



# CONCEPTS & CONNECTIONS:

— Experiential Learning —

*A Newsletter for Leadership Educators*

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## Experiential Education:

### *Vehicles of Pedagogy for Impacting Student Leadership*

*By Roberta Magarrell & Kristin Laney*

What methods can be used to help a student cultivate leadership qualities? Is classroom training enough, or are there effective programs available to assist students in acquiring leadership abilities? Consider one student who stepped outside a classroom to expand his education. "I have always wanted to do counseling, however, I was very unsure about my own abilities to help others. My first week

at the Crisis Line... was like a 'Russian Roulette' of problems. But by the end of the semester, I had learned numerous new skills" (Fuhriman, personal communication, 2003).

This scenario demonstrates that though classroom training is fundamental to education, the pedagogy of experiential education provides unparalleled learning opportunities for students to internalize leadership qualities and increase application of classroom materials. It is unlikely full cultivation of leadership potential will occur without integrating the rich components of experience into scholarship. Experiential education contains a number of integrated programs such as adventure/outdoor learning, cooperative education and internships, and service learning. Following a brief overview of experiential education, this article will summarize various forms of experiential programs and their impact on student leadership.

#### ***A Broad View of Experiential Education***

Experiential education as a method of instruction immerses students in field experiences closely related to course material and asks students to

*"When confronted with situations they have never encountered before, students learn to cooperatively draw on each other's strengths for the benefit of the group."*

reflect on these experiences (Stevens & Richards, 1992). The inimitable experiences within experiential education create personal significance for students by actively engaging them in intellectually and emotionally meaningful activities. "Experiential education can present unequalled opportunities for teachable moments...It is about what happens inside people - the growth and development educators constantly encourage" (Zuberbuhler, 1995, p. 3). Hands-on education places students in the driver's seat and connects them with a range of learning styles they may or may not have used before.

These learning styles are found in four specific areas comprised of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984).

These can be respectively defined as immersion in one's environment, attention to or comparison of various experiences, the creation of concepts that organize experience, action, and observations, and acting out one's ideas and theories (Kolb, 1984). Though each student has his or her

*Continued on page 2*

### ***INSIDE THIS ISSUE:***

- 🏠 *Experiential education: Vehicles of pedagogy for impacting student leadership* by Roberta Magarrell & Kristin Laney
- 🏠 *Mastering craft: Utilizing active learning in higher education* by Andrew Miller
- 🏠 *The Browne Center: Experiential lessons in leadership* by Deborah Sugerman
- 🏠 *Leadership studies and experiential education: A dialogue of possibilities* by Julie Carlson
- 🏠 *Leadership bookshelf: Teamwork & teamplay* Reviewed by Ashley Mouberry
- 🏠 *Scholarship and Research Updates: Experiential education - a powerful pedagogy* by Susan R. Komives & Ashley Mouberry

# Connections From The Director

The richness of the leadership laboratory is blending theory and concepts with experiential activities ultimately facilitating an active learning environment. Experiential education provides students and student leaders the framework to do things and think about what they are doing. Chickering and Gamson (1987) suggest that students must do more than just listen: They must read, write, discuss, or be engaged in solving problems. Most importantly, to be actively involved, students must engage in such higher-order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

This edition of *Concepts & Connections* addresses the powerful pedagogy of experiential education within the context of curricular and co-curricular leadership training, education, and development. Andre Miller, adventure education specialist at Appalachian State University addresses applications of active investigation and reflection as constructs to the active learning process. He introduces us to the apprenticeship model of learning and applications to the leadership process. Deborah Sugeran, assistant professor and facilitator at the Browne Center University of New Hampshire, helps us understand how the educational philosophy of the Browne Center may advance our understanding and application of active learning pedagogy. She brings to life the important teaching methodology within the problem solving process and visualization as a learning tool in leadership development. Julie Carlson, assistant professor in the educational leadership department at Minnesota State University at Mankato, discusses the infusion of experiential trends in the leadership studies program. Ashley Mouberry, master's student in the College Student Personnel at the University of Maryland, reviews *Teamwork & teamplay: A guide to cooperative, challenge and adventure activities that build confidence, cooperation, teamwork, creativity, trust, decision-making, conflict resolution, resource management, communication, effective feedback and problem solving skills*.

On behalf of the leadership team of the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs we hope you find meaning and application with this edition of *Concepts & Connections*.



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## Experiential Education *Continued from page 1*

preferred learning style, the most effective learning occurs when all four learning approaches are employed. According to Gish (1979), learning is enhanced when other approaches are tapped and linked into a comprehensive learning style. Following this admonition, experiential education makes it possible for students to incorporate and gain skills from each of these elements. The following sections will summarize a few specific skills developed in each program and the contributions each development makes for the enhancement of student leadership.

### *Adventure/Outdoor Learning*

Adventure and outdoor learning programs are forms of experiential education that remove people from their natural environment to unnatural environments, away from the security of routine. These programs come in numerous designs and dimensions, ranging from outdoor adventure to integrated experiences on the Internet. Whatever the form, these programs prepare students for the realm of leadership by creating meaningful experiences through fun and innovative activities, teaching problem solving through teamwork, and initiating personal development through learning to cope with the unexpected.

Adventure learning maximizes students' educational and curriculum goals by stimulating curiosity and integrating fun into hands-on instruction. Students are placed in a learning environment "that promotes both student engagement in an exciting adventure context and student participation in meaningful inquiry and analysis" (Shear & Penuel, 2002). An example of such an adventure might be a "trust fall," involving a student climbing on an elevated area and falling back into the arms of other members of the group to break the fall. An experience like this causes participants to gain new insights as they engage in meaningful inquiry about their own role and the roles of others. This type of reflective observation is a valuable tool that prepares future leaders to effectively manage, supervise, and delegate responsibilities when faced with unique group dynamics.

Another by-product of these outdoor experiences is that students learn to problem solve through teamwork, as illustrated in the example of the "trust fall." When confronted with situations they have never encountered before, students learn to cooperatively draw on each other's strengths for the benefit of the group. After such an experience, they question the consequences of their own actions and what it means to

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be a part of a team, understanding the significance of personal responsibility as well as cooperation. These skills are vital to any successful leader's livelihood. Outdoor and adventure experiences are therefore leadership training activities that encourage students to participate in inquiry and analysis and cooperatively work together.

### **Cooperative Education and Internships**

Cooperative education and internships are educational approaches that encourage the application of academic knowledge to field experiences. Cooperative education students are employed full-time, and may or may

not receive academic credit, depending upon the program. Similarly, students with internships participate in out-of-class learning experiences with a full or part time, paid or non-paid work component that may be integrated with an academic program of study. Overarching benefits of both programs are that students learn how to function in professional environments, develop positive personal attributes, obtain skills in synthesis of information from hands-on and in-classroom experiences, and increase initiative and goal setting.

Co-op education and internships train students to competently perform their role as a professional and make them more aware of the profes-

sional environment. "Cooperative education/internships programs provide students with experiences that are applicable to their future working lives..." (Ryder, 1987, p. 8). In the process, they become more proficient in adjusting to professional dynamics and establishing their identity as a professional.

Co-op education and internships are also instruments for development of personal attributes. Wilson (1987) indicates these programs lead to the development of social skills, tolerance, greater self-confidence, and independence of thought and action. The contributions of co-op education and internships to both

*Continued on page 4*

## **COMPARISON OF EXPERIENTIAL PROGRAMS**

<b>Program Type</b>	<b>Adventure Learning</b>	<b>Cooperative Education</b>	<b>Internships</b>	<b>Service Learning Programs</b>
<b>Hands-on experience</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Setting</b>	Non-classroom Range of out-of-door activities	Non-classroom Work/employment setting	Non-classroom Variety of work settings, usually related to the academic major	Non-classroom Variety of settings in non-profit locations, connected to academic work
<b>Paid/ Non-Paid</b>	Non-paid	Paid	Paid and Non-paid	Non-paid
<b>Application to Academic Learning</b>	Varies	Varies	Medium- High	High
<b>Instructor Involvement</b>	High	Low-high	Medium- high	Medium-high
<b>Time spent</b>	Hours-weeks	1-3 semesters	140-360 hrs per semester	10-20 hrs per semester
<b>Interaction with Supervisors</b>	A great deal; ongoing & integral to the experience	Weekly with Site supervisor Varies with university mentor	Weekly with Site supervisor Bi-weekly to weekly with university mentor	Weekly with Site supervisor Weekly to bi-monthly with university supervisor
<b>Focus</b>	Outdoor physical /emotional challenges; requires trust, cooperation, problem-solving, individually/group reflection	Work experience; requires initiative, developing skills, team-work, problem-solving, networking, project development etc.	Work experience; with application of academics related to major, developing skills, team-work, problem-solving, networking, self-reflection, service	Service activities to benefit the community; linked to wide range of academic course work
<b>Leadership development (Partial List)</b>	Creative problem solving Team-building Inquiry/Analysis Processing Skills Cooperation	Personal Initiative Team-work Innovation Professional work ethic Goal Setting Networking Problem Solving Project Management	Self-Reflection Problem Solving Ability to synthesize Professional work ethic Goal Setting Project Management Citizenship commitment Confidence in Skill Application	Project Management Citizenship commitment Reflection/Analysis Broader vision  Increased awareness of others' needs

## Experiential Education

*Continued from page 3*

professional and personal skills prepare students to emerge as constructive leaders in society.

These skills surface as students combine academic erudition with knowledge from field experience. Workplace learning gives students the opportunity to immediately apply the theories they study in their course work. Moreover, the active involvement of teaching faculty promotes students' synthesis of both types of knowledge. Students are able to compare the work of professionals with years of expertise to their own experiences and formulate individual opinions on community and internship-related issues. This training is imperative as a functional leader must be able to integrate and value the opinions of others while still measuring the import of their own ideas. The abstract conceptualization of both perspectives allows students to incorporate others' relevant ideas as they refine their own.

Incorporation of diverse ideas often impacts students' world-view and encourages a more self-directed attitude in the setting and accomplishing of goals. These goals then produce competency of what is doable in new or complex environments, giving a potential leader the know-how to set appropriate boundaries in project management. Summarily speaking, internships and co-op education helps students perform competently in the professional arena, develop positive personal attributes, learn how to synthesize academic and hands-on knowledge, and take more initiative, thus contributing to expansion of leadership capabilities.

### **Service-Learning**

Service-learning constitutes involvement between students and recipients of service, usually at non-profit organizations. In this type of program, an instructor assigns students to participate in community service as part of a course requirement. Involvement ranges from constructing homes for a needy popula-

tion to mentoring a child in foster care. This service allows students to develop an awareness of the significance of their individual actions in benefiting communities and society while simultaneously increasing the depth of their curriculum understanding.

When students participate in service learning, they begin to perceive themselves as part of the solution to others' concerns. The barricade that separates most students from service involvement is not a lack of desire, but ignorance in knowing how to get involved. Service learning remedies this as students are afforded opportunities to service of varying consequence and degree. Learners interrupt self-interest to focus on satisfying others' needs, consequently developing a more complete sense of self and a deeper commitment to community. This participation and commitment to community service provides a pattern of involvement that students carry with them in future leadership activities.

An additional result of connecting service and academic learning is the affective application of diverse bodies of knowledge for the benefit of society through active experimentation and increased appreciation of such knowledge. Students in a range of disciplines note the added value of their course-work as they see the ways in which it can directly benefit others. For example, a student in construction management might be involved in building a house for the needy as part of a course requirement. As a result of this active experimentation, he or she develops an increased enthusiasm for their course-work. As was noted in an analysis of the benefits of field experience in an undergraduate course by Clements (1995), "Results indicate that students perceive the difference positively with regard to interest in the subject matter and value of the subject matter..." (p. 118). Passion for

learning is cultivated as students utilize education for the benefit of others rather than just for themselves. As students are instilled with this passion, they will not only be more motivated to increase their education, a base for any leadership position, but will also be more apt to discover the application of their education in fulfilling societal needs. This quality in conjunction with awareness and commitment to fulfilling community needs is why service learning is a necessary stepping stone in attaining

a comprehensive education in leadership.

### **In Summary**

Experiential education provides a variety of pedagogy such as outdoor/adventure learning, cooperative education and internships, and service learning that enhance student leadership by expanding learning styles and connecting students with significant opportunities for personal growth. This article has specifically emphasized one or two ways each program promotes leadership, yet placing each of the programs on a continuum would show the numerous ways each overlap in promoting leadership. Each program integrates all aspects of Kolb's four learning styles and enables student development in each area. The result is a comprehensive learning experience where students utilize concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation to solidify and expand their understanding of classroom materials. As Coles noted, "One does learn by doing as well as by reading," (Levine, 1989, p. 19) another reason why experiential education is essential to leadership development. Its fertile educational environment perpetuates significant skill and personal development, making students less likely to encounter a "Russian Roulette" in their future leadership roles. ■

*"Passion for learning is cultivated as students utilize education for the benefit of others rather than just for themselves."*

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# Pedagogy

## Mastering Craft: Utilizing Active Learning in Higher Education

By Andrew Miller

I clearly remember the first time I climbed on real rock. My hands were sweaty and my feet hurt from being squeezed into a pair of torturously tight climbing shoes. I approached the rock and found a small edge for my right foot. The edge was tiny, but I found good holds with my hands, and I was able to stand on it. I continued up the route focused intently on each move, each placement of my feet and hands. I was making what I can now identify as the classic beginner mistakes by trying to squeeze the life out of the rock and using my upper body versus my legs to power my way through the climb. As I arrived within ten feet of the top I was suddenly confronted with an awkward series of moves the mere thought of which catalyzed an overwhelming fear within me. I suddenly realized how far from the ground I was. An irrational fear gripped me, and I just knew that one mistake would surely come at an incredible expense, perhaps even my life. I made it through those last few moves and found myself atop a ledge overlooking an amazing gorge. The adrenaline eventually drained from my body, my breathing and heart rate returned to a normal pace, my fear subsided, and I was ecstatic about what I had just accomplished and the view that was before me. In the seven years since that day I have learned an incredible amount about what Royal Robbins terms "rockcraft." I have learned from a series of mentors, and I have now become the mentor to many. I have refined my craft and now lead groups of people through steep and difficult

*"Active learning implies the inseparability of the mind and body and suggests a relationship between the student and the subject."*

terrain thousands of feet off the ground with confidence and comfort.

Henry Ford represents a classic model of refinement to craft. So much so, that in 1913 Ford incorporated the first production assembly line in his automobile factory. The concept for the assembly line was a result of a development cycle similar to that which I have experienced climbing, one of refinement and streamlining. By creating a process for production based on reducing wasted effort and thus reducing product cost for the consumer, Ford reduced the need for specialized craftsmen while simultaneously increasing his reliance on un-skilled labor and the mechanized tools and machinery used to build the Model-T (*The Economist*, 1999). What Ford may not have recognized in 1913 is that a similar transition was occurring in American education.

American education has developed in the shadow of the industrial revolution. Our schools themselves began to reflect an assembly line approach to education. Students became a product moving along an assembly line and teachers became the factory workers whose focus was to maintain a continuous flow of learning through interchangeable lessons and elimination of wasted effort. Upon graduation, it was assumed that all pieces of the product had been assembled for the student to form the final product. However, this production approach to education, which continues to be in practice today, makes several

*Continued on page 6*

detrimental assumptions, assumptions identified by American philosopher and educator, John Dewey.

The first assumption is that the mind is separate from the body. The physical body exists only as a vessel to transport the mind and represents wasted effort unwanted in assembly line production. The role of the teacher is to promote the growth of the intellect while strictly controlling the outbursts of the body. Dewey (1916) suggests this role reinforces a mind/body disconnect separating experience from knowledge, growth, and development.

The second assumption is born out of the first. If our mind and body are to be separate and our body has no function in learning, then our cumulative active participation in events and activities, that is, our experience also has no role in learning. Dewey saw the fallacy in this assumption and claimed instead that experience is the foundation of learning. Dewey viewed experience in terms of being both primary and secondary in nature. Primary experience can be thought of as having an experience and secondary experience is knowing that experience. Campbell (1995) describes secondary experiences as those that allow us to derive meaning from our primary experiences while primary experiences allow us to test the validity of the meaning we create. For learning to occur, both primary and secondary experience must occur and the absence of either would reveal poor results. Today, education remains grounded in secondary experience. Students are asked to understand, interpret, and connect concepts and ideas without the ability to test for their validity. Without primary experience, students are unlikely to develop the desired understanding of a particular subject.

Dewey's view on the role of experience in the educational process, although influential in progressive education, was never accepted widely in traditional education. The last three decades, however, have witnessed a slow but steady movement to incorporate

experience into the classroom. Higher education has accepted various experiential pedagogies, and a variety of academic and co-curricular programs now exist on many campuses that value individual experience in learning. Active learning is a term that has come to represent an approach where primary and secondary experience is essential to the learning process. Active learning implies the inseparability of the mind and body and suggests a relationship between the student and the subject. Active learning requires the student to take a greater role in his/her learning and signifies that knowledge is an internal, rather than external construct. An essential shift occurs in education when an active learning pedagogy is utilized; students step off of the assembly line and teachers are no longer the assembly line worker. Instead, teachers become mentors and are no longer focused on one specialized task. Students become apprentices in the development of their craft.

So, how then can an active learning pedagogy be utilized in leadership development? Appalachian State University's Outdoor Programs (OP) has for nearly three decades used a peer-based apprenticeship model in the development of their student leaders. OP offers a variety of single day and extended programs to the students, faculty, and staff at Appalachian from 3-hour challenge course experiences to 3 week international expeditions. A team of students led nearly all OP trips with only select extended programs incorporating professional staff in the leadership team. Three levels of leadership exist within the hierarchy of student leader at OP: apprentice, instructor, and trip leader. All staff, regardless of previous experience, begin as apprentices, a subjective process that utilizes self-assessment, peer review, and coordinator oversight in the determination of an individual's readiness to progress into a higher position. Apprenticeships are unpaid and students must serve as an apprentice in

*"Active learning creates collaborative environments where the learner constructs meaning from experience."*

each activity that they want to lead. A staff of roughly forty student leaders is maintained each semester with generally 15 apprentices working within various areas of the program. Each program that OP offers has spaces available for two and sometimes more apprentices.

As an OP student staff, one's responsibility moves beyond simply learning the requisite skills to safe-

ly lead an adventure experience. Each staff member in essence becomes a mentor charged with the responsibility of propagating his or her craft to future staff. The OP apprenticeship establishes a social context that fosters collaboration, critical analysis of systems and behaviors, an ethic of care, and a desire to teach. Four areas of in-service learning can be identified that maintain this social context. First is the apprenticeship: students working in the field with their peers to learn technical skills, interpersonal skills, and pedagogical skills. Second are structured staff trainings that are taught primarily by professional staff. Next are the various certifications required of staff to work in a paid position, primarily certifications for medical and specialized rescue skills. Finally, there are the informal peer-based educational initiatives referred to as staff development. Staff development opportunities are varied and typically skills oriented. They can include spontaneous outings between two or more staff or more structured camps involving 10 to 15 staff. These four areas of staff apprenticeship and development working together foster critical reflection, contextual decision-making skills, interpersonal skills, and the development and application of leadership skills.

The apprenticeship model works because it is how we instinctually learn as humans. The apprentice becomes engaged with the subject and begins a recursive process of critical reflection of guided experi-

# Program Spotlight

## *The Browne Center: Experiential Lessons in Leadership*

By Deborah Sugerman

ences. Humans begin life learning in this way yet that process is often interrupted by formal education. Quite often, it is not until formalized education is completed that we return to an apprenticeship model of learning that will continue throughout our lives.

The apprenticeship model of learning is only one example of an active learning pedagogy yet it utilizes constructs crucial to all active learning pedagogies. Active learning creates collaborative environments where the learner constructs meaning from experience. Received forms of knowledge are de-emphasized while active investigation and reflection are emphasized. Students are given control over their intellectual and emotional lives often resulting in increased levels of self-esteem. Finally, a student's knowledge becomes contextual signaling an ability to apply that knowledge throughout varied and changing environments and situations. ■

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Groups come to the Browne Center at the University of New Hampshire not to become better at *what* they do, but *how* they do it. The philosophy of the Browne Center is to move beyond traditional teaching techniques and settings to involve participants in innovative, experiential education. Guided by a skilled facilitator, participant groups are engaged in problem solving initiatives and outdoor challenges that provide a foundation for learning. Following the experience, group members reflect on what has occurred by sharing reactions and observations, discussing themes or patterns that evolved, and integrating the new learning into their behavior. Each activity serves as a metaphor through which the group addresses its actual challenges.

The Browne Center is located on 103 acres of the Great Bay Trust in Durham, New Hampshire and is a teaching, training, and research affiliate of the School of Health and Human Services at the University of New Hampshire. In addition to a seminar building and two yurts, facilities include a chimney climbing wall and two low and high challenge courses. The challenge courses consist of a collection of problem solving elements constructed of cables and wood situated in among the trees and are universal so as to be accessible to all participants.

Each activity on the low challenge course is designed to draw on a different skill set. The approach that a group uses to solve one problem may not necessarily apply to the next problem, thereby enhancing flexibility and engaging the individual strengths of each participant. The elements on the high challenge course allow people to go beyond their pre-conceived limitations by relying on their peers for physical and emotional support. The activities are done individually or in pairs, and do not necessarily require physical strength, but do require trust and cooperation between group members.

### *History of the Browne Center*

The Browne Center was started in the mid 1980's, and was named for Evelyn Browne, a visionary leader and pioneer of experiential learning. The center grew out of the need for Outdoor Education majors at the University of New Hampshire to learn facilitation skills and to practice with actual groups. Dr. Michael Gass (Coordinator of the Outdoor Education program), students in his Ropes Course Construction and Management class, and staff from Project Adventure (a company specializing in ropes course design and installation) constructed the first elements on the current course. After construction was completed, team-building programs on the ropes course were offered to the public with Outdoor Education majors as key facilitators. As the client base grew, the Browne Center incorporated more professional facilitators. Currently the center has a staff of five full time facilitators and 30 contract facilitators. Students from the university who are enrolled in a variety of majors (i.e., Outdoor Education, Social Work, Business) begin

working at the Browne Center by taking a university course in challenge course management, shadowing experienced facilitators, and co-leading programs on their own.

### *Clientele*

The clientele at the Browne Center include corporate groups (e.g., US Cellular, Exeter Hospital), civic/charitable groups (e.g., Seacoast Hospice, New Hampshire Charitable Foundation) and youth groups (e.g., Hopkinton Middle School, Friends Forever). The general goals of corporate and civic/charitable groups are training and organizational development. Programs for these groups are tailored more to the business needs of the organizations (i.e., team building, communication skills, and conflict resolution). The general goals of youth groups include social skills, citizenship, character education, and leadership.

*"The philosophy of the Browne Center is to move beyond traditional teaching techniques and settings to involve participants in innovative, experiential education."*

## Program Spotlight

*Continued from page 7*

Youth programs are geared to help improve relationships with self, peer, and adults.

Prior to any group coming to the Browne Center, an extensive organizational assessment is completed. The facilitator team first meets with the sending organization to discuss organizational goals, individual group member goals, and group demographics (i.e., age, gender, and ethnic breakdown). Based on this information, the team designs a session tailored specifically to that group. The activities selected as well as the progression of the activities address the goals of individual group members and the organization. The facilitators also design a series of reflection activities to assist in the transfer of learning from the activities back to the group's real world environment. When the group arrives at the Browne Center, the facilitators implement their plan. They present each activity, create appropriate scenarios to enhance the learning potential of the activities, observe the group progress through the activity, and debrief the activities so that group members reflect on the learning gained through participation in the activity.

### **Student Leadership**

Leadership is a goal for many youth and student groups that participate in the program at the Browne Center. The experiential nature of the activities allows for leadership skills to be learned and practiced in an engaging environment. Students learn concrete leadership skills (i.e., active listening, giving and receiving feedback, solving problems) as well as the more abstract skills of leadership (i.e., building relationships, caring for others, maintaining morale) not through listening to a teacher or reading a book, but through actually practicing the skills while being totally engaged in goal directed experiences. One example is the Teeter Totter, a 6-foot by 12-foot wooden platform with the fulcrum point balanced on a beam. The challenge is to balance the entire group on the Teeter Totter without having the platform touch the ground. Students first brainstorm ideas. During this process they listen to others' ideas, add in their own thoughts, and validate the ideas of others in the group. The group decides on an idea through consensus. As they attempt

the challenge, they evaluate their failures and change their strategies based on new ideas. The process continues with the group trying ideas, eliminating what doesn't work, and finally arriving at a successful solution to the problem. In the process, group members have helped each other physically by spotting or holding out a helping hand. They have also developed positive relationships within the group by giving appropriate constructive criticism on ideas that were not helpful and by sharing successes with the entire group.

Yet simply learning these leadership skills does not guarantee that they will be transferred to other environments in which the student is involved. Reflection on the experience is key to the transfer of learning (Sugerman, Doherty, Garvey, & Gass, 2000). Reflection helps students see their actions from different perspectives, generalize learning from the experience, and commit to behavior change in future experiences. Students first review what happened in the activity, compare observations, and check to see if their perceptions are similar to or different others in the group. With the information collected from the review, students are able to assess and evaluate their actions. Learning is generalized as students recognize patterns of thinking or outcomes that resulted from the experience. Students discern principles that can be broadly applied. They begin to connect previous experiences with present ones, and are able to project into future experiences. Once students have identified new learning, they consider applying it to other situations, reinforcing the learning and solidifying its transference (Priest & Gass, 1997). They commit to concrete plans to use their newly honed leadership skills at their schools, with their clubs and sports teams, and at home.

*“Leadership is a goal for many youth and student groups that participate in the program at the Browne Center. The experiential nature of the activities allows for leadership skills to be learned and practiced in an engaging environment.”*

After the group has completed the Teeter Totter, the facilitator asks a series of questions to help the students recognize leadership patterns within the group such as, “Who took on leadership roles in the activity? What behaviors demonstrated leadership? What leadership behaviors helped the group be successful?” The facilitator then guides the discussion with questions concerning the use of the demonstrated leadership behaviors in other environments. Questions are asked such as, “How does what you learned apply to your classes at school? How will you use these leadership behaviors with your sports teams?”

The process of active engagement in problem solving, recognition of learning, and visualization of the learning in other environments provides a powerful experience in leadership development. The Browne Center creates the environment in which the experience can take place. Through participation in activities at the Browne Center, students become better not at what they do, but how they do it. ■

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# Training & Techniques

## *Leadership Studies and Experiential Education: A Dialogue of Possibilities*

By: Julie Carlson

Can you remember “learning” something specific in elementary school? Your freshman year of high school? Chances are you don’t recall learning much about nouns, complete sentences, or long division, but you can pinpoint where you went on a field trip or what grade you were in the school play. Your memory is probably stronger pertaining to direct and sensory-potent experiences you have had compared to inactive or less-participatory events. Experiential education is an approach to learning that capitalizes on the potential for learning derived from direct experiences.

The purpose of this article is to propose ways that leadership studies might benefit from the infusion of experiential education approaches. As an “experienced” experiential educator but a fairly new professor of leadership studies, I am still experimenting with the approaches presented here. I view this article as the beginning of several dialogues of possibilities that I hope to engage in surrounding the enhancement of leadership studies through using experiential education approaches.

To begin the dialogue herein, a description will be offered of the approach to learning known as experiential education. Secondly, major current trends in experiential education will be identified and discussed as avenues for the enhancement of leadership studies by infusion at the program and individual course level.

### ***What is Experiential Education?***

In brief, experiential education refers to an approach to learning that emphasizes the mutual benefit of scholarship and experience. The combination of theory and practice is an alternative description that surfaces in the literature. One of the largest and best-known U.S. organizations that advocates experiential learning is the Association of Experiential Education (AEE). The AEE also publishes one of the few peer-reviewed journals in the field, *The Journal of Experiential Education*. The Association has adopt-

ed the following definition: “Experiential Education is a process through which a learner constructs knowledge, skill, and value from direct experience” (AEE, 2003).

The AEE was established in the mid-1970s following a few conferences involving outdoor businesses such as Outward Bound and affiliated outdoor-oriented programs at universities (Garvey, 1988/1995). The origin of AEE, then, stems from outdoor and adventure roots. However, practitioners and educators in the experiential education arena, including those involved with AEE, readily acknowledge today that experiential education is more far-reaching than outdoor adventure and inclusive of many fields and topics of study. It is an approach to learning across disciplines at any age or grade level.

Although the term *experiential education* appears to have been coined or brought into common usage relatively recently (circa 1960s), the idea of promoting learning through experience traces back to ancient times. The following section will highlight a few of the noted pioneers in experiential education, for the purpose of identifying common threads in this approach to learning.

*Early pioneers.* Historical perspectives on experiential education often begin with a discussion of Athenian philosopher, Socrates (469-399 B.C.), who was eventually condemned to death for corrupting the minds of the youth (Frost, 1989). According to Crosby (1981/1995), Socrates was instrumental in altering previous paradigms of Sophist learning that entailed the “all-knowing” teacher who “filled”

*“...knowledge should serve a practical purpose. Freeberg and Taylor (1961) explained, “His was a school of action. We learn to write by writing, and we learn to read by reading. We learn by doing”*

students with knowledge to the recognition that students were significant contributors to their own learning. Through Socrates’ guidance in self-examination and deconstruction, the process of learning gained importance over arriving at a “final static state” (Crosby, p. 6).

Although Socratic methods are still evident in the current philosophy of experiential education, there were eras of time in which the value placed on learning gained through experience, custom, and tradition was highly criticized. Plato, Socrates’ associate, and later, Aristotle, a student of Plato’s Academy, both advocated reason and logic, separate from

bodily yearnings, as the pure avenue for attaining rational and divine knowledge. It was not until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when knowledge gained from experimentation was finally recognized as valuable that a reversal in previously critical views of practical experience occurred (Dewey, 1916/1997).

John Amos Comenius (1592-1670), a Czechoslovakian theorist and educator, is also often included in the history of experiential education. Although his main interest was in the teaching of the Christian faith, Comenius maintained that learning must come through the senses and direct “hands-on” experiences. He argued that knowledge should serve a practical purpose. Freeberg and Taylor (1961) explained, “His was a school of action. We learn to write by writing, and we learn to read by reading. We learn by doing” (p. 167).

## Training & Techniques

*Continued from page 9*

Two more figures who contributed to experiential learning were French social philosopher, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), and Swiss educator, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827). Pestalozzi was greatly influenced by Rousseau's *Emile*, a 1762 novel of an educator who teaches a young boy through active and direct experiences and inquiry in the out-of-doors. Using principles promoted by Rousseau, Pestalozzi established many schools in Europe throughout his lifetime primarily for underprivileged and homeless children. The schools sought to provide a nurturing and caring environment, learning through natural and constructivist approaches, self-sufficiency skills, and direct, sensory experiences in and with the natural environment (Guttek, 1999).

American educator, philosopher, and "one of the seminal thinkers of the twentieth century" (Hickman, 1998, p. ix), John Dewey (1859-1952) provided the most comprehensive philosophical foundations of what is currently described as experiential education. Dewey was associated throughout his career at the Universities of Michigan, Minnesota, Chicago, and at Columbia University with philosophers who identified themselves as pragmatists and progressivists. A partial list of beliefs of these philosophical branches includes democracy, freedom, purposeful learning, inquiry and experimentation, and community building (Hickman). Beyond these ideals, Dewey (1916/1997, 1938/1997) further promoted a philosophy of education that emphasized small cooperative learning or work groups, practical interdisciplinary problem-solving, merging of theory and practice, merging of body and mind, the scientific method, direct experiences, and reflection. These beliefs and ideals form the foundation of what is currently known as experiential education. Following is a discussion of ways experiential education approaches can be utilized to enhance programs and courses in leadership.

## *Infusion of Experiential Education into Leadership Studies*

Leadership preparation programs throughout higher education are revealed in a variety of disciplines such as student affairs, business and management, human resources, and education. Speaking strictly in terms of my own background in educational leadership, there has long been an identified gap between leadership preparation programs and the reality of the daily work of educational leaders. A partial result of this gap has been "a growing consensus from disparate sectors...that schools and their leadership as presently structured are not meeting society's expectations" (Cambron-McCabe & Foster, 1994, p. 53). In acknowledgement of this gap, educational leadership preparation programs around the country have been instigating the re-evaluation and re-design of their leadership programs (Glasman, 1997; Glasman & Glasman, 1997).

A movement toward re-design and rethinking of leadership studies in varied disciplines is further necessitated by changes in traditional patterns of relationships and authority flows, flexible role definitions, learning communities and organizations, and leadership that is determined by competence rather than by position (Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Roth, & Smith, 1999; Wheatley, 1999). As traditional views of leadership as positivistic, hierarchical, authority-driven endeavors are eroding in favor of more participatory, democratically-driven approaches, leadership programs that once relied heavily on theoretical management models now seek out more relevant and pragmatic ways to prepare students for more visionary and transformational leadership (Northouse, 2001). Experiential education approaches can greatly enhance the effectiveness of leadership studies both within programs and within individual courses.

*Experiential trends within programs.* Outdoor and adventure-based learning experiences have previously been identified as components of experiential education. Corporations, agencies, and educational organizations have utilized these types of experiences to provide shared and collaborative leadership experiences for employees and students. Outdoor

or adventure-based experiences may range from a one-hour group initiative to a day at a constructed challenge course to a longer-term wilderness tripping event.

As emphasized earlier, however, there are trends that have emerged separate from outdoor or adventure-related roots that exemplify the philosophy of experiential education. The most prevalent of these include, but are not limited to, cooperative education ("on-the-job-training" arrangements between universities and corporations), service learning, internships, and practicums.

In contrast to outdoor or adventure-based experiences that often rely on simulated leadership scenarios as an avenue to self-discovery, learning arrangements such as cooperative education, service, internships, and practicums are usually geared toward providing actual on-the-job learning. An obvious benefit of these on-the-job experiences is placing students in real-life leadership situations yet providing relatively safe, risk-free ways to learn. Milstein and Krueger (1997) contended that internships "are unique, important, and irreplaceable aspects of effective [leadership] preparation programs" (p. 107). They further recommended that multiple internship experiences are helpful throughout leadership programs, allowing students to work with more than one supervisor and at different levels and locations.

All of the trends in experiential education discussed above can be and have been incorporated into the design of leadership programs. To do so, it is recommended that a pragmatic Deweyan approach be applied in the program design whereby the most appropriate approach to teaching be identified for various components of the subject matter.

*Experiential trends within individual courses.* Organizations and agencies that offer programs using experiential approaches are widespread across the country and continue to grow in numbers. Experiences provided at constructed facilities or that are brought to classroom sites are attainable within a feasible amount of distance of most medium to large-sized cities. Paying for experiential programs provided by service providers can be costly, rendering this approach impractical for many higher education leadership courses.

One option that is not costly and can be utilized is a problem-based learning (PBL) approach integrated into courses in leadership studies. Strong support exists for problem solving in educational leadership training programs as "a key element that is common to both educational leadership practice and leadership preparation programs...is problem solving" (Glasman & Glasman, 1997, pp. 3-4). Bridges and Hallinger (1997) proposed that entire preparation programs should be based on PBL, the key component of which is a curriculum based on solving problems that the students are likely to encounter in their profession. Block (1997) summarized, "PBL is superb and turns out precisely my kind of educational leaders" (p. 176).

A few ways that PBL can be offered is through the use of fictional or non-fictional case studies, in-basket decision-making activities, organizational simulations, and small group ethical debates. Case studies for classroom use with discussion questions included are available through written and on-line sources. A recommended electronic source for leadership cases is *The Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership* (University Council for Educational Administration, 2003). Cases studies for classroom discussion can also be constructed by students themselves based on leadership dilemmas they have encountered through their own experiences.

Another experiential approach is the intentional and continual placement of students into leadership situations within the classroom. Arranging for students to lead informal group discussions and formal oral presentations in front of small, medium, and large class member audiences can be regular occurrences throughout the semester.

Furthermore, students can actively engage in democratic-decision making processes by designing parts or all of the course or determining parts of the subject matter to be studied. In leadership study courses, this may cause reluctance, as there is much content to cover. Again, the Deweyan philosophy of balancing theory with practice surfaces and should be a guiding principle in this endeavor, one of which I have not yet attempted myself, but am seriously considering.

## Ending Remarks

Experiential education is an approach to learning that extols Deweyan philosophy, which, in turn, extols the work of philosophers and theorists dating to Socrates. Experiential education advocates the use of small cooperative work groups, problem-solving, merging of theory and practice, direct experiences, dialogue, and reflection. ■

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# The Leadership Bookshelf

## *Teamwork & Teamplay: A Guide to Cooperative, Challenge and Adventure Activities that Build Confidence, Cooperation, Teamwork, Creativity, Trust, Decision Making, Conflict Resolution, Resource Management, Communication, Effective Feedback and Problem Solving Skills*

By Jim Cain & Barry Jolliff

Reviewed by Ashley Mouberry

Published by Kendall/Hunt in 1998 and awarded with the Karl Rohnke Creativity Award, presented by the Association for Experiential Education (AEE), and the Golden Knights of Lambert Award, presented by the Memphis Boy Scout Chapter of Project Cope, *Teamwork & teamplay* is a must have book for all who have an interest in or curiosity about challenge and adventure education.

The book, written by Jim Cain and Barry Jolliff, two of the premier researchers and writers in the field of outdoor and adventure education, is designed for a broad based audience including, but not limited to, educators, outdoor adventure programmers, and corporate organizations.

**T***eamwork & teamplay* is organized into nine chapters. Chapter 1 provides the context and background of experiential education and offers an extensive review of the current literature available in the area of challenge and adventure programming. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 describe how to plan, create, and carry out a challenge and adventure programming session specifically focusing on the importance of pre-workshop planning, sequencing, and activity choice. Chapter 5 provides information

on how to create and/or acquire the equipment necessary for certain types of challenge and adventure activities. Chapter 6 focuses on the importance of processing and reflection, both of which are key in any form of experiential learning. Chapter 7 is a grab bag chapter, full of fun facts and cool ideas that were not included in other chapters

but important enough that the authors did not want to leave them out. Chapter 8 is

*“Challenge and adventure programming is rooted in the philosophy of experiential education, which suggests that learning best occurs through experience.”*

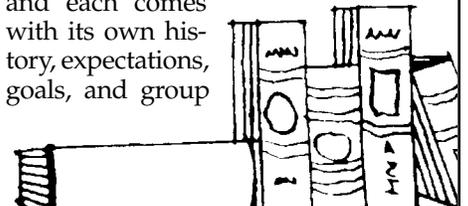
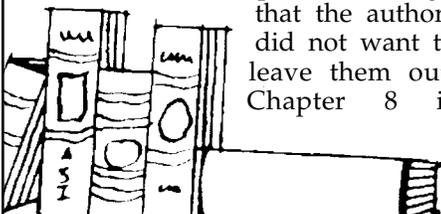
devoted solely to helping the reader find the resources needed to learn more about outdoor and adventure education. Chapter 9 turns the readers toward the future as the authors ponder where the field of outdoor adventure programming is going and offer advice for those interested in coming along for the ride.

In each chapter one will find a box labeled “Basic Training” in which the authors, knowing that their readers are always active and on the move, have provided a brief and concise summary

of the chapter’s main points and important definitions. While the basic training tips are a great idea, the authors caution readers not to rely solely on “basic training” as a source of information.

Chapter 1 begins describing theories and philosophies that are behind challenge and adventure programming and the reasons why the challenge and adventure programming model is effective. It concludes by providing a bibliography of significant articles related to challenge and adventure education. Challenge and adventure programming is rooted in

the philosophy of experiential education which suggests that learning best occurs through experience. Cain and Jolliff propose that the best types of learning experiences are those that encourage individuals “to push past their own comfort zones (physically, emotionally, intellectually, spiritually) to enter a region of unknown outcome, which is often referred to as the growth zone” (p. 1). Providing opportunities for individuals to enter into the growth zone is the purpose of challenge and adventure education and should be the ultimate goal of the group facilitator. Facilitators should create supportive environments, which provide opportunities for individuals to participate in activities that require them to act, think, or engage in ways that they may never have done before. Cain and Jolliff suggest that by engaging in these types of activities participants are able to develop skills such as problem solving, creativity, providing effective feedback, developing confidence, exploring diversity, achieving group consensus, coordination and balance, focus, non-verbal communication, and visualization. There are many powerful techniques that could be used when working with groups in a challenge and adventure programming setting. All groups are different and each comes with its own history, expectations, goals, and group



dynamics. The authors encourage readers to figure out for themselves how to best employ techniques for their own groups or groups that they find themselves working with. Suggestions on how to create a successful challenge and adventure program are discussed throughout the remainder of the book.

Chapter 2 focuses on planning that is necessary to successfully carry out a challenge and adventure activity. Authors Cain & Jolliff describe the planning process that takes place as being analogous to that which is necessary to write a good book, suggesting that challenge and adventure programs “need some flashes of color, an exciting beginning to really pull in the participants, some innovative new ways to look at the world, some changes in plot, and a gradual building of spirit that takes each participant a little higher than they thought possible, often leaving them exhausted, but happy at the end of the program” (p. 21). In order to successfully plan a group challenge and adventure activity one must first be able to evaluate the needs and goals of the group. Cain and Jolliff provide a great template for a Needs and Goal Assessment sheet which can be either photocopied or adapted to fit the reader’s style. Once the needs and goals of the group are known, the facilitator can then proceed to the activity planning stage. The authors also provide the readers with a template of a planning sheet which details all of the groups information including the date, length of the program, location, contact information, number of participants, reason for the event, special needs and location of a rain site in addition to the list of the program’s activities, the equipment needed and the approximate amount of time allotted for each activity. A completed example of this template is included for clarity.

Chapter 3 focuses on what should be done at the beginning of challenge and adventure programs providing some helpful tips for facilitators including the fact that it is likely that not all participants will arrive on time; therefore, the facilitator should be prepared with some quick and easy games to engage participants as they arrive. Several suggestions are made for activities, which are quick, simple and require little or no equipment.

Once all of the participants have arrived, the planned activity sequence can begin. Cain and Jolliff note the importance of frontloading during the beginning of challenge and adventure activities. Frontloading is when “expectations of the participants and the knowledge of the facilitator come together” (p. 32). It is the time where expectations are set, safety precautions are explained, and the philosophy of challenge-by-choice is presented. All outdoor experiential activities operate on the philosophy of challenge-by-choice which means that participants will be challenged throughout the day in many different ways but if at any point the participant feels uncomfortable or unsafe engaging in an activity they can choose not to participate and will be respected for their decision. Cain and Jolliff have fun ways in which facilitators can bring up and discuss important rules regarding safety, expectations, goal setting, and the challenge-by-choice philosophy. Once everyone is on board and the ground rules are agreed upon, the activities begin! All challenge and adventure activity programs should begin with some type of warm-up. Warm-ups are activities that allow participants to get their bodies moving and their muscles stretched out in preparation for the rest of the day’s activities. Several warm-up activity descriptions are provided with templates and variations.

Chapter 4, which consists solely of sample activities, is one of the most useful chapters of the book. For each of the 83 activities described, Cain and Jolliff present a detailed description of the equipment needed, the challenge, resources for framing the activity, instructions for facilitators during the activity, activity variations, and discussion and debriefing topics related to the activity. The authors emphasize the importance of sequencing in challenge and adventure programming. Each programming sequence should be designed to fit the needs of the

activity participants and generally follow the following sequence: icebreakers; warm-ups; trust building, decision making, and problem solving initiatives; challenge initiatives; and closing. All of the activities presented were chosen because of their effectiveness and because they are generally low in cost and low in risk. As an aid to the reader, Cain and Jolliff also provided a quick reference guide at the beginning of the chapter, which includes the activity number, name, intensity level (low, moderate, or high) and the skills or themes presented in the activity. This quick reference guide is very useful when one needs to find an activity at the spur of a moment.

*“Providing opportunities for individuals to enter into the growth zone is the purpose of challenge and adventure education and should be the ultimate goal of the group facilitator.”*

Chapter 5 serves as a compliment to the previous chapter. This chapter provides the reader with information on where to purchase and how to construct the props needed for the activities in the previous chapter. The chapter is organized by activity; each activity equipment list has a number which corresponds to the number used in the previous chapter for that activity. For example, Chapter 4 begins with a feedback activity entitled 100 Words or Less and is labeled as 4.01. The template of the page needed for this activity is provided in Chapter 5 in a copier ready form and is labeled 5.01. Cain and Jolliff provide a detailed description of the materials needed to complete each activity including information about where one can purchase the equipment or how one could make the equipment on his or her own. The chapter is very well written. Instructions are clear and concise and almost every activity is accompanied by a photograph or drawing of the equipment that is required for that activity. Fortunately, most of the activities that use outdoor challenge and adventure activities can be made from simple materials such as PVC pipes, bandanas, plywood, and rope, all of which can be purchased for a nominal price at the local hardware store.

## Leadership Bookshelf

Continued from page 13

In Chapter 6 the authors emphasize the importance of processing, discussion, and reflection in outdoor adventure activities. Reflection is essential for learning and development. "Processing, debriefing and reflecting on the challenge and adventure experience is the part of adventure programming that allows the participant to incorporate new understanding into their knowledge base" (p. 297). Although processing and debriefing an experience is arguably one of the most important roles of facilitators, it is often the role that most facilitators struggle with because it is "one of the most difficult skills to learn and requires a great deal of patience and practice" (p. 297). Several key texts have been written on the topic of debriefing challenge and adventure activities. A number of these resources are listed as recommended reading at the beginning of the chapter. Throughout the chapter the authors provide readers with a variety of debriefing techniques including a discussion of how to frame the debriefing activities and the role of the facilitator during those activities.

Chapter 7 is a compilation of information that the authors wished to share with readers including programming resources, cool equipment, educational resources, and other "food for thought" regarding the field of outdoor challenge and adventure programming. It is a fun chapter to read because each of the 38 activities or resources provides the reader with useful and fun information. Notable activities and resources include: a description and contact information for the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT), a professional organization which provides information for those who wish to create a challenge or adventure course on their campus; methods which could be used to get the attention of large groups; resources for incorporating discussions around diversity into challenge and adventure activities; a list of the least expensive and most often used challenge and adventure activity equipment; hints and techniques for storing your challenge and adventure equipment; and a fun list entitled "Signs that you might be a

little over the top in challenge and adventure programming" (p. 334).

Chapter 8 consists of 65 pages of resources for educators and practitioners who are interested in learning more about challenge and adventure programming. The authors have worked hard to develop a comprehensive list of resources and reference materials including books, manuals, texts, and guides related to challenge and adventure programming in addition to national organizations, challenge course builders, college programs, insurance carriers, professional conferences and workshops, periodicals, newsletters, internet resources, and places to buy books and equipment.

In Chapter 9 the authors ask readers to look towards the future. They offer several suggestions for those who are interested in or intrigued by challenge and adventure programming. They emphasize the importance of staying current in the field through reading books and research articles, joining professional organizations, and developing relationships with other outdoor education adventurers. They emphasize the importance of seeking out and participating in training opportunities, being open to new ideas, learning from one's mentors and colleagues, putting one's self in the role of participant, and being willing to step out of one's comfort zone. All of the recommendations that are made are genuine and based on the author's real life experiences. The authors do not claim to know all that there is to know about the field of challenge and adventure programming and on the contrary remind readers that there is still a lot for us all to explore and learn. They conclude the chapter and the book with ideas for the future, encouraging readers to take action and work to create positive change in the field of challenge and adventure programming.

*"This book is a must have and serves as a truly an invaluable resource for anyone who is interested in incorporating the concepts of challenge and adventure programming into what they do."*

Challenge and adventure programming is an effective pedagogy for leadership development and learning. The content of the book is comprehensive in nature taking readers through each step of the challenge and adventure programming model. The authors provide hundreds of resources for the challenge and adventure educator and each chapter is written in a simple format that is easy to follow and understand. All of the activities that are presented in this book are great for both the novice and experienced challenge and adventure programmer, combining simple techniques and equip-

ment that is easily to obtain or build at a low cost. From reading this book one can easily sense the excitement and energy that is created when a group engages in challenge and adventure process. This book is a must have and serves as a truly an invaluable resource for anyone who is interested in incorporating the concepts of challenge and adventure programming into what they do. ■

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# Scholarship and Research Updates

## *Experiential Education: A Powerful Pedagogy*

By Susan R. Komives & Ashley Mouberry

Any way you look at it, experiential learning, of any kind, is one of the most developmentally powerful pedagogies in education. Meaningful experience contributes more to the development of efficacy for any skill than any other single aspect of learning (Bandura, 1997). The opportunity for students to engage in an experience and reflect on it, or to apply knowledge to a challenge, makes concepts real in ways that reading and abstraction alone do not. Experiential education, which can be "loosely defined as learning by doing with reflection" (Priest & Gass, 1997, p. 17) is grounded in the work of many educators/scholars including John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget.

David Kolb's (1981, 1984) Experiential Learning model is perhaps one of the best known and most useful in higher education. Most of us would be well served to re-visit Kolb's experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1981, 1984; Smith & Kolb, 1986). As we noted in the "Organizational learning" issue of *Concepts & Connections* 7 (1), Kolb helps us understand the cycle of how one makes meaning of experience through reflection and by applying new thinking to shared problems. This cycle is presented as a circle in which concrete experience → reflection → abstract conceptualization → application. This cycle is a useful learning model for individuals and for groups or organizations. Kolb's Learning Style Inventory is a useful assessment measure to determine the various preferred styles among members of an organization so the group can begin to focus on how it best learns. The LSI is available from [www.hayresourcesdirect.haygroup.com/](http://www.hayresourcesdirect.haygroup.com/) (1-800-729-8074).

Rosemary Caffarella (Lee & Caffarella, 1994) has a body of work on adult experiential learning that would inform developing leadership through experience as well. Lee and Caffarella (1994) identify three guideposts for using experiential learning methods: (1) connect each learner's personal context to the knowledge - knowledge synthesis; (2) shift focus to student self-directed learning - keep the learner in control; and (3) facilitate the transfer of learning-enhanced by the contextual similarity of the learning/ application

settings and the complexity, "depth, elaborateness and comprehensiveness of the skills" (p. 44) facilitated by the learning. They present a taxonomy of experiential learning including in-class and field based experiences including such activities

as group discussion, reaction panels, listening groups and demonstrations, in-class case studies, games, in-basket exercises, critical incidents, debate, poster presentations, storytelling, journaling, modeling, role assumptions, and site visits and tours. In addition they present a useful taxonomy of methods and formats for these activities including analysis of practice, apprenticeships, coaching, internships, mentoring, clinical supervision, support groups, and networking. The National Society for Experiential Education [<http://www.nsee.org/>] is a great source of material to explore these strategies with particularly useful materials on service

learning as a powerful pedagogy.

Problem-based learning is a complex and useful pedagogy for teaching any subject because it requires the learner to draw from multiple sources of knowledge and use team members effectively (Duch, Gron, & Allen, 2001). Problem-based learning has been adopted as a frame for many curricula including medical schools and engineering programs and is the reality of student organizations who wrestle with how to engage the challenges their groups face from addressing hate crimes, challenging hazing practices, or changing library hours. Viewing the problem-based learning of these challenges can make leadership applications real and vivid.

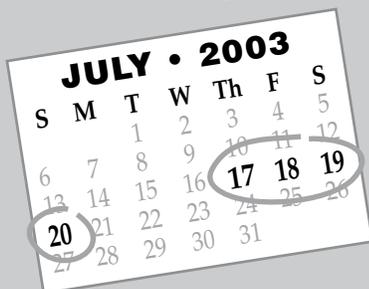
Outdoor adventure education is a distinctly powerful form of experiential education that has recently begun to peak the interests and gain the support of educators across the country.

*"Experiential education, which can be 'loosely defined as learning by doing with reflection,' is grounded in the work of many educators/scholars including John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget."*

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July 17th - 20th  
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*The theme of the 2003 Symposium is*

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## Scholarship & Research Updates

*Continued from page 13*

This form of experiential education takes place in the outdoors and generally involves an amount of uncertainty or risk (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993). Forms of outdoor education have existed for decades. The outdoor education movement began in the mid 1920's and developed as a profession in the 1960's and 1970's with the arrival of major influences such as Outward Bound in 1962 ([www.outwardbound.org](http://www.outwardbound.org)), the National Outdoor Leadership School in 1965 ([www.nols.edu/NOLSHome.html](http://www.nols.edu/NOLSHome.html)), Project Adventure in 1971 ([www.pa.org](http://www.pa.org)), and the Association of Experiential Education in the mid 1970's ([www.aee.org](http://www.aee.org)).

The most popular and accessible type of outdoor adventure education experiences are those that are residential in nature, meaning, participants remain on or near the college or university campus. Residential experiences generally include activities such as warm-ups, icebreakers, trust exercises, games, ropes (both high and low courses), and closings. Ropes and challenge courses are probably the most well-known form of outdoor adventure education. Many campuses are fortunate enough to have their own ropes or challenge course which often is open not only to members of the academic community but also to businesses and groups outside of the campus community. Almost all courses charge a fee for use but many who participate in ropes or challenge course activities believe that the experiences and learning that come from group participation in these activities is well worth the cost. Ropes and challenge course are a great way for participants to get to know one another, and to develop trust and teamwork among members of the group. A great resource for professionals who are interested in developing a challenge or ropes course at their institution is the Association for Challenge Course Technology ([www.acctinfo.org](http://www.acctinfo.org)).

For those who are interested in pursuing more affordable outdoor adventure education options check out Jim Cain and Barry Jolliff's (1998) book entitled *Teamwork & teamplay*, a great resource for both novice and

seasoned outdoor adventure educators. For a review of this book please read the Leadership Book-shelf column in this edition of *Concepts & Connections*. Other useful resources for those interested in designing residential outdoor adventure experiences include: Rohnke and Butler's (1995) *Quicksilver: A guide to leadership, initiative problems, adventure and trust activities*; Oberle and McClarren's (1994) *Ready, set, go!!! A guide to low prop, no prop initiative games and activities*; and Rohnke's (1989) *Cowtails and cobras II: A guide to games, initiatives, ropes courses & adventure curriculum*.

Non-residential forms of outdoor adventure education include hiking or backpacking trips, canoeing, skiing, mountain biking, camping, rock climbing, kayaking, and orienteering, just to name a few. These types of activities often require participants to leave campus for either a short or extended period of time ranging from one day to several weeks. Generally, these opportunities are open to all members of the campus community - administrators, faculty, staff, and students. If you are interested in finding out more about these types of activities on your campus a good place to start is the campus recreation center.

Recently, outdoor adventure activities have also been incorporated into or offered as an additional option for first-year students participating in a traditional college orientation program. Outdoor orientation programs have been around since the middle of the 20th century and found their beginnings at Prescott College in Arizona (Watters, 1986). Outdoor orientation programs vary by institution but are generally designed so that students have a variety of trips to choose from with each trip consisting of a small group of first-year students led by a team of trained upper-class students. Many outdoor orientation programs

*"Outdoor adventure education is a distinctly powerful form of experiential education that has recently begun to peak the interests and gain the support of educators across the country."*

seek faculty and staff volunteers to participate and serve as mentors, along with the upper-class trip leaders, for the first-year student participants. Studies have found that programs like these have helped to ease the transition for students who are first entering college because they allow students an opportunity to interact with other students and faculty on a one-on-one basis (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1996; Devlin, 1996; and Paulson, 2000). These types of programs also serve as great opportunities for leadership development in that they allow students to

move out of their comfort zones, promote teamwork to overcome challenges, and encourage reflection and application.

Understanding and appreciating the potential leadership development opportunities that exist through outdoor adventure education demands that the readers keep up to date on the latest research initiatives in the field of outdoor adventure programming. There are several journals available for educators and practitioners that are worth checking out. *The Journal Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning* sponsored by the Institute for Outdoor Learning, debuted in December of 2000 and is published bi-yearly. The journal articles are written to "promote dialogue, research, thinking, understanding, teaching and practice in the broad field of adventure education and outdoor learning." The journal articles are available at a reduced price for members of the Institute for Outdoor Learning. Abstracts of all articles can be accessed freely at <http://www.outdoor-learning.org/journal/journal.htm>. The Journal of Experiential Education is a professional journal published three times per year by the Association for Experiential Education and is free for all AEE members. This journal includes articles that span a broad

number of outdoor education topic areas including research and theory, environmental education, adventure programming, and service learning. For more information about this journal please visit <http://www.aee.org/publications/journal/aeejourn.html>. Another useful resource for outdoor adventure educators is Research Connections, which is published by Indiana University's Institute for Outdoor Leadership and Education (IOLE) and Department of Recreation and Park Administration. *Research Connections* provides brief research updates including summaries of articles and implications for practice based on the latest research in the field of outdoor leadership and can be accessed freely at <http://www.indiana.edu/~outdoor/resconx.htm>.

Research findings conclusively demonstrate the impact of experiential learning and outdoor education programs on a variety of skills and leadership behaviors. You can find additional information on these applications in NCLP's latest issue of Leadership Insights and Applications series, *Outdoor adventure education: A pedagogy for leadership* (Mouberry, 2003). 🏠

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# Conference Announcements

## 🏠 **May 27-30, 2003 National Conference on Leadership Diversity, Orlando, FL**

The conference will bring together leadership development professionals, educators, business executives, government officials, and nonprofit agency representatives to exchange innovative ideas, viewpoints, and resources, and develop coalition-building strategies to enhance leadership diversity throughout higher education and a variety of other organizations.

*For more information visit*

*[http://www.diversity.ucf.edu/programs/national\\_conference/ncsplash.htm](http://www.diversity.ucf.edu/programs/national_conference/ncsplash.htm)*

## 🏠 **June 4-30, 2003 Global Leadership Program, Denver, CO**

The Global Leadership Program is a comprehensive four-week program that includes: university courses, cultural activities, and community service. The program is open to undergraduate students from around the world. Objectives include: Obtain new skills and knowledge; Think critically about the problems we face today; Meet people from around the world; Broaden your knowledge about diverse cultures; Make lasting memories.

*For more information contact [director@visionresource.org](mailto:director@visionresource.org)*

## 🏠 **June 5-7, 2003 13th Annual International Conference on Servant-Leadership, Indianapolis, IN**

The conference will feature Warren Bennis, Ken Blanchard, Diane Cory, Michael Jones, Ken Melrose, and George Zimmer.

*For more information visit <http://www.greenleaf.org/leadership/conference/Conferences-and-Opportunities.html>*

## 🏠 **June 5-8, 2003 CLA's 23rd Annual Leadership Conference, Saint Paul, MN**

The Community Leadership Association will be hosting "Renaissance on the river: Renew, reflect, & reconnect." Speakers include Frances Hesselbein, Bill Grace, Ancella Livers and Keith Caver, Parker Palmer, Joel Barker, Michael Kroth, and Patricia Boverie. In addition to the regular conference, the Youth Leadership Track will offer workshops on collaborative leadership development.

*For more information visit <http://www.communityleadership.org/>*

## 🏠 **June 25-29, 2003 3rd Annual Greater Expectations Institute Conference, Denver, CO**

The conference titled "Campus Leadership for Student Engagement, Inclusion, and Achievement" is designed to help campus teams enrich and deepen their efforts to create campus environments that engage, include, and challenge all students by tapping existing innovations. Institute Faculty include: L. Lee Knefelkamp, Teachers College of Columbia University; George Kuh, Indiana University; Peter Smith, University of California Monterey Bay; and Beverly Daniel Tatum, Spelman College.

*For more information visit <http://www.aacu.org/meetings/gxinstitute/gxinstitute2003.cfm>*

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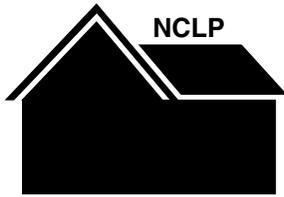
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