Also, during this time participants were given the chance to give feedback to others. Kelly said "Dale, you did a great job paddling today." While some complimented others, some apologized for their behaviors during the day including Les who said: "I am sorry for freaking out on you all today, I will try harder tomorrow." I think this may be the turning point for Les.

After the participants go to bed, the instructional team, the course director and I stay up to discuss the course to this point. Lisa gave positive feedback saying instructors were "running a good course", and "that the issues arising were normal for a FINS course." Lisa reminded the instructors to not be so hard on themselves, that the kids were safe. She recognizes that they have good rapport with the students and states "they all seem invested in the program."

As discussed in previous chapters, rapport is an essential step in the qualitative data collection process. Rapport is important as a means to gather direct information from the participants. As important as it was for the researcher to build a positive relationship with students, it is just as important for instructors to build rapport with their students (Brendtro, Brokenleg & Van Bockern, 1992).

Lisa continues the discussion with reminders of particular issues, and she reminds staff that "chaos always ends." She reinforces the need to work on making sure they are meeting the participants' needs. We were all exhausted from a long, day full of bad weather, lightning drills, bad behaviors, and runaways. Lisa and I still had one more full day to spend with the group before returning to the Outward Bound base camp.

Day 2 of the river visit, day 7 of the course

A new day, a fresh start. The instructors and I wake hoping for a better day than yesterday. This will not be so. To begin with, it is hotter than yesterday and within the first half hour the instructors see Les place a pack of cigarettes under his gear bag. While Les was not looking, Jennifer confiscated the cigarettes, but said nothing. The instructors 'butt heads' trying to figure out how to address the trust issue. It is decided to first have the group participate in a learning initiative called 'Raging River' (see appendix H). The intent of Raging River is to teach the ideas of helping, relying on each other and trust. At the beginning of the initiative the students struggle to listen to each other:

John says: "You are not listening to me."

Kelly responds: "I have an idea."

Todd says: "I know, shut up and listen."

Not long after this discussion the group successfully completes the game. The lead instructor then begins the discussion of trust. She reports to the group that there is a serious issue and "trust has been lost." Before she is able to say anything else, Les shouts "I found them in the bushes they're mine, can I have them back please?"

The group is unclear about what is going on. The instructors inform the rest of the group that they found cigarettes in one student's personal items. Todd says "I stole them yesterday when I was on the run, they're mine." Some students start to blame the instructors saying that they are "not innocent either." They claim to have "seen smoking by instructors, saw them flicking a cherry and passing a cig around." This is an unfounded claim. I see this as an attempt by the students to switch the focus from their negative behavior on to the instructors.

Jennifer ignores the students' accusation and tries to continue on with the circle. If she chooses to fight every comment or issue the group will never move forward. As mentioned earlier, it is important for instructors to know what battles to fight and which ones to let go. Some students sit down, while others continue to stand in a circle. This non-conformity becomes a new problem, which Jennifer decides to deal with. The group was told that when in a circle up everyone needs to be on the same level. When the instructors try to restore control within the group, the following exchange occurs:

> Todd says: "My feet hurt, I can't stand up."
>
> Les replies: "I don't want to sit down."
>
> Jennifer states: "Choose up or down as a group."
>
> Les says: "I don't see how trust was lost, wow, I found some fucking cigarettes. It was me, what are you going to do, kick me out? Go ahead, why are you going through my stuff, anyway I found it in a boat."

The rest of the students are starting to become annoyed when they realize that the longer they stay on land, the later they are going to be arriving to the next camp, and

the more they are going to have to be on the river in the mid day heat. Dale says "next time you find something on the ground why don't you just give it to them, lets get this show on the road." Like day one, he is on top of things.

When Dale first arrived he stated that living in the wilderness "is everyday stuff", which may be why he is aware of what needs to take place during the day. To have a good day, he has been able to take the 'hard skills' and understand how they work in the program. He now begins the stage of learning to transfer this skill to the other members of the group. Les walks away, ignoring Dale.

After more than three hours we are finally in the boats and on the river paddling. It is so hot we have to stop every half-hour to dip in the water. This is something I almost always refuse to do out of fear of alligators and other creepy creatures that seem to reside in the Florida wilderness waterways. This heat only makes people more annoyed and frustrated and soon Todd and Les, who are canoe partners today, threaten each other.

Todd threatens: "I am going to throw this paddle at you if you don't shut up."

Les yells: "Fuck you, just paddle."

Todd is once again isolated from the group. He is placed in Mark's canoe, and they stay behind the rest of the paddling convoy. Todd states "I am not going to follow your stupid rules anymore."

We paddle on, stroke after stroke, the lush green Florida landscape goes by. It seems unbelievable but after over six hours on the river in the killer heat, we actually arrive at our campsite. Here, we meet up with the Education Coordinator who is going to spend the evening with us and take Lisa and I back in the morning. Upon

arriving to camp the group is given time to 'chill out', bathe, swim and cool down. After this break, we finally sit down for lunch, even though it is after 4:00pm. After we eat the group is called together.

This time they are given a challenge that can move the group from Training expedition to Main expedition. They are told they have 45 minutes to set up camp in silence. The group responds to this really well. Everyone seems so excited, they are moving really quickly, working together, signing to each other. All through this Todd continues to be away from the group, which makes me wonder if this could be the reason for the group's success. Soon, the group forms a circle signaling they are done. When they are told they only took 41 minutes, they are all so excited, jumping up and down, screaming. They are asked, "What did it take", and respond, "teamwork, no talking, focus!" One reason instructors chose to have the group participate in a challenge is because challenges are seen to have the ability to restore excitement and energy into the group. In fact, the student's positive energy appears to have dramatically increased after they felt the success of completing the task which was set in front of them.

After camp set up the group is given 20 minutes to hang out. They are then briefed on mini solo. Mini solo is an activity some instructors choose to do to help the students get ready for the 48 hour solo expedition, which will take place in less than two days. Mini solo also gives the instructors the opportunity to relax and regain their positive energy, something that is needed after this day. Each participant is taken to a private spot and will be brought back just before bed time. During mini

solo the instructors check on the students a few times, bring them food and meet with each other to plan the next stage of the expedition.

My last few hours camping with the group, and I am exhausted. Even though I have only been with the group for 48 hours, I feel I have been through a tornado: stealing, fighting, threatening, running away and more. In the morning, the Education Coordinator, Lisa and I prepare to leave. We are lucky to be able to return to base camp, but the instructors do not have this luxury. Before leaving we have to help the group with one final task. The group is confronted with a major challenge this morning. They have to portage their gear from one side of the river, over the road/ bridge and reload it on to the other side of the river. Portages are not always the most difficult obstacles in the world, but this one is a true challenge. It is about a mile long, and the group has a large amount of heavy gear.

The instructors decide to give the group a challenge. They have five minutes to plan as a group, and then load as much gear as they can into the van within a two minute period. We would then drive the gear over to the unloading spot. Whatever gear they are not able to get into the van will have to be carried over. Their success will depend on how well they work together. The students jump at the challenge.

The students begin quickly by forming a circle. Once in the circle each individual is given a chance to suggest what would be the best way to get everything in. Their problem solving demonstrates a real commitment to making this project work.

Back in the group, Les suggests: "Lets load all the water first."

Todd adds: "We should make sure we get the food bins in, they are heavy fuckers."

Kelly states: "I'm small I can be in the van staging the gear, and you all can pass it to me."

When the group is given the go ahead, they put their plan in action, working together, forming a chain, passing gear and communicating. Given yesterday's group dynamics, this is an amazing site to watch. It seems the time the instructors have been spending on teamwork is paying off. Through their actions yesterday at camp set up and today with the portage, the students have shown they deserve to be on Main expedition. We drive the gear to the other side of the river and the three of us return to the Outward Bound base.

Discussion

Throughout the first ten days with the participants, I sat down and interviewed the students on two separate occasions. The first was a more informal discussion during the second day on the program. The second was a more formal interview that took place during the river visit. During these interviews, all participants explained to me that they have really "been learning" and "finding the lessons useful" in helping them deal with their issues both individually and as a group. They seem to realize that they have been taught a new way of looking at an argument. Instead of just fighting back and forth (doing a figure 8), they have gained the skills and abilities to break down issues and isolate particular aspects of the problem, after which they can create a more concrete discussion and further decide an appropriate method of dealing with the issue. These skills have also led the group to be successful in other areas of

the program. An example of this was seen in the portage challenge. The group was able to plan and work together, putting aside their issues to create a successful plan. When I asked the participants "what do you do when you have trouble on the river?", their responses formed two mini cluster themes which I have organized as *strategies* and *outcomes*. Please see Table 4.1 for a representation of textual descriptions supporting the mini cluster theme *strategies* and Table 4.2 for the mini cluster theme *outcomes*.

Strategies

The lessons that are delivered each day become strategies for dealing with issues and problems. All of the students found the tools they were gaining were giving them different ways to talk about, deal with and resolve problems. Their individual responses to my question follow:

Kelly said: "Do a CNR."

Les reported: "At home I would of gone out and smoked a blunt but here its', I deal with them, I look at them."

John replied: "The complaint, need, request thing. Instead of just doing the complaining and need I will request things."

According to student responses, the lessons the instructors have been teaching have made an impact on their personal behaviors. Stumbo (1999) stated that youth at risk need to learn skills, and these tools can be taught in a variety of different ways. During the beginning of the program, prior to the students having any new skills, life at camp was rough. The days were filled with fights and arguments. As the students continued to gain more tools such as communication strategies and anger

management techniques their days began to get better and run more smoothly. With the increased amount of lessons being delivered, the students became more successful. Instead of fighting all the time, the group worked together and because of this began to feel success.

Table 4.1

Theme 1- Lessons work; the importance of lessons
Strategies
Talk about the problem and try and solve it.
People need to talk about their problems instead of letting their mind over, or overflow their mouth.
Sit down and talk about it and try and compromise with one another.
If you have a problem you go talk to the group leader, not the adult but the group leader.
There was one point where me and Dale got in a really big argument, probably that, instead of you know arguing back and forth doing a figure 8 probably call a gunnel up.
CNR (6X).
Call PROPS (people respecting other people speaking) and help people out a lot more.
I am learning to control my anger a little bit, like usually when I use aggressive I can come back quickly and turn it into assertive.

Note: These direct responses come from all six students and were gathered during the first 10 days of the FINS program. These responses are only a representation of the comments made by students.

Outcomes

Through learning lessons and gaining skills the participants were not only developing skills to be better prepared in dealing with problems, but they also received positive outcomes. For example, James connected his experience on the Outward Bound course with his growth in taking on more responsibility.

> James said: "It teaches me keep up with responsibilities and all those things that need to be done instead of slacking away and letting other people do my work for me."

As the course progressed these outcomes became more visible. During the beginning there were many fights and arguments about whose job it was to put the fire out or to load the boats. But by the time the group reached the portage we saw that loading the van and setting up camp the night before did not take as long. This finding can be connected with the fact that consequences in the wilderness are immediate (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1999; Woodbury, 1994). This group has seen and felt that fighting and struggling through each minute of each day only makes the day longer and harder. The students have apparently realized, if they can keep up these more responsible behaviors, a positive consequence for the final expedition may mean less time on the river and more time relaxing at camp. The group has seen and felt the benefits of completing their tasks, and they have been rewarded with feeling better about themselves. Kelly explained this, saying how she is "learning...self respect and respect for others."

Table 4.2

Theme 1- Lessons work; the importance of lessons
Outcomes
I'm learning how, my self respect and respect for others.
Self discipline, self respect, communication, dealing with your problems.
Do things that I never thought I could do, stuff that I never thought possible.
Trust in myself.
(I felt) pretty damn good, when I was able to complete them (challenges).
I feel proud of myself.

Note: These direct responses come from all six students and were gathered during the first 10 days of the FINS program. These responses are only a representation of the comments made by students.

In the review of literature it was discussed how a substantial amount of research focused on the increase in self-esteem within the young people who participate in wilderness programs (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1999; Hendee & Brown, 1987; Milner & Nisbet, 1997; Nassar-McMillians & Cashwell, 1997; Witt & Crompton, 1996; Woodbury, 1998). This was also supported by the findings in this study. Some of the students commented that they participated in a number of activities which they "never thought we could do." Further, it was not only shown that growth in self-esteem was a positive outcome of participating in the FINS program, but more so, the qualitative nature of this study showed that learning new skills and tools, through the various lessons and activities helped build self-esteem. Through trying new activities, participating in challenging activities (Milner &

Nisbet, 1997), stepping out of one's comfort zone (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1999), away from the youths' normal environment (Witt & Crompton, 1996), the participants have had the opportunity to feel success. For many, this may have been the first time.

Summary

For Outward Bound, lessons arise at all different times, and are delivered in a variety of different methods. Each individual participant arrives with their own problems, goals and mindset. They all participate in the same program, but each have their own way of interpreting what is being taught to them. Many of these six participants took hold of lessons that were working for them and incorporated them into their daily routine on the FINS program. Lessons were not only taught to the group as a whole, but individuals were taught new skills through lessons that would help them succeed both with their goals on course and hopefully, goals at home.

While observing the group it was evident that the youth were using their new skills. Another interesting aspect in regard to these initial lessons was how the progression seemed to flow concurrently with the stages of the FINS program. During the training phase, the lessons that were delivered were primarily the 'hard skills', the skills necessary to live comfortably in the woods. As these skills developed, the participants were ready and open to learn new skills and grow in a different way. As the group moved from the training phase to the main phase of the wilderness expedition, the group also progressed with learning new lessons, which were more focused on 'soft skill' development. When talking with participants, they reported that in the beginning they were not really sure what they were learning, or whether they were learning anything at all. As they continued to move further down

the river, they were beginning to realize all the skills, lessons and tools that they were gaining. They also began to realize that they could achieve their goals by utilizing these skills.

Lessons have a dominant place in the program. Through my discussions and observations of the group I now realize how important lessons are to the success of the youth in the program. In the story included in Chapter 1, the instructors decided to deal with the issues that arose. Similar to this study's course, the students gained skills through the instructors' persistence, patience and work. They were not just taking a trip down the river. When I worked as an instructor I always thought the youth were just doing the lessons to get through the course, and that every now and then there may have been one participant who truly grew from learning the lessons. Now, I realize, specifically for this group, how important and meaningful the lessons are. In the next section, I will explain how these lessons also work when the youth return home.

Chapter 6

Lessons Come Home

Solo expedition: The turning point

Solo expedition encompasses 48 hours where each individual is brought out to a private camping site that is located away from the rest of the group members. The sites are small and are tucked in the woods. This leaves little worry that participants will try to run away or signal to other group members who may be completing their solo in a site near by.

To many solo is a time of reflection. It is a time for each individual to think back on their behaviors during the first 10 days of course and life back at home before Outward Bound. During the solo interviews with students many stated that Outward Bound includes a solo expedition "because it makes you think." Further, solo is the time when the participants begin to focus on the future, on the final phase of the program, and more so, on what they are going to do at home. Kelly discussed how during final she was going to "work differently." She also talked about the goals she was working on during solo, which included, getting ready for home. Kelly stated that when she gets home she was planning on "talking to her parents, doing a CNR and not blowing up and going to her room", if issues arose. These two factors, the removal from the group and the time of reflection, are the aspects of solo that seem to reflect the Native Vision Quests (Delaney, 1995; McCormick, 1997).

Solo seems to be the turning point in the program, not only for the students but also for instructors. While the participants are on solo, instructors work on plans for

the final phase of the wilderness expedition. They reported to me that during final they teach lessons more focused on going home than getting through the course.

Solo can be a very relaxing time for instructors, a time for them to regenerate their energy and get ready for the last few days on course. Overall, solo is a very effective activity. Students reported that solo gave them the opportunity to "think and get the truth out", and "to have a break before final, getting it all done."

We are almost home

After the completion of the solo expedition the group was once again returned to the river to complete the final phase. I did not participate in final, but was there three days later to pick the group up and bring them back to base camp where they finished the last days of the wilderness program and prepared to get ready to go home. When I arrived the group was in great spirits, saying "we beat you here, ha ha", or "you are slow, we want our showers." Throughout this day the group participated in cleaning their gear, a service project, and an overall course debrief. Everyone was ready to go home. And, they continually stated that they were excited about going home. For example:

> Kelly said, "I can't wait till tomorrow, I am going to hug my parents and then take a long, long shower."
>
> Les stated, "As soon as I see my dad, I am going to run over and tell him I love him."

Follow up

Each participant is involved in two home visits and one school visit. I participated in all of these visits. It is always interesting to see the youth back in their

'normal' environment. For some reason they all look different. I could never put my finger on what it is that is different, whether it is just because they are clean or because they have actually grown up or changed. These visits gave me the opportunity to see what effects the FINS program may have had. I saw participants sitting and discussing issues with their parents. When we arrived at Kelly's house for her first home visit, her parents made us an incredible southern meal. Over dinner, the course instructors discussed Kelly's progress since returning home. Kelly reported that, "I have been pretty good, I have had a few issues, but like you taught us on the river, I am taking a time out, thinking my thoughts through and then coming to discuss them with my parents, instead of just yelling and slamming my door."

Other evidence of growth was seen with John at school. On course, instructors found that due to the lack of a backpack, John rarely brought homework home to complete. During the school visit, John told his teachers he did not bring work home because he did not have a backpack, at which point they took him to the supply room and gave him all the necessary supplies he needed. When instructors checked in with him during the last home visit, he reported that he had been handing in homework on time, and that his teachers stated they were very proud of him.

Lessons come home

As discussed in the literature review, Gass (1999) describes the necessity to transfer skills gained in the wilderness environment to the home environment. One concept that arose through the observations and interviews with the participants was that not only were the lessons helpful in dealing with issues during the wilderness expedition, but they were also beneficial for the participants and their families once

they returned home (Please see Table 5 for a representation of textual descriptions further supporting this theme). In response to my questions Les and John replied:

> Les said, "Think what would I do if I was out in the woods, go running, shut my door…turn off the tv and really sit down and think."
>
> John mentioned, "I don't get mad as easily…cause of all the stuff that we had to do."

The lessons which were taught were delivered in such away that the skills were not only useful while participating in the wilderness expedition, but were discussed in ways that the youth would be able to use their new skills at home. As an instructor, I always said to the students that you are not going to go home and call a 'circle up', but you are going to go home and be able to calmly and rationally walk yourself through a CNR. Apparently, this is what the students realized.

Another benefit of the FINS program and the ability of lessons to transfer home is the involvement of family members. As important as the lessons were to the participants, an important aspect of the program is the parent involvement piece. On two separate occasions the youths' parents participated in meetings to teach them the lessons that the youth were finding useful. This was very helpful in the transition from the wilderness environment to the home environment because both were able to use the same language and both had an understanding of how the lessons worked. Families commented:

> Kelly: "Its like I said before, we are doing good now. Following the contract, fair fighting, and not fair fighting."

Parent: "We are doing the things made on the contract. We are following the contract and it seems to be working."

Table 5

Theme 2 - Lessons come home; the importance of transfer

By then I should have the hang of it.
My grandpa and I are getting along a lot better, we are talking a lot more.
I am using everything.
I am using how to control my anger, what to do when I get angry, I am using like CNR and all that.
I can use the materials I have learned.
Taking time outs.
I am doing good in school now.

Note: These direct responses come from all six students and were gathered during final phase, home and school visits and the graduation ceremony. These responses are only a representation of the comments made by students.

Summary

As important as it is to use the lessons in the Outward Bound program, the goal of Outward Bound is to alter the path that the participants are on in their daily life and help to prevent the youth from heading or continuing to head down the wrong path. Hirsch (1999) states that adventure programs aim to change interpersonal and intrapersonal behaviors. Through discussions and observations with the participants and their families, it became obvious that this was occurring.. The participants had progressed with their skills from day one of the course and continued to grow and evolve as the course continued. With the parents learning some of the same skills and

language, the families were able to continue their growth after the completion of the wilderness expedition.

We are one

Another concept that began to emerge through the data analysis was the idea that even though all six participants come from different backgrounds with different problems, being together as a group helped them grow and succeed. When any number of people are put together and expected to live and work as a group for an extended length of time, relationships form, people take on roles, and trust and reliance can or cannot be built. This was no different for this group. From day one we saw the participants trying to find their place in the group. Youth at risk are commonly defined as outcasts or problem makers or any number of other words that have negative connotations. As the youth worked to find their place in the group roles were different here than at school or back home. Here, everyone had the chance and opportunity to succeed, fail and try again. Here, people were not pulled down in ways they are back home for example, the need to steal a car or smoke drugs to be cool or to be accepted as part of a group. Here, to be cool meant being able to run the whole morning run without stopping or to be able to get mad but then turn it around and work through it. Life is different in the woods. It is simple and there are small things you have to do to be successful and to feel good about yourself. This was one aspect of the program that the participants realized was helping them change their ways and head down the right path. Many of the participants stated that being able to be themselves was an aspect of the program that they thrived on. This was also a skill

many continued at home. Please see Table 6 for a representation of textual descriptions to support this emerging concept.

Table 6

Emerging idea- We are one; the importance of belonging to a group

A good experience, just being around people that you don't really know and getting to know them better and you know having people around to talk to when you need someone to talk to and having fun.
Always have someone to talk to.
Seeing everybody else's problems and mine, and really looking at them in a different perspective.
Talking about our problems and what I can do to solve them, having other people with the same kind of problems and that they are out here dealing with them and you know teamwork, they help you deal with them, you help them deal with them.
Just having a problem in the group and you know calling circle up and dealing with them, getting to talk about them.
Just being myself.

Note: These direct responses come from all six students and were gathered throughout the entire FINS program. These responses are only a representation of the comments made by students.

Conclusion

The goal of these chapters was to bring the reader to the FINS experience. Through ethnographic descriptions, the reader may be able to experience the feel of the chaotic days involved in working with youth at risk in a wilderness environment. This is important so readers can have a better understanding of the life on a FINS course. The descriptions were also provided as a means to show what occurs during

specific days on course, and how learning takes place. The descriptions showed that as the course progressed and lessons became clear, students improved.

These chapters also provided responses to the research questions. The two themes were constructed to show how the students believed the lessons were the most important aspect of the program. Also, the topic of transfer of learning came forth. Not only is it important for the lessons to be useful in the wilderness, but a positive outcome of the FINS program is that the skills gained from the lessons are useful in the home environment. The concept of *we are one* was included to highlight the importance of being part of a group. The ethnographic and textual descriptions provide evidence to support the idea that being part of a group of individuals dealing with similar issues and problems, positively affects the participants.

This study also showed that even though growth in self-esteem was an aspect of the youths' participation, the youth felt it was the tools they were gaining and choosing to use, that lead to the growth in self-esteem. Finally, in regards to lessons, this study highlighted how the lessons learned by participating in the FINS program are able to teach factors such as responsibility and goal setting. These two behaviors are important both in family life and the school environment.

The final chapter of this thesis will discuss the six questions Ellis (1998) suggests to use to evaluate qualitative research projects. This final evaluation is used as a means to further ensure the research questions have been addressed.

Chapter 7

Summary and Recommendations

Introduction

My past involvement with Outward Bound led me to this study. Due to my personal history as a FINS instructor, I wanted the opportunity to try and understand what it was about the Outward Bound FINS program that was affecting it's participants, if at all. In my interpretation of the data, I tried to show how the lessons learned during the wilderness expedition transferred home. Now that the research had been completed and the data analyzed, the next step in the process is to go back and see whether the research findings had effects with regard to myself as the researcher, for the program and in relation to the existing body of literature. To do this I will use Ellis' (1998) six questions for which she suggests qualitative researchers use to evaluate their research findings. I used these questions to guide my evaluation, as a means to see whether the findings I constructed answered the research questions. Following will be a break down of Ellis' questions as they relate to the research questions.

1. Is it plausible, convincing?

Ellis' asks if the findings from the study are plausible and convincing. The interpretations constructed from the data analysis show that there are benefits from participating in the FINS program. These benefits come from participating in a program where one is taught lessons and skills that help deal with issues and that these skills are able to transfer to their home environment. The ethnographic

descriptions provide a means to show the process of how skill development takes place.

Hopefully, future FINS instructors as well as leaders of other wilderness school can continue to further their success with youth at risk by incorporating skill lessons which can be transferred to the youths' normal life. I believe that the comments made by the participants in this study clearly show that they were learning ways to deal with the issues in their lives. This was further supported by the observations recorded while participating on the FINS program. As the researcher, I was able to see individuals making positive changes in their lives based on skills gained from participating in the FINS program.

2. Does it fit with other material we know?

After returning from collecting data, a more complete literature review was conducted which also explored the concept of transfer (Gass, 1998). Gass describes the ability to transfer information gained while participating in a wilderness program as an integral piece of adventure education. He further discusses the importance for the benefits gained while in the wilderness environment be able to transfer to the home environment. This concept was supported by the theme *Lessons Come Home*, which showed that it is not only important that skills are being gained while participating in a wilderness education program, but more so, that these skills are able to transfer to the participants' home life.

Much of the existing literature revolves around growth in self-esteem. This was also found to be true in this study. Many of the participants stated that they never believed they would be able to accomplish the many tasks that they successfully

completed while participating in the FINS program. However, this study not only demonstrated that self-esteem growth was a positive outcome of participating in the FINS program, but further illustrated that there were specific aspects of the program which affected this personal growth.

3. Does it have the power to change practice?

I believe that the findings from this study definitely have the power to change practice, both within Outward Bound, as well as other wilderness based programs. Outward Bound courses give instructors time during course preparation days to develop their course. This includes developing the structure of the course – for example, instructors decide if they are going to be very strict or laid back. Course preparation also involves discussions surrounding how issues will be dealt with, and what roles instructors will take.

The instructors are also given time to work with the Education Coordinator to develop the education component of the course. Even though the instructors will change the lessons throughout the program depending on the needs of the students, preparation time gives them the opportunity to gather resources and prepare different lessons. Although time is allocated for lesson building, it is only a small segment of the course preparation days. With the findings from this study, it is hoped that instructors will realize how important and pertinent lessons are, and will spend more time gathering a variety of lessons so they can be prepared for any issue that may arise.

As for other wilderness schools, many of which may not include structured education time, the findings from this study suggest that lessons are a very important

piece to a wilderness education program. Using the results of this study, they may begin to create an education component to their programs.

4. Has the researcher's understanding been transformed?

This study has shown me how important lessons are to the success of youth who participate in the FINS program. I never realized that the lessons could be the main aspect of the program that positively affected the students. If I were to do a course again, I would focus the majority of the course preparation days on gathering a variety of lessons that could be used for the endless number of issues that arise while working with youth at risk. Further to this, I would focus a tremendous amount of energy discussing with the students how the lessons from the wilderness environment can help them at home.

Overall, I have grown from this study. I feel I am better equipped to create a successful wilderness experience for youth at risk. I feel that many of the questions I entered this study with have been answered, as I feel I am more aware of what benefits students of the FINS program.

5. Has a solution been uncovered?

I entered this study with three research questions. My first research question focused on the experience of the FINS program, and I think this can be best summed up by Dale who said, "it's an experience some people have to take." As reported in the literature review, the FINS experience is a challenging experience that offers the opportunity for trying new activities and learning new skills. FINS students' gain many benefits from participating. Some stated they were proud of themselves for being able to complete activities they never thought possible, others reported they did

increase their self-esteem. I believe the experience is different for everyone. Todd, who hated the entire program and did everything in his power to challenge it by running away and refusing to follow course rules, successfully completed the program and stated that he can see how it "may benefit me somewhere down the road." On the other end of the scale there was Les, who truly wanted to succeed on the program. Even though he had difficulty throughout the program he worked incredibly hard, and when asked how his family was doing, he replied "we are good, we are more of a family."

Each individual has his or her own experience and has a choice to make the program what they want it to be. They can be like Todd and fight the whole time and hate life for the 18 days or they can choose to be like Les and work at being successful. However, in the end, each and every participant is affected and changed in one way or another by their participation in the program. From the smallest extent where they can say they participated in an Outward Bound program, to being able to say that this program changed their life for the better, all participants' are provided opportunities to bring their own meaning to their participation in the program.

The second question asked was, what were the positive and negative aspects of participating in the FINS program? The participants all agreed the program was a positive experience, even though some stated "they were hating life", at times throughout the wilderness expedition. The participants reported that they gained a tremendous amount of 'hard' and 'soft' skills because of the lessons taught throughout the program. This information surprised me. I had always believed there was an importance to the lessons, but not to this extent. With this knowledge I plan to

write a summary report which can be sent to the Outward Bound program as well as to other wilderness schools. I further hope to present the findings from this study at the HIOB-Florida Programs yearly staff training. It is then hoped that changes will be made in the form of more time and money spent developing the education component. This would include more time and energy spent planning and preparing lessons for the course. I also hope instructors will take more time to explore the needs of their group and the variety of lessons available to them.

Although I asked the participants to report to me any aspects of the program that they did not think were important, they all stated there was nothing within the program that was not helping them. The only answer I received in regards to negative aspects was the bugs and the lightning drills, something the program has no control over. I found this to be very interesting because each day there was complaining about one thing or another. I imagined there would be aspects of the program some students would feel were unnecessary.

The final research question looked at transfer. As reported in the discussion of themes, the way the instructors taught the lessons and worked with individual participants, giving them tips and tools on how to use the lessons at home, was what was important. The fact that there was parental involvement in the program made all the difference to the successful use of the lessons at home. Without this common knowledge of terms and skills, the families may not have been able to understand each other. This is an important aspect of the success of the FINS program and a piece that I would consider an essential part of any program working with youth at risk.

6. Have any new possibilities been opened up for the researcher, research participants, and the structure of the context?

I do not believe any new possibilities have been opened up for the research participants. The participants agreed to participate in this study and the FINS program. At the completion of the FINS program their commitment to Outward Bound and this study ended. Even though new possibilities have not been opened up for the participants, I do believe that participating in this study may have been beneficial. Participants were given the opportunity and time to really sit down and think about what they were learning, if they felt they were learning anything at all. Having me question them at a variety of times through out the program allowed them the opportunity to explore their growth as well as discuss and plan their future.

However, I do believe that new possibilities have been opened up for the researcher. In the following section ideas for future research will be discussed. Also, as the researcher, and as a past instructor and probably a future instructor, I have developed many new ideas for creating a positive wilderness experience based on the findings from this study.

In conclusion, this study has made a significant impact on me as the researcher. My knowledge and understanding of the experience and what is affecting the participants have grown and expanded. With this new knowledge I looked back on my past courses and realized that when I worked with a group of instructors who took their time and focused energy on teaching, we really made a difference in the lives of our students. I now realize that the time I spent creating new lessons was what created a more successful course. It is my goal now to communicate my findings to

Outward Bound and hope that this information will inspire instructors to spend time and energy to ensure lessons are taught and fully integrated into the participants' lives.

Future research

This interpretive case study showed how lessons and the ability to transfer the skills home are important aspects of a wilderness program. With this new understanding, new questions arise. For example, how long did the families use the lessons and tools they were taught while participating in the FINS program? Did the youth continue down the 'right road' or did anyone resume their past behaviors? Stated another way, what are the longitudinal effects of participating in the FINS program?

Through this investigation, a number of other questions and interesting areas to study arose surrounding the idea of youth at risk. One area that developed was the idea that many, if not all, youth at risk are angry. From my past experience with Outward Bound and observing the participants in this study, it seems they all enter the program angry. I believe it would be interesting to study if all youth at risk are angry. Further, is this anger appropriate?

Another area that I hope to study is to clearly define the meaning of wilderness education and the many terms used as explanations for what wilderness education is. While reviewing the existing literature there were many different words and phrases people used to define wilderness programs and I believe it would be interesting to try to define and attach meaning to each of them. These are a few of the interesting

questions I hope to examine in future research studies. I also hope to continue to add to the existing body of literature.

To conclude I believe it is important to note that even the best instructor with the most creative lesson plans maybe able to create a positive learning environment, but when it comes right down to it, it is the participants' choice to take the information and use it or not. The wilderness experience forces you to make the "right" choices or you may face unwanted consequences. As with Les, he believed that the reason he was successful in the program was that he "took the right road." I just hope that he and the rest of this group will continue to utilize the lessons they were taught and continue to grow from their involvement with the Outward Bound program.

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Appendix A

Student checklist: Training phase to Main phase (copied from group journal)

Task	Completed	
1. Wake up to morning meeting in 3 hours.	_____	_____
2. Lunch in one hour.	_____	_____
3. Camp set up in 45 minutes.	_____	_____
4. Chow circle to evening meeting in one hour.	_____	_____
5. Follow tent rules.	_____	_____
6. Follow convoy rules.	_____	_____

Student checklist: Main phase to Final phase (copied from group journal)

Task	Completed
1. Complete one instructor challenge.	_____
2. No instructor reminders about basic expectations for one day.	_____
3. Call all issue circle ups for one full day.	_____
4. All consequences completed.	_____

Appendix B

Information sheet for students

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to better understand the students' experience of participating in a wilderness program. We would like to know what students believe are the positive and negative aspects of the program so that future instructors and staff can design better programs that are more helpful to the students.

Participation

During the program, you will be asked to do a number of different things. Throughout the program you will be interviewed, which will be tape recorded using a hand held audio recorder. Questions during these interviews will focus on what you have been doing during the course, whether you think the program is benefiting you or not, and why. The interviews will take anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour, and will occur periodically throughout the whole FINS program.

The researcher will participate in the program at a number of different times throughout the 28 days. During these times the researcher will observe you involved in the variety of activities which take place during the course. The researcher will record important information either in a journal or into a hand held tape recorder. This information will then be examined in conjunction with the interview transcripts to see how specific aspects of the program benefit or do not benefit you, the student.

Finally, the researcher will gather relevant program documents including Outward Bound school information and information from student files. Your course journal will also be requested for review by the researcher. This information will be examined to help generate a clear picture of the school, the types of students who participate in the program, and how the wilderness program can be helpful to the students.

Helpful information

It is your choice whether or not you would like to participate. If you decide to participate and then later change your mind, you are free to drop out. Everything you say will be kept confidential. Your name and course number will not be used at anytime. Instead a pseudonym will be used and no one but the researcher will have your personal information. The tapes used for interviews will be transcribed after the completion of the FINS program and will then be erased. The interview transcripts, observation field notes, and relevant documents will be kept in a locked filing cabinet.

Your participation in this study will in no way affect your graduation status in the course! All information that is shared with the researcher will be kept confidential from instructors, so if there is information that you would like to discuss regarding instructors, it will not be communicated to them, unless you choose to have this information disclosed.

For your safety

As with Outward Bound instructors, the researcher is legally required to report any information regarding sensitive issues. Although all information collected during the research study will be kept confidential, any information that affects your safety will have to be reported, including threats of suicide, abuse or running away.

For you

Participating in this research project will allow you the opportunity to share the positive and negatives of participating in the FINS program. With this information, instructors will be better trained and will create programs that better suit the needs of the students. You are able to have a voice in what you and others are doing!

The researcher is a former instructor with Outward Bound, who is currently conducting graduate work at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada, and will be available to answer any questions you may have. You can also speak with her graduate advisors, Dr. Halas and Dr. Campbell, from the University of Manitoba, at ***-***-****.

If you agree to participate in this study, please fill out the attached consent form. You will be given a copy of the signed consent forms to keep in your files.

Thank you very much,

Julie Booke, Graduate Student
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies
University of Manitoba

Appendix C

Examples of Outward Bound protocol

Suicide: If instructors think or suspect a student is contemplating suicide, they would ask the student outright "Are you thinking about hurting or killing yourself?" If the answer is yes, that student is put on a 24 hour watch until the student can be removed from course, at which time the Course Director will assess the level of lethality. During the period of time where the student is waiting to be picked up, the instructor sitting with him/her would interview the student for level of lethality and complete a contract with the student, agreeing to not kill themselves for at least 24 hours. Instructors would also attempt to remove challenging situations (for example, changing the canoe route or removing stressful activities, see HIOB Instructor field manual, 1993).

Runaway: Instructors must be aware of the location of students at all times and pay close attention during stressful times or periods where the group is close to roads or communities. If instructors suspect a student of running they will ask him/her to explain his or her intent. If a student(s) does runaway, the instructor would follow him/her until he/she returns to the group, he/she is picked up by someone from Outward Bound, or the situation becomes unsafe. Unsafe situations include the student getting into a car or entering a dangerous area. If this occurs the local law enforcement would be called to help with the situation. Instructors would phone the Course Director, inform them of the situation, and create a plan which includes call back points and search ideas (HIOB Instructor field manual, 1993).

Criminal behavior: If students are found to be involved in any criminal activities (e.g., drugs, stealing) while participating in the program, the researcher would inform the course instructors. If this should occur, it would be up to the instructors to decide what would transpire.

Appendix D

Student participation consent form

Project title: Wilderness education for youth at risk: an interpretive case study

Please read the following and sign the bottom if you agree to participate in the study.

1. My participation in this study is voluntary.
2. Information obtained will be kept confidential.
3. Participating in the study will in no way affect my graduation status in the program.
4. I am free to drop out of the study at anytime, without consequence.
5. The researcher will follow Outward Bound protocol.
6. The researcher will have access to my student file. (circle one)Yes No
7. I grant the researcher access to my course journal. (circle one)Yes No

I would like to participate in the study. (circle one)Yes No

_____
(Your name, please print)

_____
(Parent or guardian, please print)

_____
(Your signature)

_____
(Parent or guardian, signature)

_____
(Date)

Parent or guardian participation consent form

Please check the following:	Yes	No
1. I agree to participate in this study.	_____	_____
2. I grant permission for my child to participate in this study.	_____	_____
3. I grant permission for my child to be interviewed for research purposes.	_____	_____
4. I grant permission for my child to be observed for research purposes.	_____	_____
5. I grant the researcher access to my child's student file.	_____	_____
6. I would like a copy of the final research report.	_____	_____

If yes, please include your mailing information below.

_____ _____

Parent or Guardian (please print) Witness (please print)

_____ _____

Parent or Guardian (signature) Witness (signature)

_____ _____

Date

_____

_____

Mailing information

Appendix E

Information sheet for parents or guardians

Project title: Wilderness education for youth at risk: an interpretive case study

I am writing to invite you and your son/daughter to participate in a graduate research project investigating the students' experience of participating in the FINS program. The purpose of this study is to help Outward Bound schools, instructors, staff and others who are interested in wilderness programs, better understand the students' perspective of the Outward Bound experience. We would like to know what students believe are the positive and negative aspects of the program so that future instructors and staff can design programs that are more helpful to the students.

Your involvement in this study will occur during your participation in the FINS program. If you decide to take part in this study your tasks will include participating in an interview and allowing for observations. Interviews will be conducted during the FINS program and will be recorded using a hand help audio tape recorder and will take approximately one hour. Questions during the interview will focus on your thoughts and feelings regarding the positive and negative aspects of the FINS program. All interview tapes will be transcribed and coded for confidentiality. Observations will occur at different stages of the FINS program. At the completion of the research project interview tapes will be erased, and interview transcripts and observation field notes will be stored in a locked filing cabinet.

Students who agree to participate in the study will be interviewed on a number of occasions during the course of the FINS program. Interviews will be conducted using a hand held audio recorder and will take approximately 15 minutes to an hour. Questions during these interviews will focus on what the students have been doing during the course, whether they think the program is benefiting them or not, and why. The researcher will also participate in the FINS program at a number of different times throughout the 28 days. During these times the researcher will observe the students as they participate in the variety of activities which take place during the FINS program. The researcher will be recording important information either into a journal or a hand held tape recorder. This information will then be examined in conjunction with the interview transcripts to see how specific aspects of the program benefit or do not benefit the students. Finally, if granted permission, the researcher will gather relevant documents including Outward Bound school information and information from student files. This information will be examined to help generate a clear picture of the school, the types of students who participate in the program, and how the FINS program can be helpful to these students. All information gathered will be coded for confidentiality and kept in a locked filing cabinet.

The researcher conducting the study is a former instructor with Outward Bound, who is currently conducting graduate work at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada, and will be available to answer any questions you may have. You can also speak with her graduate advisors, Dr. Halas and Dr. Campbell, from the University of Manitoba, at ***-***-****.

We are asking for both you and your child's participation in this study. Participation in the study is completely voluntary and thus you are free to withdraw at anytime. There are no foreseeable risks with your involvement in the study. Please indicate on the attached consent form whether you agree to participate in this study and whether you grant permission for your child to participate. You will be given a copy of the signed consent forms to keep in your files, and if requested, you will be provided with a copy of the final research report.

Thank you very much,

Julie Booke, Graduate Student
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Studies
University of Manitoba

Appendix F

Sample: student interview comments

1. What have you learned so far?
    a. Calling circle ups
    b. Dealing with problems
    c. Getting problems out
    d. Communication

2. What do you normally do during an argument?
    a. Argue back
    b. Hit things

3. What have you been taught to do out here during an argument? If anything?
    a. Bring it out, it feels good to get it out.
    b. Don't let it blow up

4. What has been the most beneficial part of the course for you?
    a. CNR

5. What part of the program do you think has not helped or affected you at all?
    a. No way, every part

Appendix G

WIN WIN

Purpose: Students, through a physical illustration, will recognize the realities of being involved in a win/lose situation versus a win/win situation.

Materials Needed: M & M's and ensolite pads, or a large tarp.

Time: 30 minutes

1. Instructor informs the students that they are going to do an activity. The students should be lying down on the ensolite pads in two rows, facing each other on their stomachs, in "arm-wrestling" positions.

2. Instructor places a small pile of M & M's (or any other small treat that can be divided) in between each pair of students and gives strict instructions that they are not to be eaten.

3. Instructor then gives the following instructions: "The object of this is to win as many M & M's as possible. Each time you pin your partner's hand down, you may pull one M & M over to your side, but do not eat it. You will have two minutes to win as many as possible. Go!" Helpful hint: Be careful in the introduction not to say "wrestle." Usually one pair of partners is coached prior and is set up with a staff member and student to pin each other hands continually back and forth without struggling or "wrestling." This results in at least one pair with both people winning a lot of M & M's.

4. Instructors time the group for two minutes and calls a stop at the end of the time.

5. Instructor then gathers up the remaining M & M's that are still in the center poles between partners, the ones that were not "won."

6. Instructor holds up the remaining M & M's gathered and displays them to the group and points out that these are part of what was possible to win, but were not. (This can also be described as the potential that was not used.) For added impact or as an attention getter, the instructor can take the unused "potential" and put them in a bag and stomp on them.

   Then the instructor re-directs the group's attention to the piles, or absence of piles, of M & M's that were won, in front of each participant, and points out the differences between different sizes of the partners winnings. (The should range from 0 to handfuls).

Examples: "looks like you won quite a few there, how many?"
"What about you, you only have two?"
"What happen here, you have thirteen and you have one?"
"You both have about the same size pile, about 20 each?"

8. To debrief, the instructor can ask for clarification about how some pairs have won few and others have won handfuls. This may bring up answers from the group such as they were fighting harder, they did not fight at all, or one was stronger than the other, etc. The instructors can emphasize there responses by asking who was playing "win-win", "win-lose", or "lose-lose?"

9. Other questions that can be asked include: Which game worked out best for both partners? Which game would you rather play? What do you need to do to play it? Discussion can then be carried over to the idea of working together, and compromising, versus butting head, being stubborn, and refusing to acknowledge another point of view. This can then be related to other situations on course, at home or at school.

   Source of lesson: Tricks from touch. Unpublished booklet. Written by the staff at Touch of Nature Environmental Center, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1987.

Appendix H

Raging River

1. The object is for the group to make it from point A to point B (to be decided by instructors).

2. Instructors give the students five items in which they are allowed to step on, while in the raging river. If the students are stepping on the item they are safe and will not be sucked in by the raging river. Example: bandannas, hats, etc.

3. Only one student is allowed on the item at one time. However, a part of a student must always be touching the item, otherwise it gets sucked into the river and lost (until instructors decide to return it to the group, if the activity is getting to hard).

4. The object is for all members of the group to make it safely over to point B, with out getting sucked into the river or losing any items during the activity.

5. The group should be given time before starting the activity to create a plan of attack. After each time the group is unsuccessful, they should be reminded to work on a new plan and given specific time to do so.